

For fresh fruit and vegetable marketing and distribution in Asia



By Matthew Jones

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## India and Afghanistan look to air cargo service



Limited opportunities for overground trade prompt countries to move towards airfreight

**A**n increase in fresh fruit trade looms as one of the driving forces behind a proposed air cargo service between India and Afghanistan, according to Reuters.

Over recent times, trade between the two nations has been impeded by respective strains in their relationships with Pakistan, which borders both countries.

For suppliers in landlocked Afghanistan, the Pakistani port of Karachi is the main avenue to international markets. Reuters notes that a small volume of Afghan exports make their way through Pakistan into India. However, exports from India into Afghanistan via Pakistan are currently blacklisted.

Afghan director general for macro fiscal policies, Khalid Payenda, said the proposed air cargo service would be a timely boost to the country's fresh produce suppliers, who continue to battle the ongoing Taliban insurgency.

"We have a lot of potential for trade on both sides," Payenda was quoted by Reuters. "On our side, it's mostly fruit and dried fruit and potentially through India to other places for products like carpets and others."

The service is likely to be operated by cargo firms in both India and Afghanistan, with both governments working to improve infrastructure at Kabul and Delhi airports.

A deal between the two countries could be finalised as soon as Sunday, with Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi meeting in the Indian city of Amritsar for the Heart of Asia conference, aimed at stabilizing Afghanistan.

<http://www.fruitnet.com/asiafruit/article/1474/parts-of-san-diego-quarantined-as-psyllid-count-mounts>

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