

# ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA 2009 - Post Fair Report

## *Asia's fresh produce trade show and conference event confirm their premier position*

**H**ong Kong: 7 September 2009 – ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA and Asiafruit Congress have confirmed their premier position as Asia's leading trade show and conference event for the international fresh fruit and vegetable business. More than 3,400 trade visitors from 52 countries all over the world, including 60 per cent from Asia, were in Hong Kong last week to attend the three-day event, which took place at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre on 2-4 September 2009. Some 224 exhibitors from 31 countries took part at ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA, with 500 delegates from more than 40 countries registered at the Asiafruit Congress. "These are excellent results for exhibitors, trade visitors and conference delegates alike, especially at such a challenging time for the global economy," said Gérald Lamusse, managing director of Global Produce Events GmbH, which organises the three-day event. "The results underline just how important and unique our event in Asia has become for the international fresh fruit and vegetable business."

Major fresh produce countries and trading nations from across the world expanded their presence at this year's ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA.

Asian countries once again accounted for the largest number of exhibitors on a regional basis, making up 35 per cent of the total. China had a particularly strong presence, with some 55 companies taking part, while exhibitors were also present from other leading Asian markets such as Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines.

Countries from Europe (25 per cent), South America (13 per cent), Oceania (12 per cent), North America (9 per cent) and Africa (6 per cent) were also well represented at ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA, reflecting the truly international character of the show.

While Australia, The Netherlands, France and the US all beefed up their presence at ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA, major South American supplying nations such as Chile and Brazil exhibited for the first time. Peru and Argentina also made another strong showing while South Africa was back in force.

"Major exporting countries are moving in on Asia and making this event the fulcrum of their marketing push in the region," noted Mr Lamusse.

While visitors to ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA were impressed with the size and range of the



stands, exhibitors also remarked on the high quality of the visitors in attendance. Leading buyers from Asia's major fruit and vegetable markets again made up the majority of visitors to ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA, with most of them holding decision-making positions in their companies.

Many of Asia's fruit and vegetable markets have responded positively to the global economic crisis over the past 12 months as a desire among consumers to rein in their spending on eating out has prompted demand for fresh produce to remain steady or, in some cases, increase.

That was one of the key takeaways for delegates to the opening day of Asiafruit Congress, Asia's top international conference event for fresh fruit and vegetable marketing, which took place over three mornings alongside ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA.

Asiafruit Congress was addressed by a range of high-level international speakers offering delegates unique insights and expert advice to help them make the most of the important growth opportunities that Asia presents.

Day One opened with a broad overview of economic trends and shopper habits across Asia from The Nielsen Company combined with strategic advice on how to boost sales to the region's markets. A panel of Asian buyers, including senior retail executives from Tops/Central Food Retail and Parkn-Shop, then discussed the findings of the analysis. Success stories in consumer marketing also came under the spotlight on Day One with presentations from Publicis Worldwide, the California Table

Grape Commission and Japanese marketing consultancy Yamano & Associates.

Major global retail groups Tesco and Metro kicked off Day Two by outlining their produce procurement strategies in Asia and China respectively in a session on Asia's sourcing potential. The issue of licensing intellectual property such as proprietary varieties was also the focus of a session that featured first-hand insights from BioGold International, Mylnefield Research Services and Zhengzhou Fruit Research Institute.

Day Three opened with expert analysis of the impact of trade liberalisation in Asia on the fresh produce business and concluded with an exclusive session on the emerging Indonesian market.

The success of this year's ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA and Asiafruit Congress stands the event in good stead for its return to Hong Kong next year, when the three-day event takes place on 8-10 September 2010 at Hong Kong's Convention and Exhibition Centre.

## COMMENTS

### Visitors

**David Langton, senior project manager, international group sourcing department, Asia-Pacific, Tesco (China)**

"This year's event is much larger and there are more exhibitors – it's an excellent opportunity for all Tesco's category managers in Asia from China, Japan, Thailand and Korea to come and under-

stand what's available from different exporting countries. It gives us the opportunity to meet our existing customers face to face and to find new suppliers and new products."

**Kent Cheung, assistant buyer – fruit & vegetables, ParknShop Supermarket (Hong Kong)**

"ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA is the perfect place to meet existing clients and new suppliers. It's great to see so many companies here from South America, which should become a key sourcing focus for the Asian markets going forward."

**Chusak Chuenprayoth, president, KC Fresh (Thailand)**

"ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA is expanding every year and it's become pretty big now. Hong Kong is the right location as it makes it so easy for everyone across the world to attend."

**Salimul Haque Essa, Tasho Enterprises (Bangladesh)**

"We never miss ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA. There's always something new to see, and someone new to talk to and do business with."

**David Beecham, global development director, Gist (UK)**

"We're new to this event, and we came because we want to understand the region and what's going on here. A lot of companies we know have come as well; it's the happening place to be."

**Antony Greenstein, director of global business, Kerry FSDA Limited (Hong Kong)**

"The show is terrific. The standard of the exhibitors has improved dramatically and people have clearly put in a lot of effort to their stands. It shows that they value the Asian market. The networking opportunities are unprecedented."

## EXHIBITORS

**Stuart Symington, CEO, Fresh Produce Exporters' Forum (South Africa)**

"This event is excellent for South Africa. ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA is a very solid platform for our growth in the East and it saves our growers and exporters from travelling the whole region to meet their customers, resulting in huge savings in terms of time and cost. Our Department of Trade and Industry has been able to witness first-hand this year the value of consolidating our presence at the show."

**Peter Silcock, CEO, Horticulture New Zealand (New Zealand)**

"Our exporters are very pleased with the amount of business and potential business they're getting at



ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA. The quality of contacts they're making is very good."

**Sjaak van der Meij, Hagé International (The Netherlands)**

"The quality of the visitors is impressive – the people that are here are the really important people in the trade – they're the decision makers."

## EXHIBITOR PROFILES

**Sinclair (US / UK)**

Leading international labelling company Sinclair chose the setting of ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA to launch its new hand-labelling system (HLS). The new HLS is desk-mounted, uses standard Sinclair label roll sizes, and can label 120 pieces of fruit per minute with labels of up to 36x26mm. The HLS fills a niche between smaller, portable hand-labellers and automated systems for small-scale applications. President and CEO Bill Hallier said the display model had already found a buyer and was heading to China following the trade show. "This has been the best ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA in the last three years," said Mr Hallier. "There's been a broad range of customers visiting our stand, including an unexpectedly high number of Indians. It's been a good event."

**Chilean Fresh Fruit Association (Chile)**

Chile was represented at ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA with its own stand for the first time this year, bringing in 40 companies under the cooperative aegis of exporter association ASOEX, promotion board Prochile and grower association Fedefruta. The stand served as the Asian debut of the six-month-old Chilean Kiwifruit Committee, which

now represents 85 per cent of the country's export volume. The Committee is focused on establishing mandatory minimum quality standards and cooperative export marketing, and next year will undertake a global study on the perceptions of Chilean kiwifruit at a trade level to identify areas for improvement.

**Fresh Produce Exporters' Forum (South Africa)**

South Africa was back in force at ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA this year with a large pavilion featuring 24 companies to field visitor enquires about the Southern Hemisphere export giant's diverse supply offer. The South African pavilion was home to a range of growers and packers, from leading and long-time players in the Asian region to newer companies looking to break into this burgeoning market. "Things are ripening now in Asia for South Africa and for our members and we've seen very strong interest from the large buyer element among the visitors here," said Stuart Symington of the Fresh Produce Exporters' Forum. Enquiries were coming in from a wide range of Asian markets, he noted, including China, Taiwan, Japan, Indonesia, Vietnam, India, Korea, the Philippines, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

**Goldland Fruit Group (China)**

Chinese fruit group Goldland exhibited its new red-fleshed apple at ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA. Bred by Dutch company Next Fruit Generation, the variety is being planted and marketed in China under licence by Goldland Fruit Group. "We're starting to propagate this variety in our nursery in Hebei Province and we expect to develop commercial production over the next few years," explained Goldland Fruit Group's chairman Leo Chiu. The



Chinese company also promoted the new Dedoro brand of bananas that it is now building in China. “We are working together with a key banana grower in the Philippines to source fruit for the China market,” said Mr Chiu. “We have established dedicated banana handling and ripening facilities in China and a strong sales network through which to distribute and market the fruit under our Dedoro brand.”

**Montague Fresh (Australia)**

Visitors to ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA were able to taste a number of new plum varieties at the large Australian pavilion courtesy of stonefruit marketer Montague Fresh. “We’ve conducted taste testing of a series of experimental varieties here,” explained Montague Fresh’s Ben Centra. “These varieties are not yet commercially planted in Australia but we are using the event to gauge trade and consumer feedback.” The range of plums included red-, green- and yellow- skin varieties with either red or yellow flesh. “We’ve had a really good response to the flavour of these varieties, and Autumn Honey is proving to be the most popular. We already have some trial plantings of this one in Australia,” Mr Centra added. The plant material for the plum varieties comes from the US and while some of them are in trial production in Australia, others are still in quarantine. Second-time exhibitor Montague

Fresh was also promoting its peaches and nectarines at the show.

**Danper (Peru)**

Danper Trujillo is one of the largest asparagus exporters from Peru, marshalling over 2,700ha of production, and was present at ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA for the second year in an effort to build business in the region. “We’re in the initial stages in Asia,” explained sales and marketing director Jorge Aranguri. “We need to get to understand the business cultures in Asia.” Mr Aranguri said. Danper already had some Asian customers from the last ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA, and this year had double the number of visitors, including interest in its white asparagus from buyers in Singapore.

**Rijk Zwaan (The Netherlands)**

International seed breeder Rijk Zwaan held the official Asian launch for its new Sensational Flavours Line of products at ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA. Sensational Flavours consists of a range of varieties that are bred primarily to deliver exceptional taste to consumers, but also aroma, texture and visual appeal to provide a distinctive sensory experience, according to the company’s chain manager for Asia Jan Doldersum. These unique varieties, which were developed with the aid of assessments from experienced tasting experts, were the focus

of culinary demonstrations organised by Rijk Zwaan during ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA. Proprietary Rijk Zwaan products being promoted included the striped aubergine (Angela RZ), the sweet pointed pepper (Palermo RZ), the cocktail cucumber (Quarto RZ), the cocktail tomato (Amoroso RZ) and the supersweet yellow baby melon (Yellissimo RZ).

**San Miguel (Argentina)**

Asia currently has the smallest share of Argentinian citrus exporter San Miguel’s business, but the company’s commercial manager Adolfo Storni said the region has the highest potential of any world market, particularly for lemons. “You can grow in a very short period of time in Asia,” said Mr Storni. The Hong Kong market is the biggest in Asia for lemons, he explained, but improving Chinese production was becoming a challenge. “We’ve had plenty of visitors at this year’s event, and everyone who came were decision makers,” he said. “There’s a high density of information here, and all the biggest players have come.”

**Horticulture New Zealand (New Zealand)**

The Asian markets will be key to New Zealand’s bid to double the value of its fruit and vegetable industry over the next 10 years to some NZ\$10bn from current levels of NZ\$5bn – and this makes a strong presence at ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA



vitality important. That's the view of Peter Silcock, CEO of Horticulture New Zealand, which brought together eight different New Zealand companies to exhibit a range of products and services at this year's event. "Most of the industry's growth will come from exports, and Asia will be the place to drive that growth," Mr Silcock predicted. "We're showing our commitment to our existing trade partners in Asia and seeking new partners here at ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA. We see significant opportunities in this market, particularly for value-adding with new varieties." While kiwifruit and apples remain the backbone of New Zealand's fruit and vegetable exports, the industry sees potential for a wider range of products going forward, such as cherries, berries and selected vegetable lines, he noted.

#### **Pedregal (Peru)**

ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA is the best way for Peruvian exporter Pedregal to see all of its clients at once, according to export manager Jesica Larovere Frigo. Pedregal has a well-developed network of customers in Asia, she said, and after nine years of operations in the region, around 40 per cent of the company's business is in Asia. Pedregal is best known for its Red Dragon table grape label. "Here in Asia we export mainly Red Globes, but the market is wanting more and more red and black seedless grapes," said Ms Larovere Frigo. "We send over 400 containers a year to Asia, and we've doubled exports since last year to a total of 2m cartons."

#### **IBRAF (Brazil)**

Brazil was present for the first time this year at



ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA with an official stand, representing the country's increasing interest in Asia as an export market. "All the exhibitors at the stand are very happy, and they've made a lot of contacts with a lot of buyers and importers," said Joyce Nunes of the Brazilian Fruit Institute (IBRAF), which coordinated the stand. "We came this year to learn more about the market and more about the trade fair, and I think we'll be back next year." Ms Nunes said some of the Brazilian exhibitors planned to visit business partners and markets in the region following ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA.

#### **MAFC (Malaysia)**

Malaysian Agrifood Corporation (MAFC) promoted its Paiola papaya for the second time at ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA as well as displaying its new range of packaged vegetables under the Lushious brand. The supersweet, hybrid papaya variety Paiola, which boasts yellow skin and an extra long shelf life, has already made an impression in Europe, and the product was nominated for the Fruit Logistica Innovation 2009. "Paiola is our iconic fruit brand and we have successfully shipped fruit to Europe, the UK and the Middle East," explained vice-president of international sales Mohd Hafizuddin Abdullah. "Now we are targeting Asian countries, which is part of the reason we're here at ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA." The second brand MAFC was promoting at the event was its Lushious range of packaged vegetables. "These vegetables are grown in the highlands with a focus on food safety and traceability," said Mr Abdullah.

Tomatoes, cherry tomatoes, capsicums and salads were among the key product groups featured in the Lushious range.

#### **Australia Fresh (Australia)**

Australia once again enjoyed a strong showing at this year's ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA with a bigger stand covering 200m<sup>2</sup> and housing a large number of companies and products. "Our Australia Fresh pavilion has grown by more than 30 per cent since last year, reflecting the growing interest from our exporters," said Wayne Prowse of Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL), which manages the Australia Fresh marketing programme. "Our growers and exporters are coming back after they made some good contacts and business deals last year and they're expecting to do more business this year." Australian horticultural exports have increased by around 30 per cent over the past year to reach A\$925m. While a good part of this growth was exchange rate-related given the weakening of the Australian dollar versus its US counterpart, Mr Prowse said it also follows on from Australia's strong presence at last year's show.

ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA is organised by Global Produce Events GmbH. The company is a joint venture between Messe Berlin and the London-based media company, Fruitnet Ltd.

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