

# WORLD NEWS

Compiled by Regina Cronje  
ARC-INSTITUTE FOR TROPICAL AND  
SUBTROPICAL CROPS

## AUSTRALIA

### Lychee love affair between North Queensland and Taiwan



**QUEENSLAND PRODUCERS WILL** have access to lychee varieties from Taiwan as part of a Memorandum of Understanding agreed to by the Queensland and Taiwanese Governments. Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries Lianne Donaldson said Agriculture and Fisheries and Trade and Investment Queensland had facilitated this investment which would open the door to joint research projects with Taiwan. "The benefit for our lychee growers is the expected increase in export market share and access to new varieties and markets in the longer term," the Minister said. "The Taiwanese have been attracted to Queensland because it has the opposite season to northern hemisphere production. "Six specially-developed varieties will be made available to Queensland farmers for testing in their orchards in the north and south of the state. If they do well in Queensland conditions, Australian growers and Taiwan could then consider a joint project to export to other Asian countries as well as supplying the Australian domestic market. The first step is to import several hundred lychee trees, which will be placed in a secure Australian Government biosecurity facility in Victoria for up to twelve months before being moved to a nursery in Queensland for broader planting on local farms. One of the varieties Taiwan will send to us is called 'Rose Red', which is a large lychee with a slightly rose fragrance, better shelf life, and is easier to peel." ❖

Source: <http://www.tiq.qld.gov.au/lychee-love-affair-north-queensland-taiwan/>; published 14 July 2016; shortened

## INDIA

### Packing solution Company presents shelf life extension for exotic fruits



**UFLEX LTD.,** ONE of India's largest global flexible packaging solution companies, has been working with customers in India to extend the shelf life of exotic fruits. India grows exotic fruit such as litchi, rambutan and mangosteen, and the market demand for these products has been increasing year on year at a rapid pace. The successes of Flexfresh in major fruit and vegetables led to the trying out of the Shelf Life Extension solution for rambutan. The issue is that the product has to be consumed within 48 hours of harvest and could only be sold to neighbouring markets. The product loses about 8% moisture per day when stored in ambient conditions and its skin turns black on day two due to moisture loss making the product unfit for consumption. Trials were conducted under 10° Celsius using the Flexfresh 60\*40 Liners inside the reusable plastic crates. The product was packed both in bunches and also in punnets for retail sales. Explaining the trial results, Siva Shankaran, Vice President - Flexfresh™, said that the harvested product was packed in ambient conditions in the liner bag and closed hermetically. This ensured that the available oxygen inside the liner bag was consumed almost immediately. The temperature of the produce under refrigeration was going down to the target, ensuring that the respiration rate was brought down gradually without any shock to the product. The Carbon Dioxide further ensured that the product colour was maintained and also offered protection from fungal infections. With the product respiring under high humidity, the weight loss is a thing of the past. The product took almost two days to awaken back to the higher respiration rates and this allows a window of opportunity for the retailer to have the product reach the customer in good condition. Flexfresh is sold in liner bags suitable for international standard size open top boxes and crates. Commenting on the success of FlexFresh, Chairman and Managing Director, Uflex Limited, Mr Ashok Chaturvedi said: "Perfotec and Uflex are complementing each other's capabilities to globally address the issue of shelf life extension of fresh produce in the most innovative, scientific and efficient manner". ❖

Source: <http://www.freshplaza.com/article/161787/India-Packing-solution-company-presents-shelf-life-extension-for-exotic-fruits>; published 10 August 2016; shortened

# WORLD NEWS

## VIETNAM

### Vietnamese lychees win the heart of Australian consumers

#### VIETNAMESE LYCHEE FARMERS

and traders have turned to new export markets to find higher prices and more stable demand. Vietnam has exported over 10 tons of lychees to Australia, the government's online news portal cited Vietnam Trade Office in Australia as saying. Last year, Vietnam exported its very first consignment of lychees to Australia and the U.S.. Even though the volume was small, just 35 tons combined, it was a significant step. Industry experts expect more exports of the fruit in the years to come if the country can meet stricter U.S. and Australian standards and quarantine regulations. Australian consumers' interest in Vietnamese tropical fruit has grown well, reaching a larger customer base, from the east coastal cities of Sydney and Melbourne last year to the west coastal Perth this year. As Australia's Department of Agriculture has approved imports of lychees that are treated at a new food irradiation facility in Hanoi, Vietnamese farmers now no longer have to travel nearly 2,000 kilometers from the north to the south for fruit irradiation treatment. Vietnamese lychees have become more price competitive as the new irradiation



Photo by VnExpress/Giang Huy

center has helped farmers cut costs. However, the fruit, mainly shipped by air to Australia, is still not as cheap as Chinese lychees which are all shipped by sea, said Vietnam Trade Office under Vietnamese Embassy. The Ministry of Industry and Trade forecast that the lychee supply for the domestic market this year will record at 78,000 tons while 52,000 tons will be exported to foreign markets. China is Vietnam's biggest lychee export market, buying on average some of 60 percent of the annual crop, according to official statistics. ❖

Source: <http://e.vnexpress.net/news/business/vietnamese-lychees-win-the-heart-of-australian-consumers-3432290.html>; author An Hong; published 7 July 2016; shortened

## MADAGASCAR

### Lychee season very early

**THE LYCHEE SEASON** in Madagascar is much earlier this year compared to other years. Export volume should reach 18,000 tons and Malagasy producers are expecting to end the season earlier than planned. Once temperature and rainfall data has been analysed and a sufficient quantity of fruit is deemed to be mature, an important date at the start of the season is decided upon – the date that export boats are loaded. This year they could be loaded by the 10th-12th November, compared to the 19th November in 2015 and the 17th November in 2014. Technicians say that “fruit setting was good this year, the load of fruit is higher than last year.” Every year, tens of thousands of ton of lychees arrive on the international market. Production increased over the 2012-2013 season when Madagascar was able to export almost 17,500 tons. This volume increased to 18,000 tons in 2013-2014, but decreased to 17,000 tons in 2014-2015. Last year, Malagasy producers aimed at a 20,000 ton export, but forecast data is not yet available. ❖

Source: <http://www.freshplaza.com/article/164997/Madagascar-Lychee-season-very-early>; published 13 October 2016

## GENERAL

### The fruit of love and life

**AT A TIME** when men wooed women with flowers, a Chinese emperor chose a different path. Legend has it that emperor Tang Minghuang of the Tang Dynasty was in love with Yang Guifei. She was the emperor's favorite concubine and Tang would do anything to please his ladylove.

Yang's favorite fruit was lychee. At the time, this fruit was not available at the capital where they lived. The emperor would therefore send his men all the way to South China to fetch the

fruit for his beloved mistress. Lychee fruits, till date, are held in high regard in China. In fact, many varieties of lychees are named after wealthy and influential Chinese families. The health and beauty benefits of the lychee fruit are aplenty. In Chinese medicine, these fruits are sometimes used to treat abdominal pain, coughs, neuralgia and swollen glands. A tea made from the peels helps alleviate diarrhea and is also said to cure skin rashes. Lychee also helps in haircare. As the fruit is a rich source of Vitamin

C, regular consumption of lychees help ensure adequate supply of blood to the hair follicles. While it is good to eat the fruits fresh, several lychee-based products have made their way to the market. Besides packed lychee foods, and drinks, soaps, shampoos, and other cosmetics, which use lychee as their base, are selling like hotcakes. ❖

Source: <http://atimes.com/2016/05/food-lychee-the-fruit-of-love-and-life/>; author Caroline Diana; published 12 May 2016