

When Polish company Polskie Jagody opened its first farm near Warsaw in the 1970s, blueberries had yet to gain much popularity in the region. Now Poland ranks as one of the top 10 blueberry producers in the world and shows potential to keep growing, said sales manager Agata Małkiewicz.

With new plantations coming into maturity, the company hopes to increase its current volume from a few hundred tons (MT) a season to 1,000MT over the next two years.



Polskie Jagody sales manager Agata Małkiewicz

Polskie Jagody's growth comes at a time when Polish blueberries nationwide are undergoing renovations. Although the Polish industry has historically lacked investment for modernization and development, new EU funding has allowed for better facilities and practices.

"There has been lots of investment recently because of EU funds. We also took advantage of the EU funds. Our facility is quite modern. We have two very modern packing lines. It was built for the 2012 season," Małkiewicz told www.freshfruitportal.com during Fruit Logistica in Berlin.

Click [here to view a photo gallery of Polskie Jagody's operations](#).

Among investments have been tools for frost protection, including wind barriers and fog machines.

"We are investing in many things to protect ourselves from different situations like frost, but you can't control everything, unfortunately," she said.

"Winter is not as damaging as long as the temperatures don't change very quickly. If they go down gradually, it's fine. If there's a huge decrease in temperature, it may be damaging, especially if there is no snow coverage."

Currently, Małkiewicz said the winter has been favorable and so far, the plantation looks good.

The company has seven to eight main varieties, including Chandler, Sierra, Bluejay, Liberty and Aurora. Although Bluecrop blueberries are popular in Poland, she said Polskie Jagody has chosen to focus on other varieties to stand out from competitors.

"We have a lot of Chandler and Sierra, which we like. Chandler is a very big fruit; it's 20-something mm. They look excellent, they taste good. Sierra is one of the varieties we also really like that tastes good," she said.

As for sales, most of the company's fruit goes to export markets in Europe. In the future, Małkiewicz said they would like to increase domestic sales and increase activity in the Middle East and Asia.

www.freshfruitportal.com