


The Chilean Hass Avocado Committee expects a higher export ratio this season, with good prospects in Europe, the U.S. and in South America. 


Chairman Adolfo Ochagavía has told *www.freshfruitportal.com* volumes would likely be higher with more fruit on the trees, despite frosts in recent days in the country's V (Valparaiso), VI (O'Higgins) and Metropolitana regions.

"In general terms you can see more fruit on the trees than last season. During the month of July we should finish our harvest estimate and could have an estimated figure," he says.

"Regarding distribution between exports and domestic sales, it's difficult to anticipate, but I estimate that this year the export ratio should be higher than it was last season. It all depends on the relative prices of avocados in different markets.

"This season we will have a little more fruit compared to last season, which will provide more volumes to different markets, which is good for our industry and its reputation as a reliable supplier of quality avocados for the long term."

He says European avocado markets should improve by the time Chilean supply arrives, while attractive prices exist in the U.S. and further afield.

 "In the case of Europe, in this time it's a bit depressed by the high shipments sent by the Peruvian industry but we expect by mid-September when the Chilean arrivals start, it'll be on a better footing," he says.

"We have a North American market with attractive prices because its domestic harvest had lower volumes than the previous season, and to change continent, the prospect of increasing our market presence in Germany is very interesting.

"In another area, the opening of the South African market for Chilean Hass avocados is an attractive prospect."

Ochagavía says the Argentine market will continue to be strong after receiving 7,000 metric tons (MT) from Chile last season, which is more than avocado exports to Spain and the U.K. combined.

In the 2010/11 season Chile produced 160,000MT of avocados of which 45% were sold in the domestic market, while the U.S. imported 33%.

## **Marketing campaign and local production**

Ochagavía says the Chilean Avocado Importers Association (CAIA) in the U.S. will have a budget of around US\$3.6 million, which will involve spending on advertising via radio, internal, social networks, public relations and point of sales positioning.

The European campaign will be focused on England, Spain, Germany, Denmark and Sweden, including in-store promotion and public relations.

He says the outlook is good for fruit production and quality, despite a drought that has affected some areas such as Ligua-Cabildo and Petorca.

"We expect the rains will be around the normal annual rainfall and the winter will be mild.

"This will be the eighth year that we realize our independent programme, which demands that the avocado in the orchard has a minimum of 23% dry matter, to be cut, processed and sent."

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