MéxicoG.A.P.® Scheme poised for rapid growth

Mexico Calidad Suprema to announce that number of mexican growers certified under scheme expected to reach 2,200 within the next four years at forthcoming GLOBALG.A.P. Summit 2012 in Madrid, Spain.

Madrid, 8 October 2012

Mexico’s Good Agricultural Practice certification scheme MéxicoG.A.P.®, which is benchmarked with GLOBALG.A.P., is poised for rapid growth over the next four years, with up to 2,200 Mexican fresh produce growers, covering an estimated 40,000 hectares, expected to be certified under the initiative by 2016.

Mexico Calidad Suprema, which helps growers across Mexico to achieve MéxicoG.A.P.® and GLOBALG.A.P. accreditation, will be highlighting this forecast at a press conference at the GLOBALG.A.P. Summit 2012 in Madrid, Spain.

From the current 200 certified producers – equivalent to 3,600 hectares - Mexico Calidad Suprema expects to see steady growth in the amount of growers in the country that meet the GLOBALG.A.P.- benchmarked programme’s agricultural production standards.

In fact, the organisation forecasts that a further 9,900 hectares will become certified under the scheme during the 2012/13 season alone.

Since 2011, Mexico Calidad Suprema, which is jointly funded by Mexican growers and the country’s government, has been developing alliances with both producers and the authorities to implement and reinforce compliance to national and international regulations.

These actions, says the organisation, have the ultimate objective of increasing and supporting a greater number of certified growers under the MéxicoG.A.P.® programme.
**Framework agreement**

As part of this drive, Mexico Calidad Suprema has signed a framework agreement with Mexico’s food safety and quality authority SENASICA-SAGARPA as a means of encouraging the implementation of the Contamination Risk Reduction System (SRRC) environmental management programme.

The agreement is focused on supporting growers through training programmes, technical assistance, analysis and monitoring of contaminants as control measures, as a means of achieving certification.

Mexico Calidad Suprema has also recently signed a landmark agreement with Mexico’s largest avocado growers’ organisation, the Association of Michoacán State Avocado Producers and Packers (APEAM), to support the implementation of food safety programmes in some 500 orchards, with an estimated 8,900 hectares set to be covered by the first stage of the initiative.

Currently, 58 per cent (equivalent to 70,000 hectares) of Michoacán’s total avocado production is exported, although only 16.6 per cent (20,000 hectares) of that figure is certified.

In addition, Mexico Calidad Suprema has also run training initiatives during much of 2012 to reduce contamination risks and improve Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in the avocado sector.

To further support growers, the organisation is currently overseeing technical assistance programmes through which technicians, professionals and experts are supporting producers in the process of receiving certification.

Mexico Calidad Suprema also hopes to increase the amount of certification accreditation organisations in the country. At the current time, there are two MéxicoG.A.P.® certification bodies and 10 that certify under the allied GLOBALG.A.P. programme.
Export success

Hurst’s Mexico, the Mexican subsidiary of US-based Hurst’s Berry Farm which has operated in the country for the last 12 years, has been a major beneficiary of the MéxicoG.A.P.® programme.

The company, which is now one of the largest berry producers in Mexico, exports raspberries, blueberries and blackberries to a number of European and Asian markets, including the UK, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan and Japan.

According to Hurst’s, having MéxicoG.A.P.® certification scheme has provided it with an opportunity to become a sustainable business in Asia and Europe, enabling the company to offer clients firm assurances over quality, food safety, handling and workers’ rights.

“MéxicoG.A.P.® certification is important for our company and the berries industry because it integrates not only good agricultural practices, but also production material sustainability, environmental care and social responsibility,” said the company.

“It is a widely known and valid protocol which ensures total quality, establishes reliability for our clients and enables us to increase our list of customers in Europe and Asia.”

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