

Country is aiming to supply market during commercial window between southern and northern European seasons.

Serbian blueberries are apparently breaking new ground in the field of exports this year as interest grows in newly established commercial production in the country.

One group in particular, called Bluemond, appears to be leading the pack. The group is understood to have sent its first direct shipments to the UK and Netherlands during the past month, targeting a supply window that tends to emerge between the end of the Spanish season and the start of harvesting in Poland.

Established just a few years ago as a community of growers, Bluemond Limited just a few years ago - has managed to scale a proven business model quickly by deploying advanced technologies and employing advanced techniques to understand and reach their target markets.

At various production sites in the region around Mladenovac, 50km south of Serbia's capital Belgrade, as well as in Bajina Bašta in the west and in parts of the south, there is evidence that those backing Bluemond Farms' growers - principally two key people, director Branko Bajatovic and head of technical services Aleksandar Milic - have done their homework.

For a start, the majority of the varieties being produced are Duke, Draper, Bluecrop and Huron - all varieties with an established pedigree in the marketplace - while the farms themselves are all equipped with the latest protective and productive technologies.

According to Bajatovic, Bluemond is well placed to build up its presence in the market.

"We're all producing our own blueberries to an agreed high standard, rather than buying and selling, and we're all going through the GlobalGAP certification process because that's what the market requires," he explains.

"We have a great opportunity here, with a good micro-climate, a good knowledge of blueberries and a willingness to learn."

Source; Eurofruit