

For fresh fruit and vegetable marketing and distribution in Asia



By Tom Joyce

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## Crystal clear on future direction

The Saudi trader is expanding its presence across the Middle East, while investigating the possibilities for processing, packing and home deliveries



**C**ystal Asia, located in the Jeddah Central Fruit and Vegetables Market, is one of the leading fresh produce traders in Saudi Arabia, supplying direct to local and regional hypermarkets and supermarkets, while increasing its volumes to food service operators, restaurants and hotel chains.

According to general manager Hussain Al-Goufi, the company's aim is to bring world-famous brands to the Middle East and deliver produce of high quality and freshness using its fleet of over 200 refrigerated trucks.

"We are always thinking

about our customers and how we can meet their demands, supplying fruit at the right time at a fair price, even when demand is high," says Al-Goufi. "This is how we are able to secure business and keep regular orders."

According to Al-Goufi, South African oranges were the best selling item last year, as well as grapes from South America. "We faced difficulties in the beginning with products like Asian exotics, but we have since had good results," he says. "Our customers are always looking for the lowest price for the main fruits like oranges, apples and bananas. This situation has provided an opening for Indian bananas on

the Saudi market, while eastern European apples are taking market share from French and Italian apples."

Crystal Asia is rapidly expanding to cover the entire Gulf and Middle East region, including in Jordan, Syria, Egypt, and Lebanon. "The Saudi market is performing very well compared with our other markets," says Al-Goufi, "but there is room for new ideas like processing, packing and home deliveries using our mobile application."