



By Mike Knowles

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## Fruitbox: Exclusive interview with Alk Brand, Westfalia



Conversation series continues its look at the avocado business in an exclusive interview with the group's new CEO

Avocado suppliers will be well placed to capitalise on growing consumer demand for healthy products, but must continue to improve when it comes to environmental sustainability and ethical sourcing.

That's according to Alk Brand, chief executive of the world's largest avocado grower, Westfalia.

Brand was speaking exclusively to Fruitnet's Chris White in the latest episode of Fruitbox, Fruitnet's twice-weekly interview show.

Giving his first interview in his new role, he also revealed the company was planning to expand its production further around the world, encouraged by recent new corporate investment, continued strong demand and the opening of new markets such as Japan.

Mozambique, for example, will help the group satisfy new demand in a sustainable, ethical manner.

"We are giving a lot of rural community farmers access to global markets, and that's something really to be proud of," Brand noted. "We continue to plant in Chile, Colombia and Africa, but I can assure there are more surprises up our sleeve."

### Tune into Fruitbox

Hosted by Chris White in London, Fruitbox now attracts a big audience across the global fruit and vegetable business that tunes in twice a week to

"There's definitely a move towards more healthy products and avocados are very well placed for that," Brand commented, adding that meeting new consumer requirements in terms of corporate social responsibility was something that Westfalia was already well placed to do.

"I think the new normal enables all of us to focus more on what is ethical and sustainable, on what is good for us but also good for the planet," he continued.

"We will use this opportunity to revisit everything we do in our business. I think it's going to create new opportunities for us as a business to do things better and differently."

### Greener than ever

The recent appointment of former retail buyer Johnathan Sutton to a newly created role of executive of safety and

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The latest episode of Fruitbox, as well as all previous episodes, can be found on any of the following podcast services:

environment for the multinational group underlined that commitment to addressing challenges like reducing carbon footprint and the use of plastics, he said.

Better irrigation methods and the development of improved cultivars that are more environmentally friendly were also areas in which Westfalia would continue to invest, he added.

Westfalia's expansion in the past few years has been impressive. According to Brand, there is likely to be more of the same in years to come.

"It is well known that we are growing our business fairly aggressively. We will continue to do so, but in the framework of compliance, health and safety, food safety and so on.

New growing regions in Colombia and

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