

Leading experts from Chile and around the world will be part of the webinar "The New Challenges of the Cherry Industry", the second webinar of 2021 held by Global Cherry Summit, the premier annual event for cherry industry professionals.

The meeting will take place on Thursday, August 26 from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. EDT, and will analyze the challenges that will impact the Chilean cherry industry in the upcoming 2021-22 season.

This webinar, organized by Yentzen Group and the ASOEX Cherry Committee, will evaluate the future guidelines of the sector, the lessons learned from the past, and the new challenges that arise as a result of changes in the marketplace. The importance of fruit quality and its effect on trade and position in the Chinese and international markets will also be discussed.

Cristian Tagle, president of the Asoex Cherry Committee and one of the speakers, will start the event with a presentation on "The new challenges of the industry".

Tagle said that in the industry "we have several challenges, such as market diversification, water scarcity, availability of workers, and Covid-19 standards worldwide, although Chile is much better off than other countries. However, our fruit goes to these destination markets. These are important issues to address and are constantly evolving".

Along the same lines, Manuel José Alcaíno of Decofrut indicated that "this seminar is important because it addresses aspects that are fundamental to be able to generate a matrix that allows us to diversify markets. We have to continue to trust that the Chinese market will absorb these volumes without being affected. The reasonable thing to do today is to look for alternatives".

The second session will deal with "The coming season". In this segment, Kurt Huang of Shanghai Oheng will talk about "The Chinese market in 2021/22", while Alcaíno will talk about "The North American market in 2021/22" and Darren Matschull of JO Sims Ltd will delve into "The European market in 2021/22".

Militza Ivelic, founder of Trio Capacita, and Jessica Rodriguez creator of Trio Kimün, will explain the "Harvest parameters and their impact on cherries' shelf life". The webinar will end with a panel discussion that will address the key scenarios for the cherry industry, which will include Orieta Ramirez, General Manager of Frusan, and Mario Edwards, General Manager of Agrofruta.

## **Chinese and European market**

Regarding the key issues of the Chinese market, Kurt Huang explained that "the Chilean cherry season has been a big challenge for everyone. The pandemic caused it to be more difficult for both parties, Chile faces the problem of labor and maritime transport".

The specialist indicated that "most Chilean cherries have no other place to go, the Chinese market is still the place, but who should assume the possible risk? How should it be shared? In terms of logistics, Hone Kong will remain the main port of entry. Trucks crossing the border between Hong Kong and mainland China have a special permit and are led by Hong Kong drivers, so the pandemic situation in Hong Kong will affect a lot, and there could be a shortage of drivers."

"The most important thing is to take Covid-19 prevention measures seriously in orchards and packing houses. Let's face the challenge together, the Chilean side must lower the expectation in return and rely more on its Chinese partners," he said.

Along the same lines, Alcaíno said that "we will make an estimate of the capacity of the U.S. market to absorb the Chilean volume, the price levels that could be expected and the recommended procedures to approach that market".

Meanwhile, Darren Matschull of JO Sims explained that "the main issues will revolve around what Chile can do to diversify some of the cherry exports away from China to England and Europe, but also the challenges this presents."

"England and Europe are very different markets. England has a mature southern hemisphere cherry business, but the specifications and technical requirements are among the most stringent in the world. On the other hand, Europe considers the southern hemisphere to be 'out of season' and is reluctant to sell cherries during those months," he emphasized.

Matschull said that "the approach to selling more in one market or the other will be very different. It will be important for exporters and producers to attend to understand what is expected of them if diversification is something they are interested in."

Regarding "Parameters that guarantee a good post-harvest", Militza Ivelic pointed out that "We will talk about post-harvest, the elements that are taken into consideration in the harvest and how they impact on the shelf life of the cherries. We will address it in different stages where we will comment on what we experienced last season in terms of postharvest."

"To the above we will add the most important varieties that were exported in 2020, 70% was concentrated in three varieties, then we will see what were the parameters at harvest and how they impacted the destination fruit," he emphasized.

### **Key event for the industry**

The meeting is preceded by the successful webinar "Challenges and Opportunities after a Complex Season", which had more than 750 participants and brought together hundreds of professionals to share crucial information about the past and future of the Chilean cherry industry.

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