



Mangoes, ready to export on the precise date



Every fruit exporter hopes that their product will be ripe, just in time to sell it at the best price. In Ecuador, this is not a simple matter. As you can imagine, the main bulk of the Ecuadorian mangoes are directly sent to the U.S. One of the main mango producers in the region -Mexico- exports around 80 million boxes a year to the U.S.; Ecuador, over 12 million boxes; Brazil, 8.5 million, and Haiti 2 million. I visited a mango producing area in Ecuador called Palestina. The challenge of the farm I visited – as in other similar farms in Mexico and Costa Rica – is placing the fruit in the market before other competitors. How can this be achieved? It is possible, with the help of a nutrition plan that allows control of the metabolic process, to ensure that flowering happens 4 or 5 months before the ideal export window. First, we need to understand the phenological phases of the mango. Secondly, implement a specific nutritional management for each phase. This includes chelated micronutrient and specific NPK soluble formulas for the different phases before bud break. Then the buds will appear according to schedule ahead of time, as desired. Once this has happened, potassium nitrate is applied to the plant to break bud dormancy: this induces flowering. With extra care, the future fruit shipment will set and grow until the exporter's goal is reached. On the expected week, voilà! mangoes are ready for the international market at the best price.