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Barbara Khol

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Ecuador: Banana Exporters Not Interested In U.p.e.b. Membership

by Barbara Khol

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On Aug. 28, banana exporter associations rejected Ecuadoran membership in the Union of Banana Exporting Countries (UPEB) as proposed by Agriculture and Livestock Minister Alfredo Saltos. Private sector spokespersons said such membership would mean accepting ceilings on exports, and fees paid to the UPEB at a time when Ecuador is consolidating its world market leadership position, new markets are being opened, and prices are on the upswing. About 100,000 ha. are dedicated to banana plantations, and annual output per hectare ranges between 1,500 and 3,500 boxes. In the first half of the year, banana exports totaled 1,300 metric tons, for revenues of \$336 million. Bananas are Ecuador's second-most important export. In 1990, banana export income totaled \$468 million, and this year's revenues are projected at about \$700 million. (Basic data from EFE, 08/28/91)

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