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By Mike Knowles

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S&A Group: emoji deal 'sets us apart'

Company's Oliver Davies explains decision to sponsor Unicode's globally recognised strawberry symbol



The unusual step taken by S&A Group, a leading soft fruit marketer with operations in the UK and China, to become the exclusive and permanent worldwide sponsor of the strawberry emoji, was designed to underline its commitment to innovation when it comes to producing and selling the fruit, according to the company's Oliver Davies.

Davies, who manages the group's operations in China, where it imports not only berries but also avocados, told Fruitnet the purchase of a gold sponsorship package from

Unicode, the non-profit consortium responsible for developing universal standards including the emoji system, was a move that reflected S&A Group's desire to "stand out" in the international market.

"As a business we are always striving for a point of difference and this is evidenced by our investment in our own varietal breeding programme," Davies explained.

"With that in mind, we are proud to be the gold sponsor of the strawberry emoji, which will be highlighted in all forms of communication with current and prospective suppliers, customers and consumers."

He added: "This will help us to stand out in the marketplace and confirm our position as a leading grower and supplier of high quality strawberries."

Three other fresh produce marketers have bought the rights to an emoji, namely Avocados from Mexico, USA Pears and New Zealand kiwifruit company Zespri.