

The Secretariat of Agriculture and producers promote the healthy and safe trade of fresh fruits

Fruit irradiation treatment creates jobs, shortens transportation times from harvest to shelf, and guarantee the proper mitigation of pest risks, as detailed by the secretary Víctor Villalobos Arámbula



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The Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development is working on a plan to promote the irradiation of fresh fruits as an alternative phytosanitary treatment that makes possible for our country's small-scale vegetable and fruit producers to place their goods in more and better markets and guarantee the supply of healthy and safe foods for consumers.

At a meeting with representatives of the Mexican National Association of Food Irradiation, Secretary Víctor Villalobos Arámbula pointed out the high potential of our country to trade fresh irradiated products, which in turn creates jobs, shortens transportation times from harvest to shelf, and guarantees the proper mitigation of pest risks.

The federal official called to irradiate more emblematic products, such as capulin fruit and crab apple, since they are exotic fruits that could be traded in the main world markets.

He informed that soon officials of the Secretariat of Agriculture will meet with their peers of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, to expound of their willingness to accelerate the procedures for the export of products (soursop, mamey and sapote), mainly for the benefit of producers in the south and southeast regions of our country. At the close of 2022 the agrifood trade between both countries amounted to 73,137 million U.S. dollars, a 13% increase when compared to the prior year (by 8,467 million U.S. dollars).

Mr. Villalobos Arámbula stated that the Secretariat of Agriculture is working on a project to use the facilities in Metapa de Domínguez, Chiapas, which were used for the sterilization of male Mediterranean flies, to irradiate fruits from the south and southeast regions (like mango and guava), which will drive the development of their small and medium-scale producers.

Javier Calderón Elizalde, general director of the National Agro-Alimentary Health, Safety and Quality Service (SENASICA), stated that the irradiation treatment is one of the best alternatives to trade fruits with a higher degree of ripening, since they keep their flavor and quality due to not been subjected to high temperatures, and that the treatment is environmentally friendly.

He emphasized that producers have the support of the agency of the Secretariat of Agriculture to expand their trade of irradiated fruits and vegetables, since the Executive branch has instructed that any action must bring benefits to small and medium-scale producers in particular.

Karla Moctezuma Oaxaca, president of Animac, commented that for 15 years their association has represented producers and packagers from 21 states in our country that use the irradiation phytosanitary treatment to export fruits and vegetables to 28 states in the United States.

During that period no product has been rejected at the border for the presence of any regulated pests, which is proof of the commitment and reliability of the producers that employ such treatment.

Currently, the irradiation of fresh fruits is a safe treatment that makes possible the export to the United States of these foods: mango, star fruit, manzano pepper, pomegranate, fig, sweet citrus, guava, dragon fruit, and soon mamey sapote, plum and chicozapote.