

## Brazil's Fruit Exports Jump 10% to 851 Tons

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Brazil's fruit producers reached the end of 2004 with record exports worth US\$ 370 million, the equivalent to 851,000 tons. The performance represents an increase of 10% in value and 5% in volume in relation to 2003, according to the Brazilian Fruit Institute (Ibrafi).

The forecast is that external sales in the sector may have a 20% increase in quantity shipped in 2005.

The losses suffered by the papaya, grapes, melon and mango cultures because of climatic problems were compensated by the good performance of apples.

Last year, the product's external sales yielded US\$ 72.5 million, with an increase of 92% over the US\$ 37.8 million revenue in 2003.

In terms of volume, the increase was of 112%, with shipments of 153,000 tons, against 76,400 tons in the previous period.

Last year, the Canadian government authorized the importation of Brazilian fruit without additional (post-harvesting) sanitary treatment. In the official message to the Ministry of Agriculture, the Canadian authorities demand treatment only for apples, a procedure that is already being tested.

According to the Brazilian Agriculture Ministry's international affairs advisor, Gilson Westin Cosenza, the Canadian decision opens a new market for Brazilian producers and exporters, mainly of mangos, grapes, papayas, and melons, the production of which has been growing in recent years, stimulated by international trade.

Brazil is responsible for 2% of world fruit production and ranks first in papayas, the exports of which rose 140% between 1997 and 2001, when sales, chiefly to the United States and the European Union, reached US\$ 22.8 million.

Grape exports have also increased. 20.6 thousand tons were sold abroad in 2003, as against 3.7 thousand tons in 1997. Mango exports, for their part, jumped from 22.2 thousand tons in 1997 to over 128 thousand tons in 2003, with earnings exceeding US\$ 70.9 million.

Cosenza observes that prospects are also good for melon exports, which rose from 98,690 tons in 2002 to 149,758 tons in 2003, with earnings of US\$ 58.3 million.

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