Westfalia Fruit celebrates 75 years leading global avocado markets and Doing Good

Westfalia Fruit, the leading global avocado supplier celebrates its 75th anniversary this year. Founded by the legendary philanthropist and geologist Dr Hans Merensky in 1949, Westfalia continues to stay true to its purpose of Doing Good.

Ahead of his time, 75 years ago Dr Merensky had the foresight to establish the Hans Merensky Trust to ensure that his pioneering spirit and support of local communities would be protected for future generations.

From its roots in South Africa, Westfalia has an established global presence across 17 countries and 5 continents, uniquely working in partnership with local communities and investing in a sustainable future. Below are a few examples of how Westfalia continues to make a positive impact locally and across the global industry.

New technology targeting food safety

Westfalia Fruit has successfully tested an innovative and natural method of ensuring food safety within the supply chain. This new method uses a probiotic uniquely distributed within a water mist circulated in the ripening room.

The trials found a 65% reduction in micro levels in the testing room compared to the control room. Avocados that had been treated with the probiotic remained mould free for up to fifteen days, which resulted in a reduction of internal rot of around 20%. This method has other clear benefits, eliminating the need for chemical cleaning materials and avoiding the need to shut down ripening rooms for cleaning.

Leading sustainable growth in Asia

Looking ahead, Westfalia Fruit has capped off an exciting year of growth in India and China, two of the fastest growing avocado markets in the world, as well as Japan. The company is also forecasting continued market growth across the region into the latter half of the decade.

Westfalia entered the Indian market in 2022, quickly establishing itself as the market leader and largest importer of avocados into the country. Initially, around 200 tonnes of Westfalia avocados entered India but this has already grown to around 4000 tonnes, a more than tenfold increase in just two years. Australia recently gained access for its avocados with South Africa close to also gaining Indian market access.

In China, the avocado market saw a downturn during pandemic lockdowns but in 2023 this turned around and the market there is now looking more optimistic. In August South Africa celebrated after its avocados were granted access to the Chinese market.

In 2023, Westfalia in Peru celebrated a Japanese success story, significantly increasing imports to Japan by 58% establishing Westfalia as a leading supplier to the market. In addition, South Africa was recently granted avocado market access to Japan. Westfalia will work towards expanding and lengthening the season with fruit from Peru and South Africa complimenting each other in the market.

Helping the climate and Colombian biodiversity

Westfalia is leading a unique effort in Colombia to care for a nationally protected area on its land in the Sonsón municipality, north-west of the capital Bogotá.

Since 2021, Westfalia Colombia has been working with the local government, community action committees and local producer associations, to protect the Maitamá páramo and restore ecologically important areas within its production farms as well as wider local ecosystems. More than 7000 trees have been planted and Westfalia Colombia is on track to plant more than 20,000 trees by 2025.

Westfalia's community and sustainability projects worldwide reflect the company's sustainable approach to business and its commitment to ensuring the conservation and management of natural resources as well as ensuring it is a leader in the avocado industry well into the future.

> **Meet the Westfalia Fruit team at Fruit Logistica in Berlin 7 - 9 February, to find out more about these initiatives in Hall 5.2, stand D-21.**