

For fresh fruit and vegetable marketing and distribution in Asia



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Japan protects high-end varieties

Efforts being made to prevent domestically developed, branded varieties from being grown overseas



Japan's Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Ministry is set to begin increase efforts to prevent the seeds and saplings of high-end branded fruit varieties from being transported and grown in other countries.

According to local news sources, a number of the seeds and saplings have been taken out of the country without permission and the ministry is considering tighter regulations and a possible law revision as part of the renewed effort to combat the movement.

A report in the Japan Times said Japan is attempting to boost exports in its high-end fruit, with total

annual shipments nearly reaching ¥1 trillion (US\$9.2bn). However, the outflow of these branded varieties can hinder export growth.

One example of a branded variety which has been taken from Japan is Shine Muscat grapes.

The ministry told the Japan Times the Japanese-developed, high-end variety is being grown in South Korea and China without permission and being sold in Malaysia, Thailand and other South-East Asian countries.

Since 2006, Shine Muscat has been protected in Japan as an intellectual property under the Plant Variety Protection and Seed Law.

However, the branded variety was not registered internationally as the government did not expect it to be exported.

The ministry said when it found Shine Muscat grapes were being grown in China and South Korea and sold overseas two years ago, it could not stop the sales as deadlines for registrations for variety protection had passed.

To assist the new efforts, the ministry put together a group of experts to discuss measures to stop a repeat of the Shine Muscat case.

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

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