Malaysia promotes durian production

Malaysia is looking to increase durian production in light of recent indications China would soon allow imports of the fruit

Deputy agriculture and agro-based industries minister Chua Tee Yong told Malaysian newspaper the Star he anticipated strong demand for the fruit in China.

However, the country had seen a decrease in the amount of land given over to durian production.

The newspaper reported 63,000ha were planted to durian in 2005. This area has since fallen to 55,000ha.

He said many durian growers had pulled out of the industry because of poor demand for the fruit and problems with distribution channels.

"Many farmers are worried there will be a glut in durian supply and that they will have to slash prices badly, just like in the past," he said.

An increase in export markets should give stability to the industry in Malaysia, he added.

"There has also been aggressive promotion in Singapore since last year, where there is a great demand for the fruit. With more farmers planting durian trees, there will be more supply of the fruit, which will help stabilise prices."

He said only companies that could comply with China’s import regulations would be allowed to send durian there.