

Health and safety actions boost the production and exports of Mexican papayas

Since 2020 to date, the National Agro-Alimentary Health, Safety and Quality Service (SENASICA) has certified 250 papaya production units located in Campeche, Chiapas, Colima, Jalisco, Michoacán, Nayarit, San Luis Potosí, Tabasco, Tamaulipas, and Veracruz in Contamination Risk Reduction Systems.



In the words of the Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development, the national papaya industry is an example of how by adopting food safety culture, producers boost their chances of success and can venture into the more competitive international markets.

Mr. Francisco Javier Trujillo Arriaga, general director of the National Agro-Alimentary Health, Safety and Quality Service (SENASICA), while attending the National Assembly of ProExport Papaya in Guadalajara, Jalisco on behalf of Secretary Víctor Villalobos Arámbula, sworn in the new board of directors of the organization, that will be chaired by Juan Carlos Martínez Porte, from 2022 to 2024.

The federal public servant recalled that the association was born from the need of actions by the health authority and the producers, to offer consumers and commercial partners greater assurances concerning the safety of papayas against the risks of physical, chemical, and microbiological contamination.

In that reward, he congratulated the association for their work in coordinating 90% of the companies that export the fruit to the United States, which has helped curtail the cases of contamination associated with papayas to practically nil.

Implementing the best health and safety practices has boosted the national production of papaya to reach an annual volume of 1,117,000 metric tons, which ranks our country as the fourth producer in the world and as the top exporter of the fruit (169,000 metric tons).

According to data from the Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development, from January to April of this year, export sales of fresh papaya, together with watermelons and cantaloupes, grew by 14.25% vs the same period in 2021, which earned USD\$184 million.

Joint work has positioned us as leading agro-alimentary producers and exporters.

Trujillo Arriaga pointed out that joint work bears fruits, as being a reliable and respected country allows us to be one of the leading agro-alimentary producers and exporters.

This joint work between the authority and producers and traders is recognized by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and has reinforced the links of successful productive and commercial chains (like avocado and mango) since over 25 years ago.

The federal public servant also delivered a certificate of recognition to ProExport Papaya, in the context of the 2022 World Food Safety Day, as one of the productive associations more committed with good practices.

Moreover, the organization implemented and fulfilled the papaya action plan published by the SENASICA in 2020, to prevent the presence of microbiological contaminants in Mexican sourced fruits.

Eduardo Gaitán Padilla, outgoing chairman of ProExport Papaya, commented that during the past two years this sector has positioned itself as an international level agro-alimentary industry that is committed with internal regulations and the standards demanded by their commercial partners.

He further stated that 100% of their members have been trained in good practices by the safety technicians from the SENASICA, and that forums

concerning the verification and issuance of export certificates have been organized.

The incoming chairman, Juan Carlos Martínez, emphasized that the organization will continue promoting the consumption of Mexican papaya, regardless of company or state, and will reinforce research so farmers have enough tools to boost their productivity.

He further stated that papaya producers accept the commitment of being strategic partners to the organization of the Secretariat of Agriculture, for the benefit of the sector and of thousands of families that rely on that crop, and to supply Mexico and the world with healthy and safe foods.

Since 2020 to date, the SENASICA has certified 250 papaya production units from 83 companies, located in Campeche, Chiapas, Colima, Jalisco, Michoacán, Nayarit, San Luis Potosí, Tabasco, Tamaulipas, and Veracruz in Contamination Risk Reduction Systems (CRRSs).