

Update

October 2021: issue 42

Beacon Commodities



Another Juniper harvest is well under way in the Balkans. Thankfully, the yields are an improvement in 2019 and 2020 and with good quality across all the regions. This should slow down the number of grey hairs appearing on Tommy's head!

Demand

The demand for Juniper has not wavered over the past 24 months. The previous two harvests have been exceptionally poor (in 2019 and 2020) which has exacerbated the whole problem. Many buyers were left short or with no stock at all judging by the number of new enquiries we received at Beacon Commodities.

This has meant many buyers have rushed into the market to try and secure stock as quickly as possible meaning the market has opened at higher levels than 2020. This was inevitable given the demand and the fact Juniper is a niche, wild crop which is only harvested once a year.

As a side note, Beacon stopped selling 2020 crop to any new enquiries in a bid to ensure their existing customers were looked after. Thankfully this policy paid off.



Michael is eager to get back to the manual labour

Harvest

Harvest was delayed in some regions as collectors were prohibited from entering the mountains in order to prevent wildfires which have plagued Greece. The whole region has endured an exceptionally hot summer with temperatures consistently over 40°C with little to no rain.

The lack of moisture and hot days has meant that the berries are slightly smaller this year, but the moisture content is lower meaning the drying process is shorter. Quality is good with fewer green berries being picked.



The hills in Macedonia

Our relationships

Our relationships with our collectors remain strong given the 'bumps' over the last 24 months. Some bumps they have been as well – the pandemic, Brexit and the extraordinary increase in demand. This is ever more important now as we are having to finance goods before the berries are picked. A true test of a relationship!

Freight

As with any industry, we are suffering from increased freight costs and the lack of availability. Trucks and containers used to be ordered with 3-5 days' notice but are now taking 2-3 weeks. This situation is not going to get better with global predictions suggesting the container shortage could last at least until April 2022.

We have already taken delivery of 2021 crop and this will continue on a weekly basis with trucks and containers coming in from all over the Balkans. We hope the above provides a useful insight but if you have any further questions then please do not hesitate to contact us.

