



FRUIT LOGISTICA 2018: Find fresh opportunities in new technology

One of the most important trends in today's fresh produce business is its increasing ability to deliver products that are ripe and ready at the right time. Those companies brave enough to invest in technology to ensure products meet consumer expectations are now reaping the rewards of that bravery. What's more, their success could inspire further advances.

Visitors to next year's FRUIT LOGISTICA, the leading global fresh produce industry trade fair, which takes place in Berlin on 7-9 February 2018, are eager to learn how technology – from research into new varieties to hi-tech processing equipment – can boost product quality. They are also searching for the next big





check, " explains the company's Sarah Hellemans.

Those improvements have helped all Europe's major markets to register double-digit growth in avocado import value over the past five years (ITC data). In the UK, where the increase was 35 per cent, Walmart-owned retailer Asda and supplier Worldwide Fruit recently began using Dutch firm Aweta's acoustic sensor system to measure the fruit's firmness. As a result, the retailer is now able to market the product in store at three distinct levels of ripeness.



thing, the product that might emulate recent success stories like avocados, blueberries and sweet potatoes. FRUIT LOGISTICA Global Brand Manager Wilfried Wollbold comments: "As consumers become more interested in eating healthily, fresh produce suppliers and their service providers have an enormous opportunity to satisfy that demand. To do so, however, they must show that they can offer buyers tasty, high-quality products that are also convenient, safe, readily available and, in many cases, sourced ethically and sustainably. FRUIT LOGISTICA is the best place to do that by far."

Avocados are perhaps the best example of how such innovation is combining with other improvements, like year-round availability, to drive up consumption. Belgian importer Special Fruit has bought into new technology to ensure better results. "We've invested in more ripening cells, more ripening experts and state-of-the-art machinery from MAF Roda that sorts and packs avocados in a more efficient way, and performs an extra quality

FRUIT LOGISTICA 2018 will also illustrate how the same upward trend is being noted for other products like mangoes and papayas, driven by technological improvement. For more mainstream items like apples, meanwhile, the introduction of better technology – like the first ever Unical 8.0 grader, installed earlier this year by Unitec at Italian exporter Minguzzi – is equally important. In short, FRUIT LOGISTICA 2018 offers plenty of inspiration to those hoping to expand, diversify or simply make a start in the fresh fruit and vegetable business.

Companies wanting to exhibit at FRUIT LOGISTICA 2018 can still register, provided they do so online by 31 July 2017. Support is available from the FRUIT LOGISTICA team in Berlin or one of organiser Messe Berlin's representatives in 150 countries worldwide.

Part four of the FRUIT LOGISTICA trend report "Fresh Produce Trade 2025" is available online

Increasing health awareness, the demand for more transparency, rapidly-changing developments: These three megatrends in consumer behaviour were identified by the Gottfried Duttweiler Institute in the "Fresh Produce Trade 2025" trend study commissioned by FRUIT LOGISTICA. The burning question: What impact will these trends have on the fresh produce trade?

First the good news: The growing need for healthy food makes it very likely that demand will increase for fruit and vegetables. Viral marketing campaigns can also have a positive impact, since they provide the opportunity to reach a large audience at relatively low cost. But there's another side to the coin: Viral campaigns are difficult to con-

trol and can lead to fast changes in trends. Hyped-up products can also pose a problem for the produce industry, since there are limitations to the extent that natural products can be subjected to sudden changes.

To prepare for the trend report, interviews were conducted with international experts across the entire value chain. This helped identify the far-reaching changes from an industry perspective. The most relevant fields of action were defined with expert support from the renowned Gottlieb Duttweiler Institute, a Swiss think tank. The aim is to offer the industry ideas, incentives and insights, and to initiate a dialogue focusing on future developments in the fresh produce business.

Parts one, two, three and four of the trend report are available on the website. The complete study is also available to download in German, English, French, Italian and Spanish. ♦

