

Roundup: Mexican SMEs look to China for business opportunities

By Edna Alcantara

GUADALAJARA, Mexico, Oct. 14 (Xinhua) -- Mexican small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the food, textile, wine and other sectors are looking to strike business deals with China, a market they are eager to break into.

These could be seen as companies moved to participate in the two-day China-Latin American and Caribbean Business Summit, which wrapped up Wednesday in Mexico's second-largest city Guadalajara.

Larger firms with more export experience, such as Jalisco-state tequila maker Rio Plata del Senor, are also seeking boosted business with the Asian country.

Officials and nearly 2,000 business leaders from China and 24 Latin American and Caribbean countries attended the summit and expo, which featured more than 300 stands in 12,000 square meters of exhibition space.

"We are a family-run business based in Tepic, Narayit, on Mexico's central Pacific coast," said Gilberto Gangoti Bermudez, owner of Sacramonte Liquors and Wine, one SME keen to do business in China.

"We just went public in Mexico a month ago and we want to take (the enterprise) as far as we can. Our product appears to have been liked at this important forum and what we are trying to-do is to present and reach China with our sweet hibiscus wine," Gangoti told Xinhua.

The small-business owner has succeeded in closing a deal with Canada and now hopes to gain an Asian client at the summit.

Medium-sized produce packer JBR Select Avocados, based in the central state of Michoacán, is another case in point.

"It's a young company with six years of experience," said Manager Salvador Hernandez. "We have succeeded in reaching the North American market, but due to its number of people and economic level, China is a very attractive market."

Hernandez also underscored the importance of such forums, which provide small companies with access to China right here on Mexican soil.

The ninth summit is organized by Mexico's ministries of Foreign Affairs and Economy, in conjunction with Mexico's export and investment promotion agency ProMexico, the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT) and the Mexican Business Councilor Foreign Trade, Investment and Technology (Comce).

Mexico's ATMotors, which attended the summit, already works with three Chinese firms and together they are working to introduce their vehicles in the Mexican and South American markets.

China, pledging to increase trade exchange with Latin America, is the region's second-largest source of imports, and third-largest destination for exports, according to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).