

Situation and Outlook for Avocados

Significant production decreases in most of the world's avocado-producing countries will reduce world avocado supplies to 1.2 million metric tons in 2000/01, down 14 percent from last year. Larger output in the United States, the world's second largest producer, and Chile is not sizable enough to offset a 26-percent production decrease in Mexico, the world's largest producer. However, world avocado exports in 2000/01 are forecast to increase slightly to 220,000 tons, due to the export orientation of producers in Chile, Israel, Spain, and South Africa. While U.S. exports remain small, they are forecast to increase slightly to 5,000 tons in 2000/01, due to larger supplies and the recent opening of the Chilean market to U.S. avocados.

Mexico

Production for 2000/01 is forecast at 650,000 tons, down 26 percent from the revised 1999/2000 estimate, due primarily to the crop's cyclical nature and unfavorable weather conditions, which reduced yields. Output was also lower than expected due to producers delaying harvest in an effort to avoid market saturation and declining Mexican avocado prices.

In January 1997, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) approved the importation of Mexican Hass avocados from Michoacán into 19 northeastern U.S. states from November through February, provided growers meet pest-control requirements. To date, no pests of concern have been found in the groves approved under the program. Given the success of the program and lack of pest interceptions, the Government of Mexico has expressed strong interest in expanding its market access to include additional U.S. states and a longer time period.

Although Mexico is by far the world's largest avocado producer, only 5 percent of production is exported. Due to increased access to the U.S. market, Mexican avocado producers have gradually been increasing shipments. Exports to the United States in 1999/2000 totaled 13,444 tons, up 28 percent from 1998/99, and are forecast at 15,000 tons in 2000/01, a 12 percent increase. Total Mexican avocado exports in 1999/2000 reached 22,415 tons, a decrease of 42 percent from the 1998/99 season, attributable to increased domestic demand. Despite strong domestic demand, the export market continues to be profitable and 2000/01 exports are forecast to reach 35,000 tons. Central America continues to be Mexico's largest export market, followed by the United States. Imports of fresh avocados into Mexico are negligible, reflecting its status as the world's largest producer and consumer. U.S. avocados are unable to enter the Mexican market due to phytosanitary restrictions.

United States

Production for 2000/01 is forecast at 210,000 tons, up 22 percent from the 1999/2000 season, due to good weather and increased yields. The official 2000/01 estimate of U.S. avocado production will not be available from USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) until July 2000.

U.S. exports of avocados for 1999/2000 totaled 3,436 tons, 43 percent below the previous year's level, due to strong U.S. demand. Exports are forecast to increase slightly to 5,000 tons in 2000/01, due to larger supplies and the opening of the Chilean market. U.S. fresh avocado imports increased significantly in 1999/2000 to 66,237 tons, up 19 percent, reflecting increased shipments from Latin America. Chile accounted for 58 percent of total U.S. imports, followed by Mexico with 20 percent, and the Dominican Republic with 15 percent. Total U.S. imports are likely to increase in 2000/01, due to strong consumer demand, good U.S. prices, and the strong U.S. dollar. U.S. processed avocado imports are overwhelmingly of Mexican origin. Imports of processed product increased 36 percent in 1999/2000 and are likely to increase slightly in 2000/01 due to expected increases in Mexican shipments.

South Africa

Production in 2000/01 is forecast at 81,000 tons, down 22 percent, due to the alternate bearing nature of the fruit and unfavorable weather conditions. Continued growth in planted area suggests that South African avocado production will increase substantially in the next few years. Exports for 2000/01 are forecast at 46,000 tons, down 15 percent from last season, due to lower output. Approximately 50 percent of the South African crop is exported, primarily to France, Belgium and the United Kingdom.

Chile

Production for 2000/01 is forecast at 100,000 tons, up 11 percent from the revised estimate for 1999/2000, due to new orchards reaching production and excellent weather. Future increased output is expected as planted area has been increasing by approximately 1,000 hectares per year and new plantings have yet to reach full production. Exports are expected to increase in 2000/01 to 52,000 tons, 14 percent above last year's revised shipments, due to larger supplies. Chile's exporters are still overwhelmingly dependent on the U.S. market, with over 95 percent of total 2000 exports shipped to the United States. As a result of long and intensive USDA efforts to open the Chilean market to U.S. avocados, the Government of Chile granted permission for California avocados to enter Chile, effective December 1, 2000.

Spain

Avocado production in 2000/01 is forecast at 47,000 tons, down 19 percent from last year's revised estimate, due mainly to the crop's cyclical nature. However, area planted for avocado production continues to increase. Over the next five years, area planted is expected to expand another 25 to 35

percent, as steadily increasing demand and good prices encourage more producers to switch to avocado production. Increasing European demand for natural and organic avocados is prompting many Spanish producers to take advantage of existing environmentally-friendly growing practices to convert to organic production. Exports are forecast to decrease to 35,000 tons, down 24 percent from last year, due to the smaller crop. Almost all of Spain's avocados are shipped to Europe, with over 60 percent going to France.

Israel

Production for 2000/01 is forecast at 67,000 tons, down 13 percent from last year, due to the crop's cyclical nature. Actual production for 1999/2000 was 77,000 tons, up 67 percent from 1998/99, because of favorable weather conditions. Output is likely to remain constant in the short term, due to replanting of old orchards with hardier rootstocks. In the medium term, output is forecasted to reach 90,000 tons, of which 65 percent will be for export. Increasing problems with access to water resources and competition from Spain in the European market will force growers to improve efficiency and increase yields. Exports are forecast at 47,000 tons, up only slightly from last year. Almost all Israeli avocados are shipped to Europe, with over 50 percent going to France. U.S. avocados are unable to enter the Israeli market due to phytosanitary restrictions.

(The FAS Attache Report search engine contains reports on the avocado industry for 6 countries, including Mexico, South Africa, Chile, and Spain. For information on production and trade, contact Lisa Anderson at 202 720-5028. For information on marketing contact Steve Shnitzler at 202-720-8495).

Avocados: Production, Supply and Distribution in Selected Countries
Marketing Years 1996/97 - 2000/01
(Metric Tons)

Country/ Marketing Year 1/	Production	Imports	Total Supply	Exports	Fresh Domestic Consumption	Total Distribution
Chile						
1996/97	51,000	0	51,000	15,470	35,530	51,000
1997/98	86,500	0	86,500	44,514	41,986	86,500
1998/99	80,550	0	80,550	34,787	45,763	80,550
1999/2000	90,000	0	90,000	45,500	44,500	90,000
2000/01 F	100,000	0	100,000	52,000	48,000	100,000
Israel						
1996/97	79,000	0	79,000	44,000	33,000	79,000
1997/98	64,000	0	64,000	35,000	26,000	64,000
1998/99	46,000	0	46,000	26,000	18,000	46,000
1999/2000	77,000	0	77,000	45,400	29,600	77,000
2000/01 F	67,000	0	67,000	47,000	19,000	67,000
Mexico						
1996/97	838,000	0	838,000	68,000	755,000	838,000
1997/98	762,336	0	762,336	34,117	714,486	762,336
1998/99	550,000	0	550,000	38,571	493,429	550,000
1999/2000	876,623	0	876,623	22,415	809,208	876,623
2000/01 F	650,000	0	650,000	35,000	570,000	650,000
South Africa						
1996/97	54,000	312	54,312	22,704	31,608	54,312
1997/98	100,000	0	100,000	52,000	38,000	100,000
1998/99	65,000	0	65,000	33,000	24,000	65,000
1999/2000	104,000	0	104,000	54,000	38,000	104,000
2000/01 F	81,000	0	81,000	46,000	30,000	81,000
Spain						
1996/97	40,000	3,331	43,331	31,831	11,500	43,331
1997/98	60,000	3,560	63,560	54,878	8,682	63,560
1998/99	73,000	2,650	75,650	44,900	30,750	75,650
1999/2000	58,000	3,600	61,600	46,300	15,300	61,600
2000/01 F	47,000	5,000	52,000	35,000	17,000	52,000
United States 2/						
1996/97	171,186	27,117	198,303	5,002	193,301	198,303
1997/98	161,706	47,775	209,481	4,230	205,251	209,481
1998/99	144,469	55,515	199,984	6,060	193,924	199,984
1999/2000	164,473	66,237	230,710	3,436	227,274	230,710
2000/01 F	210,000	75,000	285,000	5,000	280,000	285,000
Total						
1996/97	1,233,186	30,760	1,263,946	187,007	1,059,939	1,263,946
1997/98	1,234,542	51,335	1,285,877	224,739	1,034,405	1,285,877
1998/99	959,019	58,165	1,017,184	183,318	805,866	1,017,184
1999/2000	1,370,096	69,837	1,439,933	217,051	1,163,882	1,439,933
2000/01 F	1,155,000	80,000	1,235,000	220,000	964,000	1,235,000

1/ Marketing Years: Israel - September/October; Chile and South Africa - calendar year of the second year shown; Mexico - August/July; Spain - July/June; United States - November/October.

2/ Import and export data from Census Bureau, Department of Commerce
F = Forecast

SOURCES: Reports from USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) attache reports, USDA/NASS estimates, and U.S. Department of Commerce.

U.S. Exports of Fresh Avocados
Marketing Years (November/October): 1995/96 - 1999/2000
Metric Tons

Destination	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000
European Union					
Belgium-Luxembourg	0	15	0	0	0
France	233	104	0	3	19
Germany	19	21	19	0	0
Netherlands	3,875	1,151	1,691	2,713	384
Spain	67	20	98	444	94
Sweden	364	39	0	0	0
United Kingdom	884	346	377	755	497
Other Countries	0	19	0	21	0
Subtotal	5,442	1,715	2,185	3,936	994
North America					
Canada	1,101	1,304	1,091	934	915
Mexico	13	10	5	210	34
Subtotal	1,114	1,314	1,096	1,144	949
Asia					
China/Hong Kong	44	80	45	2	1
Japan	2,719	1,784	750	838	1,236
Korea; Republic of	93	88	40	46	77
Subtotal	2,856	1,952	835	886	1,314
Total	9,412	4,981	4,116	5,966	3,257
Other Countries	32	21	114	94	179
Grand Total	9,444	5,002	4,230	6,060	3,436

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

U.S. Imports of Fresh Avocados
Marketing Years (November/October): 1995/96 - 1999/2000
Metric Tons

Origin	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000
Bahamas; The	355	688	189	211	137
Belize	0	0	14	0	0
Chile	12,911	17,451	32,903	36,682	38,758
Costa Rica	0	0	4	38	0
Dominican Republic	6,118	6,860	6,509	6,389	9,934
Ecuador	0	0	0	0	0
Honduras	0	0	0	0	0
Jamaica & Dep	0	0	0	0	0
Mexico	1,703	1,909	7,655	10,521	13,444
New Zealand	70	192	483	1,671	3,957
Other Countries	18	16	18	3	7
Grand Total	21,175	27,116	47,775	55,515	66,237

Source U.S. Bureau of the Census

U.S. Imports of Prepared Avocados
Marketing Years (November/October): 1995/96 - 1999/2000
Metric Tons

Origin	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000
Costa Rica	0	0	0	0	0
France	18	0	3	0	0
Japan	0	0	0	1	0
Mexico	14,899	13,016	15,734	17,224	23,138
New Zealand	0	0	0	0	3
Philippines	2	18	5	4	13
South Africa; Republic of	8	0	0	159	494
Grand Total	14,927	13,034	15,742	17,388	23,648

Source U.S. Bureau of the Census