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China - Peoples Republic of

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Reverse Trade Mission Results in Purchase of \$1.7 Million of Fresh Fruit

Report Categories:

Export Accomplishments - Events

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Report Highlights:

We recently learned that a Chinese importer from an inland city purchased US\$1.7 million of fresh U.S. fruit as a result of joining a reverse trade mission organized by ATO Shanghai in 2011. This was the first time the buyer visited the United States. The reverse trade mission included the Produce Marketing Association's Fresh Summit trade show in Atlanta, Georgia and field visits in Washington State. Several U.S. producer associations supported this mission to make it a success. The 2011/2012 season was the first time this Chinese company imported fresh fruit from the United States. The importer has told ATO staff that the direct imports would not have happened without this reverse trade mission.

Our 2011 reverse trade mission to the Produce Marketing Association's (PMA) Fresh Summit Trade show and the State of Washington generated US\$1.7 million in sales from a new importer in a second tier city. The importer reports that they would not have directly purchased fruit from the United States without this mission. Six Chinese buyers paid their own expenses and were supported by an ATO Shanghai staff member on the mission from Oct 8-16, 2011. Critical support was also provided by the Washington Apple Commission and the Northwest Cherry Growers.

Confidence about Chinese demand for U.S. fruit and the ability of U.S. producers to deliver a high quality product led this mission's new Emerging City Market importer to purchase US\$900,000 of apples and US\$800,000 of cherries from Washington last season. 2011/2012 was the first season that this Chinese company imported fresh fruit from the United States. The importer told ATO staff that the direct imports would not have happened without the reverse trade mission. The exporter was very satisfied with the results of the mission and looks forward to a long-term business relationship.

The reverse trade mission included two parts: field visits in Washington State and a visit to the PMA show in Atlanta, Georgia. In Washington State, the mission visited orchards and packing houses in Yakima, a major Washington apple growing region, and had meetings with trading companies. The field visits were very helpful in demonstrating how American farmers and packers consistently deliver a high quality product. In addition, the Washington Apple Commission and Northwest Cherry Growers jointly hosted a luncheon meeting to welcome the Chinese buyers and introduced growers, packers and shippers to them.

During the PMA show, the traders made new contacts, enhanced relationships with their existing suppliers, and discussed future cooperation. The U.S.A. Pear Bureau also organized a workshop to introduce U.S. pears to the Chinese buyers.