

China's Chongqing opens import route for Thai durians

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Southwest China's Chongqing welcomed the first direct cold-chain train of Thai durians which reached the megacity via the New International Land-Sea Trade Corridor.

The 150,000 durians from Thailand are first transported by road to Laos and then loaded on a train and travelled to China via the China-Laos Railway, according to Xinhua News agency.

The entire journey took four days, down from 8-10 days on previous sea-road routes, said Deng Haoji, chief operating officer of Hongjiu Fruit, the company that purchased the fruits.

"For fruit importers, time is money and every hour is precious. This durian train has reduced costs, as well as losses during transportation," Deng said.

The majority of the durians will enter markets in Chongqing, while the rest will continue the train journey to reach the neighbouring province of Sichuan.

Durians are among a growing number of agricultural products from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) which has expanded entry into the Chinese market. This happened because of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement and the improvement of cross-border transport infrastructure.

In 2022, China imported 825,000 tonnes of durian, of which 780,000 tonnes came from Thailand, according to customs data.