

Reemoon makes top sorting technology more accessible to South African fruit growers

Reemoon, which holds about 80% of the market share of citrus sorting equipment in the Chinese market, is experiencing rapid growth in its overseas business, which currently accounts for 15% of its total business.



The six-lane sorting machine at Ngonini Estate, Swaziland (Photo supplied by Reemoon)

In South Africa, one of its major areas of international expansion, the company is focusing on the citrus industry in Limpopo Province and Swaziland. The first Reemoon machine was installed in Hoedspruit three years ago and since then five more sorting machines have been installed, with another three on the way.

The first four-line optic sorting machine was installed at Alesia Boerdery in Letsitele in February this year and attracted a lot of attention, with some farmers travelling more than 800km to the open day. In Swaziland, at Ngonini Estate, a six-lane sorting machine has been installed, with another on the way for its sister estate, Tambuti Estate.

"The price of Reemoon equipment is approximately 40 to 45% lower than other citrus sorting equipment currently available in South Africa, but of very similar quality, because the machines are manufactured in-house at our facility in Ganzhou City in Jiangxi Province in China," says Pierneef Smit, Reemoon's country manager for South Africa. "Through word-of-mouth as well as our exhibition stand at Fruit Logistica in Hong Kong last year, Reemoon is becoming better known to the South African industry."

Reemoon offers a year's warranty on its equipment. Optical sorting technology is becoming more accessible to smaller players in the citrus industry through better affordability.



Reemoon's two-lane sorting machine in action at Bufland Boerdery (photo supplied by Reemoon)

The company aims to differentiate itself through its after-sales service. "For us, everything revolves around that. The unique thing about Reemoon is that we offer in-house technical service. We know the equipment and we act preventatively, before anything goes wrong, in order to prolong the lifetime of the equipment. We pay a routine visit every two weeks to all the farms where our equipment has been installed, whether there's a problem or not. As we grow, we're going to appoint more technicians, each based in the different main citrus areas to be on-hand within a few hours."



The chromatmap function of Reemoon's optic sorting software

Reemoon software is developed in Beijing, from where an IT expert is at all times stationed in South Africa on a rotating basis, in order to assist with all software issues that might arise and to aid farmers in obtaining all the data captured by the sorting machine, as well as to tweak the data parameters. Furthermore, via TeamViewer, Reemoon can assist in solving IT challenges from anywhere in the country.

"We are the only Chinese company that has the capacity to supply all core technologies in electronic sorting machines. Our technical capacities cover sorting by weight, diameter, colour, shape, and blemish control (external quality) and non-destructive internal quality control (including Brix, acidity and other internal defects)," explains Hill Zhou, overseas business manager at Reemoon.

The high-speed camera (capable of 11 photos per fruit, 11 photos per second) employed in the optic sorting machine is German, the motors and gear boxes are Italian and the fruit cups run on a non-oilable chain from Japan. At 70% speed and 70% cup-fill, the line carries between 5 and 5.5t of navels per hour.

"When people ask how I calculate what value our new Reemoon sorting machine has added to our enterprise, I tell them I measure it in years added to my life. My stress levels are much lower. I quite enjoy being in the packhouse, watching the new sorting machine,"

says Dewald Eksteen of Bufland Boerdery, who estimates that they're able to pack one and a half times more fruit than before.

The farm plans to sort its peaches and nectarines with the machine later in the season, and in the Lowveld, a Reemoon machine is already put to use to sort passion fruit by weight. In China it is widely used for kiwifruit sorting.

Reemoon also offers post-harvest equipment processing equipment and there are plans for more expansion in that area in South Africa.

Reemoon will attend Asia Fruit Logistica in September; visit them in Hall 5/U-01.

For more information:

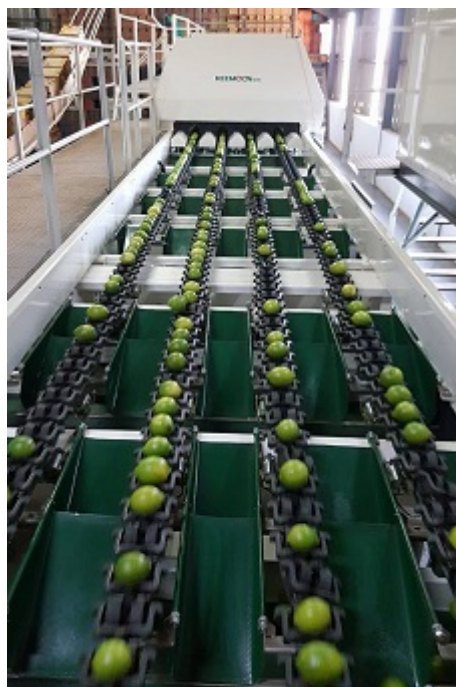
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