This year's installment of the UN's World Water Day, celebrated every year since 1993, contains a focus which should resonate with the entire fruit supply chain: groundwater and the aquifers which supply an important portion of irrigation sources.

Water costs and access are a repeat issue that seem to arise in our everyday coverage of the industry, one of the converging trends that shape the cost structure for growers of nearly all the cultivars which we cover.

The UN defines groundwater as the water found underground in aquifers, which are geological formations of rocks, sands and gravels that hold substantial quantities of water. According to figures released for World Water Day 2022, aquifers are the primary source of water for about 40 percent of all irrigation.

The UN General Secretary António Guterres warns groundwater usage is seeing a rising level of exploitation, and has sounded an alarm on its use and called for greater protection.

"Stored in rocks and soil, groundwater is our biggest source of liquid freshwater. It sustains drinking water supplies, sanitation systems, farming, industry and ecosystems. Yet, some 20 percent of the world's aquifers are being overexploited," Guterres said.

The UN also published a report to commemorate World Water Day 2022 entitled "Groundwater: Making the Invisible Visible".

AGRICULTURAL WATER SUMMIT 2022

Industry initiatives to highlight the challenges involved in water management for produce and agriculture in general are growing, and we remind our readers that Yentzen Consulting, Fresh Fruit Portal's parent organization, will hold the Agricultural Water Summit 2022 this year from on June 16th in in San Francisco de Mostazal, Chile.

The event will highlight cases of overcoming water-related challenges in places like Israel, Australia, South Africa and California, as well as experiences of companies in implementing successful strategies to reduce, reuse and better manage water. This will provide attendees with an integrated vision regarding the effective use of this scarce and essential resource for agriculture.