

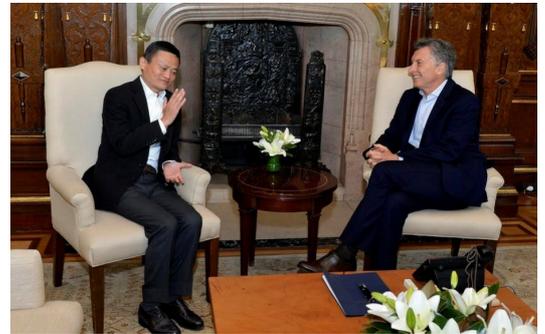
For fresh fruit and vegetable marketing and distribution in Asia



By Maura Maxwell

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Argentine grapes: China entry “imminent”



Jack Ma with Mauricio Macri

Protocol paving the way for table grape imports will be signed during Macri's visit to China later this month

Argentina's agriculture minister Ricardo Buryaile has embarked on a tour of China to lay the groundwork for bilateral trade talks due to take place during the official visit by President Mauricio Macri on 14-18 May.

During a meeting with Li Yuanping of the Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ), it was agreed that the protocol paving the way for imports of Argentine table grapes would be signed during the presidential visit.

Buryaile said significant progress had also been made in negotiating access with other products including blueberries, cherries, beef, pork and honey.

The two countries also agreed to renew a two-year working plan setting out guidelines for technical cooperation and market access negotiations.

The news follows this week's

announcement that Macri has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Jack Ma, executive chairman of Alibaba, to support the sale of Argentine products – principally wine and fresh foods – through Alibaba's e-commerce platforms.

An official statement published by the government said both parties would undertake to “facilitate and support long-term trade associations between Argentine producers, distributors and exporters and Chinese distributors and traders”.

“This agreement consolidates trade between Argentina and China,” said Michael Evans, president of Alibaba Group.

“The ultimate beneficiaries will be the merchants, especially small and medium enterprises, who will gain access to unprecedented cross-border trade opportunities through Alibaba's platforms.”

Argentina supplies US\$4.2bn of food products to China a year and accounts for 3.49 per cent of food imports. Soy products are the principle export item, but other foods such as pears, wines, beef and poultry have also been rising.

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

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