

2nd PRESS RELEASE



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The Chilean Exporters Association (ASOEX) has conducted a survey throughout Chile to gather reliable information regarding infrastructure, internal transportation, electrical and port service problems. Preliminary results of this research have been delivered to the nation's authorities, but in summary indicate important damage in major production areas and infrastructure including packing stations and cold storage facilities. Seventy-eight per cent of the damage has occurred in regions VI, VII, Metropolitan Region and VIII, affecting mostly table grapes, apples, pears and blueberries.

However, it is important to consider that in general, there seems to be a consensus amongst the industry's exporters and growers that the critical issues will be resolved within the next five working days, returning to relative normality.

Additionally, companies are showing the expected solidarity and working together to ensure that the industry will be back on its feet and operating normally.

At the same time the Chilean Government has put in place well-rehearsed plans and programs to help speed the recovery of operations. Authorities have begun the task of repairing highways and bridges that are crucial to the transport of fruit from the growing areas to the Ports. Since the earthquake struck last Saturday, most areas have remained connected through alternative routes, but there have been inevitable delays in arrival times.

As of today, the Santiago Airport has begun servicing both incoming and outgoing flights from almost all major airlines, for international and domestic routes, but there are important delays which will take a few more days to reach full capacity.

The country's main port of Valparaiso is loading normally from piers No. 1 – 2 – 3 and 6, working at 90% capacity. The northern fruit port of Coquimbo is operating normally and receiving fresh fruit without any problem redirected from other ports. Chile's second largest port, San Antonio, is operating at 60% of its capacity through the terminal EPSA (Empresa Portuaria de San Antonio) via piers 4 – 5 – 6 and 7, whilst the STI (San Antonio Terminal Internacional S.A.), is currently lacking in electrical supply, but is expected to return during the next few hours, and will then be functioning at 90% capability. The small amounts of fruits which were destined to the port of Lirquén will have no problem in being forwarded to other alternative ports.

In regards to the existing fruit inspection sites, destined to the US market, all five facilities are up and running and receiving fruit for inspection.

According to Ronald Bown, Chairman of the Board of the Chilean Exporters Association (ASOEX), "There are still some production areas, packing and cold storage facilities, which have either no electrical supply or damages to highway infrastructure, but through our discussions with authorities, complete electrical supply should be restored within the next 48 hours. All involved in the growing, harvesting and shipping of fresh fruit in Chile are committed to hold distribution disruptions to a minimum."

ASOEX would also like to thank the international fruit community for its continuing support through this difficult time. We would also like to ensure that fruit growers and exporters in Chile are committed to reducing the impact of this terrible tragedy.

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Notes to Editors: The Chilean Exporters Association (ASOEX) is a non profit private entity, founded in 1935, which represents Chile's fresh fruit exporting industry. Its members represent over 90% of the total volume of fresh fruit exported from Chile.