Pretty in Pink: The $4.30 Strawberry Exporta Issue Stamp

This ***single frame traditional exhibit*** is being exhibited for the first time in the 2023 GHSS 'Color Challenge'. The subject was selected as an example of a 'magenta' or 'pink' stamp.

This is an appropriate single frame exhibit as key exhibit elements are comfortably contained within the single frame format.

Exhibit Plan:	***'Pink Strawberry' Production Dates: 1975-1977***	***Quantity produced:***
Design Process	Designer: Rafael Davidson	400,000 panes of 50
Stamp Production	Printer: Talleres de Impresión de Estampillas y Valores [T.I.E.V]	20,000,000 stamps
First Day of Issue	Method: Photogravure	Serial Number at base
Stamp Use	Press: German 2 Color 'Small' GOEBEL	Perf. 14 Harrow
Epilogue	Format: Two 50 stamp panes/cylinder turn	Trimmed selvage

Intended use: Single letter (<20 grams) and Postcard rate to Europe as per Postal Tariff #29 [December 2, 1974-June 10, 1979]

Mexico's ***Exporta Issue*** definitive issue (1975-1993) represents both the apex and rapid fall from grace of the Mexican Postal Service. The overall series design was intended to celebrate Mexico's rapidly expanding export sector. A series of competitions was held with Rafael Davidson being selected as the overall series designer. He is a respected graphics designer who also designed several other commemorative, but is not a philatelist.

Through trial and error a series of 28 designs was ultimately selected. Several potential designs were eliminated as they either were not exported in significant quantity from Mexico [i.e. Corn], represented specific identifiable trademarked commercial products [V.W. Vehicle], or not the design was ultimately not needed [Mango].

Davidson honed the designs down to a bare 'partiality', or partial representation of an item as a uniform series format. For example, when asked 'why only a partial Strawberry, he replied that the stamp wasn't big enough to include many strawberries'.

The $4.30 'Pink' Strawberry stamp was selected for this exhibit as it was among the initial 6 Exporta issue stamps released at a closed ceremony November 28, 1975. This event was not publicized or open to the public. During the 1960's - 1980's era postal rates remained relatively stable with several 'odd denomination' service specific stamps being regularly issued.

The $4.30 Strawberry stamp was produced for only 3 years [1975-1977] by the Government Printing Works [T.I.E.V.] on the 'small' German GOEBEL 2 color press as two panes of 50 per drum rotation. All examples are on paper type 1, or T.I.E.V. official paper inventory '975-1'. Sheet selvage was trimmed leaving panes with no marginal markings. A total of 400,000 panes, or 20,000,000 stamps were produced. Note that Mexico had a population of over 50,000,000 at that time.

Only small quantities of unaddressed First Day Covers were distributed to attendees and select Government officials. As per usual practice, subsequent definitive Exporta stamp emissions were usually unannounced, and only discovered by happenstance by astute collectors. Some varieties had very low production runs, and were invoiced to only a few offices. The exhibit ends with the Strawberry design repurposed in an updated value and 'red' color.

1 Design Process

Initial Design Essays

Exporta Series designed as **unified entity**:
Key attributes: consistency of elements and appearance
'***Partiality***' of image key series design element

Design Elements consistent throughout entire series:

- ***Exporta Logo***
- ***Service Indicator***
- ***Partiality of illustrated item***
- ***Stamp Layout/Elements/Fonts***









Many well known Mexican exports were considered as stamp subjects. Some such as **Mangos**, Oranges, Corn, and Shrimp did not make the final selection. Others such as Strawberries and Automobiles went through serial design modifications

Progressive Design Essays including ***Strawberries***. Note variation in size, color, and position of elements.
The Designer experimented with varying degrees of '***Partiality***' in refining **'Exporta'** series stamp designs.



This and preceding page:

Marker and pencil on drawing paper

Signed in pencil by Designer
Rafael Davidson

'AEREO' [Airmail] Service Indicia
Service indicia: Uniform location and font throughout entire Exporta stamp series

Strawberry Stamp specifically intended to prepay the $4.30 single letter (20 gm) and postcard rate to Europe
*Mexican **Postal Rate Tariff #29**; in effect December 2, 1974 - June 10, 1979 (54 months)*



Pencil on Tracing Paper; signed by Designer (White placed behind design element and signature for visibility)

Separate ***AEREO*** and ***CORREOS*** [surface] indicia utilized until the end of 1983 when Airmail designation discontinued. From 1984 onwards all stamps have the general ***CORREOS*** indicia. Many airmail subject designs were retained, though in changed colors with updated rates.

2 Stamp Production

Stamps printed by ***photogravure*** at Mexican Government Printing Office (Talleres de Impresión de Estampillas y Valores, or ***T.I.E.V.***)

The $4.30 'pink' Strawberry stamps were produced on the 'small' German GOEBEL press capable of printing in 2 colors (cylinders); producing two 50 stamp panes/cylinder turn.



*All $4.30 'pink' (magenta) Strawberry stamps are printed on U.S. sourced pregummed unwatermarked medium weight (85 gms/m2) paper with yellow obverse phosphoresance [T.I.E.V paper code **975-1**] indicating a 1975 supply date.*



Harrow [Cage] perf. 14
Magenta and Olive Green



At least three (possibly more) separate print runs probable as evidenced by different perforation styles.

Red serial number at base



Perf 14 Harrow type 2
Slightly narrower margin trim then Type 4

Perf 14 Harrow type 4 [additional perf pin hole at mid base of stamp; note also olive ink streaking

Only known major error for this stamp Far Left column missing pink color.



2 Stamp Production



Sheet size: 220 x 260 mm, Harrow (cage) perf 14. Sheet margins trimmed so that color blocks and linear registration markings not usually present. Early printings are perforation type '4' which has an additional marginal pin perf at top and bottom mid stamp. Later printings are type '2' which only extends out 1 pin beyond baseline on all sides

Sequential serial numbers applied in red at base; odd number on Left pane; even number on Right pane.

Note olive green streaking to left of serial number at base. This has been noted on roughly 1000 out of 200,000 panes from 1975/6.

Total stamp production:	1975: 183,264 panes of 50	9,163,200 stamps
(as per T.I.E.V. records)	1976: 16,736 panes	836,800 stamps
	1977: 200,000 panes	10,000,000 stamps
	400,000 panes	**20,000,000** stamps



3 First Day of Issue

First Day Cancellation Essay

Rafael Davidson [Designer] contributed all aspects of Stamp design including First Day Cancellations.

Black marker on drawing paper; signed by designer





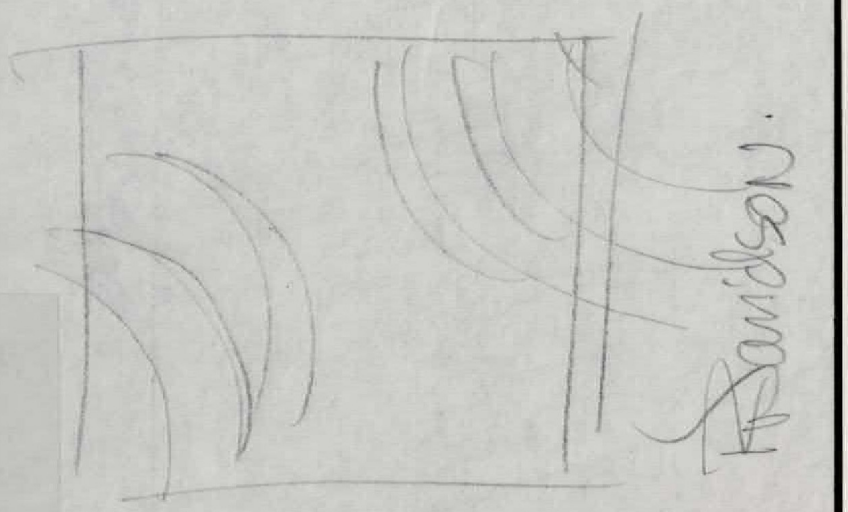
Two types of First Day Cover envelopes are known, one with thermoprint cachet, and one without any cachet.

MEXICO EXPORTA

EMISION GENERAL ORDINARIA

DIA DE EMISION 28-XI-75 CORREOS MEXICO, D.F.





$4.30 Strawberry was one of the initial 6 Exporta series stamps issued November 28, 1975. The release ceremony was not widely publicized with few 'outside' attendees or guests present.

4 Stamp Use

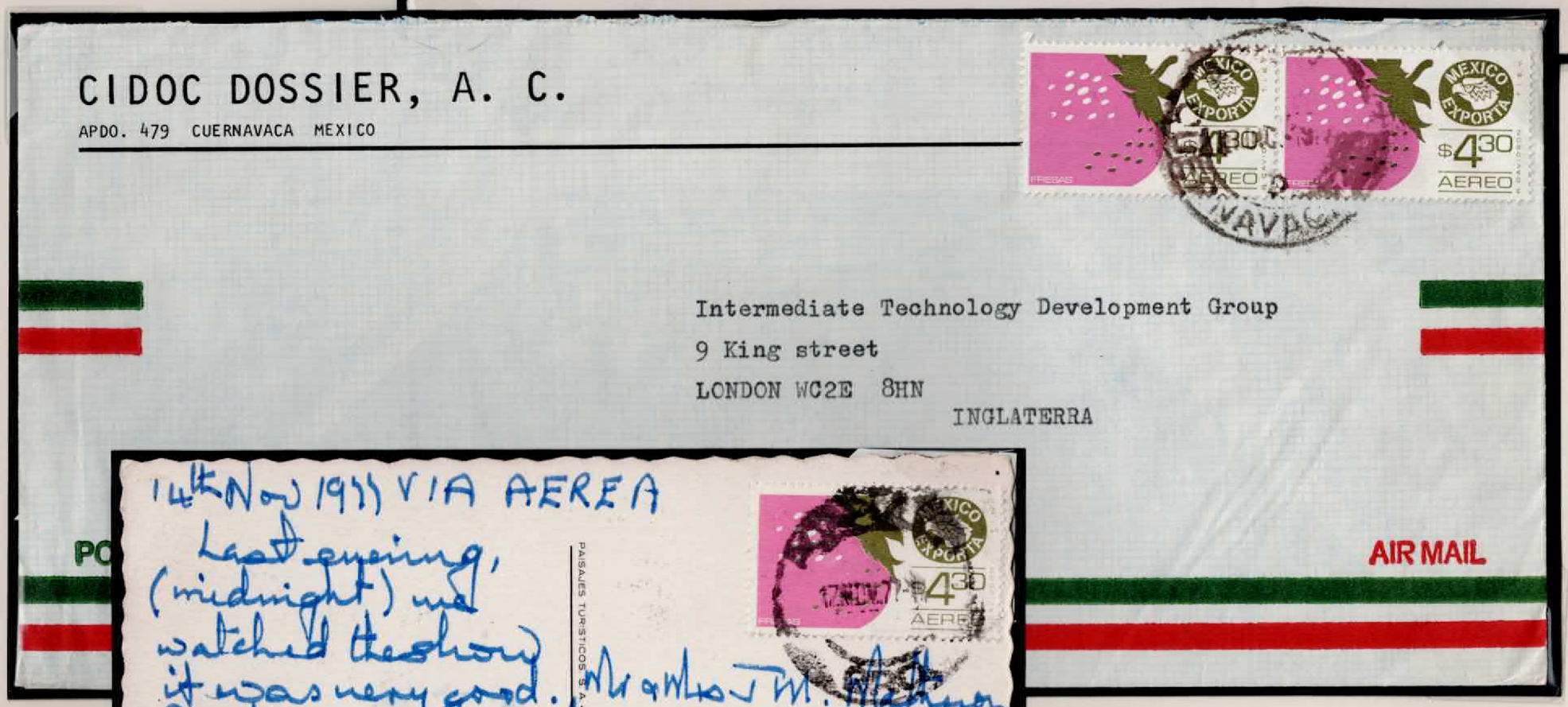
Intended Use

$4.30 'Strawberry' stamp issued specifically for letter (per 10 grams) and postcard rate to Europe

Postal Tariff #29
Dec. 2, 1974 -
June 10, 1979



$4.30 Single
(<10 grams)
letter to France
March 8, 1979

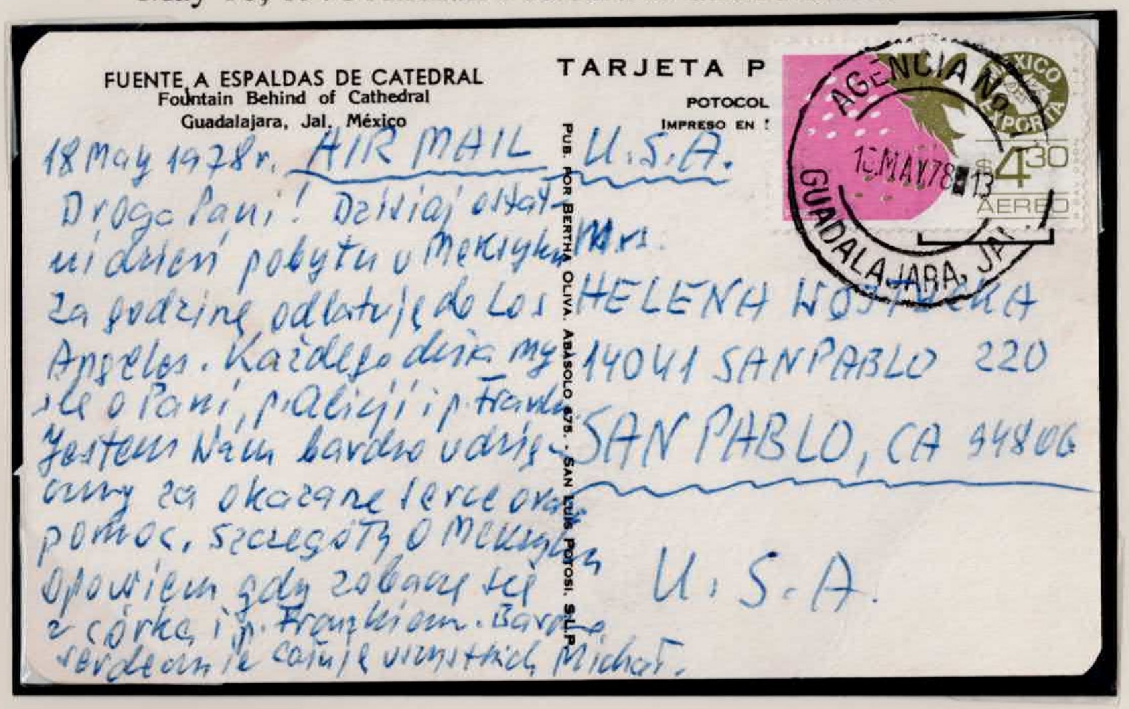


$4.30 x 2 = $8.60
10-20 grams letter
December 21, 1978

$4.30 Postcard
November 14, 1977

Airmail rate to North America: **$1.60** per 10 grams or postcard; **Surface $0.80** per 20 grams as per ***Tariff #29***.

May 18, 1978 Airmail Postcard to United States



Overfranking within intended rate period

$4.30 applied to United States; **$1.60 required**

$2.70 overpayment on both letter and postcard.

Overfranking such as these items are infrequently encountered during this period as ***1 Mexican Peso = roughly 4.5 US cents*** *[~22 Pesos/Dollar] from September 1, 1976-1980.*

The Peso was gradually devalued, reaching 48.79 per US Dollar by August 1982.

Mexican Postal Service personnel were usually very accurate in their rate knowledge during this period.

Incorrect frankings were often the result of inaccurate advice from sources such as hotel staff of secondary stamp suppliers.

There was rarely a shortage of $1.60 Air or $0.80 Surface stamps as these were the two Exporta Issue values produced in greatest quantity (close to half a billion stamps of each value)

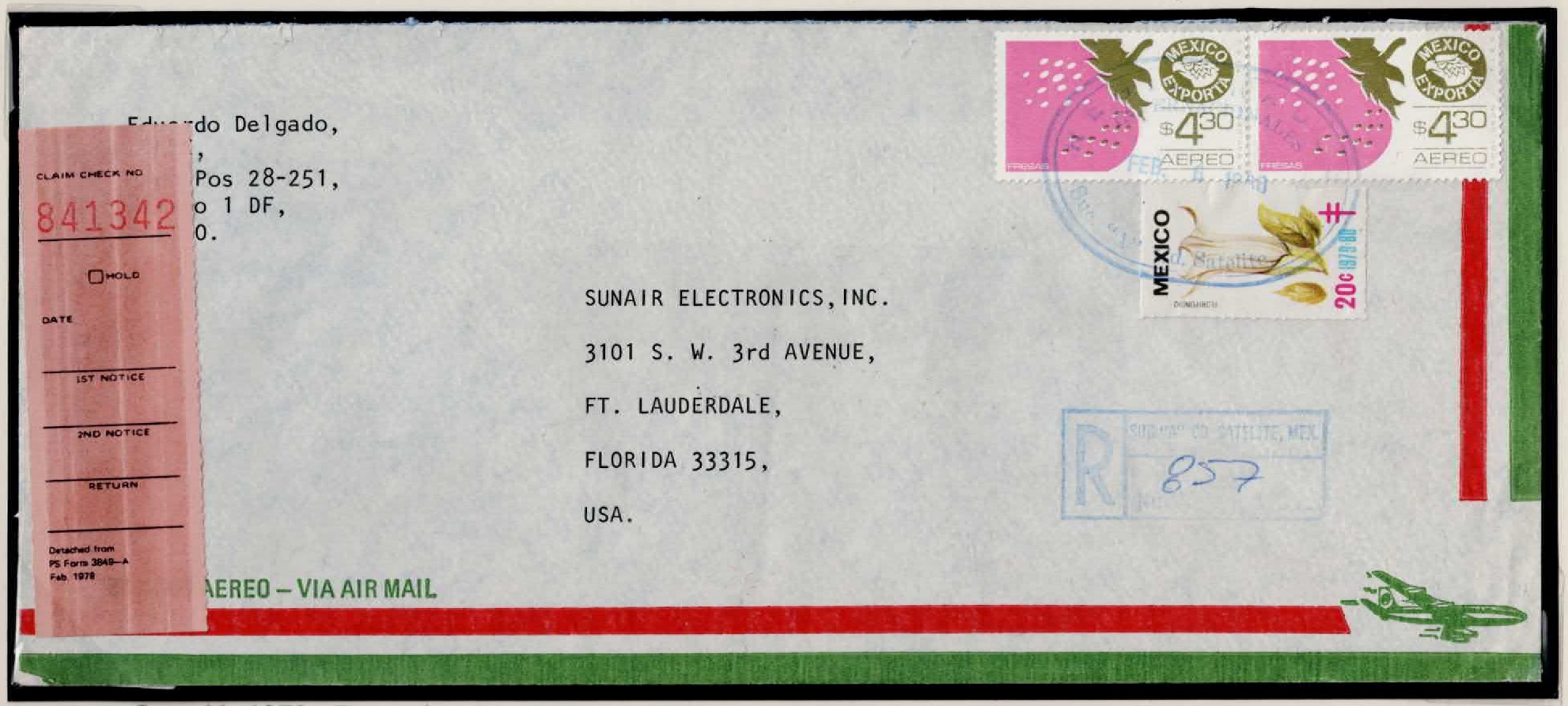
February 13, 1978 ***<10 gram*** Airmail Letter to United States



4 Stamp Use

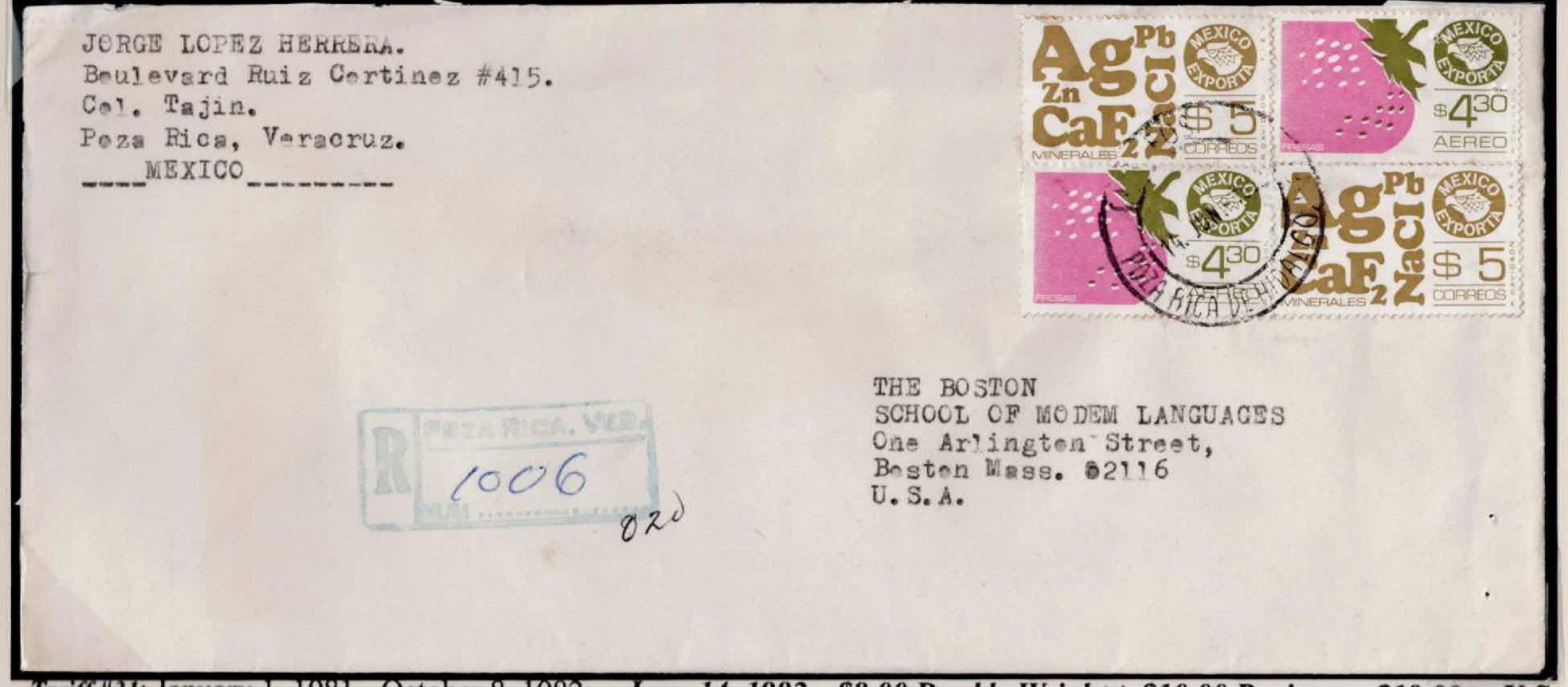
Later Rate Periods

$4.30 stamp specifically intended for European Airmail (***Postal Tariff #29***). With rate increase to $6.00 effective June 11, 1979 (***Tariff #30***) $4.30 stamp no longer required. No additional printings made; stock on currently hand was used until exhausted.



Tariff #30: June 11, 1979 - December 31, 1980 ***February 6, 1980*** ***$2.50 Postage + $6.00 Registry = $8.50 to U.S.***

Overpaid $0.10 (less than 1/2 U.S. cent) 'convenience' overfranking *$0.20 TB seal also applied*



Tariff #31: January 1, 1981 - October 8, 1982; ***June 14, 1982*** ***$8.00 Double Weight + $10.00 Registry = $18.00 to U.S.***

Overpaid $0.60 (approx. 2 U.S. cents) 'convenience' overfranking

5 Epilogue

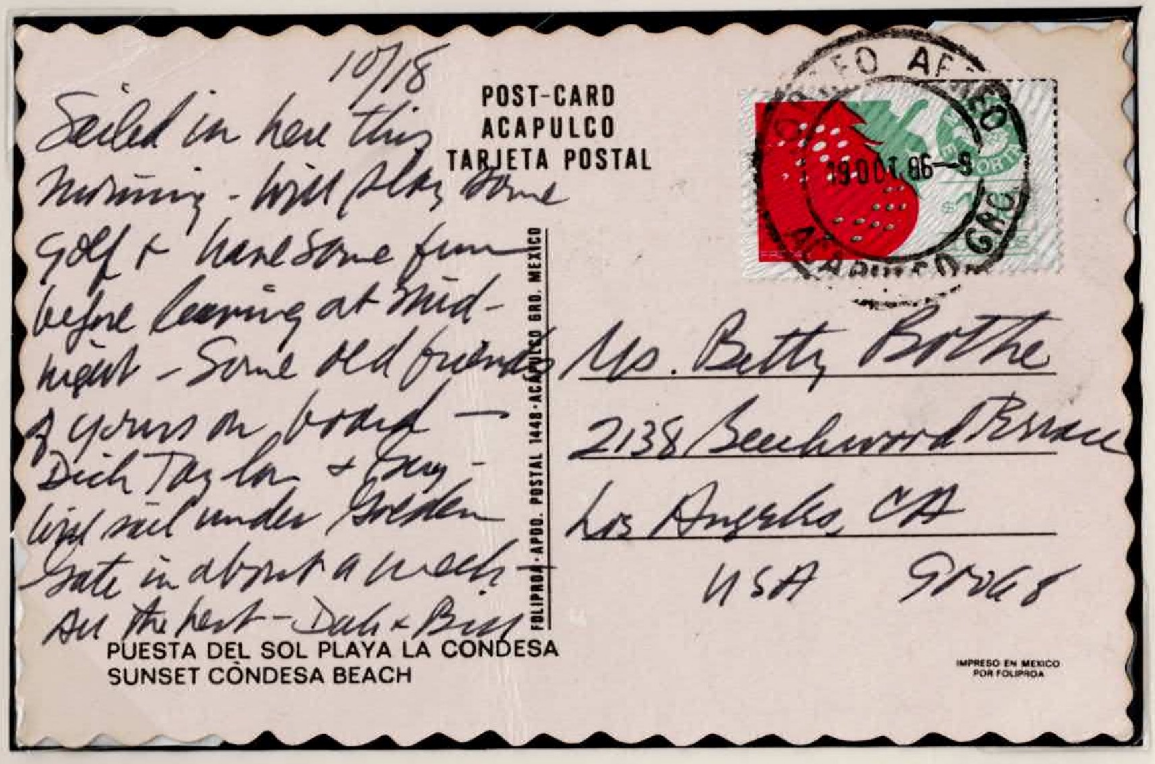
Reissued Colors and Values

During Mexico's 1980's hyperinflation the 'Strawberry' stamp design was reissued in two new values and colors. Rafael Davidson (original designer) stated that he was not involved with the update resulting in unbalanced design elements on subsequent reissues.

Red Carmine/Dark Green Emerald $100 value with Burlage issued 1983-1987
Postal Tariff #40: $100 postcard rate to U.S.

There were no longer separate Airmail stamps. A security 'burlage' was applied to high value stamps. These updated stamps were printed on the 'large' GOEBEL 4 color press. Sheets were comb (line) perforated with larger sheet margins. Marginal markings (color blocks and registration lines) visible.





$1300 value issued 1989-1993 ***Tariff #44: $1300 postcard rate to Europe***

