



By Carl Collen

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Work of Aart

Fruitnet speaks exclusively to Menno van Breemen, managing director at Aartsenfruit Asia



Menno van Breemen

How has Aartsenfruit's Asian operation developed over the years?

Menno van Breemen: The strategy of Aartsenfruit Asia has been, from the start, similar to that in Europe. We handle everything fresh – an extremely wide range of fruits and vegetables, directly from the farms of our partners from every corner of the globe, and we are distributing that to a very broad range of countries in the Far East – more than 17 countries. This makes Aartsenfruit the one and only true international gateway for fruit and vegetables.

During recent years we have established more distribution points outside the big traditional cities or markets, and that is a development we will keep pursuing. We target second and possibly third tier cities. Additionally, we see online sales growing a lot in Asia, and we are very aware of this.

What are the main challenges you face in Asia?

MvB: Asia is a growing market where new opportunities arise very quickly. Looking at its population, it's a market that is having a growing influence on the fruit trade

misconception that it's an easy market because of the high demand, when actually it is not easy at all. The right product must be placed in exactly the right place to get results. You need local people with local languages and an on-the-spot presence to control the business. Every country has different ways of doing business.

What are the key products that you supply your Asian markets with?

MvB: Grapes and citrus are the main products in terms of volume into Asia for Aartsenfruit Asia, but the strength lies in the big range of different products we handle. Besides an ever-growing demand for cherries, we see growth in a whole line of products, which includes, for example, exotic products by air.

Which are your most important markets across Asia?

MvB: In terms of volume, China is the biggest market, but the steepest growth for us, for sure, is in the South East Asian countries. Within Aartsenfruit Asia the spread is quite even and we do not depend on a certain country or location. We are spread across approximately 60 distribution points in Asia, which is a

What trends do you see in your key Asian markets?

MvB: As I said before, online sales are taking off in Asia, so distribution and (cooled) logistics will be a challenge in the years to come. Besides that, organic is a growing market in some Asian countries in the premium segment.

From a general point of view, consumers increasingly want to know where their fruit originates from and how it is produced. I think it's a good thing that people are more aware of food safety and that the consumer sees the positive health benefits of fruit.

What promotions do you carry out?

MvB: Within Aartsenfruit Asia we spend a lot of time on marketing and branding. We have our own home brands such as UNO, Capito, Mamba, Grandezza and Tooty, and we deal with the brands of our partners on the producer side. We are very keen on building brands with our partners around the world, and to help establish this we educate our customers as much as we can. As Aartsenfruit Asia we also carry out market promotions or create specially requested packaging for our customers.

<http://www.fruitnet.com/americafruit/article/1474/parts-of-san-diego-quarantined-as-psyllid-count-mounts>

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worldwide. There is a big

strength. In terms of new markets, last season we started distributing Australian grapes into Japan.

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