

## **The SADER declares Puebla and Guanajuato avocado producers free of pests.**

The recognition as free zone enables the producers to trade the fruit in better competitiveness conditions in national and international markets.



The Atlixco, Huaquechula and Ocoyucan municipalities in Puebla, and the agroecological zone of Duarte, which encompasses the communities of Cuesta Blanca, Duarte y Las Coloradas in León, Guanajuato, were recognized by the Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development (SADER) as zones free of the regulated avocado pests.

Through an Agreement published in the Federal Official Gazette (DOF), the foregoing regions were declared as free of the avocado seed weevil (*Heilipus lauri*), the small avocado seed weevil (*Conotrachelus aguacatae* and *C. perseae*) and the avocado fruit borer (*Stenomoma catenifer*).

The recognition was issued after technicians from the National Service for Agro-Alimentary Public Health, Safety and Quality (SENASICA) verified the absence of the pests with basis on the results from samplings performed in accordance with the official standards NOM-066-FITO-2002 for phytosanitary handling and mobilization of avocado, and NOM-069-FITO-1995 regarding the establishment and recognition of pest free zones.

Pursuant to the declaration published in the DOF, in order to maintain their condition as avocado pest free zones, the producers must implement the phytosanitary measures established in article 107 of the Federal Plant Health Law Regulations.

To protect the area allocated for avocado crops in the country, the SENASICA has implemented in the producer states the national campaign against the avocado seed weevils and borer, in order to maintain free zones and improve the status of the regions under control.

The presence of the aforesaid pests causes damages in the fruit since the larvae feed off the pulp and the seed, which can cause up to 90% of losses to avocado producers;

moreover, its presence entails national mobilization restrictions of the product for national and international trading purposes.

Michoacán and Jalisco are the top avocado producer states and represent 80% of the value produced in Mexico, followed by Estado de Mexico, Nayarit, Morelos, Guerrero, Puebla, Chiapas, Yucatan and Oaxaca.

The agreement, signed by Víctor Villalobos Arámbula, Secretary of SADER, shall come into force the day following its publication in the DOF and shall be valid for 24 months, in accordance to the provisions of the last paragraph of article 106 of the Federal Plant Health Law Regulations.