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Embassy of Colombia in the United States

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Colombia to Export Fresh Goldenberries to the U.S. without Quarantine Restrictions



Ambassador Luis Carlos Villegas, U.S. Under Secretary of Agriculture Edward Avalos and Alan Dowdy, Assistant Deputy Administrator, APHIS during the signing ceremony. Photo: Embassy of Colombia.

Washington, D.C. — Colombia will now be able to export fresh goldenberries with no quarantine restrictions after Ambassador of Colombia to the United States Luis Carlos Villegas and U.S. Under Secretary of Agriculture Edward Avalos signed the Operative Work Plan (OWP) as honorary witnesses.

The signing of the OWP represents the termination of a 12-year process, which began in 2003, when the United States authorized the export of goldenberries (known in Europe as Cape gooseberries) from Colombia with a series of restrictions designed to prevent the risk associated with the Mediterranean fruit fly. Those restrictions increased the cost of goldenberries, reduced their quality and hampered logistics by limiting entry to only two ports in the United States. As a result of the OWP, the goldenberries can now be exported to any port in the United States, without the need for cold quarantine treatment. It is estimated that the new measure represents a 40 percent reduction in the cost of exporting fruit to the U.S. market.

The Ministry of Trade, ProColombia, El Fondo Nacional de Fomento Hortofrutícola and the Embassy of Colombia in the United States have supported the implementation of the OWP by the ICA APHIS and ANALDEX, which will benefit the total production of gooseberries in the Colombian departments (states) of Cundinamarca and Boyacá, and will guarantee the jobs of more than 46,000 Colombians who work in the cultivation of this super fruit.

“The signing of this plan is another step in strengthening bilateral relations and realizing the benefits of the bilateral Free Trade Agreement” said Ambassador Villegas. “Between 2013 and 2014, with quarantine restrictions, goldenberry exports from Colombia to the United States grew by 121 percent. With the signing of this agreement, we expect this growth to further multiply. Goldenberries represent the first of many Colombian agricultural products that will have access to the U.S. market in the coming years, such as the Hass avocado, peppers, melon, watermelon and mango, among others.”

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