

## China opens Italian pear dossier

Asian country is apparently preparing the ground for negotiations over possible market access for Italy's fresh pears



**I**taly is ready to begin formal discussions with China aimed at securing access for its fresh pear exports, according to one of the country's leading industry representatives.

Speaking at a press conference to promote the trade event Futurpera, Emilia-Romagna's agricultural councillor Simona Caselli told reporters that China had already established a project to investigate the potential for adding Italian pears to its fresh produce import basket.

"We are going to do a lot of work on China in the coming months because the government has opened a dossier for pears," Caselli confirmed. "We will meet the Chinese authorities and present some reports on pears – particularly [Emilia-Romagna's] PGI, which has the most appropriate working practices in place for export – with the aim of opening the Chinese market."

As reported by Italiafruit News, leading players in the Italian and international pear business are preparing to attend Futurpera in Ferrara on 16 November.

They include marketing consortia Opera and Origine Group, both of which are comprised of various leading Italian pear exporters working together to boost their standing and success on international markets.

Together, Opera and Origine now represent almost two-fifths of Italy's entire pear production, and a notably higher proportion of its fresh pear exports.

This season, Italy is expected to produce around 480,000 tonnes of pears, with production of the most common variety, the country's distinctive Abate Fetel, said to be up by 10 per cent compared with last year.

According to Caselli, Futurpera presents a useful opportunity for those working in the pear category to raise its profile.

"The challenge is to promote the pear's nutritional properties to the younger generations and Futurpera is one of the events that is going in this direction," she commented.

Gianni Amidei, president of interprofessional organisation OI Pera, echoed that sentiment, adding that the presence of international competitors was indeed a positive factor that would push Italian companies to improve their production and commercial activities further.