

Blueberry company Alpine Chile has made the decision to open a commercial office in Qingdao, in order to capitalize on the fruit's growing popularity in China.

The office will be headed up by Rita Zeng, who previously worked with China's largest blueberry grower, Wallen Agriculture.

"The primary purpose will be the task of keeping better contact and communication with our current clients, and maintaining a strong presence on the issue of verification and control of the condition and quality of arrivals," Alpine's general manager Gian Paolo Bassi told [www.freshfruitportal.com](http://www.freshfruitportal.com).

Bassi said there would also be a focus on the logistics and operations of customers, accompanying them during fruit receivals to ensure the fruit meets the right standards.

Through the new venture, which officially opened on Oct. 1, he also intends to have better information about Asian markets, particularly in China through its key sales areas of Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou and Hong Kong.

Another purpose of the office is to find new commercial clients and engage in more blueberry programs in the market.



Gian Paolo Bassi

"There is a lot of interest [in China] but in reality, not everyone ends up sealing commercial operations. It is very important to evaluate analyze who [you're dealing] with," he said.

"The idea is to consolidate long term trade relations, which is our strategy, and for that we need to generate requests and know who is in this [business] regularly, especially those who are oriented toward blueberries.

Even though China is a very demanding market in terms of quality and transport - operationally and logistically - Bassi sees extraordinary possibilities for all fruits in the market.

He highlighted that the Chinese industry was undertaking various international seminars relating to blueberries, pointing out issues such as consumption habits and the fruit's health benefits.

Alpine exporter 172 metric tons (MT) of blueberries to continental China last year, according to figures from the Chilean Fruit Exporters Association (ASOEX).



Alpine Chile is a subsidiary of Florida-based Alpine Fresh.

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