

# European market Victoria pineapple

**The Victoria market:  
exclusive domain of the Indian Ocean origins?**

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Although other origins (South Africa, Ghana, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the Philippines) export Victoria pineapple to the European Union, these volumes remain fairly modest all in all. It is only Reunion and Mauritius which are managing to supply fairly substantial quantities to the European market. It is seemingly both the quality and cultivars provided by these two origins that explain the consumer appeal of the fruit that they offer.

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**V**ictoria, which is classified as a small exotic, is often considered to be a highly festive fruit. Volumes on the market remain fairly limited, and tend to peak at Easter and Christmas time. It is true that the supply is fairly small, and often entails self-consumption in the producer countries.

Over the past campaign, the overall supply was very limited, which helped the fruit on the market earn better value. The Victoria supply was particularly affected by the measures taken to contain Covid-19, which meant a reduction in passenger flights, followed by a suspension.

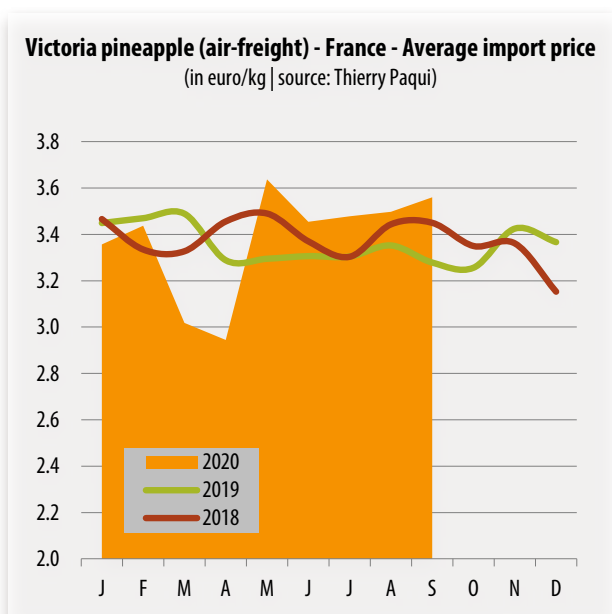
The supermarkets played a bigger role in marketing the fruit, especially through some promotions.

The bigger Mauritian supply sold as usual just as well with specialised dealers as in the supermarket sector. The fruit marketed by the origin was mainly regular in size.

Fruit from Reunion, which was scarcer, remained highly popular and was better valued than its Mauritian counterpart. Unfortunately, as per usual the supply was less regular in terms of sizing.

Attempts by Ghanaian to establish itself have not borne fruit, with the origin struggling to take root, at least on the French market, against fruit from Reunion and Mauritius.

The campaign described below ran from week 40 2019 to week 39 2020, and was above all marked by an overall scarcity of Victoria.



## Supply rising and heavily imbalanced

From October to December (weeks 40 to 52 2019), the Victoria supply embarked on a rise in anticipation of the end-of-year festivities. Unfortunately, in October, demand remained fairly lukewarm, and struggled to absorb all the fruit entering the market. The supply from Reunion, bigger and more imbalanced (too many size 10 pineapples), had a bit more difficulty selling. The start of the autumn holidays somewhat affected demand, but thanks to the supermarket sector the market regained some fluidity before Christmas. As over the previous campaigns, festive demand was late in taking hold. The supply from Reunion, still imbalanced but now with size 8 predominant, sold fairly well, although demand was rather on the lookout for sizes 6 and 7, which were scarcer.

## Demand distinctly lower after the end-of-year festivities

From January to February (weeks 1 to 9 2020), demand for Victoria was less steady, once again confirming the festive nature of the fruit. Operators had a lot of trouble selling their fruit, especially since the supply had seen a big rise in anticipation of the holidays. Several operators opted to scale back their imports, which was actually facilitated by the poor climate conditions prevailing in the Indian Ocean. The near-absence of fruit from Reunion enabled Mauritian fruit to earn rather good value, despite its heterogeneous quality due to the rains.

## Supply still limited because of the Covid-19 pandemic

From March to May (weeks 10 to 22), the overall supply was very limited. Initially, the climate conditions remained difficult, impairing the quality of the fruit that was available. By the end of the month, the closure of Mauritian airspace by the authorities reduced the overall fruit supply a bit further. The reduction and sometimes ban on passenger flights had the effect of boosting self-consumption on Reunion, as well as in Mauritius. Ahead of Easter, the few Mauritian batches present on the market were those carried by cargo companies such as DHL, which led to big price increases for this fruit. Exports out of Reunion were very much self-regulated, in view of the higher transport costs.

## Fall in demand and overall supply still limited, despite better availability of passenger flights

From June to September (weeks 23 to 39), the overall supply hardly saw any rise. Upon the arrival of the first seasonal fruit, demand turned away from Victoria, as per usual, especially since the fruit available was fairly expensive. The operators scaled back their imports a little further, in line with demand. Sales remained fairly fluid, with fairly high rates over the period, since fruit availability was very low ■

