

For fresh fruit and vegetable marketing and distribution in Asia



By Chris Komorek

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Bangladesh drop self-imposed ban

Fresh fruit and vegetable exports to Europe resume as efforts to modernise prove successful



The export ban was introduced by the Bangladesh government following repeated detection of pest by European regulators in consignments sent from the South Asian country.

In the two years that Bangladesh weren't exporting to Europe, important changes were made to bring existing methods up to a global standard.

Mohammed Monsur, general secretary of the Bangladesh Fruits, Vegetables and Allied Products Exporters Association (BFVAPEA), said the ban helped improve the country's compliancy, resulting in greater shipments.

"Bangladesh is now shipping fresh produce by packaging them at a central packing house following the guidelines for exports to the EU destinations," he said.

Fresh fruit and vegetable export earnings increased in the 2018-19 fiscal year according to a report published in The Daily Star. Potato exports experienced the biggest increase, a 31 per cent rise year on year, to US\$105.39m according to the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB).

Exporters shipped 17,487 tonnes of domestically grown vegetables, up 18 per cent year-on-year. The Middle East remains Bangladesh's largest market, while Europe continues to grow steadily now export has resumed.

According to Them Daily Star, markets in the UK, Italy, Germany and France are the largest due to the number of Bangladeshi migrants living there.

Monsur said the government introduced the restrictions to avoid any potential import bans introduced by European regulators, a move he believes was successful.

"It has paid off. We all have become more aware about quality standards and requirements for exporting."

Every consignment is now packed at the central packing house after a quality check has been conducted. From there, the consignment is sealed before directly going to the port for shipment.

Director of the Plant Quarantine Wing Md Azhar Ali, reported a reduction of non-compliance notices from Europe.

"Overall, cultivation of exportable produce has expanded because of our extensive work and the training (we have) provided to farmers (to improve their) farming practices to produce safe food," he said.

The next step of increasing exports is to secure cargo space on international flights operated by Biman Bangladesh Airlines.

BFVAPEA President, SM Jahangir Hossain, said Bangladesh would be able to reach its export targets if that could be achieved.

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

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