

Drought conditions in some Mexican production regions negatively affected fruit sizing this season, but the U.S. National Mango Board (NMB) has noted the overall supply has been slightly higher and more stable than last year.



The deal is now drawing to a close, with the latest NMB crop report showing U.S.-bound shipments to date were nearly 65 million boxes, compared to a little over 63 million boxes last year.

"It's a little bit more production, but what's more important is that it's been more consistent than last year," NMB executive director Manuel Michel told *Fresh Fruit Portal*.

"Many years as the season moves through the different regions in Mexico there are gaps or overlaps and that creates a lot more peaks and valleys, and this year it looks like it was very consistent."

He said the peak volumes - which came throughout July - had arrived a couple of weeks later than last year.

Fruit is now mainly being harvested in the northern state of Sinaloa and is expected to finish up by the end of September.

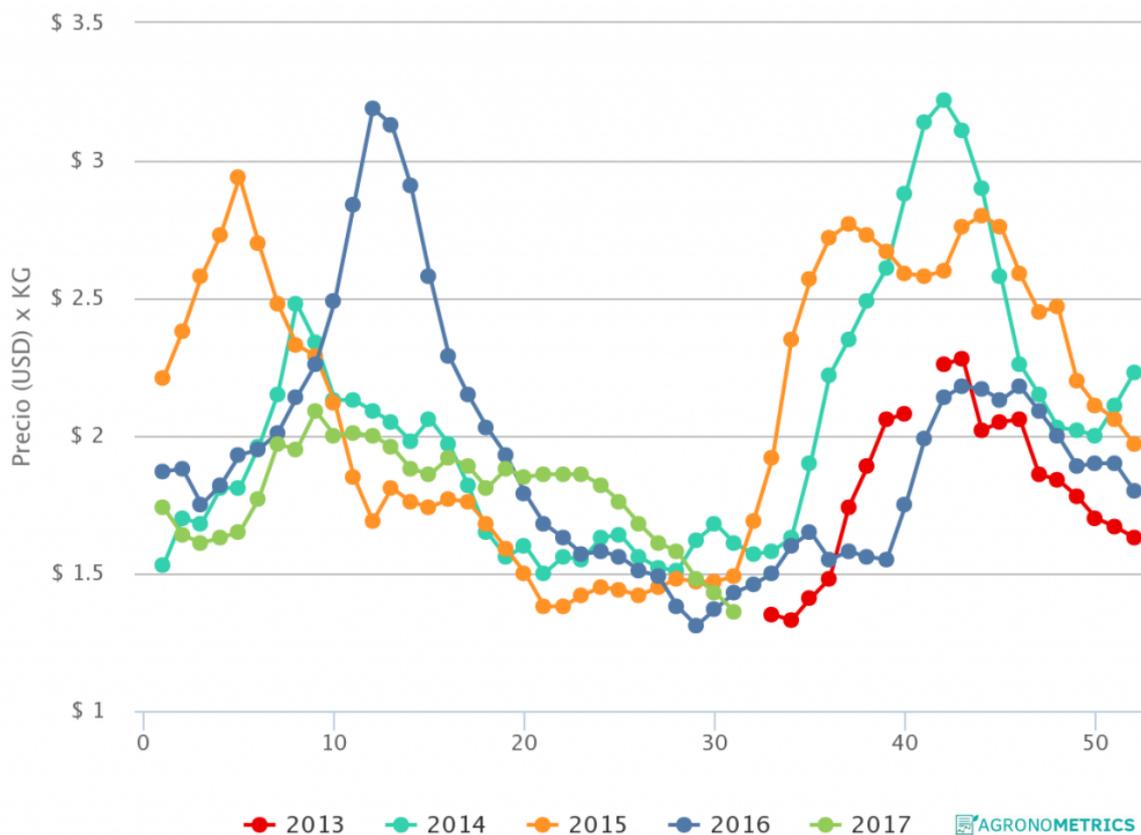
Michel said while the U.S. market had been able to absorb the increased volumes from Mexico, it had come under a little bit of pressure in recent weeks.

"Up until a month ago things were riding along very smoothly," he said, but noted the fruit was still moving.

"At the NMB we don't get too involved in the price aspect of the industry, but based on USDA information we have seen a fairly significant decline in price over the last two to three weeks."

However, he pointed out that last year the prices for the peak volumes were about the same as they were now.

"I guess relatively speaking it's very similar to last year," he said.



Historic average prices in U.S. wholesale markets. Source: Agronometrics

Much of Mexico has been affected by drought conditions, which Michel said had led to smaller sizes than the market would have liked.

"In southern Mexico, the sizes of the honey mango, or Ataulfo, were smaller than what we were expecting, and then also in Sinaloa the sizing was a little bit smaller than what had been projected," he said.

A representative of Mexican company Deleita Mangoes said both drought and frosts had affected production.

"In [the states of] Jalisco and Guerrero the mango sizes were not very big, which lowered

the price of the fruit since the North American market looks for larger sizes," operations manager Alex Martínez said.

"We are now harvesting in two areas in the south of the state of Sinaloa, and both places have been affected by weather conditions as the amount of rain has been low. This has caused the fruit to be dehydrated, and so we have had higher volumes of low-quality fruit."

Smooth transition to Brazil expected

The Haitian mango season is now all but finished, with current figures showing the Caribbean country nearly doubled its shipments to the U.S. year-on-year, rising from around 1.2 million to 2.1 million boxes.

Brazil will be the next major supplier to ship mangoes to the U.S. market, with the season expected to run from August to November and see some 7.8 million boxes shipped.

"We think that the volumes are going to be very similar to 2016, with the biggest difference being that they're reporting their season is two to three weeks behind schedule from last year," Michel said.

He also anticipated a smooth transition from the Mexican to the Brazilian season.

"The northern Sinaloa region is also delayed by about two weeks or so. It should finish toward the end of September, and that's when we think the peak arrivals from Brazil will start to happen - probably into the first week of October," he said.

"So far we haven't seen overlaps that would cause an oversupply situation - everything seems to be flowing very smoothly from one region to the other."

He added Ecuador was reporting its upcoming season may also be delayed.

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