

# MAGAZINE

ASOCIACIÓN GREMIAL DE PROCESADORES Y EXPORTADORES DE CIRUELAS SECAS DE CHILE

## The 2022 prunes harvest in Chile closed with good volumes and quality

Pedro Acuña, executive director of Chileprunes, states that of the total prunes production, more than 70 thousand metric tons were available for dehydration.



At the close of the 2022 harvest and complying with market estimates given a couple of months ago, Chile had a total prunes production of 90,000 Metric Tons (MT), of which 71,000 MT were available for dehydration. and the remaining 19,000 MT were used for fresh fruit.

Figures higher than those recorded in the previous period, indicates Pedro Acuña, executive director of Chileprunes, who adds that last season there were lower world stocks due to production losses in Chile, France and Argentina - due to damage caused by nature. -, and which influenced a rise in international prices.

The European prunes area in Chile is 12,451 hectares, concentrated in the VI Region (area located immediately south of its capital, Santiago). Regarding the 2021 pruning, which explains this harvest, it should be noted that there was a scarce and expensive workforce; generating less load regulation. Regarding flowering and fruit set, the first was somewhat abundant and late, while the second, which takes place in the months of September-October in Chile, allowed high to very high loads in most of the productive zones.

Regarding the 2022 national production, the executive highlights that for the harvest and drying, the best climatic and technical conditions were available for its development.

"The harvest, which in Chile takes place in February, had volumes slightly higher than estimated and somewhat smaller sizes than expected.

Despite the high loads, the fruit gained sugar and the quality was excellent," adds Pedro Acuña.

Given the above, Chile, as the world's leading exporter of prunes, is in very good condition to supply international markets.



## The United States and Europe were consolidated as the main destinations for Chilean prunes

As of the first quarter of 2022, Mexico and Brazil are also seen as relevant, while a strong drop in Russia is perceived as a result of the war.

In the first quarter of 2022, the United States, Poland and Germany are part of the podium of the main destinations of Chilean prunes abroad, indicates the Office of Agricultural Studies and Policies (Odepa), an agency dependent on the Chilean Ministry of Agriculture.

According to these statistics, the United States, despite its large local production, due to its domestic consumption -associated with young people and wellness trends- has become the main importer with 2,127 metric tons (MT), equivalent to US\$ 8 million (FOB), representing 22% of the total amounts received by Chile.

Around 70% of Chilean prunes are sold to the group of the 10 main destinations, which in total reach 70 countries.

The total of Chilean exports in this period has reached US\$ 35,373,027, "a significant amount given that prices are on the rise due to a lower international supply that responds to a drop in world stocks," says Pedro Acuña, director Executive of Chileprunes.

For its part, Poland with 791 MT and US\$ 3.2 million has been the second destination of our prunes exports in the period January-April 2022, while Germany with 657 MT and US\$ 2.2 million is third. . Further back and within the top ten are Russia, Mexico, Spain, Brazil, Australia, China and the Netherlands.

"The Russian case deserves a special mention," adds the Chileprunes executive. Historically, Russia has been an important buyer of Chilean prunes, something that was happening until January 2022, when it was in second place in shipments. Then, the invasion of Ukraine began on February 24, and with the war minimal shipments were recorded in March and April.

At the end of the 2021-2022 season, and observing the estimates that were given a couple of months ago in the market, Chile had a total plum production of 90,000 MT, of which, more than 70,000 MT were available for dehydration, and the remaining 19,000 MT were used for fresh fruit.

## A positive 2022/2023 season is coming for prunes market

The view of the market by José Tomás Quezada, commercial manager of Pacific Nut Company Chile, after his experience as moderator at the Congress in Dubai.



In mid-May, the International Nut & Dried Fruit Council (INC) Congress was held in Dubai. The commercial manager of Pacific Nut Company Chile, José Tomás Quezada, was part of this event as moderator of the round-table on prunes, raisins and cranberries.

After speaking with leaders of the producing countries, among others with Donn Zea, executive director of the California Prunes Board, regarding prunes, he summarizes that the industry looks healthy, with a good supply-demand relationship, without overstocks 3-4 years ago, which has led to good prices, "close to their ceiling".

"Due to climatic (France) and structural issues, global productions have fallen, resulting in markets clearing lagging stocks, and where supply and demand have met at a healthier point; what we produce is sold, and with prices almost double last year," he says.

Likewise, neither the inflation in Ukraine, nor the logistical difficulties in China due to Covid-19, nor the Russian war – modify the estimates for the 2022/2023 season, which speak of an equally good period. That is, a production of 175,000 metric tons (MT), a stock from previous periods of 31,153 MT for a final offer for the period of 206,153 MT, which should be consumed in its entirety despite its higher price.

In this last figure, a drop in consumption is already contemplated, since in the 2021/2022 season it reached 215 thousand MT. The lower quantity of prunes is not the only thing that affects higher prices for the final consumer, but also the rise in freight rates that can multiply prices by two and more.

One effect of inflation has been an increase in spot purchases, in smaller quantities, and not purchases for a whole year, says the executive. But even so, everything has been sold.

Regarding the war, Russia has had a hand: this country that was the main destination of Chilean shipments, now in times of war it is laying down by supplying prunes almost exclusively from Serbia.

### Main producers

Regarding production, the United States maintains first place both in the season that has already ended and in the projection for the 2022/2023 period, with a high internal demand represented by young people who like healthy living and sports.

Chile is the second producer and continues to be the main exporter given its very low internal demand, while France, a historical third global producer of prunes, could lose its position at the hands of Argentina, due to frosts that affected its plantations a few weeks ago.



## Mexico was the main destination in 2021 for Chilean prunes

According to information from the Chilean Ministry of Agriculture, the volume imported was 7,266 metric tons, equivalent to US\$25 million.

In 2021, Mexico became the main importer of Chilean prunes with a volume received of 7,266 metric tons (MT), equivalent to US\$25.6 million, indicates the Office of Agricultural Studies and Policies (Odepa), an agency under the Chilean Ministry of Agriculture.

Around 70% of Chilean prunes are sold to the group of the 10 main destinations, which in total reach 70 countries. The other members of the top ten are Poland, the United Kingdom, Russia, Germany, Italy, the United States, Spain, Brazil and China.

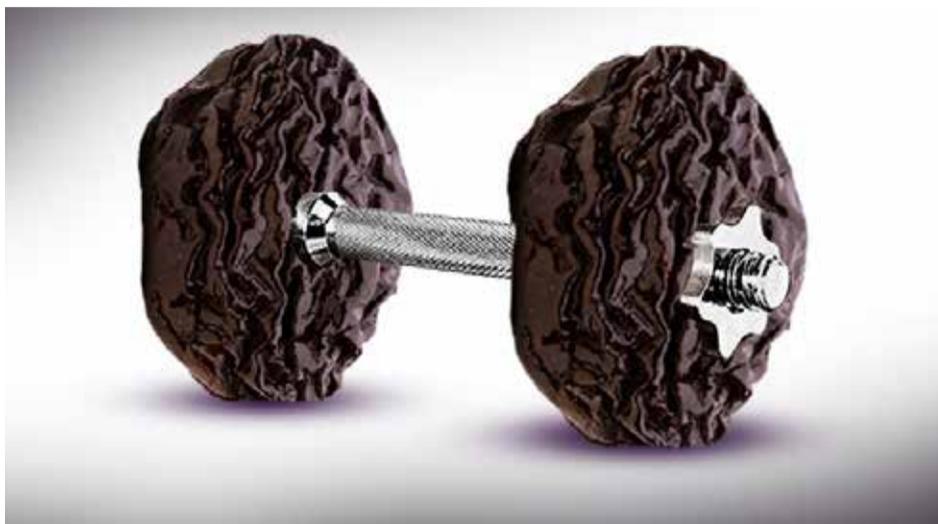
The total of Chilean exports in this period has reached US\$ 174,359,000, "a significant amount given that prices are on the rise due to a lower international supply and a drop in world stocks," says Pedro Acuña, executive director of Chileprunes.

The executive adds that "the Mexican market is one of the most relevant for Chile due to its size and we hope that demand will continue to increase".

At the end of the 2021-2022 season, and complying with the estimates given a couple of months ago in the market, Chile had a total prunes production of 90,000 MT, of which, more than 70,000 MT were available for dehydration, and the remaining 19,000 MT were used for fresh fruit.

## Benefit to the muscles, another reason that allows prunes to be on the podium of superfoods

Research and discoveries added in the last 15 years to the convenience of a fruit that should be part of the diet of any person, at any age, athlete or not.



As the years go by, there are more and more attributes that research worldwide discovers about the prunes. With so much corroborated scientific information, shouldn't it already be on the podium of global superfoods? Competing with other requirements?

The latest discoveries from Oklahoma State University in the United States indicate that prunes help increase muscle mass and lose fat at the same time. In fact, it significantly increases the concentrations of IGF-1, a protein responsible for regulating growth hormone, leading to the development of bones and muscle tissue.

In fact, now, "high-performance athletes use its properties synthetically for three main reasons: to lose fat, improve their resistance and add muscle mass," says Pedro Acuña, executive director of Chileprunes.

We must not forget that, in addition, they favor blood flow and that their soluble and non-soluble fiber content is high (6.1 grams per 100 grams), giving you the fuel that the body requires to exercise.

Prunes are the dried form of any variety of plum, obtained through a dehydration process. By drying it, it is possible to lengthen its conservation period, while it acquires physical characteristics and its own flavor and aroma, different from that of the fresh one.

### Well deserved recognition

But this discovery is just one of those that have been revealed in less than 15 years.

The benefits of prunes, with scientific evidence already demonstrated, are many and one of the first had to do with being a natural product against constipation. In 2011, the Alimentary, Pharmacology and Therapeutics published an article mentioning that this fruit is high in fiber and sorbitol, components that help to have a better bowel movement.

Over the years, the good news has been falling one after another: it relieves constipation, prevents premature aging, promotes cardiovascular health, to which is added a great antioxidant power. Prunes are an excellent source of fiber, in fact, in 100 grams of the fruit there are 6.1 grams of fiber.

It also reduces the risk of cancer: A 2015 study from the Boston Experimental Biology Conference found that they helped reduce the risk of colon cancer by facilitating the retention of intestinal bacteria in the colon.

They also contain boron, a mineral that can help build bones. This fruit can prevent the effect of radiation on the bone marrow, therefore, it helps prevent loss of its density. The prunes is one of the best foods for the treatment of osteoporosis, which affects older people, especially women.

The evidence was provided a few years ago by researchers from the Department of Nutrition and Food Studies at George Mason University in Virginia (USA), and from Texas A&M AgriLife Research in College Station. Another benefit: A study in the British Journal of Nutrition mentions that the

antioxidants along with the soluble fiber it contains can help reduce cholesterol levels, as well as delay the development of atherosclerosis. Add and continue: A 28-gram serving of prunes contains vitamins K (21% of the recommended daily intake) and, to a lesser extent, vitamins A, B2, B3, B6; minerals such as potassium, iron, copper, manganese, magnesium and phosphorus.

Prunes are a wonderful food for the liver. They prevent deterioration associated with age, which delays the deterioration of cognitive abilities typical of old age, so in addition to taking care of your body, you will do the same with your brain.

Finally, in times of pandemic, an additional attribute was also found: the relationship between vitamin K -which it has in abundance- and the best response that the body has against the coronavirus thanks to it (source: Food Magazine / July 12 2020)

"As the main exporter of prunes in the world, from Chile we invite you to consume this product in any of its formats," adds Pedro Acuña.



## Chilean industry indicators first semester 2022

**Exported volume**  
18.991.493 kilos



**Exported amount**  
74.386.575 US\$ FOB.



**Main markets;**



These 10 represent 70% of the volume within 61 destinations of Chilean prunes to date.

