

China's trout fish soars overseas demand

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China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region is becoming a hub of trout farming and soaring demand from overseas. While it is less commonly known that trout fish raised in snow and glacier meltwater in this vast region have become a world-renowned delicacy.

According to the Xinhua news agency, in Kazak Autonomous Prefecture of Ili, where the brooks meander, are filled with the hustle and bustle of a rainbow trout breeding industry reached over 100 million yuan (\$14.5 million) a year.

Rainbow trout, a fish native to the rivers and lakes of North America, is famous for having few bones and a lot of meat, which makes it ideal for raising as food.

Relying on its abundant water resources, Ili, in recent years, has invested heavily in the fishery industry. The prefecture aims to increase the annual output of aquatic products to about 30,000 tonnes by 2025.

"Xinjiang-bred trout has growing recognition in Russia, owing to its geographical proximity and high quality," said Wang Yuan, deputy manager of Xinjiang Zungui Fresh Food Technology Co., Ltd.

"Deep-processed trout products are also exported to Malaysia and many other destinations. This year, we will work to open up more markets, including Israel and Kazakhstan," Wang added.

Its parent company, Xinjiang Tianyun Organic Agriculture Co., Ltd. is a local fish farming, processing and retail leader. The company now produces a series of trout products, ranging from trout fillet, segment, and steak to minced and smoked trout.

"In contrast to last year when we ran about looking for customers, this year we've already received lots of orders and production is at full capacity every day. We estimate the annual processing capacity can reach 2,000 tonnes this year," Wang said.

Farmers have also seen a steady rise in incomes through the innovative use of the region's rich natural resources.

At present a total of 156 local residents have taken on various positions at the company, taking up more than 60 per cent of the company's staff.