

A lack of interest and planning has led to a second year of declines in Panama's food exports, including melons and watermelon, according to local news website La Estrella.



From January to November 2010, exports fell 9.4% from the same period in 2009. They fell 31.2% from the same period in 2008 to 2009. From 2008 to 2010, export value fell from US \$1.1 billion to \$679 million, a 38.2% drop.

Melon, watermelon and seafood were the most affected, according to information from the Comptroller General of Panama quoted in the report. Exports of those fruits dropped 32% from 2009 to 2010.

The fall in exports occurred because Panama still does not know how to plan its exports, despite the free trade zone, the Panama Canal and using U.S. dollars, which separates it from other nations in Central America, according to Máximo Gallardo, former president of the Panama Association of Exporters, the website said.

Panama still has no interest in a culture of exporting, because neither the private sector nor the state have a good idea of what the market is looking for; both require taking measures so that production increases and that the increase unites marketing outside the country, Gallardo said, according to the website.

Photo: wikipedia.org

Source: [www.freshfruitportal.com](http://www.freshfruitportal.com)