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Chinese New Year spurs Aussie stonefruit frenzy

Australian peaches, plums, nectarines and apricots are proving more popular than ever in supermarkets in China, Malaysia and Thailand in the lead up to Chinese New Year Celebrations tomorrow.

Spurred by a targeted campaign being delivered with growers through the Hort Innovation [Taste Australia](#) initiative, product launches have seen consumers lining up to get a taste of premium Australian produce.

In Thailand, a Bangkok Tesco store showcased the produce with a wall of stone fruit and red lanterns to mark the lead up to Chinese New Year.

Tesco produce category manager Lapa Leelarpeerapan said many customers were seeking premium Australian stonefruit.

"Australian produce is good quality with a good taste," she said. "We do sampling to let our customers try it, and they love it. These promotions have proven really successful."

In China, the campaign recently launched at leading retail chain City Super, where high-end Chinese New Year stonefruit gift hampers and cooked samples created by local celebrity chef, Brian Tan, drew a crowd.

City Super manager Mr. Eugene Gong said Australian stonefruit is a delicacy.

"The Chinese New Year event we held for Australian stonefruit has received a massive welcome from our elite shoppers and members," he said. "Premium Australian fruits are very popular in China, so we are thrilled to be a long-term retail partner with Taste Australia."

The Aussie stonefruit campaign will continue in Chinese retail outlets until March with regular sampling in supermarkets across Beijing and Shanghai, livestreaming, promotions and We-Chat.

At the same time, Australian growers and exporters – Montague, T&G Global, LPG Cutri Fruit Global and Nutrafruit for the Queen Garnet plum variety – will participate in industry co-promotions in various areas of China including tailored events at wholesale markets and more.

In Malaysia, staff at leading supermarket chain AEON had similar positive feedback. Senior manager perishable and dairy division Irene Khor Kim Ean said their campaign, which runs till March, is all about a Celebration of Flavours ushering in a prosperous Chinese New Year.

"Australia has a good reputation for supplying quality premium products and our customers love them," she said. "A large portion of our produce originates from Australia and we are committed to selling more Australian produce in future."

Hort Innovation marketing and international trade general manager Justine Coates said Australia's reputation for providing great produce to South East Asia is set to grow and the export figures are already encouraging.

"The growth of stone fruit exports to South East Asia has been phenomenal," she said. "Exports went from 8.6M tonnes in 2015 to more than 59M tonnes in 2019, with a 76 per cent hike between 2018 and 2019 alone."

"The success of the Taste Australia initiative can be attributed to the dedication and support from Australian growers, and exporters, retailers and delivery partners in each key market, and Austrade who act as official representatives in-country, providing valuable support."

"Hort Innovation looks forward to continuing to work with our stakeholders to strengthen our relationships and reputation across our key trading markets, and build new links for the benefit of growers."

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