



By Tom Joyce

Tuesday 5th April 2016, 12:45 GMT

## Belgian pears near Brazil entry

Belgian officials are confident that the country's pears will soon gain access to the large Brazilian market



**T**he Belgian secretary for foreign trade, Pieter De Crem, is currently in Brazil lobbying to gain access to the South American country for Belgian pears, according to De Tijd.

The sizeable market is viewed by Belgian exporters as an ideal replacement for Russia, which has remained closed since summer 2014.

Despite the corruption scandal currently engulfing Brazilian politics, officials in Belgium are confident of a deal to permit Belgian pears being reached within the next two weeks.

"Part of the new pear crop will go to Brazil in September," confirmed Philippe Appeltans, general secretary of the Federation of Belgian Horticultural Cooperatives (VBT).

Brazil imports around 180,000 tonnes of pears a year, including 120,000 tonnes from Argentina, 40,000 tonnes from Portugal and 10,000 tonnes from Spain.

According to Appeltans, Belgium will send upwards of 10,000 tonnes of pears to Brazil within the next four to five years.

For Brazil, Belgium provides

an easy access point to the rest of the European market, one reason why Apex-Brasil, the country's promotional agency for trade and investment, chose Brussels for the site of its northern European office.

De Crem also met with Brazil's minister of aviation, as the country's largest airline, TAM, nears a decision on its new northern European headquarters, with Brussels Airport under consideration.