

For fresh fruit and vegetable marketing and distribution in Asia



By Tom Joyce

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New ground for Turkish cherries

New opportunities are materialising for Turkish cherry exporters like Alanar, with demand from eastern Europe and the Middle East on the rise



Turkish cherry producers are hopeful of a better season this year, on account of the markedly improved weather conditions. “The cherry campaign is looking much more positive this year,” says Yiğit Gökyiğit, marketing and sales manager at exporter Alanar. “The weather was closer to an average year, which should translate into larger volumes and better quality.”

At the start of May, the company had already begun selling small volumes of earlier varieties on the domestic market, while the main crop was set to be ready on 22 May, around a week later than last year. “That’s good for us,” says Gökyiğit. “The bulk of the crop is available from the last week of May until the first week of August, with the highest volumes arriving in June.”

Alanar’s main export market remains Europe, with Germany and the UK especially important, followed by East Asia. However, the company is finding new opportunities all over the world.

“We are receiving good demand from new markets,” says Gökyiğit. “This year, we are seeing more demand from eastern Europe and the Middle East. Our marketing team is growing, so we are attending more and more exhibitions and making lots of contacts. In addition, the reputation of our company is growing. These days, sometimes we find customers and sometimes they find us. Many people have heard about Alanar since our parent company Tekfen Holding took over. We have invested in new technologies and new orchards, and people are very impressed when they see our products and want to try them.”

According to Gökyiğit, Poland and Romania are growing especially fast. “We send to the supermarkets there,” he says. “We expect these eastern European markets to grow year after year. It’s hard to make contacts initially. But when you find the right partner and they like your product, service and quality, they demand more.”

In the Middle East, Alanar sends to the

UAE, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Oman and Jordan. “This is a growing market,” says Gökyiğit. “This year, we expect the Middle East to take more than double the volume we sent last year. This is because we are talking with the biggest chains in the region. The supermarkets are importing a lot of produce direct, so we are growing with them and it’s easier communicating direct.”

Alanar is also confident of growth in East Asia, where the company already works with the supermarkets. “We will be targeting Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia,” says Gökyiğit. “We are not able to send direct to China due to the authorities’ demand for a 16-day cold treatment, which is impossible for us. There are discussions about introducing a fumigation protocol instead, but it looks unlikely for this season. Hopefully next year, we will send our first volumes direct to China.”

In anticipation of continued growth, the company’s parent company, Tekfen Holding, is eyeing up further

investments. “We are building one of the

three times greater. It is a state-of-the-art

solar panels and recycling the water we use.

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

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biggest fruit facilities in Europe, near Izmir," says Gökyiğit. "It will be completed in March 2020. All our packing facilities will be there, including for our cherries. Our production capacity will be two to

building, very modern and environmentally friendly, incorporating all the latest technologies. The environmental side is very important for Tekfen Holding. We are reducing our use of plastics, installing

The company is very well known in this field, so we are always working and doing our best to address such issues."