

The Mexican berry sector looks likely to achieve a 12% increase in blueberry, raspberry, strawberry and blackberry exports for the 2022 season, with shipments - primarily to the neighboring U.S. market - already up to 386,894 tons.

According to Juan José Flores García, managing director of the Mexican National Berry Export Association (Aneberries), growers in the country were expected to export more than 584,000 tonnes of soft fruit by the close of 2022, compared with 462,000 tons in 2021.

Speaking to Mexico's *Agencia Reforma*, Flores García said the total exported to June 16 comprised 62,011 tons of blueberries, 50,900 tons of blackberries, 206,238 tons of strawberries and 67,744 tons of raspberries.

"In Jalisco - one of the states with the greatest level of production - we are at around 182,000 tons exported, which, in my opinion, is really important because it is creating jobs," he told the press agency. "We view it as a pillar of development in the communities where they are growing berries."

Some 95% of Mexican berry exports are destined for the U.S. market, said the Aneberries managing director, with the remaining 5% divided between 37 countries, covering Europe, the Middle East and South East Asia.

In addition, Flores García told the press agency that Aneberries was seeking Mexican government support to facilitate the opening of new export markets, making special mention of India, Malaysia and South Korea.

According to Aneberries data, the current planted area in Mexico for berries totalled 14,000 hectares, with some 120,000 people employed directly and 438,000 indirectly by the industry.

Aneberries will be staging its 12th annual international congress from July 27-29 in Expo Guadalajara in the western city of Guadalajara in Jalisco state.