


Colombian dragon fruit shipments to Chile look set to increase following the authorization of packing and treatment facilities in Bogota earlier this month. 

Chilean Agriculture and Livestock Services (SAG) inspectors also reviewed three registered export-producers in the Roldanillo, Bolívar and Belén de Umbría municipalities.

They checked the condition of the fruit along the production chain, verifying that Colombian Agricultural Institute (ICA) practices met Chile's quarantine requirements.

ICA Plant Health Regulation Institute deputy manager Maria Cristina Torres Villamil, said authorization of the packing and steam treatment plant showed producers' capacity to comply with previously negotiated protocols.

"Similarly, it's a positive indicator of the coordinated efforts among public and private sectors to take advantage of business opportunities in international markets for the benefit of small producers, thus increasing their exports and diversification to consolidate promising agricultural export activity."

She said it was a positive step along with the revival of the Japanese market, which followed a closure of more than 10 years after pests were detected in some export fruit.

In 2011, 637 metric tons (MT) of dragon fruit worth US\$2 million were exported to Japan, and in the first five months of 2012 nearly 277MT were exported at a value of nearly \$US1 million.

She thanked SAG for its support of small to medium-sized Colombian producers, which has created confidence in fulfilling the export work plan signed by both countries in late June.

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