



By Maura Maxwell

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CR pineapples get green light from China



Producers and exporters are being urged to unite in order to fully exploit China's market potential

China's plant health authorities have approved the phytosanitary protocol for the entry of Costa Rican pineapples, clearing the final hurdle before imports can begin.

The announcement follows the latest visit by AQSIQ inspectors on 13 February to inspect farms and packhouses in Guapiles, Sarapiquí, San Carlos and Upala.

Luis Felipe Arauz, Costa Rica's agriculture minister, said China provides a new option for shippers whose pineapples are highly demanded in Europe and the US, and that Costa

Rica would be able to compete in quality as well as in volume.

So far, 17 companies have registered their farms to export to China.

Laura Bonilla, president of the Costa Rica Chamber of Exporters (Cadexco) said the opening of the Chinese market was good news for exporters, particularly in light of the uncertainties created by the US administration's trade stance.

She urged exporters to unite in order to better exploit the potential in China. "The goal now is to come up with a national strategy that includes

producers, Cadexco, the National Chamber of Pineapples Producers and Exporters (Canapep), the foreign trade ministry and trade promotion agency Procomer in order to conquer this market," she said.

According to Canapep, there are currently around 38,000ha planted with pineapple in Costa Rica, with production concentrated in northern, Caribbean and South Pacific zones.