



Prognosfruit

5 - 7 August 2015, Merano, Italy



WAPA (WORLD APPLE AND PEAR ASSOCIATION) PRESS RELEASE

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RUSSIAN BAN CONTRIBUTES TO 20% DROP IN RETURNS TO GROWERS WAPA RELEASES 2015 CROP FORECAST

More than 300 representatives of the international apple and pear sector met at the 39th Prognosfruit Conference on 6th August 2015 in Merano, Italy. At the Conference, WAPA (World Apple and Pear Association) released the 2015 European apple and pear crop estimates. The 2015 apple production in the EU will decrease 5% compared with last year's crop. The pear crop is predicted by European growers to decrease by 4% compared with 2014. Additionally, the 2015 crop promises to be of good quality given the generally favourable climatic conditions and overall fruit size.

Despite concerns about the difficult conditions at the start of last season, through strong promotional activities, European countries sold their entire crops earlier than planned. However, the Russian embargo, together with the relatively large crop, resulted in an average reduction of 20% in returns to growers, many of whom suffered losses. This occurred despite the support measures made available by the EU which resulted in approximately 250,000 tonnes of apples and pears being given for free for distribution and the benefit of a considerably lower € to \$ exchange rate which helped to increase exports.

Hans van Es, Chairman of the Fruit and Vegetable Committee of Copa-Cogeca, said: "*The European apple crop last year was 15% higher than 2013, whilst pears were 5% greater. The industry had to content with the ban imposed by Russia, but despite these two factors, the industry sold the entire crops earlier than expected. The on-going support from the European Commission to alleviate the effects of the Russian embargo is greatly appreciated by the industry. However, the reduction in returns to growers is a considerable concern which unless corrected during the coming season will have an adverse impact on future investment and production.*"

The 2015 European crop forecast for apples is 11.974.000 tonnes, 5% lower than last year. It should be noted that this volume is 7% higher than the average for the last three years. The estimates for varieties are as follows: Golden Delicious will decrease by 5% to 2.546.000 tonnes. Gala will remain stable at 1.331.000 tonnes. Idared is forecasted to decrease by 7% to 1.111.000 tonnes while Red Delicious will increase by 5% to 644.000 tonnes. Significant changes in other Northern Hemisphere countries are: Russia (+4%), China (+7,5%) and Ukraine (+16%), while production is expected to decrease in the USA (-4%), Switzerland (-4%) and Canada (-26%).

The total forecast pear crop in 2015 is 2.343.000 tonnes, 4% lower than last year. However, this is 6% higher than the average crop of the last three years. Conference will decrease by 4% to 934.000 tonnes, Abate Fetel by 7% to 334.000 tonnes, and William BC by 5% to 262.000 tonnes. Elsewhere in the Northern Hemisphere crops have either increased compared to last year, as in USA (+1%), China (+7,5), Turkey (+36%), Russia (+4%) and Ukraine (+7%); or decreased, as in Switzerland (-11%).

WORLD APPLE AND PEAR ASSOCIATION

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Daniel Sauvaitre, WAPA President, said: *“The prospects for the coming season are better than a year ago. The European crop is slightly lower, European stocks are negligible, there are unlikely to be overhanging stocks from the Southern Hemisphere and considerable progress has been made in developing exports overseas. However, a great concern is the damaging reduction in returns to growers. Most countries have reported increases in consumption which is a very positive trend for the industry and growers deserve to be congratulated on ever improving product quality and the beneficial effects of strong promotional activity.”*

WAPA will continue to monitor the development of the Northern Hemisphere crop and issue updates as necessary.

****ENDS****

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WAPA was founded in August 2001 with the objectives of providing a forum for discussion on matters of interest to the apple and pear business and initiating recommendations to strengthen the sector. The current President of the Association is Daniel Sauvaitre of ANPP in France and Todd Fryhover is Vice-President from the Washington Apple Commission in the United States. WAPA membership includes the following countries and areas: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Scandinavia, Slovenia, South Africa, the UK and the USA.

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