

Chile is forecasting that cherry exports to the U.S. will see "substantial growth" in 2021-22 to around 13,000 metric tons (MT), in addition to a longer season.

The Chilean Fresh Fruit Association (CFFA) also said that for the first time, the U.S. export season will run more than 12 weeks, from November through February.

Chile reigns as the world's largest exporter of cherries, and continued growth is anticipated over the coming years. While China has been the main receiver of Chilean cherries, the industry is working diligently to develop other markets, including the U.S., the CFFA said.

"Diversification and development of markets is crucial for our industry. Chile views the U.S. as a market with enormous potential, and we are committed to investing in its expansion," said Cristián Tagle, Chairman of the Cherry Committee.

To support the increased volumes flowing into the market, the Committee will fund an expanded marketing program, encompassing numerous consumer and retail components encouraging consumers to "Cherrish the Moment". Promotions will begin in December and continue through February, with new merchandising material communicating different occasions for enjoying Chilean cherries.

Karen Brux, managing director of the Chilean Fresh Fruit Association (CFFA) said: "Chilean cherries are a delicious addition to just about anything. Whether shared with family over the holidays, used in a special dessert for Valentine's Day, given as a gift for Chinese New Year, or just eaten on the sofa while watching TV...there are so many ways to "Cherrish the Moment" with Chilean cherries."

The CFFA's merchandisers are working with retailers across the country to showcase cherries to their shoppers both in-store and online. Extensive social media and e-commerce programs will provide an additional boost to awareness and shopper demand.

The first shipments of cherries will depart Chile by early November and will continue through early February.