



By Maura Maxwell

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Chile mulls Philippines trade deal

Fresh produce shipments to the Asian country increased by more than 10 per cent last season

Chile has announced its intention to secure a Free Trade Agreement with the Philippines. Following a recent meeting between Andrés Rebolledo of export promotion bureau Direcon and Consuelo Puyat-Reyes, the Filipino ambassador in Chile, it was agreed that a Joint Study Group will be officially launched at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Organisation (APEC) summit which takes place in November in Manila to discuss the creation of a bilateral trade agreement between the two countries.

"Having already negotiated similar deals with Brunei, Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam and Thailand, the Philippines is a natural progression in our strategy to strengthen Chilean ties with ASEAN countries," Rebolledo said. "With a population of 96m, the Philippines could be an interesting market for our country and help us to reinforce our presence in the Asia-Pacific region."

According to Asoex, Chile exported 406,672 tonnes of fruit to Asia in 2013/14, a 1.8 per cent increase on the previous season. China and Hong Kong were

together the biggest market, absorbing 179,803 tonnes, followed by Taiwan with 66,293 tonnes, South Korea with 58,265 tonnes, India with 48,785 tonnes and Japan with 28,826 tonnes. The Philippines was in sixth position, importing 5,867 tonnes, a 10.7 per cent increase on 2012/13. Table grapes, cherries, apples, plums and kiwifruit are the main products shipped to Asia.



Andrés Rebolledo with Filipino ambassador to Chile Consuelo Puyat-Reyes