

SE Agribusiness
HD **Chinese** want bales with 'back story'
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AUSTRALIA'S vast farming landscapes and fresh environmental credentials are key selling points when it comes to winning buyer loyalty from cashed-up, educated **Chinese** consumers.

Even textile exports, such as wool, have an appealing 'back story' which shoppers want to know about and relate to, Tianyu marketing manager Jane Guo said.

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In heavily populated and industrialised **China**, where hundreds of **millions** of city consumers can literally taste the smog and rarely see sun or blue sky for weeks on end, the farm image is big **business** and features prominently in city marketing campaigns.

Luckily for Australia's meat, **milk**, horticulture, and grain crop producers, **Chinese** shoppers put a lot of confidence in the clean, healthy, well-regulated origins of Australia's exports.

But they also increasingly expect farmers and marketers to produce evidence of good environmental practices.

"**Chinese** consumers are showing much greater interest in environmental issues they want to know products they **buy** have been well produced," Ms Guo said.

"I think there it is important to talk more about the back story behind Australian wool."

An underlying message to farmers visiting wool plants like Tianyu was that, just like high-end consumers in Europe or the United States, the **Chinese** apparel shopper appreciated premium quality and big name brands.

But while wool enjoyed a premium reputation, consumers also wanted evidence of good management involved in producing woollen garments.

Tianyu, which imports 28,000 tonnes of greasy wool primarily from Australia, has one of **China's** most modern scouring plants and is keen to promote its own environmental credentials. The **company** recently spent about 8 **million** euros on new European technology upgrades and now boasts higher effluent water-treatment standards than woollen processors in Italy.

ANDREW MARSHALL.

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