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Mexico

Post: Mexico

Fresh Fruit Grading Suspended in Nogales Mexico

Report Categories:

Agriculture in the Economy

Agriculture in the News

Fresh Deciduous Fruit

Tomatoes and Products

Strawberries

Citrus

Policy and Program Announcements

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Report Highlights:

On November 1, 2010, the Arizona Department of Agriculture, licensed by USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), suspended fresh produce grading on the Mexican side of the Nogales, Sonora, border for fruits and vegetables destined for export to the United States. Until further notice, all fresh produce grading that had occurred in Nogales, Sonora, primarily tomatoes and table grapes, will be conducted on the United States side of the border. This decision was made, after considerable deliberation, in an effort to ensure the safety and security of graders who have witnessed increasing violence along the border during the last 12 months. The value of trade affected by this decision is estimated at over \$1.1 billion.

General Information:

The Arizona Department of Agriculture announced on November 1, 2010, that fresh produce graders would no longer work on the Nogales, Sonora, side of the border for fruits and vegetables destined for export to the United States. The grading, instead, will be conducted on the Nogales, Arizona, side of the border. This decision was made after considerable deliberation in an effort to ensure the safety of the graders.

The graders work under a cooperative agreement between AMS and the Arizona Department of Agriculture to grade fresh produce. For many years, the graders worked at three shipping consolidation locations (CADDES, SAFINSA and Apache Produce) in Sonora, Mexico. The commodities primarily graded at these locations were tomatoes and table grapes.

Although this decision may result in longer wait times for produce grading during peak times of the year (February through April for tomatoes and May through June for table grapes), AMS is working with the Arizona Department of Agriculture and importers in the Nogales area to identify options that will reduce delays.

According to United States Customs data, in calendar year 2009, the United States imported from Mexico \$281 million worth of grapes and \$605 million worth of tomatoes through the Nogales, Arizona, customs district. Through the first 8 months of 2010, the United States imported from Mexico \$459 million of grapes and \$688 million worth of tomatoes through the Nogales, Arizona, customs district.

For More Information

FAS/Mexico Web Site: We are available at www.mexico-usda.com or visit the FAS headquarters' home page at www.fas.usda.gov for a complete selection of FAS worldwide agricultural reporting.

FAS/Mexico YouTube Channel: Catch the latest videos of FAS Mexico at work <http://www.youtube.com/user/ATOMexicoCity>

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MX0042	Trade Rerouted Due to Port of Entry Inspection Suspension	6/25/10
MX0024	Greenhouse Tomatoes	4/22/10
MX0019	Ports of Entry and Inspection Hours Changed	4/6/10

