

The Mexican mango season is now getting underway, with packing sheds in the southern growing regions of Oaxaca and Chiapas either open or set to open over the coming weeks.

Crespo Organic said the ataulfo variety will kick off the 2019 season. The company is anticipating the first fruit will arrive at U.S. ports of entry late next week.

The company warns that the onset quality is not ideal for the earliest to pick fruit due to heavy rains during December's fruit formation.

"With the tremendous growth that ataulfos are having, we take the role of being leaders in the category seriously, ensuring quality first for the mutual, long-term success of the program," said Nissa Pierson of Crespo Organic.

Tommy Atkins will start in March. Crespo foresees a "very empty" pipeline of mangoes by the time that variety starts - the National Mango Board recent forecast total Latin American mango shipping volumes to the U.S. through week 11 would be 24% lower year-on-year.

But the company said the "rapid acceleration" of quality on late-season Peruvian fruit is already putting "tremendous pressure" on the Mexican industry.

Crespo has this season added more than 200 hectares of certified organic hectarage as well as a new packhouse in Chiapas, which is due to open in February and begin packing by March.