

21 January 2019

AN AVERAGE OUTLOOK FOR POME FRUIT GROWERS

Good rain during the winter of 2018 has brought much-needed relief to many pome fruit growers. Although the drought has not been completely broken, growers are in a much better position than last year. A bumper crop isn't expected, but volumes are looking better and growers are much more positive with an average export crop anticipated for the 2019 season.

The 2019 crop will see an increase in specific varieties. This is due to young orchards coming into production. During 2018, many of these young orchards countered the massive impact of the drought and now, in 2019, a 5% increase is estimated for apples. Pear exports are estimated to be on par with the previous season.

Pome fruit export estimate (12.5 kg equivalent cartons)

	2016	2017	2018	2 yr Average	2019 Estimate	Estimate vs 2018	
Apples	33 998 431	33 382 062	31 451 813	32 416 937	33 080 445	1 628 633	5%
Pears	17 775 364	17 473 384	16 971 952	17 222 668	16 926 756	-45 196	0%
Total	51 773 795	50 855 446	48 423 765	49 639 605	50 007 202	1 583 437	3%

Slight downward adjustments were made to Golden Delicious, Royal Gala/Gala, Fuji, and Topred/Starking. This was mainly due to a lighter fruit set. Volumes are still anticipated to increase +5%, +7%, +6%, and 2% respectively due to young orchards coming into production.

Pear plantings have stabilized over the past few years and one could say we are moving into a consolidation phase. Although Packham's Triumph and Forelle exports are still increasing, the past 2 to 3 seasons have seen the plantings stabilizing and growers are replacing older and marginal orchards.



The heat wave of October 2018, negatively impacted Packham's Triumph as trees were in full bloom. Export volumes are estimated to be on par with last season: 5.62mil equivalent cartons. Williams Bon Chretien volumes are also expected to decrease by 7%, due to smaller fruit size.

In general, the outlook for 2019 is good and there is enough water to raise a proper crop. Current weather conditions are good for growing and colour development that will hopefully result in higher pack-out ratios for Cripps Pink/Pink Lady®, Cripps Red/Joya®, Forelle and Vermont Beauty as well as Rosemarie and Flamingo.

The situation will be monitored on a regular basis and relevant adjustments will be made to the estimates as the season unfolds.

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