

Fruit SA signs MoU to access fruit market in China

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Fruit South Africa has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Peoples Republic of China in a bid to strengthen collaboration and to ensure market access for fruit between the two countries.

In a statement on Wednesday, Fruit SA said its vice chairperson, **Willem Bestbier** signed the MoU with his counterpart, **Wang Xin**, the vice chairperson of the Chinese Quarantine and Inspection Association (CIQA) on Monday.

Fruit SA said the objective of the MOU was to address the challenges that were experienced currently in expanding and broadening market access which took longer than desired.

With the implementation of the agreement and the acceleration of market access, the fruit industry aims to increase its exports to China to about 350 000 t in the next five years, which would be a boom for the agriculture economy and also for job creation as more orchards would be established.

To date, South Africa can only export apples, citrus and table grapes to China and the process was painstakingly slow, Fruit SA said.

The agreement is envisaged to ensure that the two organisations support their governments work in opening markets for fruits by providing the required

technical information and guidance to speed-up the negotiations process for market access for new products.

The governments of SA and China are negotiating market access for pears, which would be followed by avocados and then other types of fruits.

The parties agreed to use the MOU to provide the support required during market access negotiations through sharing information on pest risk analysis, quarantine and inspections regulations, technology exchanges related to fruit production and market developments.

China remains a country with the biggest market given its population of about 1.38-billion.

Fruit SA said during 2015 China imported 3.8-million tons of fruit valued at \$5-billion.

South Africa exported about 110 000 t of fruit to China during that period.

Given that South Africa exports about 2.7-million tons of fruit globally, Fruit SA said exports to China were very small.

The organisation said it had been working hard in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries to gain more access to export other fruit types to China. 🇿🇦

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