



MARKET INTELLIGENCE UPDATES FOR POMEGRANATE

INDIA OFFERS CONCESSIONS ON US FARM GOODS TO REACH TRADE DEAL

India is open to greater market access for American farm and dairy products and lower duties on Harley-Davidson Inc motorcycles as it seeks to conclude a trade deal with the US. New Delhi is willing to allow market access for US-produced cranberries, blueberries, pecan nuts and avocados at lower duties. Washington though is yet to blink on several issues which are of interest to India including exemptions from high steel and aluminium tariffs, the people said. So far, it has indicated easing rules to provide greater market access for Indian grapes, mangoes and pomegranate arils along with slashing import duty for these items. The restoration of an exception that had allowed India duty-free exports of about 2,000 products until last year, is also on the cards. This tops India's agenda because of its competitiveness with low-cost rivals.

COVID-19: EU RELAXES FRUIT & VEGGIES IMPORTS; NO ORDERS FROM US

The European Union has eased rules for import of fresh fruit and vegetables from India. It has done away with the requirement for a physical certificate assuring food safety, and animal and plant health standards. Now, an online certification will be enough. The relaxation comes in the wake of global trade disruptions due to the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic. Netherlands, Russia, UK, Bangladesh and Germany are the major export destinations. Grapes, pomegranates, mangoes, bananas and oranges account for a large portion of fruits exported from the country, while onions, potatoes, tomatoes, and green chilly are major contributors to the vegetable export basket.

AUSTRALIA BECKONS FOR INDIAN POMEGRANATES

India's pomegranate industry is looking forward to the opening of the Australian market in 2020. Australia's Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (DAWR) released a draft import risk analysis (IRA) for fresh whole Indian pomegranates as well as processed arils recommending imports of both products be allowed subject to certain conditions.

For whole fruit, the IRA identified 14 pests of concern, with a range of control measures proposed to reduce the risk of those pests arriving in Australia. In the case of fruit flies, area freedom or cold treatment or irradiation of fruit is proposed. For bacterial blight, area freedom or a systems approach approved by DAWR are the recommended methods.

The IRA also highlighted fruit flies as a concern for fresh pomegranate arils, with area freedom, a systems approach or fruit treatment (such as irradiation) the proposed methods of reducing these risks. The public consultation period for the draft IRA is due to expire on 17 December 2019, and industry sources, both within Australia and India, are confident access will be granted midway through 2020.

As one of the world's largest pomegranate producers, India is hopeful of developing a good business in Australia. The UAE and other markets in the Middle East absorbed the bulk of exports, but Europe was also a key market, taking almost 10 per cent.

NEW FACILITY FOR INDIAN POMEGRANATE ARIL EXPORTER IS 100% SELF-SUFFICIENT

A third pomegranate arils processing facility at Nashik, India has been inaugurated for the export of fresh pomegranate arils from India. Spread over 45,000 SFT, their new processing facility is located at the heart of the pomegranate growing region in India. With the addition of this facility, Sam Agri has increased its pomegranate processing capacity to over 6,000 MT per annum. Over the last few years, Sam Agri has been working closely with small farmers and farmer producer organizations in Nashik and other regions of Maharashtra to enable them to comply to Global Gap standards and produce residue-free pomegranate fruit suitable for exports to EU, UK, and other developed markets. Ready-to-eat Pomegranate Arils continues to be the most important product of Sam Agri and over the years the company has added other value-added pomegranate products to its portfolio, including dried pomegranate arils, chocolate coated dried arils, IQF arils and fresh cold pressed pomegranate juice. Other small export facilities can take help and guidance in order to gain grounds in jaggery exports.

INDIAN POMEGRANATE SEASON IS PICKING UP AFTER SLOW START

The Indian pomegranate season has been going pretty well so far. Although the sizes are relatively small compared to other origins, demand is growing. Exporters expect about 20 per cent more volume compared to last season, despite there being low volumes available during the early season. The pomegranate season is going on quite well, as expected. During the early season there will be lower volumes available, thanks to a slower start. However the pace of shipments has been increasing recently. The 'Bhagwa' variety of pomegranates is grown and it is expected that a 20 per cent increase in terms of volume that is being exported, compared to last season.

GLOBAL IMPACT OF CORONA VIRUS ON FRESH PRODUCE MARKETS

The recent pomegranate season ended in India with lower volumes. However, for the next season, which starts in June, a great yield (+30%) is expected thanks to the monsoon. The main market for the pomegranate seeds is Western Europe. Due to the coronavirus, Indians expect a greater demand for pomegranate seeds, since they are rich in antioxidants. However, the logistics is becoming a major challenge, because air freight is hardly possible. This could have effects on the logistics chain in India

POMEGRANATE GROWERS HOPE FOR LARGER SIZING ON WONDERFUL HARVEST

The first South African pomegranates of the season are arriving in Europe and the Middle East, early variety pomegranates, mostly Herskovits and Acco. The harvest of Wonderful pomegranates are getting underway this week in the Western Cape (home to the majority of South Africa's pomegranate production). This highlights a significant export opportunity for Indian pomegranate export traders in Europe and Middle East. It's too soon to tell what prices the fruit sold on consignment on the European markets will achieve. Fruit from Peru and India is also starting to arrive in Europe.

SOURCE LINKS:

- <https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9200856/overview-global-impact-of-corona-virus-on-fresh-produce-markets/>.
- <https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9137409/indian-pomegranate-season-is-picking-up-after-slow-start/>
- <https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9185152/new-facility-for-indian-pomegranate-aril-exporter-is-100-self-sufficient/>

- <http://www.fruitnet.com/produceplus/article/180327/australia-beckons-for-indian-pomegranates>
- <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/covid-19-eu-relaxes-fruit-veggies-imports-no-orders-from-us/articleshow/74854392.cms?from=mdr>
- <https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9197124/pomegranate-growers-hope-for-larger-sizing-on-wonderful-harvest/>