



NEW ZEALAND EMBASSY, HA NOI

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Viet Nam is now the first and the only country exporting dragon fruit to New Zealand

(Hanoi, 28 May 2014) New Zealand Ambassador to Viet Nam Haike Manning and Director General Nguyen Xuan Hong from the Plant Protection Department of Viet Nam's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development signed the Official Assurance Programme for the export of dragon fruits from Viet Nam to New Zealand. Vietnamese leaders from Ministry of Industry and Trade, Ministry of Foreign Affairs also witnessed the signing ceremony.

The Official Assurance Programme sets out procedures and activities used prior to export to ensure that fresh dragon fruit imported from Viet Nam to New Zealand meet biosecurity and import health requirements.

'I am delighted to announce that Viet Nam is now the first and only country approved to export dragon fruit to New Zealand as we do not currently import dragon fruit from any other country. I am sure imports will start arriving on New Zealand shores soon so that New Zealand consumers can start enjoying this wonderful tropical fruit', New Zealand Ambassador to Viet Nam, Haike Manning said.

In 2011, Vietnamese mangoes were approved to be exported to New Zealand and New Zealand authorities are currently working on a request to allow the export of Vietnamese rambutan to New Zealand.

The Viet Nam - New Zealand Premium Fruit Variety Development Project sponsored by New Zealand's official development assistance programme has also contributed significantly to the growth of the dragon fruit industry in Vietnam. Researchers from New Zealand's Plant & Food Research in collaboration with Vietnamese Agricultural Research Institute successfully found ways to control a dragon fruit canker disease that has broken out across Asia, and these methods will be soon used across Viet Nam.



Another unexpected success of the project has been the legal protection of a specific dragon fruit variety (LD5) and sale of the licence for the fruit to a commercial farm. This is the first time a fruit variety in Viet Nam has been legally protected in this way and demonstrates that of fruit varieties that are legally protected can deliver premiums to producers through increased market recognition. New dragon fruit varieties being developed under the project will also be bred to have resistance to the dragon fruit canker disease.

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Background

- Trade is an important part of the bilateral relationship between New Zealand and Viet Nam. At the end of 2013, total two-way goods trade increased from \$761.7 million to \$926.8 million, a 21.7 percent increase from 2012.
- Trade in agricultural products is an important part of this. New Zealand exports to Viet Nam are predominantly dairy products (52%) followed by wood products (13%).
- New Zealand's imports from Viet Nam are more varied, with steady growth in imports of a number of food and beverage products, particularly coconuts, crustaceans and coffee. Other growth categories for imports include telephones/cellphones and computers, which showed a 125 percent and 242 percent increase on the previous year.