



By Gill McShane

Tuesday 24th June 2008

Peru negotiates new trade deals

The South American country is working hard to open up markets in Asia, Australia, Russia and South Africa



Hernán Couturier

Peru's Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism (Mincetur) will start this year the preliminary contacts to examine the possibility of negotiating Free Trade Agreements (FTA) with India, South Africa and Russia, the Ministry has revealed.

"Initial contacting will begin this year and will surely bear fruit in 2009," said Hernán Couturier, under-secretary of multilateral and special affairs at Peru's Ministry of Foreign Trade.

Peru is already looking to sign trade agreements with other countries,

including China, Japan, South Korea, Australia and Central America.

Representatives from the national phytosanitary authorities of both Peru and China will meet today and tomorrow (24-25 June) in Beijing, China, to finalise the phytosanitary protocols for the trade of fresh citrus between the two countries.

"There is the potential for Peru to sign agreements with all of these countries," Mr Couturier added. "Without a doubt, Peru is starting to develop its future presence on the overseas export market."

The opening up of new markets is vital to the future of Peru's export trade, particularly for the fresh produce sector given the rapid growth in fruit and vegetable production in recent years.

The citrus industry alone is anticipating a record harvest of 56,193 tonnes this year, according to the Peruvian producer association ProCitrus, while exports are on course to grow by 10-15 per cent.