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Mainland cherry growers' triumph in China

Cherry growers from the Australian mainland are in high spirits after completing their first full season of trade via airfreight with China since being granted market access.

Two trade events held in Guangzhou and Shanghai last week saw Australian cherry growers and industry representatives celebrate the partnership and share industry insights with key distributor, importer and retail partners.

A survey of event attendees highlighted the freshness, quality and taste as the key differentiating characteristics of Australian cherries.

Around 92 per cent of attendees cited freshness via airfreight as the key reason for purchasing Australian cherries for Chinese consumers.

The events were hosted under the Hort Innovation [Taste Australia](#) banner, which serves to promote the freshness of Australia's popular seasonal fruits nationwide by showcasing Australia's unique environment, growing conditions, production methods and supply chain characteristics.

Australian Cherries were first exported to China in 2013, however this was limited to fruit from Tasmania. This season was the first complete season of cherry exports by mainland growers.

Hort Innovation acting trade-lead, Dianne Phan, said this season represented a major milestone in trade relations and a "win win" for both nations.

"China is Australia's largest two-way trading partner, with the market for Australian horticultural exports to China rising from \$13 million in 2010 to over \$500 million in 2017," she said.

"Chinese consumers now have access to Australia's full season of cherry availability. The number and variety of Australian cherries entering China have increased, traders and consumers have more choices, and the supply opportunities for high-quality imported fruits has also expanded."

Ms Phan said exporting the produce via air freight meant that Australian cherries could be picked and packed fresh from farm and available for purchase in Chinese retailers from 96 hours post-harvest.

Australian cherries are grown across six states, producing around 16,000 tonnes per annum.

Victoria, New South Wales and Tasmania are the largest cherry growing regions and provide complementary supply windows.

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