

# Hass avocado exports from Jalisco to the United States begin

Mexico is the world's top producer and exporter of avocados, with a production that exceeds 2.3 million metric tons.



With a shipment of 201 metric tons of Hass avocados from 10 packagers certified by the health authorities of Mexico and the United States, the formal exports of this product from Jalisco to the U.S. Markets commenced.

During the ceremony to give the starting signal for the first shipment, Víctor Villalobos Arámbula, Secretary of Agriculture and Rural Development, underscored the achievement thanks to the hard work, commitment, and dedication of producers of Jalisco from 608 orchards.

In his words, the Mexican government is privileged to assist farmers in this process, which is successful because it yields development and prosperity, especially for producers of small and medium-sized plots, and their families and communities.

These exports reflect what can be achieved by working towards a common goal, and the implementation by producers of plant health measures at orchards and packaging facilities, to give assurances to consumers and trade partners that the fruits are free from pests and diseases.

In the company of Governor Enrique Alfaro Ramírez, Ana Lucía Camacho Sevilla, secretary of Agriculture of Jalisco, and producers and federal and state public servants, Mr. Villalobos Arámbula recognized his U.S. Peer, Mr. Tom Vilsack, for the negotiations during the past three months that made this achievement possible.

The avocado industry in Jalisco creates over 12,000 direct jobs and 22,000 indirect jobs, across 22,000 hectares located in areas free of pests that are harmful to the fruit. The orchards are highly mechanized and have infrastructure and systems to provide follow-up to traceability.

In 2021, the state exported 113,000 metric tons to more than 25 countries, which include Canada, Japan, and Spain, and the United States, as of today.

Mr. Villalobos Arámbula recalled that this success history started on July 15, 1997, with the signature of the first work plan for exports to the United States, which made possible for producers from Michoacán to place their avocados in that market.

During the event where Ms. Eliza F. Al-Laham, consul of the U.S. Was in attendance, the federal civil servant underscored the fact that in 25 years the national production of the fruit has tripled, from 790,000 metric tons in 1995, to over 2.4 million metric tons this past year.

Today Mexico is the leading grower and exporter of avocados, which are consumed in 51 countries around the world, and which rank first in the world's list of products exported to all destinations, with a worth of 3,104 million US dollars. Sales to the United States amount to 2,473 million dollars, with a volume of 1,280 million metric tons.

The secretary of Agriculture mentioned that the National Agro-Alimentary Health, Safety and Quality Service (SENASICA) and the U.S. Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) signed the operational work plan focused on systems for the import of fresh Hass avocados from Mexico to the United States on December 6, 2021.

This new agreement opens the possibility to export avocados from any producer area in our country, since 87% of the national areas that are seeded with avocados are officially recognized as free from seed borers.

Consequently, the Secretariat of Agriculture will continue working with the remaining producer areas in our country, so in the coming years they can also place their production in the most demanding markets of the world.

Mr. Villalobos Arámbula recognized the state's producers and encouraged them to stick to the work plan to maintain the quality, health, and reputation of Mexican produce, and recognized governor Enrique Alfaro for the support provided to move forward this process.

Governor Alfaro Ramírez remarked that Secretary Villalobos Arámbula did not fail avocado producers and did well for his home state, because he is a proud native from Jalisco. "Thus, we recognize him and his work team, because we know what they did to get to this day".

Further, he commented the government of Jalisco had done its part to comply with this agenda and their commitment with not only the secretary of Agriculture, but also with President Andrés Manuel López Obrador.

The state governor underscored the coordination and will to work together in this process, which shows that growing the economy and protecting the environment are not mutually exclusive agendas.

The governor also stated that they will jointly work with the SENASICA so the state's 17,500 hectares dedicated to avocado growing that have not yet been authorized for export can be certified as soon as possible.

Mr. Francisco Javier Trujillo Arriaga, general director of the SENASICA, pointed out that, through the Avocado Regulated Pests plant health program, from 1995 to date the Secretariat of Agriculture has invested over a billion pesos, which reflects the importance of this crop for the national economy.

He emphasized that obtaining the certification of area free of avocado tree pests is the product of the joint work between the federal and state governments and the producers, but maintaining such status requires a big commitment, dedication, and permanent surveillance from all the parties involved.

The federal civil servant encouraged producers and packagers from Jalisco to keep applying the plant health measures that made them eligible for the export program, and follow the example of Michoacán, a state that has been free of pest detection issues at the border for over 25 years now.

The president of the Apeajal (Association of Avocado Producers and Exporters from Jalisco), Mr. Javier Medina Villanueva, pointed out that things were done differently with the current government and Secretary Villalobos Arámbula, unlike in the past, because the Mexico-United States Operational Work Plan was signed first to provide assurances to the farmers that their containers would indeed arrive to their destinations in the neighboring country.

“Today the conditions are set to prevent any setbacks, and the avocado industry recognizes the work and dedication of both secretary Víctor Villalobos and Governor Alfaro Ramírez, for keeping up with all the happenings in the sector, and also acknowledges that the SENASICA was essential to earn this achievement”.

Mr. José Luis Gallardo Anguiano, president of the APEAM (Mexican Association of Avocado Producers, Packagers, and Exporters), underscored the importance of starting exports from Jalisco, because now the doors are open for sales from other states, such as Nayarit, Colima, Puebla, Morelos, and Estado de México, among others.

He recognized the joint and hard work between the federal and state authorities, because Mexico belongs to the big leagues thanks to its national avocados, that are the best in the world, and whose quality has been advertised in many places, from Canada to Japan.

According to the SIAP (Agri-food and Fishery Information Service), Mexico is the leading avocado producer in the world, with a production volume that exceeded 2.3 million metric tons in 2020, which accounts for 32% of the worldwide production of this fruit.