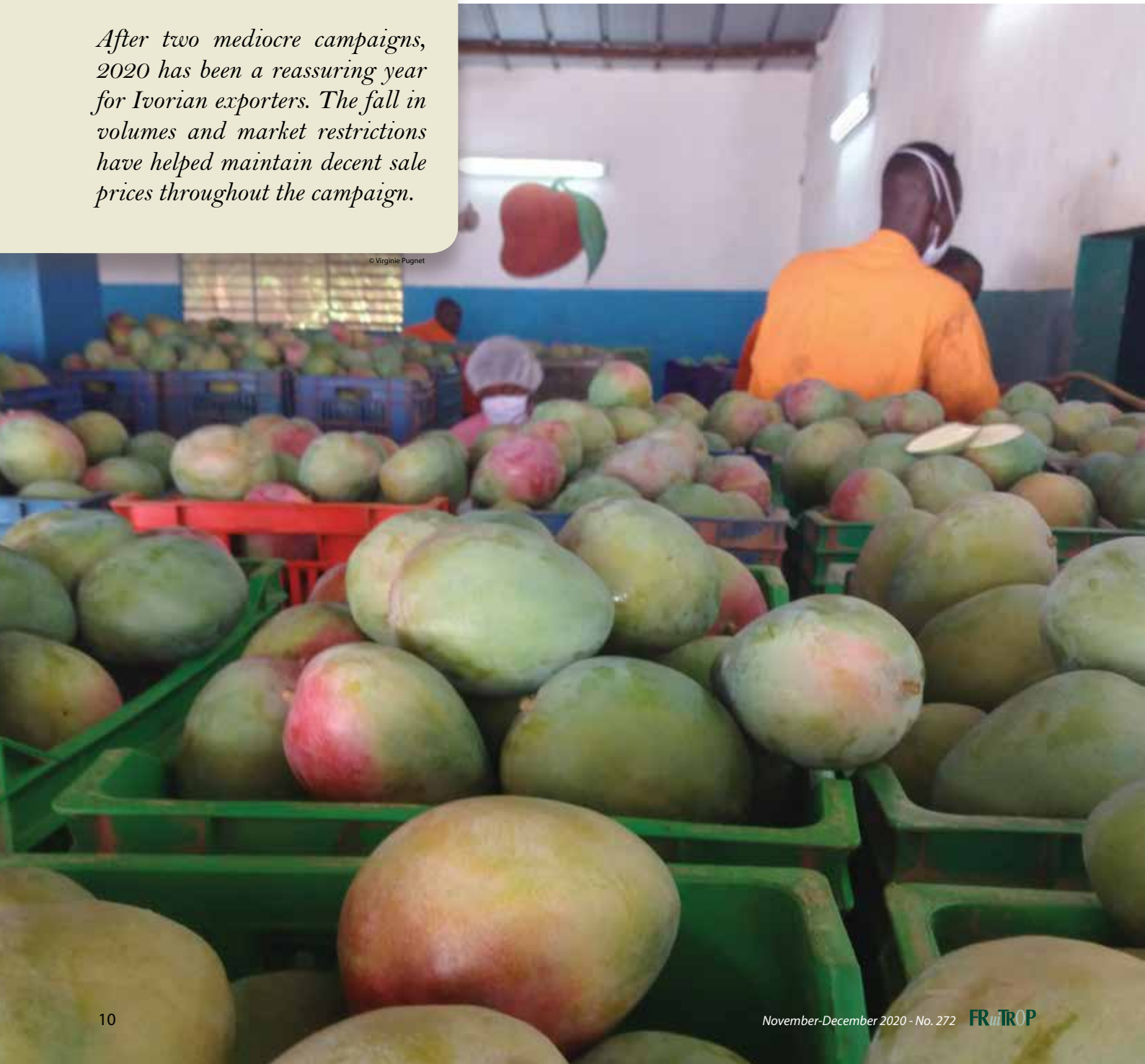


## **No crisis for Ivorian mango exports in 2020**

*After two mediocre campaigns, 2020 has been a reassuring year for Ivorian exporters. The fall in volumes and market restrictions have helped maintain decent sale prices throughout the campaign.*

© Virginie Pugnet



# Comexa Services



**Our ambitions:** to offer you ripening solutions tailored to your requirements. Backed up by a structure with cutting-edge technologies, our know-how dedicated to ready-to-eat and triggered fruit and all types of packaging, is based primarily on the experience of our teams.

**Our commitments:** to ensure a regular supply and optimal quality year-round, by selecting the best origins and best brands: Peru, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Israel, Spain and Brazil.

**Our expertise:** segmentation between loose and pre-packed mango (triggered, organic and air-freight), enabling us to meet consumer expectations through a better visual presence on the shelf.

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In Côte d'Ivoire, uncertainties over the outcome of the 2020 campaign were quickly lifted thanks to the intervention of the Ministry for Agriculture, which enabled the implementation of exceptional and appropriate measures, in the context of the health crisis: transport permits for fresh fruit exports, providing phytosanitary services at the packing stations, etc., while Abidjan was locked down and cut off from the rest of the country.

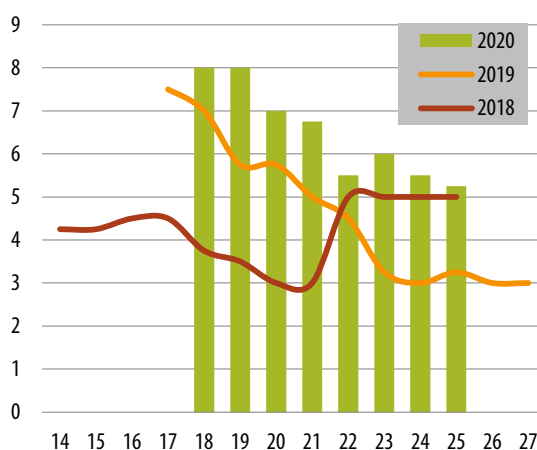
Most European countries were in lockdown during the mango harvesting period in April and May. Traditional Ivorian mango importers scaled back their orders, in the face of an uncertain European market and outlets exclusively reserved for the supermarket sector. Numerous contracts were cancelled or reduced. Then, during the campaign, the lockdown easing in Germany enabled the market to open up, providing bigger outlets for the Ivorian mango.

Furthermore, the closure of airports, whether in Europe or Côte d'Ivoire, were an impediment to air-freight exports.

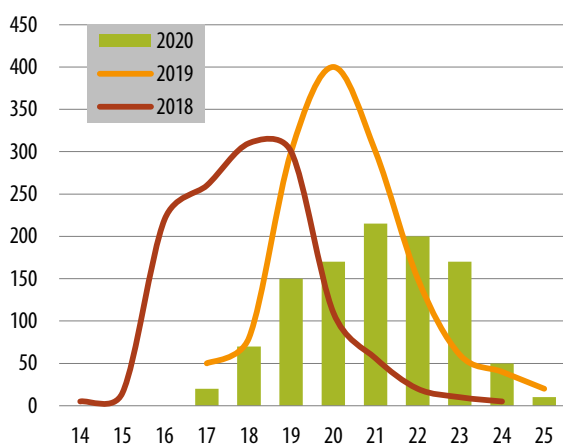


© Guy Rehner

**Côte d'Ivoire sea-freight Kent mango - France**  
**Weekly average import price**  
 (in euro/box | source: Pierre Gerbaud)



**Côte d'Ivoire sea-freight mango - France**  
**Weekly incoming shipments**  
 (in number of containers | source: Pierre Gerbaud)



## Reinforced measures against the Covid-19 pandemic

The packing stations had to adapt their operations to the new hygiene and social distancing measures, and to new working hours.

The additional constraints for the 2020 campaign comprised all personnel having to wear a mask, packing personnel cutbacks to enable better social distancing, reduced packing and harvesting working hours to adhere to the curfew implemented by the authorities, and reinforced hygiene measures.

The campaign opened on 10 April 2020 and finished in early June. However, the majority of volumes were exported between 10 April and 10 May, with the Kent variety. There were no Amélie or Keitt exports.

Exporters, under the inter-professional association (Inter Mangue), agreed to delay the campaign slightly, to allow the Peruvian volumes still on the European markets to sell off.



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## Volumes falling steeply

Ivorian mango exports to the European Union went from 28 000 tonnes in 2019 to 23 000 tonnes in 2020, i.e. a 20 % fall, despite good plantation production. The main cause was the European market shrinking due to the Covid pandemic.

Sea-freight logistics out of the port of Abidjan worked quite well. The AEL line (banana ships), as well as the conventional lines (especially MSC), did not suffer any disruption. The voyage time of 11 days was maintained. The transport of the containers from port to the production zone in the north of the country went smoothly, thanks to the exceptional measures taken by the Ministry of Agriculture.

Conversely, air-freight mango exports represented the real challenge. In a context of no passenger flights, except for special repatriation flights, Air France KLM and Martinair Cargo provided cargo flights aimed solely at taking Ivorian mangos. With a capacity of 45 tonnes, chartered cargo flights, with a frequency of two or three a week, were able to serve the market during April and May, at the height of the lockdown in Europe. Bolloré Transport et Logistique also exported 80 tonnes of air-freight mangos. Sales prices maintained reasonable levels, despite the increase in the air-freight prices.

Under pressure from Europe, Côte d'Ivoire had to redevelop and put forward a strategic fruit fly management plan, as this is a quarantined organism in the European Union. For several years, Côte d'Ivoire has applied large-scale biological treatments. In 2019, exporters were forced to provide phytosanitary products to combat fruit flies. This year, the Ministry of Agriculture's programme PAFDA (agricultural industries development support programme) financed the provision of treatment products, banking on ease of use for the growers: traps.

The phytosanitary objectives were achieved this year, with Côte d'Ivoire registering only four interceptions due to fruit fly detection. This is a notable success, after the major phytosanitary problems encountered in previous campaigns. In 2018, there were 23 interceptions, and 17 in 2019.



## New production support measures for 2020-2021

Following the production losses due to the Covid-19 pandemic, estimated at nearly 65 %, the Ivorian State granted the mango industry a subsidy of 7.62 million euros. This subsidy, aimed mainly at supporting growers, should enable the implementation of plantation maintenance actions: tree pruning, phytosanitary treatments (against anthracnose, bacteriosis and mango mealybug), providing fruit fly traps for the 2021 campaign, etc. Some resources could also be distributed to extra growers once their plots have been identified ■

Virginie Pugnet





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