



Asia Fruit Awards: winners announced

T&G Global, Euro-Atlantic, JD Fresh and Noel Shield presented with annual pan-Asian awards for the fresh produce business



(l-r): T&G Global's Rebecca Chapman and Una Wang of JD Fresh accept Asia Fruit Awards on behalf of their companies

Leading apple grower-marketer T&G Global, Malaysian importer Euro-Atlantic, JD.com's fresh food business JD Fresh and experienced Asia produce executive Noel Shield have scooped the prestigious 2020 Asia Fruit Awards.

The Asia Fruit Awards, the annual pan-Asian awards for the fresh produce business, are presented by Asia Fruit Logistica and Asiafruit Magazine. The awards celebrate excellence and recognise outstanding achievement for the best players in Asia's fresh fruit and vegetable business, with the winners selected by the two organisations.

The winners were announced at Asiafruit Congress ON, Asia's premier conference event for fresh produce decision-makers, which took place online today for the first time in its more than 20-year history.

The Asia Fruit Award is given in three core categories – Marketing Campaign

of the Year, 'Importer of the Year' and 'Produce Retailer of the Year' – while the Impact Award recognises a person or a company who has made a significant contribution to developing the fresh produce business in Asia.

MARKETING CAMPAIGN OF THE YEAR: T&G GLOBAL

T&G Global, the New Zealand-headquartered global fresh produce marketer, won the Marketing Campaign of the Year. The powerhouse apple grower-marketer was recognised for its pan-Asia efforts to promote and position Envy and Jazz apples as premium brands.

Introducing the winner, Asiafruit Magazine editor John Hey said the award recognised T&G Global's efforts over a number of years, and across a number of markets in Asia. T&G has invested heavily in developing its in-market presence, people and resources, with offices in Japan, China, Thailand,

Vietnam and Singapore. This network and infrastructure have enabled the company to develop direct relationships with trade and consumers across these markets, he noted.

T&G Global's head of global marketing, Rebecca Chapman, accepted the award.

"Asia is a key region for T&G Global and is pivotal for the success of our flagship Jazz and Envy apples. This award reflects the creative marketing efforts from our Asia team and our passion to bring our growers' great tasting, high-quality apples to consumers all over the world," said Chapman.

"It's a real honour for T&G Global to be recognised with this award, and it will give our global teams the energy to continue to challenge boundaries and connect with consumers in even more innovative ways."



JD Fresh was recognised for the strides it's made in fresh produce retail on a number of fronts. Winning government acclaim for its response to the Covid-19 crisis in China, the e-commerce giant significantly expanded its share of fresh produce sales during the pandemic as consumers switched to buying groceries online.

In addition to its gains in e-commerce, JD has continued to drive the digitisation of fresh food retail China. It has expanded its chain of high-tech supermarkets, 7Fresh, launching new stores and formats. JD also set up its first franchised community fruit stores under the Jingxuanhaoguo banner, a model under which it can apply its brand and its strength in procurement and high-tech solutions to existing mom and pop stores in neighbourhoods.

Purchasing manager of JD Fresh, Una Wang, accepted the award. "The Produce Retailer of the Year Award is a fantastic recognition from the fresh produce industry of the efforts our team has made this year," said Wang. "It inspires us to perform even better in the future, leading the e-commerce fresh produce business in China."

Outside retail, Shield worked with Metspan Hong Kong in the mid-2000s. He later helped to create JWM Asia in 2017, a joint venture between Capespan and Joy Wing Mau, enabling the Chinese group to develop its pan-Asia presence and expanding sales channels in Asia for Capespan suppliers. Most recently, as chief executive of JWM Asia Holdings, Shield restructured JWM Asia Japan (formerly Capespan Japan), paving the way for its sale to Farmind, where he remains an operational consultant to the Japanese company.

"It's been my good fortune and privilege to have been actively involved in the fruit industry across Asia for the past 30 years," Shield reflected. "During this time, I have seen many changes, especially in the development of the retail sector, the expansion of China into a fruit powerhouse, the growth of new products and the change in consumer demand to quality and taste."

IMPORTER OF THE YEAR: EURO-ATLANTIC

The Importer of the Year Award went to leading Malaysian importer-distributor of specialty fruit and vegetables, Euro-Atlantic.

Set up in 1992 with a goal to expand the range of fruit and vegetables for Malaysian consumers beyond tropical produce, the company was recognised for its pioneering efforts to introduce and develop new products and sources.

Euro-Atlantic has played a key role in developing the market for berries, avocados and mushrooms in Malaysia

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

among other categories, Hey noted.

With a strong customer base in food service and hospitality, and a significant percentage of its imports air-flown, Euro-Atlantic has faced a challenging 2020 owing to the impacts of Covid-19. But the company was also recognised for the way it has risen to the challenge, selling more produce online and marketing via social media with online cooking demonstrations as well as making moves towards 'contactless' sampling.

Managing director of Euro-Atlantic, Ebby Loo, accepted the award. "We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Asiafruit Magazine and Asia Fruit Logistica for this outstanding award," she said. "Greater things are yet to come as we embark on another fruitful year ahead."



Purchasing manager of JD Fresh, Anna Wang

IMPACT AWARD: NOEL SHIELD

The Impact Award was presented to experienced Asia produce executive Noel Shield. Shield has spent most of his 30-year career in Asia working in the fresh produce business, both as a retailer and a supplier.

Shield was recognised for his role in helping to advance the fresh produce business in Asia, especially in terms of supermarket development and brand marketing.

While head of fresh produce at Hong Kong supermarket chain ParknShop in the late 1990s, Shield helped to pioneer the introduction of elements of the wet market into the supermarket store, Hey noted.

Managing director of Euro-Atlantic, Ebby Loo

PRODUCE RETAILER OF THE YEAR: JD FRESH

JD Fresh, the fresh food arm of Chinese e-commerce giant JD.com, won the Produce Retailer of the Year Award.

In 2006, Shield relocated to Thailand where he was appointed president of produce for Tops/Central Food Retail. The group's high-end Central Food Halls gained global recognition for their premium fresh food and produce departments. Shield was instrumental in setting up Central Food's direct sourcing of imported fruits to streamline the supply chain and improve the retailer's range and offering.

The Impact Award was presented to Noel Shield

The four winners of the Asia Fruit Awards received their trophies and certificates from Wilfried Wollbold, commercial director of Asia Fruit Logistica organiser Global Produce Events, and Chris White, managing director of Fruitnet Media International, which publishes Asiafruit Magazine and organises Asiafruit Congress.

"We warmly congratulate our four fantastic Asia Fruit Award winners," said White. "These awards set a standard for everyone in the business, and our winners are to be commended on their remarkable achievements. We wish them every success in the future as they continue to innovate and drive the business forward."

Read more about the Asia Fruit Award winners in the upcoming December/January edition of Asiafruit Magazine.

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