

Peruvian agricultural exporters should amp up their offering to include pineapples to meet growing U.S. demand, according to a recommendation by the Embassy of Peru's commercial department in Washington D.C. 

The entity suggests exporters from the Andean country undertake a detailed analysis of market possibilities for fresh pineapples produced organically or that have fair trade certifications, embassy attaché José Corbera explained.

"There is still not ample enough development for organic pineapple crops. This is a good niche market for our country and we recommend it to Peruvian farmers," he told www.freshfruitportal.com.

"In reality we are trying to convince Peruvian authorities to write an agreement of recognition for organic products with the United States.

"We are trying to push the idea that yes, this is going to be a very good niche possibility with the U.S. for organic producers."

The embassy's report uses banana exports as an example of market possibilities:

"Remember that in less than a decade, Peru became the main global exporter of organic bananas, thanks to the vision and joined force of thousands of small Peruvian producers of this fruit."

Corbera added that Peru is in a well-placed position to turn pineapples into a bigger market.

"Peru is a privileged country with very interesting ecology. It is not difficult to cultivate pineapples ecologically and organically. What has happened is that the decision is currently lacking from business people who want to be part of this organic crop," he said.

"Part of our message is to get producers interested in the crop and particularly in this country, to show the demand that exists in the U.S. that could be easily filled by Peru."

In 2011, the U.S. pineapple market reached 685,000 tons (MT). According to *Euromonitor International*, demand could reach 704,000MT by 2016.

Costa Rica is currently the main supplier of pineapples to the U.S. The embassy, however, indicated that ecological criticism toward the country could create an opportunity for smaller players.

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