

EGYPT

Onion export increases, despite heat

In spite of the strong heat in the summer, the Egyptian spring onion season got off to a great start. Both quality and yield are better than last year. "We expect to export about 40 million bunches of spring onions," says Hisham El Meleigy of the Egyptian company Blue Nile.

Blue Nile ships spring onions mainly to the UK market. As soon as the German supply runs out, the export of the company is expanded to Germany and the Netherlands. According to Hisham Last year they exported 30 million bunches, but since then they've gained more market share and are going to export 30% extra.

He further said, "We lost some customers last year due to price pressure. Other suppliers were cheaper, but it turns out those customers rather wanted our superior quality. So we've regained those lost customers and even gained extra orders, which is amazing."

Blue Nile utilizes 600 hectares, which consist both of rented land and farms that belong to the company. By making use of their own production facilities, management and self appointed staff members, the company is in full control of the



whole production chain. "We're not subjected to market forces, so we can be really precise with the quality and logistics related to our crops." says Hisham.

GERMANY

Residue measurements for organic products

Recently Kirsten Arp, Head of Pesticide Monitoring at the German Association of Natural Food Natural Products eV, took part in a podium discussion in Kirchberg/Jagst last Friday at the invitation of the Farmers' Association Schwäbisch Hall.

At the event Arp clarified the Association's point of view: "I would not call it the 'end of organic farming'. However, the rules on pesticide detection in the new EU organic regulations continue to pose a threat to organic farmers, organic processors and organic traders, although improvements have been made in the final stages of negotiations."

"Now it is important that the subsequent legislation takes sufficient account of the practical experience of farms, inspection bodies and public authorities so that the rules can be implemented without harming organic farming and the organic market."

"Above all, it must be ensured that not every trace evidence leads to official closures and investigations. Although it is known that a great deal of pesticide evidence originates in conventional agriculture, especially in certain crops which, because of their natural characteristics, are "pesticide collectors". In addition, due to the ubiquity of pesticides in the environment, a specific cause is often difficult to determine or can only be determined with disproportionate effort. This fact must be considered and must not lead to the costs borne by organic farms."

"Of course, the Association, with more than ten years of experience of monitoring systems for fruit and vegetables as well as dry goods is always happy to advise and provide its expertise."



HUNGARY

Hungary to help modernize Uganda's agriculture sector

Speaking at their national day celebrations in Kampala last week, Dr Dancs Ferenc, the Secretary of State for International Cooperation at ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary said, "The republic of Hungary is waiting for a return visit by the Uganda foreign affairs to their country so as to open an embassy in Uganda to facilitate trade between the two countries.

He further said, "Hungary is ready to help Uganda to modernize Uganda's agriculture and water management sectors, among others".

State minister for Microfinance David Bahati, who represented Foreign Affairs minister Sam Kuteesa, urged the envoy to encourage Hungarians to come and take advantage of existing potentials in horticulture where they can produce in bulk assorted fruits, coffee, cut flowers, vegetables and fish among others.

He said, "We believe that promoting trade is one of the ways of improving relations between the two countries and the scholarships that Hungary has given to Ugandans to study in Hungary will help us build vocational schools".

KAZAKHSTAN

Kazakhstan and Jordan discuss increasing agriculture cooperation

According to the press service of the Kazakh president, Nursultan Nazarbayev said in a message that he, and the King of Jordan, Abdullah II, recently discussed cooperation between the two countries in several areas, including renewable energy, agriculture, transport and, more generally, economic and investment cooperation.

Nazarbayev said, "Prices on transportation affect export and import operations. In this regard we consider the importance of developing efficient transport and logistics routes between Kazakhstan and Jordan. We discussed the possibility of using the Kazakhstan-



Turkmenistan-Iran and Georgia-Armenia-Turkey railways".

The parties also discussed the further development of cooperation in agriculture sector. Kazakhstan may supply agriculture and livestock products to Jordan, and Jordan, in turn, can export vegetables and fruits to in the winter and spring seasons.

MEXICO

Mexico shipped 6 containers of organic bananas to Russia

The first shipment of Six containers loaded with organic bananas were shipped to Russia from the Port of Manzanillo recently.

The Grupo Coliman company complied with the protocols for the export of

this fruit with the support of the National Service of Health, Safety and Agri-Food Quality (SENASICA), stated the Secretary of Rural Development, Agustin Morales.

"This is the way in which the product enters Russia. Producers are satisfied because we managed to solve a problem there was so that the organic bananas produced in Colima can be consumed in that country. In addition, they are also happy because the export is being performed by a company from Colima." he said.

The state official stated that they had shipped six containers of 20 tons each, and that now that the trade had been established; the volume shipped would continue to increase due to demand for the product.



He also said the product was treated with a gas that encapsulates ethylene to slow down the fruit's maturation process, as it takes the product 30 to 35 days to arrive to Russia and that, said process would continue, once the containers were opened.

Morales Anguiano said that other countries, such as Japan, China, among others, were also interested in the product.

He said the market opportunities in those countries were positive for the producers of Colima, and all of Mexico, in face of a possible change in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

NEWZEALAND

New device helps determine kiwi taste before picking

Industrial designer William Lockwood-Geck's hand-held scanner which measures the quality of the fruit, is already attracting attention. Kiwifruit growers could now have a new and productive tool at their disposal.

Called the Harvest Manager 300, the scanner helps growers identify when the fruit is ready to be picked and also promises to be a cost-saving as much as a time-saving device.

His conceptual design is part of the end-of-year Exposure exhibition being staged by final year students at Massey University's College of Creative Arts, which opens at the Wellington campus in November, 2017.



The front end of the device rests against the skin of the hanging fruit, transferring the data to a display that is angled to face the user. The information transferred can be used to determine the fruits taste levels, for which the sector provides different levels of taste payment an incentive to growers to focus on growing higher quality fruit, rather than on producing high volumes of fruit.

The information allows growers to better determine when it is the best possible time to pick their fruit to receive maximum taste payments.

NEPAL

Exports to China grow 27.7%

Nepal's export to China has seen a sizeable growth in the first three months of Fiscal Year 2017/18. According to the Current Macroeconomic and Financial Situation of Nepal (first three months) unveiled by the Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) in Kathmandu, Nepal's exports to China

in the review period grew 27.7 % year-on-year. Export of tea, wheat flour and tanned leather to China recorded a growth of 531.2 %, 141.1 % and 110 % in the review period. According to the report, Nepal's export to other countries increased by 9.2 in the first three months of the current fiscal year.

PERU

Peach exports increases by almost 700%

According to ADEX, peach exports between January and October of this year, generated an incredible surplus of 686% over the same period of 2016, as they achieved a turnover of US \$2,765,000.

Canned peaches led exports with sales of about US \$ 1,600,000 during aforementioned period. This canned product was mainly sent to the United States (60% share) and Ecuador (39%).

According to Paula Carrion, the manager of Agricultural exports of ADEX, the prospects for this national fruit are interesting. "To achieve them, it's necessary to continue improving seeds and promoting good production and harvest practices among small producers," she said.

The companies that exported the most peaches between January and October of 2017 include Procesadora Laran SAC (with shipments for US \$ 1,662,000), Importaciones y Exportaciones Felles EIRL (with US \$1,085,000), Sunbeb SAC, Caballero Carmelo Impexp EIRL, and Belspo SAC, among others.



RUSSIA

Unusual method to analyze fresh produce toxicity

According to a report in "Russian Plane" Siberian researchers have developed a quick method to analyze the toxicity of vegetables and fruits. The main "marker" of contamination is the enzymes of ordinary fireflies.

The innovative method allows for the quality of fruit and vegetables to be assessed literally in a minute. It makes it possible to determine the level of contamination of vegetables and fruits with chemical and bacterial substances.

With the use of enzymes from ordinary fireflies, the degree of toxicity can easily be measured based on the fluorescence of the product.

Scientists have stressed that this method to determine toxicometric indicators will be tens of times cheaper than imported counterparts.

SWITZERLAND

Demand for blueberries and raspberries has tripled

Demand for both blueberries and raspberries have more than tripled since 2010 (from 3,000 tonnes to 9,500 tonnes). Berries are trendy, especially blueberries and raspberries. The small blue and red fruits are now very much consumers' favorites. However, the economic protection regulations for these two products are clearly different.

Since 2010, the consumption of blueberries has almost quintupled from around 1,000 tonnes to just under 5,000 tonnes (+ 480%). Demand for raspberries more than doubled over the same period, from around 2,000 tonnes to more than 4,500 tonnes (+ 231%). In 2016, for the first time more blueberries than raspberries were consumed.

In contrast to raspberries, blueberries have no economic protection. This means that blueberries can go duty-free to Switzerland at any time while raspberries on the other hand have a tariff quota



with a low quota duty rate and a high non-quota customs charge (ABC).

The outside quota approach then applies when the harvest is in Switzerland. This difference is very clear in the volume development of both fruits. Raspberries show two distinct peaks each year. In the case of blueberries, the small amount of dark blue Swiss crops is continually being imported. Accordingly, more imported than domestic blueberries are offered throughout the year as a whole.

SPAIN

More advanced blueberry sorting machinery and upcoming growth

The production and consumption of blueberries has multiplied in recent years due to the fruit's great health benefits, how convenient it is to consume and its unique flavour. In fact, the production volume is expected to quadruple within five years. For this reason, it is becoming increasingly necessary to update the technology that is currently used for the sort-

ing and selection, so that this task can be carried out in a more efficient and simple way.

"With the production currently available, many machines like ours would be needed. Taking into account that in five years this volume may multiply by four, the business possibilities are endless," says Fabricio Santos, president of Elifab, a pioneer in the manufacture of machines for the calibration and sorting of blueberries, which was created to respond to the concerns of the industry in this sector.

He further said, "We are not the only ones supplying machines with these characteristics, but we have been the first to create a machine exclusively for blueberries, adapted to the needs of this sector.

The others don't have the necessary technology to meet the needs of small fruits, as they were not designed for blueberries. They were adapted from those intended for cherries, which don't handle this small fruit as delicately. Furthermore, they are very large machines that take up a lot of space and don't ensure an efficient operation," explains Fabricio Santos.

