

It Took 32 Years for Japan to Taste Brazil's Mango

Contributed by Newsroom
Friday, 21 January 2005

After 32 years of negotiations, the first shipment of Brazilian mangoes is on its way to Japan. 1.5 tons of Tommy mangoes left Brazil for Tokyo on January 19.

Nine more tons of the fruit will be available in Tokyo supermarket bins in the coming days. This year, Brazil plans to export approximately five thousand tons of mangoes to Japan.

The first shipment departed from São Paulo on a 30-hour trip to Tokyo, with a stopover in New York. For these initial export shipments, Brazilian producers had to adapt to several Japanese requirements, ranging from the harvesting to the packing and including the logistics of mango distribution.

Producers from Bahia will begin to export next week, when a three-ton cargo will be shipped from that state.

With the opening of the Japanese market, Brazilian producers view with enthusiasm the prospect of penetrating other Asian markets, such as China.

"Japan will be a mirror for all the countries of the region. If our job is well done, we will conquer other markets in Asia. China is our next target," commented the technical advisor of the São Francisco Valley Association of Producers and Exporters of Horticultural and Grange Products and Derivatives (Valexport), Clemente Ribeiro.

Ribeiro recalled that the commercialization of mangoes is on the negotiating agenda of the mission that traveled to China at the beginning of this month.

According to Ribeiro, the volume of exports of the product will depend upon the commercial value established in Japan. "I believe that US\$ 4 per kilo will be sufficient to sustain the market. If the price is lower, we may export less."

Chinese Mission

IRB-Brazil Reinsurance, linked to the Ministry of Finance, is studying the possibility of establishing a partnership with China in the health insurance market.

IRB is receiving a delegation from the China Life Insurance company, comprising representatives of private and governmental sectors, to discuss the health market in Brazil.

Officials from Brazil's National Supplementary Health Agency (ANS) will also participate in the encounter.

The objective, according to the head of IRB's Communications and Marketing advisory department, Odilon de Barros, "is to bring together people from the government and insurance market companies to investigate the chances of doing business."

Barros added that the formation of a partnership with the Chinese in the reinsurance area is not out of the question, nor are associations with national health insurance companies.

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