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Variety Innovation Driving Competitive Advantage for US Table Grape Growers

US Table grape segment now has retail sales totals of USD 2.5 billion

FRESNO, CA (February 11, 2014) – The U.S. table grape sector’s critical investment in variety development geared at both product differentiation and production optimization has positioned it for continued success according to a new report from the Rabobank Food & Agribusiness Research (FAR) and Advisory group. The report, “The Right Variety at the Right Time – Securing Success in the Robust U.S. Table Grape Market,” notes the industry needs to continue this investment in order to take advantage of expansion opportunities in the export market and protect market share domestically.

“The fact that California is well positioned to reach export markets in Asia provides significant growth opportunities,” noted Rabobank senior analyst Karen Halliburton Barber, the report’s author. “Those markets are known for not only significant demand but also for providing price premiums over domestic table grape prices.”

The report goes on to examine the demand drivers in the U.S. noting also that consumption has stabilized over the past decade to between 7.6 to 8.6 pounds per capita.

“Variety development and innovation is key for both table grape production and demand,” notes Barber. “Health and convenience, as well as taste and appearance continue to be among the most important drivers for consumers. Retailers have been a significant part of this trend too. Recent advances in packaging provided reductions in shrink from nearly 20 percent in the mid-2000s to virtually zero today.”

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