

For fresh fruit and vegetable marketing and distribution in Asia



By John Hey

Thursday 14th March 2019, 5:04 GMT

## Stage set for Fresh Produce India

From agritech start-ups to emerging international products and suppliers, there will be plenty to discover at India's fresh produce convention event



**F**resh Produce India returns to Mumbai's Trident Nariman Point Hotel on 24-26 April 2019 with a fresh format designed to make this the most engaging and interactive edition yet.

This year, for the first time, the majority of the conference takes place in the Fresh Produce India Expo area itself, bringing speakers, delegates and exhibitors closer together and enabling delegates to make the most of the information-rich programme.

Fresh Produce India kicks off on the evening of 24 April with a Welcome Reception. Held in the Rooftop Room at the Trident Nariman Point Hotel, the venue offers panoramic views of Mumbai's Queen's Necklace Promenade and provides the perfect backdrop to an evening of high-level networking.

The conference programme gets under way on the morning of 25 April with a keynote session exploring the fresh

investment coming into India's fresh produce supply chain, much of it driven by start-ups. The keynote session takes place in the Regal Room, setting the stage for the start of Fresh Produce India Expo, which then opens in the same space.

Running alongside the expo is a two-track programme of workshops for delegates to choose from, half of them taking place inside Fresh Produce India Expo, and the other half in the adjoining Gulmohar room. The programme runs throughout the day on 25 April, wrapping up with an evening cocktail event at Fresh Produce India Expo. Fresh Produce India concludes on 26 April with a programme of wholesale and retail tours taking in a variety of retail formats across Mumbai.

The programme features more than 20 local and international expert speakers bringing a mix of market insight, strategic perspective, practical advice, new products, supply chain innovation

and analysis of the big topics affecting the Indian business.

### High-profile speakers, hot topics

The high-powered programme kicks off with a keynote presentation from Nitin Puri, global head of food and agribusiness strategic advisory and research at Yes Bank. India's fruit and vegetable sector is beginning to see exciting investments throughout the value chain, many of them driven by start-ups. Puri opens Fresh Produce India with his expert analysis of the investment trends, opportunities and challenges.

Executives representing some of India's leading start-ups join Puri for the ensuing panel discussion including Sanjay Dasari, co-founder of Waycool (see p28-29 for interview). Further afield, the Netherlands also has a vibrant start-up culture in horticulture, with a strong focus on hi-tech growing systems and production technologies in the covered

cropping space. Dutch Agriculture

with Mountain Blue.

Elsewhere, in a workshop on global supply

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Counsellor for India Siebe Schuur is on-hand to provide an international perspective for the discussion and to explain what his country is doing to assist the horticulture sector in India.

Workshops at Fresh Produce India cover a range of hot topics for the Indian business.

India's consumer market for fresh fruit is evolving rapidly as the country's young and affluent demographics tune in to the latest global trends and discover a taste for new products. In a session on 'category creation', leading global suppliers look at the potential to build the market from the ground up for exciting emerging products such as avocados and berries. Roberto Rodriguez of world-leading avocado grower-marketer Mission Produce discusses the keys to growth for avocados, while Dominika Kozarzewska of the Polish Berry Cooperative looks at the market potential for berries. Providing his local insight into what's happening for these categories on the ground in India is Tarun Arora of IG International, one of India's leading importers, which has a joint venture investment in domestic blueberry production

The exciting evolution of India's consumer market comes under further scrutiny in the session 'Marketing India: shoppers want more'. Avalon Consulting's Asish Puri shares the findings of a recent survey of consumer behaviour in India when it comes to buying fresh produce. Himanshu Arora, one of Zespri's leading global marketing executives, discusses the company's consumer-centric marketing strategy, and its omni-channel approach to building the kiwifruit category in India. Bringing his expertise to bear on the panel discussion is Avinash Joshi, vice-president of fruits and vegetables for Indian retail giant Reliance.

India has great future potential as a fresh produce exporter, but the commodity trap looms large in an increasingly competitive market. In a session looking at how India can differentiate its offering, Girish Sarda of exporter Monsoon Green Earth Farms explains the value of brand certifications such as Fairtrade and Rainforest Alliance, while Andy Zhang of Dole Food Co provides a perspective on the fast-growing Chinese market.

chain solutions for the Indian market, Swathi Vurrakula, India business development manager for Wageningen Food & Biobased Research, discusses the Post-Harvest Network it is developing in India.

Horticulture has a key role to play in the Indian government's mission to double farmer incomes by 2022. One of the closing sessions focuses on what government and private sector players are doing to bring farmers into an integrated supply chain and modernise production. VG Lakshmi Priyan of Bangalore-based start-up FarmFolks Agro provides a local case study, while Krishna Mishra of Ecutir explains how soil-to-shelf global agtech firm Bloom is tackling the twin challenges of global food security and smallholder farmer poverty.

For more information, including regular programme updates, or to register, visit [www.freshproduceindia.com](http://www.freshproduceindia.com)