

For fresh fruit and vegetable marketing and distribution in Asia



By Liam O'Callaghan

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Colombia's Asian breakthroughs



Access to China and Japan for Hass avocados are just two of the developments announced by Colombia as works to expand its presence in the region

Colombiá's efforts to grow fresh produce exports to Asia are beginning to bear fruit as it announced this week it has gained permission to export Hass avocados to China and Japan and secured an agreement to sell 4m boxes of bananas to China.

These announcements came as Andrés Valencia Pinzón, Colombiá's minister of agriculture and rural development, visited China with Colombian President, Iván Duque, for the Colombia-China Economic and Commercial Forum on 30 July.

At the forum, Pinzón announced China and Colombia has reached an agreement regarding the sanitary protocol for Hass avocados opening the doors to the Chinese market.

"We will now subscribe to a work plan that must be fulfilled Colombian exporters," he added in a statement.

Pinzón expects the first six containers of the product to be shipped to China before the end of the year once Colombia exporters have fulfilled the protocol requirements. From there he believes Colombia can compete with other suppliers to China.

"Colombia has all the potential to compete with and overcome the current Hass avocado suppliers to China. Currently, the production of in Colombia is approximately 90,000 tonnes and in 2018, Colombian avocado exports totalled 30,008 tonnes," Pinzón said.

In addition to the avocado developments, Duque announced an agreement which will see Colombia sell 4m boxes of banana to China.

The agreement is the result of a joint strategy launched by the Colombia government and Augura, a Colombia banana growers association. Exports will be made through exporter Unibán.

Duque stressed this agreement was an important development for the Colombia agricultural sector and was a "firm step to continue arriving with more products to the Chinese market".

The developments in China closely follow the announcement on 24 July that Colombia Hass avocados can be exported to Japan as of 31 July.

Pinzón praised the work that went into achieving this access and said Colombia was committed to gaining access to more markets for other products, as it had done with the Hass avocado.

Colombia expects to be able to meet the demand for Hass avocado created by these two new markets with anticipated growth in production.

According to figures from the ministry, Colombia has 15,530ha of Hass avocado crops but only around 68 per cent of this is has reached commercial bearing levels.

The remaining percentage

is still developing, paving the way for increased production in the future.

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

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