

## Kenya set to gain Chinese market access for avocados, mangoes

Kenya and China are set to sign a phytosanitary agreement next month that would open up the Asian country's market to many horticultural products including avocados and mangoes.

According to local press, the Kenyan president will lead a delegation of horticultural farmers and traders to China in November for the 1st Shanghai Import Expo.

The deal is expected to be signed during the event and would open the door for more than 40% of Kenya's fresh produce exports.

The information was revealed on Thursday during a cabinet meeting, according to the Daily Nation.

The Head of State said in the meeting that the agreement will also allow exports of cashew nuts and stevia, a natural sweetener grown in the Rift Valley.

During the Shanghai visit, the Kenyan President is also expected to sign a memorandum of understanding for the establishment of a trade negotiation working group.

"Another expected outcome of the President's visit to Shanghai will be the signing of a MoU for the establishment of a trade negotiation working group whose mandate will be to negotiate trade tariffs, especially on tea and coffee exports to China as well as explore additional markets for the country's cash crops," said a government statement.

The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics stated that China exported Sh390 billion (US\$27.2 million) while Kenya exported Sh10 billion (US\$697 million) to China.

Kenya exports avocados to the U.K. worth about Sh240 million (US\$16.7 million), and the revival of the cashew nut industry is a key point of the government to address the plight of farmers, according to local media.

Kenya's high annual growth rate for avocado exports helped it to overtake South Africa last year as the continent's largest exporter.

The East African country exported a record 51,507 metric tons (MT) in 2017 compared to South Africa's 43,492MT, according to International Trade Center data.