

MOU expected to facilitate access for SA fruit exports to China

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In a move designed to speed up market access for South African fruit exports to China, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been signed between South Africa and China.

The vice chairperson of Fruit South Africa (Fruit SA), Willem Bestbier, inked the deal with his counterpart, vice chairperson of the Chinese Quarantine and Inspection Association (CIQA), Wang Xin.

In 2015 China imported 3.8 million tons of fruit valued at US\$ 5 billion dollars. South Africa's share was 110 000 tons – and given that the country currently exports about 2.7 million tons of fruits globally, the value of its current exports to China is very small.

Fruit SA has been working hard in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) to gain access for a more diverse fruit variety.



“The agreement will 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 negotiation process for market access for new products,” a Fruit SA spokesman said.

“Currently South Africa is permitted to export apples, citrus and table grapes to China and the process is painstakingly slow. The two governments are currently negotiating market access for pears which will be followed by avocados and then other types of fruits.”

According to Fruit SA, the two parties will use the MOU to provide the support required during market access negotiations by sharing information in the areas of pest risk analysis, quarantine and inspection regulations, technology exchanges related to fruit production, and market developments.

“With the implementation of this agreement and the acceleration of market access, the fruit industry aims to increase its exports to China to about 350000 tons in the next five years,” the spokesman said.

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