

Camposol expects to close the year with an increase of about 30% in blueberry volumes, amid significant expansion plans for the future.

The company that is known for its avocado and berry crops said this figure is a year-on-year rise of 27,800 metric tons (MT), in line with forecasts.

Peru has seen remarkable growth both in volumes and sales of blueberries. It is expected that the country could match Chile this year or the coming year.

Regarding the avocado season, Camposol's other standout crop, Peru saw lower volumes than the previous year due to an off-bearing year.

But despite that, Camposol confirmed that it is planning to increase its offerings for 2020.

"Annual figures demonstrated a growth in demand for our fruit. Undoubtedly, that means we have to act fast because that could cause a bottleneck effect when countries like Peru, South Africa and Mexico concentrate the market - like what happened in 2018," explained CEO of Camposol Jorge Ramírez to FreshFruitPortal.com.

"If we are looking to expand our horizons, we can see that after a change in price from external factors, normalcy resumes, prices adjust. Even after that price anomaly, prices go up even more."

He also added that "prices have been better than 2018 at some points during the year. This is mainly because of lower volumes in Peru and Mexico".



Consumption growth

Ramírez went on to say that the season's most notable increases happened when Peru exported to the U.S. Since the market didn't receive as many volumes from Michocán in Mexico, Peruvian was able to increase its volumes.

"Demand for Hass avocados continues increasing year after year, by at least 4% to 5%. More mature markets - like the U.S. and Europe - are consuming 3.1 kg and 1.8 kg per capita, respectively," he said.

"China, which has recently nearly doubled its imports, is only at 0.3 kg per capita. So there's huge potential to take advantage of that over the next ten years. We see an excellent opportunity for this super fruit to satisfy the increasing demands of global markets that want healthy, fresh food."

Camposol said that it expects that avocado consumption will increase in upcoming years. It finds that worldwide preferences for fresh, flavorful, healthy products makes the fruit a good investment.

Increased demand

Speaking to its strategy for growth, Ramirez said that it is focusing on international expansion.

With this goal in mind, Camposol plans to strengthen its new agricultural operations and commercial offices in the U.S., the Netherlands and China.

"This focus is in line with our goals to become a supplier that can provide an interesting, new, and attractive offer our markets 365 days a year," Ramirez said.

Regarding Colombia, it detailed that it has 1,300 hectares of avocados planted. Similar production figures are expected in Peru with 40,000 hectares by 2025.

One of the advantages of Colombia is that it allows Camposol to provide avocados throughout the entire year as it complements Peru's production period.

Additionally, in Uruguay there have already been 1,500 hectares in citrus planted. Around 400 hectares are already in production, allowing the company to supply during the entire window of Southern Hemisphere production.

Ramírez also said that the company is able to offer full traceability on its products thanks to its vertical integration.

Challenges for Camposol

When asked about challenges in production, Ramirez said these "are related to climate and the necessity to recruit new skilled laborers".

"Differently from countries like Mexico and Chile, water in Peru comes from irrigation systems that move water from the Andes to the coast. So decreased rainfall isn't such a big risk."

Similarly, technology plays a key role in Peru agricultural production. He commented that "before harvest we have to evaluate micro-tunnels to control radiation and humidity in critical areas. We use climate control for all of our post-harvest supply chain, such as packaging and containers with controlled atmosphere."



Camposol Cares from Farm to Family

Camposol went on to detail its sustainable efforts to decrease environmental impact on agro-systems. By using resources in a responsible way, promoting efficiency and improving its processes, it is able to decrease its footprint.

An example of Camposol's campaign success in this regard was in 2018 when the company became the first agroindustrial company in Peru to be certified sustainable. It was able to save more than 3.3m cubic meters of water, 122,000 cubic meters of reused water and 110,000 cubic meters of treated water.

Since 2014, Camposol has been measuring its water footprint in its blueberry, avocado and mandarin production. Alongside SuizAgua, it also measured the impact of its industrial processes for blueberries, fresh avocados and frozen mangoes.

"Because of that, and because we are committed to the environment, we united with the Blue Certificate program run by the National Water Authority (ANA). This program joins the companies that measure their impacts and are active in projects that reduce water use. This

generates a shared value and has created a community."

"We know that today, consumers, and young consumers especially, are conscious of their health and look not only for flavor but attractiveness in their food. At the same time, they want transparency in the way in which producers obtain and harvest the fruit. They also want to know the values of the company," added Ramírez.

"Consumers are motivated to buy food that is produced in a sustainable, socially responsible way. So, it's becoming more important that consumers know about the ethics behind the company that they're buying from," he emphasized.