

Title The Brazilian Lychee Industry – Present and Future
Author Yamanishi, O.K., Pires, M.C. and Almeida, L.F. P.
Citation Program and Abstracts, 3rd International Symposium on Longan, Lychee and Other Fruit Trees in Sapindaceae Family, August 25-29, 2008, Fuzhou, China. 132 pages.
Keywords lychee; prospect

Abstract

In 2007, the São Paulo lychee industry has about 2,000 ha compared with 350 ha ten years ago. São Paulo state accounts roughly for 70% of the total planted area followed by neighbor state of Minas Gerais with 15%, Paraná with 5% and minor industries in Goiás, Federal District, Espírito Santo and Rio de Janeiro. Approximately, 25% is in full production, 35% beginning the production and 40% of young non-bearing trees. The main cultivar ‘Bengal’ accounts for 99% of planted area in old and new orchards and show a pronounced biannual bearing habit which is clearly illustrated by the drastic oscillation in supply of fresh fruit (2,500 MT in “on year” to 400 MT in “off year”), as well as, the price paid by consumers fluctuate accordingly from US\$ 3.50 to 10.00/Kg. The forecast for the next five years is to double the actual production and over 10,000 tons in 2020. As lychee production in Brazil rely to one cultivar ‘Bengal’ and to one major region – São Paulo – the harvesting peak is highly concentrated in December (65 to 70%) resulting in lower prices during this period. The Brazilian lychee industry only produces fresh fruit mainly for domestic market with trace amounts exported to Europe and no import from other producing countries. The main constraints for lychee production in Brazil include the lack of information regarding adequate technologies for canopy management, pruning, nutrition, irrigation, pest management and post harvest handling of the fruit, as well as variable genetic material (early- and late-season cultivars in relation to ‘Bengal’) with fruits with a high percentage of good quality pulp. But, from 2004, a group of 20 growers from different regions coordinated by University of Brasilia started importing lychee marcots of new cultivars (Kwai May Pink, Kwai May Red, Feizixiao, Tai So, souey Tung, Salathiel, Emperor, Haak yip and Kaimana) from Australia and is now being evaluated in 20 different farms across five different states (São Paulo, Minas Gerais, Goiás, Distrito Federal and Bahia). It’s expected that in few years Bengal will be gradually replaced by those new cultivars and harvesting period extended from September to March. Besides this, the commercial orchards of Bengal located in marginal areas (approximately 25% of the total planted area in Brazil) where fruiting is extremely erratic due to lack of chilling to induce flowering would set and bear fruit more constantly and early in the season if top-worked with new cultivars with low chilling requirements. In Brazil, lychee has a huge potential to become popular as kiwi fruit in the 90s if the industry manages to supply good quality fruits for longer period with an affordable price.