

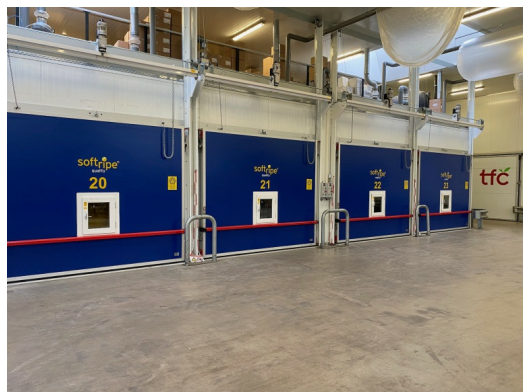


By Carl
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TFC Holland invests in Softripe tech

BayWa subsidiary adopts artificial intelligence-supported process for precision ripening of avocados and mangoes



Netherlands-based exotic products specialist TFC Holland has become one of the first companies in Europe to implement new Softripe technology.

According to the BayWa subsidiary, Softripe's artificial intelligence-supported process optimises the ripening process leading to "higher fruit quality as well as a significantly longer shelf life of the products".

This significantly minimises markdowns and fruit losses along the value chain, the Maasdijk group explained.

Sustainable step

"Although the industry is currently focusing more on the preservation of ripened fruit through the application of protective layers, the decision to use Softripe as a state-of-the-art ripening technology now seems the more obvious and sustainable step for us to transport perfectly ripened avocados and mangoes with a significantly longer shelf life to

our customers' fruit departments," explained CEO Falk Schlusnus.

The Softripe approach focuses on the respiration rate of fruit and, with it, the 'well-being' of the product throughout the ripening process.

The atmosphere in the ripening chamber is permanently monitored by AI-supported technology and continuously and individually adjusted in relation to the respective metabolic processes of the fruits.

This not only produces optimised, more uniform ripening results, but also fruits that "stand out on the retailer's shelves as well as under everyday conditions at home for the consumer" thanks to a longer shelf-life.

Better sensory properties

Softripe said that blind tests had also shown that its avocados were said to have better sensory properties than fruit from conventional ripening methods, due to

Internal quality defects such as vascular browning in avocados – a discolouration of the flesh fibres – can also be significantly reduced with the new technology, the group outlined.

TFC's UK sister company Worldwide Fruit has already implemented the technology after an extensive series of tests with "extremely positive results for various fruits".

"The very homogeneous and consistently high ripening qualities have convinced us," said Schlusnus, who has been on board with the investment at TFC since 2019 and helped get it off the ground. "By using Softripe, we are redefining what the highest standard of fruit quality is and will successively expand the application of the process to other products."

Ultimately, TFC said, the objective is to reduce food losses along the value chain. It is to offer customers fruits that are ripe for consumption, but also perfect, aromatic and sweet with a longer shelf-life, with quality they can reliably trust with every

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their more aromatic, nuttier flavour and purchase.
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