



## Success story

# Organic fruits from Ecuador

## Producer association successfully specialises in organic fruits

Tierra Orgánica was born out of necessity, but with a clear goal: After a heavy earthquake hit the region, the producers' association was established in 2017 to support small farmers through the cultivation of organic fruit. Around 67 small-scale farmers grow exotic fruits like plantains, passion fruits, and pitahayas while respecting organic standards. With the support of Import Promotion Desk (IPD), the young team of Tierra Orgánica has managed to successfully export organic fruits from Ecuador to the EU market: first business deals prove the potential of the products the cooperative has to offer.



### Products

- Organic passion fruits
- Organic pitahayas
- Organic plantains

### Certifications

- EU ORGANIC
- B CORP

### Cooperative for organic fruits

Tierra Orgánica was created in 2017 in the Manabí region after an earthquake had caused heavy damages in many villages and cities. The cooperative was founded to jointly produce organically certified fruits, to aggregate them for supply to the international market and finally to support small-scale farmers and guarantee a secured income. Organic farming and the inherent responsible use of natural resources belong to the company's DNA since day one. Tierra Orgánica is now active in various regions of Ecuador, and they provide seeds to their producers. The cooperative trains them in organic farming and the associated requirements as well as providing purchase guarantees to their producers, which offers economic security for the farmer families. Currently, the cooperative offers organic certified plantains, passion fruits, and pitahayas.



**Paul Riera**

Managing Director of Tierra Orgánica

[www.tierraorganicaec.com](http://www.tierraorganicaec.com)

»Thanks to the support of IPD we were able to reach our goal and gain a foothold on the EU market. The insights into the EU market and a better understanding of requirements on the importer side were particularly important for us.«

## Challenge

### Successfully marketing niche products

The producers' association belongs to the few companies in Ecuador that specialise in exotic fruits in organic quality. Through close contact with the farmer families, Tierra Orgánica can ensure high quality and compliance with international standards. Since Ecuador is mainly known as a supplier of bananas, Tierra Orgánica currently covers a niche on the European market with their offer of exotic organic fruits, like pitahayas, mostly unknown in Europe.

At its onset Tierra Orgánica experienced teething troubles trying to establish itself on the international market. The young team lacked, among other things, industry know-how about the special requirements of the EU market as well as contacts to fresh fruit buyers.

## Promotion

### Know-how and matchmaking

With IPD's support, Tierra Orgánica's dedicated team was able to fill its knowledge gaps very fast and gained a better understanding of the EU market and importers' specific requirements. By participating in trade fairs like Fruit Attraction 2019 and Fruit Logistica 2020, the company got to know the demand side better and made valuable contacts. Even during the pandemic, the cooperative stayed in touch with European buyers by presenting their portfolio at IPD's virtual b2b events "Organic Fresh Produce 2020" and "Fresh Produce 2021".

Following the IPD workshops and coaching sessions with IPD experts, important marketing documents such as a company presentation, product specifications, and information sheets on logistics were created. Thanks to the IPD sales coachings, Tierra Orgánica's team has been able to refine and improve their pitch to potential clients.

## Effect

### Successful growth of the producer cooperative

Tierra Orgánica was with IPD's support able to reactivate one of their existing contacts, which eventually led them to establish a b2b relationship adding another long-term business partner to their client portfolio. As of spring 2021, the cooperative has been making regular deliveries to their European clients with several mixed pallets of passion fruits and pitahayas frequently delivered since then. In addition to that, Tierra Orgánica has been able to increase the number of producers in the past years and is now working together with 67 small-scale farmers. The cooperative wants to grow in the future by adding new products to its portfolio.



## Results

- Business deals 
- Export volume 
- Cooperation with small farmers 
- Operational improvements 



**Ronald Vianen**

Managing Director of Biotropic, Spain

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»Tierra Orgánica was able to convince us with their offer. This has allowed us to expand our range of organic exotic fruits. We have already made several supplier contacts thanks to IPD, and this certainly won't be our last!«

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