



Country Profile Bolivia

Production, Trade and Prices in the Quinoa Sector

This document gives insight into the production aspects of Bolivian quinoa, trade facts and expectations for the sector's future. Data is derived from several sources: information from the European market is provided by Eurostat, about the Bolivian sector, the document "Bolivian Quinoa Travels Beyond Borders" by the Bolivian Institute for Foreign Commerce gives very detailed insight. And finally, Pedro Claver informs us about the happenings in the Bolivian fields.

Quinoa Production in Bolivia

Bolivian Quinoa Production in Ha and MT						
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Area in Ha	59,924	63,010	64,789	96,544	104,365	131,192
Prod in MT	34,156	36,106	38,257	50,566	58,040	61,182
Yield in MT per Ha	0.57	0.57	0.59	0.52	0.56	0.47

Table 1: Data provided by SISPAM, 2013 – elaborated by IBCE 2013

According to the Bolivian Ministry of Rural Development (Viceministerio de Desarrollo Rural), the area cultivated with quinoa has been 131.192 ha in 2013 and will reach 169.094 ha in the season of 2014. That would be an increase of about 30%. Expressed in volumes, the Vice Minister expects yields to increase by 56%, which will mean a total production of 95,444 MT in 2014 (<http://www.economiabolivia.net/2014/03/10/el-precio-de-la-quinua-bajara-en-2014/>).

During the quinoa season in 2012, quinoa production was concentrated in the regions of Oruro, in which farmers produced 17,922 tons, Potosí (14,906 tons) and La Paz (8,611 tons). Those are the original quinoa cultivation areas which are located on the Peruvian border around the Titicaca Lake (the region La Paz) and the Southern Altiplano of Bolivia (for the regions Oruro and Potosí). The Southern Altiplano is characterized by its high altitude (3,750m on average) and the salt flats around Uyuni. The climate is harsh (arid and with night frosts) and the soils are dry and saline. Only Quinoa Real can be grown in the Altiplano Sur and Quinoa Real can only be grown in the Altiplano Sur.

Thanks to the large amount of quinoa varieties, the crop can also be grown in other climatic zones. Quinoa dulce, a variety that has a lower saponin content, is grown in the Andean region around La Paz. In 2013/2014, farmers started to cultivate quinoa also in the valleys: Cochabamba, Chuquisaca and Tarija. The difference between the bitter Quinoa Real variety and the sweet ones grown in lower altitudes is, that the latter ones do not have the protective saponin layer and are hence more susceptible to pests and diseases. Due to the fact that many pests and diseases cannot survive in high altitudes, Quinoa Real needs little input of chemicals (insecticides, fungicides, etc.). Quinoa grown in lower areas cannot easily be grown organically. According to Pedro Claver, working as technical advisor at Fautapo in Bolivia, synthetic insecticides and fertilizers are especially applied in low altitudes and in areas with high pluvial precipitation. There is no evidence yet about the difference of nutritional composition between bitter and sweet varieties.



Picture 1: Quinoa grown in Villazon bordering Argentina, (Pedro Claver, 2014)



Picture 2: Puna, in the north of Potosi (P.Claver, 2014)



Original quinoa growing area ○
Newly emerging quinoa growing areas in lower altitudes ○

Graph 1: New producing areas in Bolivia



Trade Figures

The beginning of the quinoa trade between Bolivia and Western countries dates back to the 1980s when Gepa, a German solidarity organization signed the first contracts with the producer association ANAPQUI. The so-called quinoa boom has started around 2003 and has developed as shown in the graph below in recent years. Since 2003, quinoa exports have constantly increased.



Graph 2: Exports 2003-2013, Source: Instituto Boliviano Comercio Exterior, IBCE (2013).

The numbers above refer to the quinoa grain and include all three colors (white, red and black) as well as organic and conventional quinoa. Quinoa is listed under the HS code 1008509000. Cabolqui lists quinoa puffs and flakes as a separate unit, but (together with Amaranth and Canuwa derivatives) they do not exceed 1000 MT in 2013. In 2012 exports were destined to 25 countries worldwide, the main ones being the United States (with 64% of the total exports), followed by France (10%), Canada (6%), the Netherlands (5.6%), Germany (3.4%), Australia (2.3%), Brazil (1.8%), Israel (1.7%) and the United Kingdom (1.2%). These nine destination countries represented 97.8% of total Bolivian quinoa exports (IBCE, 2013).

Prices

As export increases, prices rise as well. An internal document from Cabolqui and the Bolivian customs illustrates the price records. In 2006, a ton of quinoa was bought for \$1,200 whereas 6 years later, in 2012, prices had gone up to \$3,054/MT. The average price in 2013 has been as high as \$4,145/MT and has temporarily (8.12.2013) been as high as \$6.61/kg at the farm gate which translated into an import price of about \$9,000 (information from Jorn van den Dop who experienced the expensive quinoa in the end of 2013).

Apart from information services, we at Mercadero provide services in the field of business development, trade facilitation, value chain development and others. Go to our website to learn more about us.