

ASEAN countries competing for bigger slice of Chinese fruit market

At this point in time, Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam and Philippines are competing fiercely for a larger share of China's fruit market.

According to statistics from the Customs Department of China in 2018, that nation imported fruits worth US\$7.62 billion, up 36 per cent from the previous year. The total imported quantity exceeded 5.52 million tonnes and was a 25 per cent increase over the previous year.



China imported 1.34 million tonnes of fruit from Vietnam, 1.17 million tonnes from the Philippines and 1.02 million tonnes from Thailand. The five fruit China imported the most were: cherry, durian, banana, grape and orange. The director-general of the Department of Trade Negotiations at the Commerce Ministry, Auramon Supthaweethum, said there were many factors that led to intense competition among ASEAN countries to export fruit to China such as the ASEAN-China Free Trade Area (FTA), and Chinese tourists' love of Thai fruits.

Also, the ongoing trade war between the United States and China has led to China imposing a 30 per cent tariff on fruit from the United States, resulting in China importing more fruit from ASEAN. Currently China allows Malaysia to export 10 kinds of fruit, including longan, mangosteen, lychee, coconut, watermelon, durian and pear, which will be effective from October 12. Malaysia is also negotiating with China for export of jackfruit. China has allowed Vietnam to export nine kinds of fruit such dragon fruit, watermelon, lychee, longan, mango, banana, rambutan, pineapple and mangosteen, effective from August 27.

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