

Mexico's avocado industry association has been recognized by the country's government as the leading foreign trade promotion agency.

The Association of Avocado Producers and Packers of Mexico (APEAM) was given an award on Thursday morning during a ceremony headed by Tatiana Clouthier Carrillo, Mexico's Secretary of Economy.

APEAM represents some 30,000 producers and 67 packing companies from Mexico.

"We recognize each person who receives this award today and who are capable of bringing labor, investment and, above all, Mexican products to be exported abroad," she said, highlighting the growth of Mexican avocado exports over recent years.

The president of APEAM, Gabriel Villaseñor Zurita, and the treasurer, José Luis Gallardo, received the award that recognizes the efforts of thousands of producers and dozens of packing companies from 43 municipalities that make up the avocado belt of Michoacán.

"The exporters, without a doubt, are the iconic image of Mexico abroad. We are the leading reference and one of the most visible faces of what is produced with quality in the country," said Villaseñor.

The award also reinforces the industry's commitment to continue on the path of care and protection of the environment, APEAM said.

APEAM, has been recognized with this award twice - in 2010 and now in 2021 - since its creation in 1997, when a group of 60 producers and five packers established the Binational Export Plan.

For 23 years, Mexican avocados have steadily increased their positioning in the global markets, going from 41,118 metric tons (MT) exported in 1999 to 1.1 million MT shipped in the last season.

Currently, avocados are present in 34 countries, with the U.S. being the main destination, followed by Canada, Japan, France, El Salvador, Spain, Honduras, the Netherlands, China, South Korea, among others.

The avocado export industry is mostly made up of small producers (64% have an area of 1 to 10 hectares) and generates 400,000 jobs in Mexico and 30,000 jobs in the U.S.