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Aug.5: 258.92 (-1.0)	
RATES	
EUR	19,792
GBP	28,607
HKD	2,055
USD	15.884
CHF	12,721
JPY	143
BAT	393
AUD	12.310
CAD	13,190
SGD	9,695
CNY	1,840
Vietcombank sourc Aug.5	

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## Quality key to EU fruit exports

(19-07-2005)

HCM CITY — Distributors of Vietnamese dragon fruit need to pay attention to the quality of the fruit if it is to further enhance export opportunities to the European Union (EU) market, according to Steve Humphreys, an expert on tropical fruit

On a yearly basis, countries in Europe import a large quantity of dragon fruit. The Netherlands imports 200 tonnes of dragon fruit, France's demand is 185 tonnes, the UK receives some 105 tonnes and Germany, which buys 100 tonnes.

In 2004, Vietnamese dragon fruit exports accounted for 40 per cent of the European market, second only to Israel (42 per cent) while Thai dragon fruit represented a tiny 18 per cent of the EU market.

Binh Thuan Province, on the south central coast known as the country's biggest dragon fruit producer, has planted 5,000ha of dragon fruits, of which 4,000ha are yielding an average of 15-20 tonnes per hectare.

Dragon fruit is also widely planted in the Mekong Delta provinces of Long An, Tien Giang and Vinh Long. Here the fruits only take a short time to grow and adapt well to the local soil conditions.

In order to boost dragon fruit exports, Steve Humphreys said the fruit industry needs to improve the dragon fruit quality, diversify the fruit, reduce transport costs and launch an attractive marketing campaign. — VNS



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