



Quality shines through at AFL

Visitor numbers hold up well at the Hong Kong show, with exhibitors highlighting strong business outcomes

Asia Fruit Logistica 2019 defied difficult circumstances in Hong Kong to deliver a show characterised by high-quality visitors and exceptional business opportunities last week.

Attendance was inevitably impacted somewhat by recent unrest in Hong Kong, but visitor numbers exceeded expectations, reaching 90 per cent of 2018 levels. More than 12,000 trade professionals from all over the world made the most of the opportunities to meet and do business with over 800 exhibitors from more than 40 countries at Asia Fruit Logistica, which took place on 4-6 September at AsiaWorld-Expo.

Exhibitor numbers remained strong, with some 810 exhibitors presenting a wide range of products and services from around the world, and from every step of the supply chain. The overwhelming majority of registered exhibitors (96 per cent) retained their presence at the show, with exhibition space even recording a small increase.

high-quality visitors at the event, providing first-rate opportunities to hold productive meetings and do business.

More than 85 per cent of trade visitors also reported a 'positive to excellent' impression of this year's edition of Asia Fruit Logistica, according to visitor survey results collated after the second day of the trade fair. The results also confirmed the high quality of visitors, with over 90 per cent of visitors holding leading management positions in their company and involved in the purchasing and procurement decision-making process.

As the first Partner Country in the 12-year history of Asia Fruit Logistica, Peru brought its biggest-ever delegation to the show and enjoyed a highly successful participation.

"Asia Fruit Logistica is the gateway to Asia," said Victor Sarabia, agribusiness manager at PromPeru. "This has been a revealing edition because it has enabled us to learn more about the retailer and final consumer as well as market trends. We expect to increase the number of Peruvian exhibitors by around 30 per cent next year and also include logistics operators and brands."

"After all our intense preparations and hard work, we are delighted to deliver another successful edition of Asia Fruit Logistica in Hong Kong," said commercial director of Asia Fruit Logistica, Wilfried Wollbold. "We are sincerely grateful to all our exhibitors and trade visitors for joining this year's edition under difficult circumstances. We feel fortunate to be part of such a great and resilient industry."

Presented by Asiafruit Magazine and Asia Fruit Logistica to celebrate excellence in Asia's fresh produce business, the Asia Fruit Awards recognise Asia's best companies in produce marketing, importing and retailing respectively, while the 'Impact Award' acknowledges significant contribution to developing the fresh fruit and vegetable business in Asia.

Marketer of miniature apples Rockit Global won the 'Marketing Campaign of the Year' for its innovative 2019 campaign in China, Indonesian importer Laris Manis Utama won the 'Importer of the Year', Chinese food retailer Yonghui Superstores scooped 'Produce Retailer of the Year' and the 'Impact Award' went to Indian importer-grower-distributor Yupaa Group.



More than 12,000 trade professionals attended the trade show

Quality has always defined the success of Asia Fruit Logistica, this year perhaps more than ever. A high percentage of exhibitors were pleasantly surprised by attendance levels, and remarked on the concentration of serious buyers and

Breakfast together with Fruitnet Media International on the second day of the show (5 September).

Asia Fruit Logistica 2019 concluded on a positive note, and confirmed its position as the essential annual event for Asia's fast-growing fresh produce market, which is set to make up over 50 per cent of global consumer spending on fresh fruit and vegetables by 2030. "We welcome you to join us again next year, when Asia Fruit Logistica takes place in the last week of September (23-25 September)," said Wollbold.

What they said

Over the three-day trade show, Asiafruit Magazine collected testimonials from a number of visitors and exhibitors. Here's what they had to say:

David Smith, Confluencer (China) - Visitor

"The quality of buyers has been exceptional. The concentrated quality of people should be one of the key gauges of success for any trade show, and this year's edition certainly delivered."

Kelvin Ong, general manager, JWM Asia (Singapore) - Exhibitor

"This year we were affected by the developments in Hong Kong. Some clients and suppliers cancelled their trip, which meant we had to cancel a few important meetings. However,

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“faced with the challenges, the organisers did everything they could: they kept us updated on social media; asked us to vote for a possible postponement to December; and shortened the last day of the show to help facilitate a smooth onward journey for participants. I look forward to Asia Fruit Logistica next year.”

Gerwin Geer, commercial strategy director, **Laava (Australia)** - Visitor

“We’ve been astonished by the number of lead generations we’ve had here. The concentration of key decision makers and influencers all in one place make it an extremely efficient way to do business on the ground. We’ve never experienced such a vibrant and impactful event over three days.”

John Ledebor, director of international business, **CMI Rewards (USA)** - Exhibitor

“It’s been booked out for the first day and a half, so the show has just been excellent for us. There’s seven people in our booth and there were times we couldn’t speak with all the visitors.”

Nabeel Essa, director, **Tasho Enterprises (Bangladesh)** - Visitor

“The show is a little quieter this year, but it’s been good for getting business done. The serious people in the business are here and we’ve been having a lot of really good meetings.”

Hadi R Abuseedo, general manager, **Abuseedo Trading (UAE)** - Exhibitor

“I love the show and it is always very positive for us. This year we saw more unique and more serious buyers and we were still busy. Around 80 per cent of the people we see here are people we already know and 20 per cent is new business. Asia Fruit Logistica is about networking and finding out about the industry and what is new.”

The next edition of Asia Fruit Logistica takes place on 23-25 September 2020 at AsiaWorld-Expo in Hong Kong. Asiafruit Congress takes place on 22 September 2020 at the same venue.



The next edition of Asia Fruit Logistica takes place on 23-25 Sept

Peru brought its biggest-ever delegation to the show

Strong start at Asiafruit Congress

Asia Fruit Logistica’s business week got off on a strong footing at Asiafruit Congress, Asia’s premier fresh produce conference event on 3 September. Held the day before Asia Fruit Logistica at the same venue, Asiafruit Congress delivered a big picture view of the key changes and developments across production, marketing and trade in Asia’s fast-moving fresh produce markets.

A wide range of expert insights on future trends were shared by high-profile speakers such as Harry Debney, CEO of leading Australian fresh produce group Costa, Raymond Yeung, chief China economist for ANZ Bank, and Jason Zhang, president of major Chinese distributor Joy Wing Mau. Afternoon workshop sessions spotlighted exciting growth areas of the business, including the role of intellectual property varieties, Spain’s emergence as a supplier to Asia, brand localisation, Asia’s booming cherry market, and the growing influence of e-commerce and New Retail on South-East Asia’s grocery market.



Costa CEO Harry Debney (second from left) addresses the panel during Asiafruit Congress

Delegates to Asiafruit Congress received the first copies of the 2019 Asiafruit Congress Statistics Handbook. The unique statistical guide to Asia’s fresh fruit and vegetable business covers 12 different markets, and features Vietnam for the first time this year, as well as a global fruit map displaying the main trade lanes for fresh fruit imports to Asia.

Asia Fruit Award winners announced

The winners of the Asia Fruit Awards were also announced at Asiafruit Congress in a ceremony that has become a centrepiece of the event.

Indian importer-grower-distributor Yupaa Group was presented with the Impact Award

Hall Forums provide information hub

Information opportunities did not stop at Asiafruit Congress, with visitors to Asia Fruit Logistica able to gain valuable takeaways and practical solutions on a range of subjects at a series of free-to-attend Hall Forums.

At Hall Forum 1, Asiafruit Business Forum offered sessions on the hour from 11am each day. From the advantages of packhouse automation to the rising marketing power of influencers, these sessions provided visitors with a wide range of practical advice for managing their fresh produce businesses.

Each morning at Hall Forum 2, Smart Horticulture Asia explored the rising influence of digitalisation and disruptive technology in the fresh produce industry. The attention turned to cold chain management and transport systems each afternoon at Hall Forum 2, where Cool Logistics Asia took centre stage.

The Hall Forums attracted a collective audience of 1,300 attendees over the course of the three days, covering a wide range of subjects including sustainable packaging, artificial intelligence, and the growing influence of e-commerce on perishable logistics.



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In addition to the Hall Forums, two events took place alongside Asia Fruit Logistica for the first time this year. The 12th International Frutic symposium was held in conjunction with Asia Fruit Logistica, bringing together academic scientists and fresh produce industry professionals for technical discussions covering innovations, new technologies and research required to promote the supply of safe, high-quality fresh fruit and vegetables.

Global Women Fresh, the newly created networking platform

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for women in the international fresh produce industry, also held its first meeting at Asia Fruit Logistica, following the success of the non-profit organisation's inaugural event at this year's Fruit Logistica trade fair in Berlin. Global Produce Events also hosted the 2nd Chinese Business Leaders

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