

# POLISH APPLES BOUND FOR MALAYSIA

Poland is one of the leading producers of fruits and seeking slice of Southeast Asian market

ADRIAN DAVID  
KUALA LUMPUR  
bt@nst.com.my

**M**ALAYSIA is expected to become Poland's latest market for its apples, following the Russian-Ukraine war.

Poland is one of the leading producers of apples in the world and the largest in Europe but lost exports to Russia and Belarus owing to sanctions.

Association of Polish Fruit and Vegetable Distributors (Fruit Union) secretary-general Paulina Kopeć said there were plans to ship 3,000 tonnes of apples to Kuala Lumpur by November.

"If this materialises, Malaysia could be the gateway for Polish apples to the Asean region — especially the large Thailand and Indonesian markets — and reduce their dependence on imports from New Zealand, Australia, Italy, South Africa and the United States.

"We too would like a slice of the

Malaysian apple market and are talking to Malaysian importers, as it is among the favourite fruits here," Kopeć said.

Besides apples, she said Poland was also striving to export blueberries and strawberries to Malaysia.

"We have captured Egypt, which is Poland's largest apple market, and are now moving into the African continent.

"Other strong markets are Israel, India, Vietnam, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

"Our apples are gaining trust by consumers in Asia as Polish fruits are popular due to their unique taste and nutritional value.

"We have, through generations of cultivation, created a tradition and culture where our apple producers offer consumers fruits of the highest quality.

"Our apples are considered to be exceptional because of the unique climate which prevails in our country — giving them a proper balance of sweet and sour.

"The suitable soil, cultivation technology, knowledge and experience of the growers make the apples stand out from the fruits offered by producers from other

parts of the world," said Kopeć.

She said Poland contributed 11 per cent of the European Union (EU)'s fruit production, 26 per cent of the EU's apple production and had increased its fruit tree plantations by 11 per cent to 16,000ha.

"Polish fruits account for €1.9 billion, while its apples earn €925 million, annually," she said at a presentation attended by Polish ambassador Krzysztof Debnicki at the W Hotel in Jalan Ampang recently.

Poland exported more than 922,000 tonnes of the EU apple harvest of 11.7 million tonnes last year.

Kopeć said the cultivation practices of apples and other fruits in her country had contributed to sustainable production, rural stability, biodiversity and a multitude of jobs.

"Our apple plantations have low pesticide usage, compared with other crops, and require very little water supply.

"Apples have huge nutritional value as they are high in fibre, low in fat, contain natural fructose and free from sodium.

"Our apple varieties are gala, golden delicious, najdared, red chief, red delicious and red jon-prince," said Kopeć.



Paulina Kopeć