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1. Market Dynamics

1.1. United Arab Emirates

Mango is in short supply with only a few currently available from Pakistan. Some green mango is coming in from Egypt and is expensive. Dried mango from Thailand is also available.

There is also limited supply of avocado, which is also commanding a high price.

There is strong demand in the market for fresh and dried chillies, the majority of which are from India, with secondary supply from Iran. Dried chillies are only available from India.

Banana, lemon, onion, carrot, cucumber, bitter melon, papaya, coconut, suran, arvi, turnip, gawar, drumstick, awla are all currently in season, though as it’s only early season for turnips and bitter melons, there is limited supply of those items.

The season for pineapple, mango, sweet potatoes, capsicum, cauliflower, cabbage, zucchini, potato, turnip, snap pea, green bean, pumpkin, okra, acorn squash, beans, and guava has recently finished.

Vendors report average sales with expectations of greater trading in a month when more vegetables are in season and available.

1.2. Oman

In Oman mango is very short supply with many sellers unable to stock them. The few mangos available are yellow mangoes from Pakistan.

Most of the chillies in the market are being grown in Oman, though chillies from India are also available. Dried chillies are not available.

Avocado is only available from Kenya though supplies are very limited and many sellers cannot offer them.

Overall, sales are generally good, with most vegetables available in limited quantities.

1.3. Qatar

There is limited supply of chillies which are only being imported from India. Demand for green chillies is high and so is the price. Additional supply is expected in a month.

Dried chillies and dried Mango are not available. There is good demand for fresh mango available from Pakistan and Egypt, but in limited quantities.

Avocado is available from the usual source of Kenya, but short supply has pushed up the price and demand has reduced.

Traders indicate that banana, lemon, carrot and pineapple are among the best selling items. Turnip season has started and guava season has finished.

Overall, sales people are happy with what they consider to be average trade for this time of year, although they expect it to increase in a couple of months.

1.4. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Despite recent media reports of high prices for fruit and vegetables, our market research indicates prices are reasonable.

Tomatoes are from Turkey, Jordan and Saudi Arabia with some supply also noted from India for the first time this year.
There are limited mangoes, only from Egypt and Kenya.
The price of avocado has increased from the previous report.
There are few oranges in the market but supply is expected to increase when Egyptian oranges become available in the next couple of months. Meanwhile lemons are readily available from Egypt, Turkey and South Africa.

1.5. Bahrain

This month, most vegetables and fruits in the market are back to their normal prices, mainly due to the normalizing of supply volumes from K.S.A. and Jordan. Chillies are among products that have seen a price rollback thanks to the better availability from these Arab countries. Avocado remains the same with supply and price. But for Mangoes this time, supplies are much reduced as the season ends. There are still a few kinds of mango available in the market but not from our major supplier which is India.

2. Media

("Where articles reference the Middle East in general or more than one Middle Eastern country reported on, results are posted under United Arab Emirates)

2.1. United Arab Emirates

The export of Dutch apples and pears fell 17% in the first half of 2015 compared to 2014. A large share of the harvest was already sold for low prices at the end of 2014. A lower supply due to a cold spring is the cause of 3% less export of vegetables in the first half of 2015.

Exports of other produce, including tomatoes were also reduced.

The volumes are still low, but this year export from the Netherlands to the Middle East (including Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar) is growing more strongly than ever (40%). (1)

Prospects for agriculture development in Somaliland have risen due to the growing fruit and vegetable market potential in the gulf region. Gulf states import an estimated 5 million tons of fresh fruit and vegetables annually, with a value of over 3 billion dollars. Among the Gulf states, the most important market is the United Arab Emirates, with a share of more than 40%, followed by Saudi Arabia with more than 30%, Qatar and Kuwait, both with just under 10%, and Oman and Bahrain. One of the major suppliers for these markets is Syria, however Syria, Lebanon and Jordan are either directly or indirectly affected by the war.

New opportunities arising from the gap being provided by Syria include Syrian investors wanting to lease thousands of hectares of farmland in Somaliland as part of their effort to diversify the source of fruits and vegetables to keep up with the market that they have in the gulf. To this end, They are ready to contract with local farmers to lease land for a specific period of time. Upon finishing the contract, they will leave behind full-fledged farm that can be sustained. In return Somaliland farmers will receive skills and technologies to produce good quality fruits and vegetables.

Syrian farming expertise and technologies to raise the standard of Somali farmers and the economy as a whole. The country is cultivated only 5% of its arable land and is not self-sufficient in food and most of our foods are imported from foreign countries. (2)

Kenya

A business team from the Middle East will be in the country from Monday and is scheduled to hold meetings in Nairobi and Mombasa, the Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry announced yesterday.

The chamber said it will host over 25 business people in a government-led visit from the United Arab Emirates.

It said the team will comprise of investors in agriculture, construction, renewable energy, transport and logistics, water and sanitation, manufacturing and services and food and beverage production.
The United Arab Emirates is among leading import markets in the region for Kenyan agricultural products. The Economic Survey 2014 indicates that exports to the Middle East have been growing by 16% over the last five years. (3)

Foreign investors are increasingly buying or leasing large swaths of developing countries in pursuit of food, water, and profit, according to human rights groups and academics, putting people and the environment at risk.

Lack of consent from residents is a key distinction between a land grab and other overseas investment. In the Saudi Star deal, for instance, locals did not know that 25,000 acres of their land had been given to the company for rice cultivation until bulldozers arrived to clear the area, said an Anuak tribal person who was quoted in a report released recently by the Oakland Institute, a California-based think tank that documents impacts of international land deals.

The deals almost always include government promises of water from a nearby river or aquifer, she said. For instance, Saudi Star is taking water from the Alwero River but is also building a dam on the Alwero to obtain more. The company is working to finish 30 kilometers of irrigation canals this year so it can flood its rice crop, which will be primarily for export, according to reports.

Saudi Star did not respond to requests for comment. But the company’s owner claims the investment benefits Ethiopian citizens. “While contributing to the food security of the Kingdom, the project will provide enormous benefits to Ethiopia in terms of foreign investment, job opportunities and food. Around half of the increased production is expected to remain in Ethiopia for local consumption.”

Experts say land grabs accelerated after the world food crisis of 2007–2008. In the arid Middle East, countries such as Qatar, which import 90% of their food, sought to secure food supplies overseas. Growing basic staples locally is unsustainable for such countries. In Saudi Arabia, for example, wheat is irrigated from rapidly depleting aquifers, which are being drawn down 943% faster than they can recharge.

Some countries seeking food and water security are beginning to steer clear of land grabs. Countries such as the United Arab Emirates and Qatar are buying stock in overseas agribusiness companies in the hopes of having a say in export decisions. (4)

Between January and June 2015, Brazil, Algeria and the United Arab Emirates were the main non-European destinations of Spanish fresh fruit and vegetable exports. These countries had already registered significant growth in previous years.

Spanish exports to the United Arab Emirates registered a strong growth and have multiplied by ten in the past five years, from 2,994 tons in 2010 to 25,389 tons in 2015; a volume that is 17% higher than that obtained in the same period of 2014. Spanish exports of fruits and vegetables to the United Arab Emirates in the first half of 2015 amounted to 26.9 million Euro, 38% more than in the same period of 2014. Vegetable exports include onions, lettuce, tomatoes and carrots, and fruit exports include practically all species, especially stonefruit, pome fruit, berries, watermelon, cantaloupe, and citrus.

Given the good prospects for this market, FEPEX, with the support of ICEX and the Ministry of Agriculture, is organizing the participation of a group of companies in the Wop Dubai Fair, which will be held between October 5 and 7 2015. In 2015, this international trade fair will be celebrating its seventh year. The fair will have an 8,000 square meter area and it is expected more than 4,500 professionals will visit it. (5)

A business team from the Middle East will be in the country from Monday and are scheduled to hold meetings in Nairobi and Mombasa, the Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry announced yesterday. The chamber said it will host over 25 business people in a government-led visit from the United Arab Emirates. It said the team will comprise of investors in agriculture, construction, renewable energy, transport and logistics, water and sanitation, manufacturing and services and food and beverage production. The United Arab Emirates is among leading import markets in the region for Kenyan agricultural products. The Economic Survey 2014 indicates that exports to the Middle East have been growing by 16% over the last five years. (6)

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of United Arab Emirates is leading a delegation, including senior officials and captains of industry to India for the India-United Arab Emirates Joint Commission Meeting on Technical and Economical Cooperation, scheduled to be held on 02-03 September, 2015 in New Delhi. The Joint Commission Meeting with United Arab Emirates will be co-chaired by External Affairs Minister of India and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of United Arab Emirates and will discuss a variety of bilateral issues including scientific
collaboration in the area such as space and renewable energy, sustainable development, environment, arid agriculture, desert ecology, urban development and advanced healthcare. (7)

United Arab Emirates has plans to increase food imports from South Korea. The Asian country is adopting the Emirate’s halal certification system, which officials hope will act as a catalyst for the trade in animal products and have a knock-on effect for other food produce.

“There is a lot of trade between the Middle East and Korea,” said Dr Kim Jae-soo, president and chief executive of the Korea Agro-Fisheries and Food Trade Corporation. “There is also a demand for Korean products and it’s increasing year by year.”

South Korea and the United Arab Emirates have collaborated in agriculture, energy, defence, security, education, culture and healthcare since the 1970s.

The United Arab Emirates imports about 90% of its food. Opening up another source of imports will allow the Emirates to diversify, avoid shortages and help to meet growing demand.

Retailers expressed interest in stocking South Korean produce. Ahmed Khoori, managing director of Big Hit general trading, which supplies fruit and vegetable markets, said he was looking at importing seasonal fruits from South Korea.

“Korea has four seasons and people never import from there,” he said. “They import apples from China but the quality isn’t the best.” (8)

New Delhi: India and the United Arab Emirates are expected to flesh out this week many decisions announced during Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to the Gulf Emirate last month, especially investment opportunities in India’s infrastructure sector, besides manufacturing and construction.

In a meeting with United Arab Emirates industrialists, Modi made a strong pitch for investments from the United Arab Emirates, telling investors that India had the potential to absorb US$1 trillion immediately in areas like infrastructure, agriculture and warehousing. He also promised United Arab Emirates businesses a conducive climate in India. (9)

Dubai Municipality has signed a deal with planetfair, to be this year’s strategic partner for the 7th edition of the International Perishables Expo Middle East (WOP DUBAI), a dedicated exhibition for fresh edible food to be held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates next month.

WOP Dubai will be held from October 5 to 7 at the Dubai World Trade Centre.

The event is expected to throw the spotlight on the latest market trends in the perishables industry while also showcasing leading local and international fruits and vegetable suppliers.

The show has been dubbed as its biggest edition so far, with over 29 different countries to be featured across different pavilions and an expected participation of more than 200 exhibitors.

The memorandum of understanding (MoU) aims to consolidate Dubai’s position as a regional hub for trading fresh fruits and vegetables by turning/transforming the emirate to one of the most important global business centres for fruits and vegetable sectors in the region, by showing investment benefits and business opportunities that are available in Dubai’s central market for fruit and vegetables, and to reinforce the import and export trade operations in Dubai in general and the central market in particular.

According to UN Comtrade, a repository of official trade statistics and relevant analytical tables, showing that the United Arab Emirates is ranked Number 1 in the importation of fruits and vegetables among Arab and GCC countries and ranked 16th internationally.

The repository, which contains both annual and monthly trade statistics, showed that the country has imported over Dh9.2 billion (US$24.2 billion) worth of fruits and vegetables in 2014 - Dh6.1 billion worth of fruits and Dh3.1 billion worth of vegetables.

In terms of volume and weight, the United Arab Emirates imported a total of 2.5 kg fresh produce last year, further broken down into 1.2 billion kg of fruit and 1.3 billion kg of vegetables.
The repository also revealed that the United Arab Emirates holds 44% of the whole imports of fruits and vegetables in the GCC - 47% for the total number of fruits imported and 40% of the total number of vegetables entering the region. (10)

Sri Lanka’s earnings from exports of fruits and vegetables during 2014 has increased, compared to the previous year’s income.

According to the study conducted by the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce titled ‘Fruit and Vegetable Sector Statistical Analysis 2014’, earnings from fruit exports has seen the biggest jump, accounting for a 51% rise, while earnings from vegetable exports have gone up by 25% during the same period.

Exports of fruits from Sri Lanka to countries such as United Arab Emirates, India, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Maldives and Germany all have gone up during the year under review.

The above mentioned countries are also the biggest buyers of the fruits produced in Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka’s export earnings from vegetables has mainly come from markets such as, Maldives, United Arab Emirates and United Kingdom, which are the biggest buyers of the Sri Lankan vegetables. (11)

South Africa is looking to double its US$2.9 billion (Dh10.6 billion) bilateral trade with the United Arab Emirates and boost foreign direct investment from the United Arab Emirates, beyond its 13 current projects worth US$170 million in the country.

Efforts will be beefed up through a newly-created joint commission between the two countries to shape and plan the future course of their relationship. The new body was formed on August 3.

The United Arab Emirates is one of South Africa’s main markets when it comes to agricultural produce. (12)

Maharashtra is all set to export record 40,000 to 60,000 ton of pomegranates in the coming season beginning November.

While West Asia continues to remain one of the biggest markets for India, this year, it also exported pomegranates to countries including Bahrain, Sri Lanka and the Netherlands. The United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Turkey, Bahrain and Kuwait are other important markets for the fruit.

In 2014-15 season, the state had exported a record 40,000 ton of pomegranate, an increase of nearly 33% compared to the previous season.

Prices have picked up after a poor start and doubled from R40-50 per kg to R100 per kg for farmers, said Prabhakar Chandane, chairman, Maharashtra Pomegranate Growers Research Association.

While the deficient monsoon has affected other crops, for pomegranates, less rains mean lesser possibility of fungal infections, he pointed out.

Cultivation of pomegranates is on the rise not only in the state but also across the country, Chandane said.

The second season of harvesting is to come up in January-February period. The first season for the crop comes up in the July to September period.

Normally, the export season begins in November every year and is completed by March. However, the season extended up to April this year, Chandane said. (13)

A greenhouse using water evaporated from plants to cool the crops could lead to farmers using 90% less of the precious resource.

Unveiled on Monday by Dubai’s International Centre for Biosaline Agriculture, the system would mean enormous savings for a country in which 56% of water used goes on agriculture.

The greenhouse, being built on a farm in Al Dhaid, has been designed by a team of local and international scientists. (14)

Residents can soon buy ‘fresher’ fruits and veggies, as the Central Fruits and Vegetable Market in Al Aweer is all set to get an array of new facilities to improve services.

Over 600 trucks visit the market every day, each carrying between 22 to 26 tons of fruits and vegetables straight from local farms and various ports.
The average quantity of products that reach the market is 16,000 tons depending on seasons, weather conditions, and domestic situations in countries sending the produce. A new three-storey building for cold storage and covered and air-conditioned service area for wholesale trucks are in the pipeline. The new cold storage unit, valued around Dh1.3 billion, will have 56 stores and is expected to be operational from March. (15)

Eurofruit's sister magazine Asiafruit is coordinating an inward buying mission of fresh fruit and vegetable importers from Asia and the Middle East to visit Peru during the week of the export forum. Peru is the fastest-growing fresh fruit and vegetable producer and exporter in Latin America. (16) Although it is still early to offer figures on the strawberry planting prospects for the 2015/2016 campaign, Spanish company Freshhuelva's first estimates point to a significant decline due to limited water resources, which will also affect the second raspberry harvest in the County, as well as blackberries and blueberries.

"After such a dry summer and considering the little water we have this season, many growers are wondering whether to go ahead with the transplants," he says.

Soon the raspberry planting for the second harvest, to take place between April to June, will also start. Growers are forced to allocate the scarce water resources in the most efficient ways possible; in many cases, this entails having to choose one crop or another. Despite the limiting factor of water, crop diversification continues to be the trend among growers in Huelva, relying on other berries as an alternative to strawberries.

Freshhuelva expects to hold talks with the Directorate General of Industry, where they will demand greater ease in the negotiations required to sign export protocols with countries like the United Arab Emirates, South Africa and others. (17)

AGRICULTURAL exporters dealing with key markets including the Middle East are set to benefit from five new counsellors being deployed in January 2016.

The new positions will be based in Vietnam, Malaysia and the Middle East, as well as additional high level counsellors in Bangkok and China.

They will add to Australia's existing overseas agricultural counsellor network in key markets based in Tokyo, Beijing, Seoul, Jakarta, Washington, Rome and Dubai.

"We're increasing our representation in the Middle East—up from one to two agricultural counsellors working to get a broad range of products into a number of growing and new markets." (18)

Gulfood Manufacturing, the region's largest trade exhibition for the F&B manufacturing, processing and packaging industry, will host the 10th Dubai International Food Safety Conference, during the exhibition next month, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

The Gulfood Manufacturing event will take place from October 27 to 29, at the Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC). (19)

Between August 2014 and July 2015, the value of the European Union's (EU) total exports to third countries, in spite of the Russian veto, has increased by 5.7% compared with the same period last year.

European exporters increased their exports to some Arab countries, like Saudi Arabia (10%), United Arab Emirates (14%) and Egypt (+26%), although, the most significant increases have been registered in the United States. (16%), China (33%), Switzerland (5%) and in some key markets in Asia, such as Hong Kong (19%) and the Republic of Korea (29%).

According to data from the European Commission, a very positive performance has been recorded during the first half of 2015, with a record in March (at nearly 12 billion Euro), while the second half started with a positive trend, as in July 2015 exports recorded an increase of 8% compared to July 2014. (20)

Turkey: Fluctuations in the Russian economy and the impact of negative developments in the Middle East cause concern for citrus exporters in the 2015-2016 season.
The citrus industry's export season, which is expected to open this month, has an average of 3.6 million tons of production annually, an economic value in excess of 1 billion dollars, and provides livelihood for a lot of people, especially in the Mediterranean and Aegean regions.

Several varieties in the sector are gradually transitioning to harvest; to avoid approaching the opening of the season unprepared, packaging companies are working intensively. Packaged citrus products are stored, whilst the Ministry officials' commission quickly gives permission for the product to be exported to the destination country.

Despite the activity in the sector, exporters are waiting nervously due to the economic crisis in The Russian Federation and negative developments in the Middle East.

Mediterranean Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Exporters Association board member, Atay Isimtekin, stated the need to export lemons as well as mandarins in the 2015-2016 season, and said they expect to begin later this month.

Citrus occupies a 45% share of Turkey's fresh fruit and vegetable exports, points out Isimtekin. In recent years, the sector has been reasonably stable, explains Isimtekin, compared to the previous year exports have increased 16%, but revenue by just 1%.

"An increase in exports in the sector last year was not paralleled by an increase in revenue. Normally a decrease in buying power means a decrease in the amount of purchases of goods by a country. The Middle East’s buying power was already not good, on top of which the dollar rate also rose. We are anxious how it will be this year. 80% of exports in the sector are seriously problematic." (21)

Netherlands: Poly lettuce is selling well at the moment. "This has been the case for a number of weeks, actually. The quantities aren't high, but price-wise, it's going pretty much as desired," says Henk van Doorne of Van Doorne Imex. Prices for poly lettuce have gone down slightly, but are still at a level of around 35 cents.

Sales of the lettuce are mainly concentrated outside Europe. "Virtually all air cargo destinations," the grower/exporter says. "Quite a lot is going to the Middle East, for instance.

He expects the lettuce trade to remain at this level until November. "The quality coming from Southern Europe is not very high, so that's good for us. In December, you traditionally see the fortune hunters entering the market, and quite a bit of lettuce is expected, while between January and mid-February the market will be pretty empty again."

Contrary to the poly lettuce, prices for the jumbo head lettuce are at a low level. "That ranges from 17 to 25 cents now, but prices are going up and down quite a bit. In the Westland, there are hardly any jumbo lettuce growers left," Henk says. Where lettuce growers had major problems with fusarium this year, many growers have now taken steps, for instance with disinfectant mats. "It's still on the rise a bit, but not as much as earlier this year." (22)

Dubai: A new committee is expected to start regulating fruit and vegetable markets in the United Arab Emirates by the end of this year, a top official said.

Dr Hashim Al Nuaimi, Director, Consumer Protection Department, Ministry of Economy, said the Higher Committee for Consumer Protection will establish a dedicated committee to oversee pricing, quality and other matters covering the fruits and vegetables sector.

Around 12,000 tons of fruit and vegetables enter the Dubai market daily, which already has 100,000 tons in store.

The new committee will be based in Dubai and Abu Dhabi but will cover all fruit and vegetable markets in the United Arab Emirates.

Prices in this sector are currently stable and will not be allowed to skyrocket as the supply is adequate enough to absorb any spike in demand, Dr Al Nuaimi said.

There is already a price freeze in place for this year on 3,500 essential items, such as rice and sugar, at 500 outlets in the United Arab Emirates, he added.

Dr Al Nuaimi does not foresee 2016 to be any different. "At this stage, the Ministry of Economy sees no reason for increase in prices for any items," he said.
A consumer hotline has been set up to handle complaints. The department, which was established by Article 4 of the Federal Law No 24 of 2006, can investigate claims originating in any emirate. Amendments followed in Federal Law No 7 of 2011.

The department also coordinates and cooperates with local-level entities concerned with consumer rights, such as the Department of Economic Development in Dubai.

Punishments for breaking the consumer protection law can be severe, as described in a copy of the law distributed by the ministry. It includes, among others, up to a million-dirham fine for violating sections 6, 7 and 14, which cover issues such as hoarding to inflate prices, failure to indicate a warning if the use of the goods “encompasses any risk”, and offering services that may “inflict damage to the consumer health in the course of ordinary usage”. (23)

A new fruit box delivery company called Fruitful Day has been launched in Dubai.

Fruitful Day’s business model is simple: delivering seasonal fresh fruit straight to your workplace.

Mejia says; “We source our fruit from across the region, choosing the best of what each country has to offer. (24) According to data from Asoex, the Fruit Exporters Association of Chile, table grape exports during the 2014-2015 campaign amounted to 759,551 tons, 4% more than in the previous year.

The President of the Table Grape Committee of ASOEX, Fernando Sat, stated that “this was a difficult season for Chilean fresh grapes. It was better than last year, but it still wasn't easy. We've been sending fewer grapes to Europe, as it's been complicated to export there due to issues with export prices, which have led to an enhancement in the penetration in markets, such as the Asian market.”

Latin America is the fourth destination for Chilean fresh grapes with 71,593 tons. Exports to Canada and the Middle East amounted to 14,948 and 7,618 tons, respectively. (25)

South Africa: Mbiza Trading, a subsidiary of United Exports are in the second year of blueberry production in South Africa. They have been harvesting since May with most of the winter production going to the domestic market.

The first export shipments to the Middle East and Asia took place 3 weeks ago with the first European shipments of 6 tons sent to Rotterdam at the end of last week. It is all airfreight at the moment as volumes are still relatively small. Roger Horak from United Exports said that they will increase volumes as the Polish supply winds down.

“We want to fill the gap between the Polish supply and the main Chilean volumes which we expect to arrive in December and January. We can also get the fruit to the market faster than other southern hemisphere producers due to the shorter sea freight transit time.” (26)

Malaysian company Rompin Integrated Pineapple Industries is expanding the amount of land it devotes to growing pineapples to help meet current “huge” domestic and international market demand at that is exceeds supply.

In global terms, the export markets that Rompin is targeting are Japan, South Korea, China (in the process of getting the import approval), and the Middle East. "In the Middle East we are focusing on Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Turkey, etc. The market is important because we have direct shipments to those countries and our Halal certification is recognised by the Islamic World," explains Mr Teoh. “About 20% of our fruit goes to Islamic countries, which mainly demand whole fruit.”

Another option available is for the fruit to be shipped by air, although shipments by air, which are best for keeping the freshness, entail high logistics costs. In any case, “because of our geographical location, our production is not seasonal. Rompin's pineapple production is carried out all year round.” (27)

His Excellency Engineer Hussain Nasser Lootah, Director General of Dubai Municipality led the inauguration ceremonies today (October 5, 2015) of the 7th International Perishables Expo Middle East (WOP DUBAI), the GCC region's only dedicated exhibition for fresh edible food and the 10th International Plants Expo Middle East (IPM DUBAI), which will run until October 7, 2015 at the Dubai World Trade Centre. The exciting three-day events are expected to throw the spotlight on the rapidly growing and vibrant global perishables and horticulture industries.
Spread across over 8,000 square meters of exhibition space, WOP DUBAI is poised to receive visitors coming from over 80 countries. This year's show is featuring 14 official country pavilions, which also reflect a 24% increase in exhibitors as compared to last year. Both shows are expected to receive more than 7000 participants demonstrating a 26% increase from last year. (28)

United Arab Emirates's Ministry of Environment and Water too had set up a shop at Hall 3 sharing hall space with a fruit expo - with plenty of avocados and pineapples on display. No roses on display at the MoEW stall but they did have some pamphlets on display advocating the ban of genetically modified materials for agriculture and food processing. Most interestingly their pamphlets were trilingual - English Arabic and now even in Hindi.

Fatima Al Kalbani Acting Director of the Plant Health and Development Department at the Ministry of Environment and Water said of the region's 'only dedicated horticulture trade show' that the ministry is keen to promote agribusiness. "Our participation also is to learn from the experiences of other countries in the field of agriculture". Al Kalbani said the exhibition covers all aspects of the horticulture sector: greenhouses plant nurseries gardening centers suppliers of plants and flowers landscape and architects and contractors. (29)

For the first time in Sri Lanka, a local company, Nelna Agri Development, a subsidiary of the Nelna Group, is planning to export fresh mango to Japan, considered one of the difficult markets to enter due its strict quarantine procedures.

Sri Lankan professor attached to Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University of Japan, Prof. Mont Cassim, has been appointed by Prime Minister Wickremesinghe as his special advisor for promoting business relations between the two countries. "This has assisted us in a great way to enter the Japanese fresh fruit market. They have already placed a mango pulp order to Japan, Gunatillake said.

The Company is expected to earn over US$ 100 million in foreign exchange earnings by 2017. These products are now being exported to Japan, Korea, Singapore, Sweden, Dubai and Qatar markets, he said. The company has hired an agronomist from Israel and Israeli technology is now being applied to improve the product yield and quality to cater to those markets, he said.

For that purpose the company is to invest Rs 500 million to set up two factories in the Moneragala district. At present the company is running two plantations; one at Embilipitiya, which is of 150 acres and the other at Moneragla of 500 acres, targeting top end buyers in the Middle Eastern, European and Singapore markets in the future. "This is the largest mango plantation in the country, and has been branded as "Nelna" Mango. Its produce exceeds the international standard called BRIX level," he said.

With the ever increasing demand the company will invest Rs 300 million for a mango pulp manufacturing plant and an Individual Quick Frozen (IQF) plant at an investment of Rs 200 million in Moneragala district, he said.

Under their 650 acres total plantation the company is expecting to earn US$ 10-15 million per year. But the company’s main target is US$ 100 million in 2017, Gunatilakle said. Further, an IQF plant will also be set up in the same land and they will also be able to start exporting the products of this plant because IQF is ideal for the ice cream industry, he said. (30)

An Australian produce exporter says prices have been improving for ‘at least a year’ already. "We are more competitive on price when compared to South Africa especially on navel oranges, pears and apples," says Vince Brullo of Australia Fruits.

Demand for other commodities besides apples is also on the up, according to Mr Brullo. "We airfreight mixed orders into the Middle East daily, including Broccoli, Celery, Asparagus mixed in the Fruits such as Rockmelons, Honeydews, Avocados and new season mangoes," he says.

The spike in demand for apples in particular is thanks to a sustained low Australian Dollar. The fact it is staying low through September and now into October has meant that the usually quiet period for exports has not been as quiet as expected on a seasonal basis, Mr Brullo adds. (31)

Stronger relations between the United Arab Emirates and Cuba were forged this week after an official state visit by Foreign Affairs Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed to the Caribbean island nation.

Sheikh Abdullah’s visit to Cuba included discussions on enhancing cooperation in ports, infrastructure, medicine and medical research, agriculture and tourism, said Wam. (32)
Qatar-based Saudia Group has opened its first Kenz Hypermarket in the United Arab Emirates, in the emirate of Ajman, after investing AED80 mn (US$21.8 mn) in the nearly 15,000 sq. m store. (33)

Agratech Farms is a multinational company based in Dubai United Arab Emirates that aims to become one of the largest operators of hydroponic farms in the GCC and Europe and is expanding its hydroponic farming operations in Portugal.

Agratech Farms is the first company to invest in vertical farming hydroponics in the Portuguese farming market. The possibility of the plant growing vertically is new to the locals and is rapidly becoming all the rage in the industry. Having successfully built a series of hydroponic farms in the Middle East, and adapting the system to the harsh climate, Agratech's team have developed a system in Portugal that allows for zero downtime in the cold winter months. (34)

Egypt: Food industry exports represent nearly 20% of total air cargo products, and the sector of agricultural crops, especially vegetables and fruits, makes up the largest share of the percentage.

About 55% of total Egyptian exports were transported by air to the Middle East, 32% to the European market, 2% to the Far East, 4% to the US market, and 7% to the African market, according to Gohar.

Deputy Chairman of the Air Transport and Logistics Services Division in the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce, Ayman Al-Sheikh, said air cargos of exported food industries are limited and unsatisfactory. This is due to the low reliance on air cargo in general, as well as the lack of good marketing for Egyptian food industries, and the low quality of packaging, which negatively affects exports.

He added that fruits and vegetables exports represent nearly 65% of total Egyptian exports, noting that exports transported by air amount to nearly 150 tons per day during the peak season that starts in October and lasts until May.

The lack of space on board of the national carrier’s aircrafts (EgyptAir) that fly to Europe reduces Egypt’s ability to achieve large revenues in the food industries and fruits and vegetables exports, according to Al-Sheikh.

He said EgyptAir cargo acquires 80% of the total air cargo in Egypt, explaining that EgyptAir’s airlines are more efficient in terms of shipping from Asia to Europe, especially from China.

He affirmed the importance of providing facilitations to exporters of vegetables and fruits, especially in terms of the procedures followed in the Cargo Village, on the condition of the presence of a large X-ray device to speed up the process of cargo screening.

Al-Sheikh noted that 20% of Egyptian agricultural and food exports get damaged due to the poor infrastructure of Egyptian airports.

(35)

Worldwide, demand for lemons is on the rise, partly because of a focus on positive health effects.

The harvest around the Mediterranean has started with the Turkish lemons entering the market first, followed by the harvest in Spain and Italy. The prospects are reasonably positive. Although the estimated volume for Spain turns out lower than last year, it’s around the multi-annual average. Shortages later in the season are being reckoned with though. The lemon cultivation on Cyprus is decreasing, the export has virtually stopped. In the United States, the harvest has started, and there are rumours of demand surpassing supply. China can rely largely on domestic cultivation for year-round supplies.

Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates are among the biggest importers of the lemons.

India: higher prices due to lower harvest

Production is disappointing this year, especially in the largest production area, Gujarat in the wet of India. Combined with high demand, caused by the higher temperature, this results in higher prices than last year. On average, lemons yield a dollar per kilo. The export from India is mainly focused on the Arab countries, like Oman and the United Arab Emirates. The export to these countries has logistical advantages, and the import rules are also favourable.
Over the past few years, production in the northern region of Kashmir has also grown. Although growers are optimistic about the quality, the cultivation does cause raised eyebrows among scientists. Several professors say the region is absolutely not suitable for the cultivation of lemons.

China: sufficient domestic cultivation

The Chinese market is able to rely on domestic production virtually year-round. The season lasts from September until July. Last year, the harvested volume amounted to 450,000 tons, a 5% increase. The government of Anyue has invested in lemon production in recent years, including through a constructing distribution centre, setting standards and establishing public-private investments. About 60% of the harvest is exported, with major buyers being the Middle East, Southeast Asia and The Russian Federation.

Italy: lemon sales stable

While sales of lemons in general display a decreasing trend, research shows demand for lemons remains stable with a lot of demand from Arab and Asian countries. The country has roughly 15,000 hectares of lemon orchards. The harvest of Femminello Siracusano has begun, the season lasts until June. The harvest has a 20-day head start, and grower prices are about 20% higher than last year. (36)

Spain’s Rojo Brillante (Bright Red) kaki persimmon campaign is already underway and significant volumes will hit the market within weeks.

The kaki harvest, protected by the Designation of Origin Kaki Ribera del Xúquer, will be about 5% greater than last season, reaching between 210,000 and 220,000 tons.

While high temperatures and hailstorms caused some fruit to fall during the summer, this has been beneficial for the fruit sizes, which are larger than at the start of the previous week.

Rafael Perucho, manager of PDO Ribera del Xúquer says 80% of the kakis sold under the Persimmon brand of the PDO Ribera del Xúquer go to export markets, mainly in Europe but the company is seeking new markets and is finding interesting commercial opportunities in the United Arab Emirates and Jordan.” (37)

DUBAI — More than 130 companies from across 26 countries will participate in the 13th Middle East Natural and Organic Products Expo (Menope), the region’s niche organic and natural products exhibition, which will be held next month, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

The event will take place on Nov. 2-4 at the Dubai International Convention and Exhibition Centre (DICEC).

Menope 2015 will showcase a variety of products spanning across herbs and spices, food and beverages, cereal products, supplements, health care products, natural living, natural cosmetics, healing products, natural remedies, traditional medicines, spas, relaxation facilities, pet products and fabrics.

The exhibition is patronized by the Ministry of Environment and Water and is supported by International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM).

According to Euromonitor International, a leader in strategy research for consumer markets, though the Mena market for organic products is still in a nascent stage of growth, the sector was worth US$110.1 million in 2014 compared to US$72.4 million in 2009.

Organizers of the expo, said that year-on year, the organic and natural products market has grown in the range of 12% to 15%.

“The market for organic and natural products picked up speed in the second half of the last decade with growth rates on an exponential trail – led by increased awareness on the benefits of these products for health,” he added.

“The growth trends also got a boost with the focus on lifestyle diseases in the Gulf countries which is a matter of grave concern to governments and health authorities in the region," he noted. (38)

United Arab Emirates's Ministry of Environment and Water is using drone technology to help combat the red palm weevils in line with its strategic goal of developing and implementing a key plan to fight and eradicate agricultural pests. (39)
Netherlands based company Driscoll's reports soft fruit has had a very good year so far across the board. "We are seeing increasing demand for multi-line presentations of strawberries, blueberries and raspberries," says Ben van der Most of Driscoll's. "Although blackberries are still a relatively small category we are seeing huge growth in consumption."

The Middle East, Nordic countries and Benelux are regions of the most growth in soft fruit demand. Van der Most says the strawberry and raspberry seasons have gone well, as has Driscoll's blackberry sales, though there is a blackberry shortage in Europe. He sees good potential in blueberries and the company is increasing cultivation.

In addition to investing in our distinctive varieties, we also invest in the entire refrigerated chain. Through our close collaboration with transporters, we guarantee that our products will be delivered at a temperature between 0 and 2 degrees Celsius. (40)

Marseille shipping company, CMA CGM, are deploying 5 new services from Morocco to the Middle East, Africa, The Russian Federation and North America. These services are used over the citrus export season (oranges, clementines…) and for vegetables (tomatoes, courgettes, peppers…) from Morocco.

These 5 shipping routes have 14 weekly departures from Morocco. (41)

Selina Wamucii LTD, a Kenyan fresh produce export company, has acquired a majority stake in Mt. Kenya Avocado Farms, a leading producer and exporter of Kenya avocado fruits and avocado oil, equally based in Kenya producing hass and fuerte avocados for export.

This comes at a time when Kenya is strongly establishing itself as a major exporter of avocados, with farmers across the country moving to increase the acreage for avocado trees as more get on-board. Avocados from Kenya are traditionally exported to countries in the Middle East and Europe. The recent past though has witnessed a sharp increase in the number of countries and regions that are interested in Kenyan avocados, including The Russian Federation whose demand for Kenyan avocados has seen huge volumes of avocado shipments from Kenya to The Russian Federation. Other countries that are importing avocados from Kenya include Hong Kong, Singapore, Iran, Libya, and Egypt just to mention a few. (42)

Australia: For the 2014/2015 season, statistics indicate production of 300,000 tons of tomatoes for Australia. For the coming season, growers in Australia reckon with a harvest of 310,000 tons. The weather conditions are positive during the planting season, with only two extremely hot days, no frost and little wind. The majority of the harvest is processed. Australians are among the biggest consumers of processed tomatoes, with a consumption of 23 to 24 kilos per capita each year. For growers, the costs for water are the biggest challenge. The exchange rate is favourable though, making it improbable that imported tomatoes will be cheaper. The export is expected to be lower, with Asia and the Middle East being the most important markets. (43)

India: A proposal was made to import different varieties of disease-resistant grape saplings by the Maharashtra State Grape Growers Association and the All Indian Grape Exporters Association. Five new varieties of disease-resistance grapes have been imported by the State Grape Growers Association from South Africa to help improve the yield of fruit in Nashik. Grape exports contribute around R16 billion to the country's foreign exchange market. Maharashtra accounts for nearly 98% of India's total grape exports mostly to the Netherlands, The Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Bangladesh. (44)

India: The lemon production in western parts of India, namely Gujarat, which is the country's largest grower, is currently low, which combined with high demand (boosted by high temperatures) is resulting in higher prices than last season, of about 1 dollar per kilogram, reports Mr Naresh Boghara, of the Indian company Jagdamba Farm, specialised in the production and supply of a wide range of agricultural products.

India exports its lemons mostly to Arab countries, like Oman or United Arab Emirates. "Since distances are not great and Gujarat has a good amount of ports, which makes exporting to these countries very easy. Compared to other countries, the customs rates are really good," explains Mr Boghara. "Furthermore, when it comes to the use of pesticides or fertilizers the conditions in these countries are profitable for business. (45)
The Higher Organising Committee of the 17th Arab Investors and Businessmen Conference (ABIC) has lined up a host of discussions on investment opportunities in the United Arab Emirates across diverse sectors, in line with the United Arab Emirates Vision 2021. These opportunities will be promoted between 16 - 17 November through several investment activities. The event is organised jointly by the General Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture for the Arab Countries (GUCCIAAC), the Arab League, Arab Investment and Credit Export Guarantee, in cooperation with Strategic Marketing and Exhibitions. (46)

The Ministry of Environment and Water has announced the launch of ‘I’IMPERFECT’ a national campaign to reduce food waste and increase food surplus at Times Square Centre in Dubai. The announcement came during a press conference held to celebrate World Food Day under this year’s theme of “Social Protection and Agriculture: Breaking the Cycle of Rural Poverty”.

‘I’IMPERFECT’ aims to bring all key stakeholders together within a collective framework to encourage the use of imperfect fruits and vegetables with the objective of reducing food loss at the source level i.e. farms. (47)

The I’IMPERFECT campaign falls in line with the Ministry’s strategic objective to enhance food safety and the sustainability of local production. It encourages the effective engagement of the corporate and economic sectors in a move towards environmental sustainability. Moreover, it launches awareness initiatives to enlighten society on the hierarchy of waste management, including waste reduction, re-use, segregation, and recycling.

The campaign targets the government sector, farmers, society, retail centers, food production and sales companies, schools, and industry-related SMEs. It aims to support local food projects and educate the public about the importance of reducing the loss and waste of consumable food by raising awareness among farmers about the significance of harvesting imperfect fruits and vegetables and marketing them in retail stores. It also encourages the exchange of expertise and knowledge on means to reduce food waste and proper recycling.

Batches of locally grown organic fruit and vegetables usually rejected by supermarkets because they "don't look good", could soon be displayed in separate aisles.

“The message is that these fruits and vegetables might look different but they taste the same, the quality is as good,” said Renu Ojha, general manager of Blue Planet Green People, an organic food shop in Dubai.

The campaign is called “I’mperfect” and the company is working with the Ministry of Environment and Water to introduce it nationwide. They will encourage employers to use the food in work canteens, try to persuade supermarkets to sell it and host market days in schools. (48)

A local newspaper in Syria reported that citrus producers in the country are facing growing difficulties every year despite the increase in acreage and production volumes, mostly as a result of the challenges involved by the notable rise in production costs, accompanied by a decline in prices, as well as by the difficulties in logistics and marketing operations.

Average production is estimated at 850 thousand tons; Lattakia also accounts for 32.3% of the province’s total citrus acreage.

The Ministry of Agriculture, said that this year’s citrus harvest is good, with no impact from pests or diseases, and that the total production will amount to one million tons, with most of it grown in Lattakia and Tartous. He explained that the local market demands up to 400 thousand tons per year, which means another 600 thousand tons will have to go to external markets or for the production of juices.

The Syrian citrus production is the third largest of the Arab countries, the seventh in the Mediterranean and the eighteenth worldwide. (49)

Malawi President Arthur Peter Mutharika has reiterated his government’s commitment to see to it that the Greenbelt Initiative GBI) becomes the flagship vehicle for food security, job and wealth creation for Malawians. He was speaking in Salima on Monday when he toured Salima Sugar Factory construction site. The Green Belt Initiative is planned to use the available land and water resources to increase agricultural production and productivity. It will play a pivotal role in increasing incomes of the people and improve food security at both household and national levels. The Malawi leader emphasized the need to boost production in order to turn the country’s economy to a predominantly exporting nation, which is his government’s core goal. “We have relied on tobacco for too long, and we are set to diversify our export commodities through the Greenbelt Initiative.”
On the same day, the President also toured another of Salima’s major investments, Malawi Mangoes, a food processing company that produces mango and banana beverages. Malawi Mangoes is a major international standard fruit processor in the country that supplies fruit pulp or puree to major drink manufacturing companies in Europe, Asia, the Middle East and other parts of Africa. (50)

Agri-Naturelle is preparing to ship its first consignment of Spanish Primofiori lemons of the 2015/16 campaign to Shanghai.

The 2015/16 lemon season has started well with prices generally higher than at this stage last year across international markets. Amer said this was due to the smaller Spanish crop coupled with stronger demand.

As the company’s experience grows it has been able to fine-tune its shipment process to ensure that fruit arrives on the market in even better condition including the introduction of ethylene absorbers to containers to filter the air and slow down the ripening process.

Agri-Naturelle’s primary focus is exporting to non-EU markets like China, the Middle East and Canada.

The company also recently sent its first consignment of potatoes from Segovia to Jordan. However, Amer noted that the company’s experience so far showed that although there is strong demand for premium quality fruits and vegetables in the Middle East, the market is generally not yet prepared to pay a high price for them. (51)

An award-winning Malaysian restauranteur and executive chef from the United Kingdom is expected in the United Arab Emirates this weekend to encourage residents to relish fresh fruits and concoctions from his native country.

Norman Bin Musa, who is bestowed the title “Food Ambassador for Kuala Lumpur” in Nov. 2014, will be demonstrating his expertise at the Oct. 23-24 “Malaysian Fruits Festival.”

Musa, will be conducting interactive demonstrations on how papaya, star fruit, dragon fruit, rambutan, mangosteen, watermelon, jackfruit, pineapple, guava, cempedak, dokong and rock melon could be turned into juices, jellies, salads, puddings and other desserts.

Currently, 30 Malaysian companies affiliated with Kuala Lumpur’s Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry-Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority; export the fruits aside from mangoes, pomelos, rose apples, capsicum and tomatoes to the United Arab Emirates.

The fruits, along with other vegetable exports, are stored in “chill boxes or containers” during the seven-hour flight from Malaysia.

Sea cargo is not an option for transport since it would take the produce 10 days to two weeks before reaching the United Arab Emirates.

The Najib Razak administration, as of Sept. 2015, had allocated 22.6 million hectares of cultivated land to agriculture for domestic and international markets, throughout Malaysia.

Agricultural sector is set to expand by 3.5% per annum as set under the “11th Malaysia Plan (2015-2020)” with emphasis on increasing productivity through the combined initiatives on research and development as well as through a comprehensive modernisation programme.

Total fruits and vegetables exports to the United Arab Emirates as of April was at US$3.3 million while. In 2014 the figure was at US$4.1 million, from US$3.73 million in 2013. (52)

South Africa’s export volumes for nectarines, peaches and plums are expected to rise to a record in the 2015-16 season as demand from the Middle East climbs and new cultivars are planted.

The nation may sell 3.9 million 2.5-kilogram (5.5-pound) cartons of nectarines, 4% more than a year earlier, while peach exports may advance 5% to 2.1 million cartons of the same size, the South African Stone Fruit Producers Association said. Shipments of plums are seen increasing 3% to 11.82 million, 5.25-kilogram cartons.

“Over the last couple of seasons the traditional markets have shown a renewed interest in our export fruit, with continued strong growth in other markets such as the Middle East,” Jacques du Preez, general manager for trade and markets at Hortgro said. “These new cultivars widen the marketing window period and ensure that there is an even distribution of fruit throughout the season.”
The Middle East purchase 42% of peaches exported, according to Du Preez.

Apricot exports may decline 3% to 783,991 4.75-kilogram cartons. The EU and The Russian Federation are the biggest buyers at 37% collectively, followed by the Middle East at 36% and United Kingdom at 25%. The next forecast for exports will be released in mid-December and at the end of January. (53)

The fruit concentrates and puree market has been segmented on the basis of geography, type, technology and application. On the basis of type, the market is segmented into fresh, fresh cut, frozen and dried. On the basis of type of fruit used, the major segments are pineapple, mango and banana. Among these, pineapple is the most popular fruit concentrate, accounting for 60% of the world’s fruit juice trade.

The major markets for fruit concentrates and puree market are European Union, the Middle East and the U.S. Fruit juices, concentrates and purees are traded internationally and used by a variety of industries; mainly the beverages industry. Beverage industry is the largest end-user of concentrates and purees, producing numerous drinks, nectars and syrups. Mango concentrate is base ingredient for all drinks. Several industries use banana pulp to enhance the flavour of drinks, and it is relatively cheaper than mango. Other products that are traded internationally are acerola from Brazil, Cherimoya from Venezuela and Brazil, Lychee from Brazil and starfruit. (54)

2.2. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Three of the Gulf's biggest private equity firms are battling it out for a majority stake in Saudi supermarket chain Al Raya for Foodstuff Co, with a deal likely worth as much as US$300 million. (1)

Saudi Arabia’s pledge to maintain its dollar currency peg, amid oil’s slump to a six-year low, is likely to be followed by its Gulf neighbours.

Saudi central bank’s deputy governor for research and international affairs, told Al Arabiya television Tuesday that authorities will maintain the peg at 3.75 riyals per dollar. One-year forward contracts for the riyal, which have surged this month on speculation it may be devalued, fell after his remarks.

One-year forward contracts for the Saudi riyal jumped to their highest in more than a decade on August 24, signalling more bets that the currency will weaken. Contracts for the United Arab Emirates dirham have also surged this month to the highest level since 2009.

Oil Slump

The trades coincided with a further slump in oil prices and less favourable economic forecasts for countries in the region. (2)

Speaking at an audience with Fahad Abdullah Sefyan, the new ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Nigeria, president Muhammadu Buhari has reiterated his desire to diversify the country’s economy.

"For more than 30 years, Nigeria has depended on oil as its major source of revenue at the expense of agriculture and the non-oil sector, which could be the mainstay of our economy," he said.

"As oil exporting countries facing similar challenges due to the down turn in the international price of crude oil, we should be working closer together. (3)

The odds are continuing to rise that one of the strongest El Niño events on record will last until early this spring, and Saudi Arabia is among countries that experts believe could be worst affected. (4)

JEDDAH: The Jeddah Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI) has called for reasonable prices of food items during this year’s Haj season.

The issue was discussed during a meeting between JCCI’s Commission for Food and Beverages and the Ministry of Trade and Industry on Thursday. (5)

A lifestyle article acknowledged Jeddah is having one of the hottest summers in history, with temperatures almost reaching 50 degrees Celsius this week and promotes kiwifruit recipes as healthy and refreshing snacks. (6)
Riyadh - The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) has witnessed remarkable agricultural development over the last three decades, successfully turning large areas of desert into agricultural fields. Currently, the KSA is leading exporter of a variety of agricultural products including organic products and olives and oil as well as the dairy products, eggs, fish, poultry, fruits, vegetables, and flowers to the markets around the world.

Although the KSA has a huge desert land, it also boasts of the areas where the climate has favored agriculture. The country has developed its agricultural sector by implementing major irrigation projects and adding previously barren areas to its stock of cultivatable land. Today, agriculture makes a substantial contribution to the KSA's economy. It is worth mentioning that the city of Jouf is one of the cities that has been developed for its agricultural nature and has received special concern in planting olives as it has around 12.300.000 olive trees and the city of Jouf markets its production internally as well as internationally to some of the European and the Arab countries.

To reduce its dependence on the revenue earned from oil exports as the main source of income and to produce more food for its increasing population with a high standard of living, the KSA has been making intensive efforts, through its five-year development plans, to develop its agricultural sector. Cultivated land in the KSA has dramatically increased because of government encouragement and financial aids and the country is presently witnessing an unprecedented exploitation of its agricultural potential. The introduction of sophisticated technology and modern machinery and cultivation of new crops and different varieties have led to the establishment of the greenhouse industry and large agricultural projects. This has not only improved KSA's self-sufficiency but also the export of some products such as wheat, dates, watermelon, poultry, eggs and fresh milk.

Saudi Agriculture - the Middle East's largest agriculture exhibition is conducted every year to support the industry by attracting exhibitors from the Middle East, Europe, the Americas and Asia in addition to local companies who will be displaying the latest agricultural products, services and equipment in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

In contribution to the agriculture sector in Saudi Arabia, the Saudi Agriculture exhibition 2015 will be held from October 11 to 14, 2015, at the Riyadh International Convention and Exhibition Center in the capital of KSA.

More than 350 specialized exhibitors from the Middle East, Europe, the Americas and Asia, in addition to local companies will be showcasing the latest in agricultural products, services and equipment. (7)

Bangladesh will push again for duty free-quota free (DF-QF) entry of its 55 items into Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) as the Joint Economic Commission (JEC) meets in November next, officials said.

Cooperation in areas including agriculture will be discussed in the meeting.

Bangladesh considers agricultural products are among items with great export potential to KSA. (8)

Royal approval has been given for a SR1.766 billion program for combating red weevils that pose a mortal threat to date palms, according to Minister of Agriculture Abdulrahman Abdulmuhsin Al-Fadhli. The money will be spent over a period of five years. (9)

Saudi Arabia's government is studying whether to cut state subsidies that keep domestic gasoline prices at some of the lowest levels in the world, a major Saudi newspaper quoted unnamed sources as saying.

Al Watan's Saturday edition quoted the sources as saying the matter had taken on additional importance after the neighbouring United Arab Emirates reduced subsidies and allowed gasoline prices to rise last month.

Because higher gasoline prices could lead to inflation in other goods, Anazi suggested the government might introduce new subsidies for some food and other consumer items. (10)

Saudi Arabian supermarket chain Danube Co. Ltd is seeking to sell a stake in a deal that would value the business at about US$2bn, according to two people with knowledge of the matter. Bahrain-based Gulf International Bank BSC is advising Danube's owners, the Jeddah-based Bin Dawood Group, on the sale, the people said, asking not to be identified as the information is private. Investcorp Bank BSC, also based in Bahrain, is in talks to buy a stake of about 20%, the people said. (10a)

Shipping to Yemen is grinding to a halt as Saudi-led navy inspections hold up cargoes, shippers say, depriving it of desperately needed fuel and food as aid groups warn of famine.
Before Saudi Arabia and Arab allies intervened in March to try to restore Yemen's president to power and roll back the Iranian-allied Houthis, Yemen imported more than 90% of its food, mostly by sea. (11)

Jizan Region, South of Saudi Arabia can be described as the capital of mango fruit in the region with around 750,000 trees producing some 27,500 tons of mangos annually.

The region is known for its fine soil and water resources and planting mangos began in 1982 with the Kingdom’s Centre for Agriculture and Water Research importing mango seeds from Australia, Kenya, Egypt, Sudan, the US and India.

A mango festival begins each year in April and continues for three months. (12)

Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia - The Ministry of Agriculture is innovating the Kingdom’s agricultural sector by launching a host of new government e-services, supporting the country's nearly USD 5 billion domestic agribusiness market, industry experts announced today.

Supporting the agricultural sector's growth, the Ministry of Agriculture, Oracle, and Oracle Gold Partner Omnix International have deployed a new e-government platform based on Oracle Siebel Public Sector eService that supports more than 500,000 online visitors, and 65,000 registered citizen and business users. Users can access 22 e-services such as land registration, organic crop certification, fishing and hunting permits, and access to machinery.

Boosted by increasing agricultural production in greenhouses, poultry farms, and fisheries, the Kingdom's agribusiness market is set to reach USD 4.9 billion in 2015, and grow at a rate of 4.9% per year to 2018, according to BMI Research. With a rapidly growing population, the Kingdom's FY2015 budget calls for SAR 60 billion in spending on water and agriculture infrastructure. (13)

The Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) has signed two agreements with the Sudanese government to cooperate in oil and agriculture fields.

The agreement was signed by Sudan’s Finance Minister, Badr al-Din Mahmoud, and SFD’s Vice Chairman and Managing Director, Youssef Ibrahim al-Bassam.

Al-Bassam says in a statement to the Saudi Press Agency that the agreements were signed to finance imports of petroleum products worth US$100 million and fertilisers for US$75m. (14)

Egypt produced 4 million metric tons of citrus in 2013 including lemons, tangerines and grapefruits, but it is oranges that take the biggest wedge of the market.

2.9 million tons were produced in 2013, with a one million ton export segment. Saudi Arabia, The United Arab Emirates and The Netherlands all compete for the title of largest export market, but The Russian Federation pips them to the post.

Popular varieties include Navel, Blood and Valencia, with the fruit accounting for 68% of the country's total citrus output between 2011 and 2013. (15)

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia’s (KSA) agriculture sector is witnessing tremendous growth and development over the past few years, recent reports revealed.

A series of ongoing projects complement the expansion and enhancement of the local agriculture infrastructure with the use of most advanced technologies. In addition, the agriculture industry has supported the development of the human resources by organizing intensive training programs. Moreover, it has utilized the finest professional expertise to develop the local proficiencies and capabilities for the agriculture and livestock production sectors while integrating the work environment.

Saudi Arabia continues to boost its agricultural sector which has a great economic significance as a key pillar in achieving food security and taking the country to the new levels of self-sufficiency.

Saudi Agriculture – the 34th International Trade Exhibition for Agriculture, Water and Agro-Industry – will run on Oct. 11-14, 2015 at the Riyadh International Convention Centre. (16)

Sudan’s minister of investment, Mudather Abdel-Ghani, announced that the Saudi companies Almarai, Tabuk and Alsafi have been granted 100 acres of agricultural land along the River Nile west of the town of Al-Gold.
The general manager of Almarai Mohammed Rasheed Al-Balawi pointed out that the three companies have allocated US$300 million for the; saying that Alsafi is currently completing new irrigation systems for the pilot project which would soon enters the circle of production.

He added that wheat would be grown on 25% of the total cultivated area, saying their companies seek to supply local markets with farm products besides establishing services projects and providing employment opportunities.

Al-Balawi added that provision of electricity would lead to a quantum leap in production and contributes to the implementation of all phases of the project according to plan, expressing readiness to finance the electricity supply for the project according to the required procedures.

Sudan’s investment minister for his part said his ministry is keen to overcome obstacles to the implementation of investment projects in the country, pointing to presidential directives to give more attention to Saudi investment.

He added that his ministry is working with all concerned bodies to address investment issues including electricity, pointing to coordination with the ministry of electricity to resolve the problem of electricity.

Last April, a high-level technical delegation from Saudi Arabia discussed in Khartoum ways for implementing the Arab food security initiative in Sudan.

Sudan’s National Investment Authority (NIA) said it offered to the Saudi delegation six agricultural projects in various states in north and east Sudan to carry out the food security plan.

Saudi Arabia is Sudan’s second largest trade partner following China.

Saudi Arabia has agreed to finance irrigation projects and dams in Sudan. (17)

The local agriculture industry a crucial economic sector is contributing to providing food security to Saudi Arabia said Abdul Rahman Al-Fadli minister of agriculture made these remarks as he opened a major exhibition in Riyadh.

Riyadh Exhibitions Co. Ltd. (REC) organized the 34th edition of Saudi Agriculture the Middle East’s largest agricultural show with the support of the Ministry of Agriculture.

More than 350 specialized exhibitors from the Middle East Europe the Americas and Asia in addition to local companies are showcasing the latest in agricultural products services and equipment.

In addition the exhibition will review the latest products equipment and related services for the agricultural sector reflecting the most prominent trends and developments in the global market in general and the Saudi market in particular.

Saudi Arabia continues to boost the local agricultural sector because of its great economic importance as a key pillar in achieving food security to reach the level of self-sufficiency. (18)

Riyadh - H.E. Eng. Abdullahraham Bin Abdullahmohsen Al-Fadhli, the Minister of Agriculture, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, inaugurated yesterday (October 11, 2015) the Saudi Agriculture 2015. The 34th edition of Saudi Agriculture, the Middle East's largest agricultural show, was organized by Riyadh Exhibitions Co. Ltd. ( REC ) under the auspices of the Saudi Ministry of Agriculture. (19)

RIYADH: A 36-member joint delegation from the Netherlands and Belgium will arrive on Thursday to promote fresh fruits and vegetables.

Ad Klaasen of the Netherlands and Philippe Appeltans of Belgium will head the joint delegation.

Talking about the visit, Dr. Hans van der Beek, Dutch agricultural counselor to the GCC countries, said that the two countries have close collaboration in the agricultural sector.

He said that as far as his country was concerned, the joint visit will increase the volume in the agricultural sector in particular and in bilateral trade in general between the Netherlands and Saudi Arabia.

He noted that last year, the Netherlands exports to Saudi Arabia crossed 600 million euros (SR2.5 billion).

"As far as fresh vegetables are concerned, Dutch exports to the Kingdom touched 20 million euros (SR80 million). The amount is not that much, but the Netherlands is one of Europe’s biggest exporters of fresh fruits and vegetables," he said.
Asked about the significance of the visit, aside from the possibility of increased bilateral trade in agricultural products between the two countries, he said that “we will add to the variety of products that we have been exporting to Saudi Arabia.”

He said that the delegation will introduce apples and pears, whose quality because of the taste is “different from what I have seen in the local market.” (20)

Fruit and vegetable prices have shot up to unprecedented levels all over the Kingdom due to a sharp drop in supplies and a spike in demand.

A survey conducted by Al-Madinah Arabic daily in central markets and retail shops has found that prices of tomato, zucchini, eggplant, coriander, lettuce and parsley have gone up 100%.

In the central markets, locally produced tomatoes are now sold for SR5 a kilo instead of SR2 while those imported from Jordan are sold at SR7 in place of SR3. The prices of Turkish tomatoes jumped from SR4 to SR9 a kilo. In retail stores the price is SR12 to SR17 a kilo.

Zucchini and eggplant are sold at SR7 to SR9 instead of SR3 in retail shops, lettuce for SR9 instead of SR2 and parsley for SR5 a bundle, in place of SR2.

Omar Ali, who makes daily vegetable purchases for a restaurant, said the price hike was not unusual as it happens generally after Haj. However, he noticed that prices have started coming down.

Workers at Jeddah Central Vegetable Market expect the prices to drop in a few days. "About 25 trucks carrying 120 tons of local tomatoes arrive here daily, but the demand is for 220 tons,” he said.

Aidha Al-Harthi, deputy chairman of the fruit and vegetables committee at Jeddah Chamber of Commerce and Industry, attributed the price hike to the extreme hot weather, which has affected farms not only in Saudi Arabia but also in neighboring countries. "The huge demand during the Haj season is another reason,” he said.

Al-Harthi also pointed out that the Saudi market largely depends on local produce because of the political instability in countries such as Syria and Yemen. "The lion’s share of vegetables consumed in Saudi Arabia is produced in Tabuk, Riyadh, Wadi Al-Dawasser and Jazan."

Al-Harthi allayed fears of residents saying vegetable prices would come down shortly as suppliers and importers have intensified efforts to meet the demand. (21)

The formation of a permanent committee for consumer protection at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry by the Cabinet will help prevent traders from increasing prices of essential commodities without any genuine reason, says experts and businessmen.

The new committee was set up following the failure of the Consumer Protection Association to safeguard the interests of the consumers.

Nasser Al-Qaraawi, chairman of the Saudi Center for Studies and Research, commended Commerce and Industry Minister Dr. Tawfiq Al-Rabiah for his initiative to establish the committee, saying it reflects the government’s desire to protect the rights of consumers.

The new committee will have representatives from the Ministries of municipal and rural affairs, heath, the Saudi Food and Drug Authority, Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency and the Council of Saudi Chambers.

Ahmed Sindi, a board member of Makkah Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI), said the Cabinet decision reflects the government’s desire to protect consumers from money-hungry traders. Sindi hoped that the committee, which is chaired by the minister, would have its branches in all parts of the Kingdom. (22)

On a visit to Saudia Arabia Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalgen said Saudi Arabian investors could benefit more by engaging in Ethiopia's agricultural sector.

Hailemariam expressed Ethiopia’s keen interest in the participation of Saudi investors in his country and said Ethiopia has favorable investment policies and alternative investment opportunities.

Currently, 69 Saudi-based companies are operating in Ethiopia with a total capital of 369 million USD. (23)
2.3. Qatar

Doha: Minister of Environment and Tatsuo Yasunaga, President & CEO of Mitsui & Co, Ltd Japan, have discussed cooperation for implementation of Social Development Program (SDP) in agriculture sector in Qatar.

The agricultural social development programs in the pipeline of the Ministry of Environment include research related to reducing the water consumption used for irrigation, and selection of high yielding crops, and wild pastoral plants with low consumption of water, in addition to research on date palms.

The research and activities are linked to environmental development, which is considered one of the main thrust of Qatar Vision 2030. In 2013, Qatar launched the Global Alliance for dry lands aimed at working to promote all matters relating to food security in dry regions by conducting joint research, financing and developing Policies.

The research stations of the Ministry of environment will play an important role in this field through cooperation with Mitsui program, which is estimated at QR15m. (1)

The Assistant Foreign Minister for International Co-operation Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani has led a Qatari delegation that included representatives of the Ministry of Economy and Commerce, Qatar Investment Authority, Qatar Development Fund and Qatar Mining to review investment opportunities in Kyrgyzstan.

The officials, including representatives from the ministries of energy, agriculture and municipality as well as the country’s mining company, the government commission on mining and the National Bank of the Kyrgyz Republic, presented areas that Qatar can invest in, particularly in the fields of agriculture, mining and energy. (2)

The recent announcement by Zulal Oasis, a subsidiary of Hassad Food, that it has implemented an integrated production technology to grow agricultural products all through the year in Qatar has imparted a great impetus for food security in the country.

The company has claimed that its “Zulal Oasis Technology” could produce over 37kg of vegetables of highest quality per square metre, which is a very high yield while efficiently using and recycling 100% of the irrigation water.

It is estimated that Qatar could achieve between 50% and 70% self-sufficiency in vegetable production by 2030, by bringing 10,000 acres under cultivation, utilising this new technology, which has been successfully tested in the country over two seasons since 2013.

The pilot research and development project aims to overcome the challenges facing the local agriculture such as, high temperature and humidity, lack of ground water as well as arable lands. (3)

Thailand is ready to provide its expertise in the fields of agriculture and aquaculture, including hydroponics, to support Qatar’s food security programme, ambassador Piroon Laismit has said.

"Because 85% of our imports (around US$3.5bn) from this country are mostly liquefied natural gas (LNG), Qatar provides our ‘energy security’ and we would like to see Thailand reciprocate this in terms of food security since most of our exports are food commodities,” Laismit said. (4)

Qatar Airways is tipped to start flights to Sydney as part of a renegotiated air services agreement that expands capacity between Australia’s major airports and the Gulf state by 50%.

Trade Minister Andrew Robb flagged in this morning’s announcement that Qatar was likely to start daily services to Sydney in addition to its flights to Melbourne and Perth.

“Airline connectivity plays a vital role in growing Australia’s premium agricultural trade of fresh products like dairy, horticulture and meats,” Mr Robb said.

“Qatar Airways is likely to commence a daily service between Sydney and Doha, which will allow businesses to quickly and efficiently move produce to global markets.” (5)

DOHA: The Agriculture Quarantine Office at the Ministry of Environment seized 5,394 imported shipments weighing 71,174 tons last month for violating the agriculture quarantine law.
Twenty-five infected shipments were destroyed. The office also seized five shipments weighing 95 tons being exported in violation of the law.

Agriculture quarantine is considered the first line of defence to protect plants from agriculture pests as a precautionary measure to protect plants and agriculture products and ensure standards are complied with. (6)

2.4. Oman

MUSCAT: Companies selling fruits and vegetables in the Mawaleh fruit and vegetables market would be penalised heavily by the Muscat Municipality if they flout health and hygiene standards.

The municipality has warned merchants in the markets over storing and packing substandard fruits and vegetables in cartons. Officials destroyed 3,071 cartons of grapes and 671 cartons of apples at the Mawaleh market after they were found unfit for human consumption. It was discovered that they were packing fresh fruits over the rotten ones.

Jumaa Al Amri, assistant to the Director of Health Affairs in the market's administration said they were found unfit for human consumption.

He explained that the vendors would cheat customers by keeping good quality grapes on top and poor quality grapes beneath them inside wooden boxes

“The market’s administration will initiate necessary legal action against the company. As for the vendors, we will co-ordinate with the Ministry of Manpower to prevent them from cheating on customers,” said Al Amri.

In 2013, the municipality officials destroyed over 27,000 kilogrammes of unfit fruits and vegetables during an inspection at the Mawaleh market and issued notices to the vendors. (1)

In a bid to safeguard shoppers and traders, Muscat Municipality is setting up fire alarms and fire fighting systems in the cold stores at Al Mawaleh Central Market.

Hundreds of tons of fruits and vegetables are sold at Mawaleh Central Market every day. Home-grown Omani products, as well as imported products such as watermelon, sweet melon, oranges, bananas, papayas, mangoes, coconuts, carrots, cucumber and honey, are much in demand.

According to traders, shopkeepers from throughout Oman come to shop at Al Mawaleh Central Market, along with local residents.

In fact, Muscat Municipality was planning to shift the wholesale fruit and vegetable market from Mawaleh to Barka to reduce congestion at the existing market.

Plans called for the Mawaleh market to be redesigned into a retail site, the Municipality had announced. (2)

Food, dance, fashion, health tourism destinations, sports, and other features of the Kingdom of Thailand are this week as part of The annuat Thai Festival 2015 is on at Muscat Grand Mall.

The festival is aimed at strengthening trade and economic cooperation, and cultural and people-to-people ties between the two countries. It is one of the embassy’s activities hosted in 2015 to celebrate the 35th anniversary of Thai-Omani relations.

The event, which continues until Saturday 5, is held in collaboration with several Thai institutions, including the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, the National Bureau of Agricultural Commodity and Food Standards, the Marketing Organisation for Farmers, the Lamphun Provincial Administrative Organisation, the Tourism Authority of Thailand, and a number of Thai business people who participate in the festival. (3)

Muscat: Omani farmers have started harvesting pomegranate crop in Jebel Al Akhdar mountain, the fruit from this part is considered by many as some of the most sought-after variety in the region.

In the markets in Jebel Al Akhdar and Nizwa province it is common to see pomegranates in abundance these days, and it is expected to last until the end of October.

The demand for Omani pomegranates is huge and a steady stream of visitors — both residents and tourist — flock Jebel Al Akhdar and Nizwa to buy the fruit.
Part of the Hajar mountain range, Jebel Al Akhdar (the Green Mountain) is approximately a two-hour drive from the capital where cooler climate allows for the growth of pomegranates, grapes, strawberries, raspberries, plums, figs, almonds, walnuts, pears and apricots.

Its highest peak, Jebel Shams (Mountain of the Sun) is 3,000m high, and is widely believed to be the highest peak in Eastern Arabia and the Gulf states.

There are around 23,000 pomegranates trees in Jebel Al Akhdar alone, according to the figures from the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

It grows in areas like Seeq, Al Aain, Al Shraigah, Wadi Bani Habib and Saloot villages of Jebel Al Akhdar.

The Omani pomegranate is known of its light red colour and sweet taste and fragile seeds.

Some fruit can weigh in excess of 1kg, according to farmers.

Rashid Al Hatali, local farmer, told Gulf News pomegranate trees in his garden in Al Aain village, is his main source of income.

Temperatures in Jabel Al Akhdar’s villages often dip to below zero in winter and snow is not uncommon there. Temperatures are moderate in the summer, not exceeding 20 degrees Celsius. This often attracts tourists from warmer parts of Oman and the region to the mountain.

“I earn more than 4,000 rials from selling pomegranate alone in Nizwa market”, says Al Hatali.

Haza Al Muqbali, a resident of Ibi, told Gulf News, that he buys pomegranates in bulk and sells them in neighbouring countries like the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia.

Al Muqbali added that he makes good profits from the sale of pomegranates.

Farmers here attribute their long life to the fruit.

It contains high levels of antioxidants, polyphenols and flavonoids which protect from the cancer and other diseases like heart disease and atherosclerosis as well as stomach illness.

Oman imports pomegranates worth more than US$2m from Jordan, Iran, Yemen, India and Egypt every year, according to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. (4)

Farmers have turned to olive farming in the recent past for its financial returns, and it could come a close second to pomegranates.

Al Jabal Al Akhdar, which has a climate similar to the one in the Mediterranean, has various plants and a high quality of crops, but in recent years farmers here have shown increasing interest in growing olives.

This year, the harvest season began on August 23, and it promises to be a good one with high production levels.

The amount of olives received in the first week was more than 4,000 kilograms.

The quantity is expected to reach more than 10,000 kg, indicating that the extracted oil volume has been more than 10% so far. (5)

Muscat: Oman is ‘seriously’ considering proposals to carry out farming abroad in order to ensure food security, said Fuad bin Jaafar Al Sajwani, minister of agriculture and fisheries wealth.

“There is some good news. We are receiving offers of land, and are considering these seriously. We are prioritising these areas, and the final decision will be (taken) by the government.

Asked which countries were being considered, the minister said he could not tell (the names of) the countries but proposals have been received so far from two countries. (6)

Oman recorded the lowest inflation rate at 0.07% in August among Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states. The highest inflation rate was recorded in the United Arab Emirates at 4.94% in August, against the same period last year.

Among the GCC members, the highest inflation rate was recorded in the United Arab Emirates, followed by Kuwait at 3.84%, Saudi Arabia at 2.1%, Bahrain at 1.7%, Qatar at 1.2%, and the Sultanate at 0.07%.
Compared to the general index of July 2015, the August 2015 shows an increase in the United Arab Emirates by 0.92%, Bahrain by 0.6%, Qatar by 0.5%, Saudi 0.4%, Kuwait by 0.29%. However, Oman witnessed a fall of 0.14%.

Compared to the same month last year, the prices of the ‘Food and beverage’ group increased in August, 2015 in most of the GCC countries: in Kuwait by 5.62%, followed by Bahrain 2.9%, Saudi Arabia 2.1%, Qatar by 1.9%, and the United Arab Emirates by 0.64%. In contrast, prices of this group fell in Sultanate by 0.89%. (7)

Texas Tech University and the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR) have been chosen to host the 2015 Sultan Qaboos Cultural Center (SQCC) conference Nov. 5 at Texas Tech International Cultural Center.

The SQCC is based in Washington, D.C. and promotes mutual cultural understanding between the people of America and Oman.

The conference was established in 2005 and the host is selected each year by the Sultan Qaboos bin Said al Said of Oman.

Tibor Nagy, vice provost for international affairs said, the conference involved some of Oman’s most respected academic researchers, including high-level officials from its science ministries.

The title of this year’s conference will be “Agriculture in Arid Areas,” which highlights the similarities between the South Plains and Oman.

The conference will address water management and use by both regions in agricultural and urban areas, agricultural production in arid and semi-arid areas as well as technology used in Omani arid-land agriculture. (8)

2.5. Bahrain

Turkish Bahraini Business Council chairman Osman Yildrim Coskun said that in addition to military deals, plans were in place to attract businessmen in Bahrain, and other Gulf states, to invest in agricultural plots of land in southeast Turkey to meet high demand for fruits and vegetables.

“Bahrain is the gateway not just to the GCC, but the world, and we believe that partnership in the field of agriculture and livestock would be excellent and there are vast plots in the southeast of the country that we could offer with good incentives,” he explained.

“…we have not received any confirmation yet for us to come up with a general idea on what Bahrain wants and what we could offer, considering that we are the main exporters of fruits and vegetables in the region.”

Implementation is envisaged within three to four years.

The GDN reported on Friday that Bahrain’s Ambassador to Turkey Dr Ibrahim Al Abdullah presented a proposal to have a permanent cargo ship in Bahrain to receive all Turkish products and distribute them internationally.

“Bahrain has a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the US and it can open the doors for us in North and South American countries,” said Mr Coskun.

“There is a general idea on where the proposed centre will be located, but it has not been confirmed yet. (1)

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister will head the Kingdom’s official delegation on Friday, September 4, to Italy to participate in Bahrain’s National Day celebration at Expo Milano2015

The Bahrain National Pavilion “Green Architectures” at Expo Milano2015 (Feeding the Planet: Energy for Life) will continue to receive visitors until the end of October.

Through the National Pavilion, BACA aims to exhibit on a total space of 2,000 square meters the unique agrarian cultural heritage of the Kingdom. The pavilion was conceived to display an endless array of natural scenery comprising fruit gardens and trees that blossom on various seasons. The national pavilion includes ancient artefacts depicting agricultural traditions dating back to several thousands of years.

Bahrain’s Pavilion also aims to spread awareness about the significance of farming heritage of the Kingdom. (2)
Undersecretary of Agriculture and Marine Resources at the Works, Municipality Affairs and Agriculture Ministry Shaikh Khalifa bin Isa Al Khalifa received today Malaysian Ambassador to Bahrain Dato Ahmad Shahizan Abd Samad and Chief Executive of the Malaysian Bank of Agriculture Wan Mohammed Fadzmi Othman.

They discussed bilateral cooperation in the agricultural field and ways of availing of the Malaysian expertise mainly in the plant tissue culture. They also spotlighted ways of setting up and operating a state-of-the-art plant tissue lab in Bahrain to protect distinguished dates and palm trees in Bahrain.

The Malaysian delegation hailed cooperation with Bahrain and invited the Agriculture and Marine Resources to visit the Malaysia Agriculture, Horticulture and Agrotourism Show (MAHA) which is set to be hosted by Malaysia in November 2016. (3)

Manama (BNA): Jeddah-based Islamic Development Bank is conducting a feasibility study on “Khairat Al-Bahrain” agricultural project in Sudan.

Developments of the scheme were today on the agenda as Undersecretary for Agriculture and Marine Resources Shaikh Khalifa bin Isa Al-Khalifa met Sudanese Ambassador Abdulrahman Khalil Ahmed to discuss cooperation.

He stressed Bahrain’s keenness on bolstering joint cooperation, stressing the importance of spearheading agricultural markets in Sudan.

He announced that the feasibility study conducted by Jeddah-based Islamic Development Bank is nearing completion, pointing out that “Khairat Al-Bahrain” will hopefully witness new developments in coming weeks.

The two sides discussed ways of following up the implementation of the project in Northern Governorate in Sudan, spotlighting the ongoing Bahrain-commissioned economic and environmental feasibility study.

They agreed to overcome obstacles that may impede the implementation of the vital project, being one the crucial agricultural schemes which aim at consolidating food security. (4)

United Arab Emirates based supermarket chain Lulu Group plans to enter the Indonesian market and will spend US$300m by the end of 2017 opening stores and a central distribution network, the firm said on Monday. Lulu Group, which operates 117 stores across the Middle East, Egypt and India, will open its first Indonesian store in Jakarta by the end of this year. (5)

PUNE: Having scored a hit with the sale of mangoes without middlemen, the state agriculture marketing board has turned its attention to the same strategy for oranges in Pune, Nashik, Aurangabad and Navi Mumbai. It plans to go overseas by exporting oranges to Bahrain and Singapore in the first phase of the current season.

Officials said that a centre for direct sale of oranges was recently started in Gultekdi Market Yard and 24 centres will come up across the city in the next few months.

The centres will be managed by orange growers and the board will assist them to sell their products by providing infrastructure at the locations. A senior official said, “This will be the second consecutive year of direct sale of oranges. Centres started last year in Pune sold about 149 ton oranges fetching fairly good returns for the growers. This year, we are expanding the initiative in a big way. About 24 centres are planned in the city and fringe areas.

Besides provision of necessary facilities to growers, the board would also keep a tab on the prices, which would change depending on supply. At present, growers are selling three kg oranges for Rs 100. The centre is being managed by orange growers from Amravati area.

A meeting at the Orange Export Facilitation Centre in Wardha decided to boost export of oranges to Bahrain and Singapore. As per the estimates, the state produces about 7.5 lakh metric ton of oranges, every year. Steps have been planned for better quality of produce and aggressive marketing.
3. Price Information

3.1. United Arab Emirates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Low Price (Dhs)</th>
<th>High Price (Dhs)</th>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Pack</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>22</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Item | Origin | Low Price (Dhs) | High Price (Dhs) | Variety | Size | Pack
---|---|---|---|---|---|---
Onion | India | 21 | 21 | | 15 KG | Ctn
Okra | Oman | 25 | 25 | | 7 KG | Ctn
Pomegranate | Egypt | 25 | 25 | Red | 12 PCS | Ctn
Pineapple | Malysia | 70 | 70 | | 10 PCS | Ctn
Potato Sweet | China | 9 | 10 | | 6 KG | Ctn
Pear | China | 150 | 150 | | 90 PCS | 1 Box
Papaya | Oman | 3 | 4 | | 1 KG | 
Pumpkin | India | 1.5 | 1.5 | | 1 KG | 
Potato | India | 16 | 16 | | 12 KG | 
Strawberry | Australia | 30 | 30 | | 2.5 KG | 
Tomato | India | 15 | 15 | | 10 KG | Ctn
Turnip | Iran | 9 | 9 | | 1 KG | 
Tangerine | South Africa | 75 | 75 | | 10 KG | 
Water Melon | Iran | 1.5 | 1.5 | | 1 KG | 
Zucchini | Iran | 25 | 25 | | 12 KG | Ctn

### 3.2. Oman

| Item | Origin | Low Price (Rial) | High Price (Rial) | Variety | Size | Pack
---|---|---|---|---|---|---
Chillies | Oman | 5.6 | 5.6 | Green | 10 Kg | 1 Box
Chillies | India | 4.8 | 4.8 | Green | 4 Kg | 
Mango | Pakistan | 6 | 6 | | 10 Kg | 1 Box
Avocado | Kenya | 4 | 5 | Green | 2 Kg | 1 Box
Awla | India | 3.8 | 3.8 | | 4 Kg | 
Apple | United States | 9.8 | 10 | | 18 Kg | 
Apple | China | 8 | 8 | | 90 Pcs | 
Acorn Squash | Iran | 5.2 | 5.2 | Green | 10 Kg | Ctn
Arvi | China | 5.6 | 5.6 | | 9 Kg | Ctn
Banana | Philippine | 8 | 8 | | 25 Kg | 1 Box
Banana | Oman | 4.2 | 4.2 | Green | 12 Kg | 
Baby Marrow | Oman | 5 | 5 | Green | 10 Kg | Ctn
Beet Root | Oman | 3 | 3 | Red | 8 Kg | Ctn
Cabbage | Iran | 4 | 4 | | 10 Kg | 
Cabbage | Oman | 4.2 | 4.4 | | 10 Kg | 
Coconut | India | 5 | 5 | | 32 Pcs | Ctn
Carrot | Oman | 3.5 | 3.5 | | 10 Kg | 1 Bag
Cantaloup | India | 3 | 3 | | 6 Kg | 
Capsicum | India | 7 | 7 | | 5 Kg | 

26
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