New Zealand Business Roundtable in China | 新西兰中国商业圆桌会

NEW ZEALAND BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE IN CHINA

QUARTERLY INDUSTRY REPORT

CHINA, QUARTER 4 2025

A quarterly report featuring valuable insights into China-specific industries from NZBRiC member companies and partners with interests in the region.

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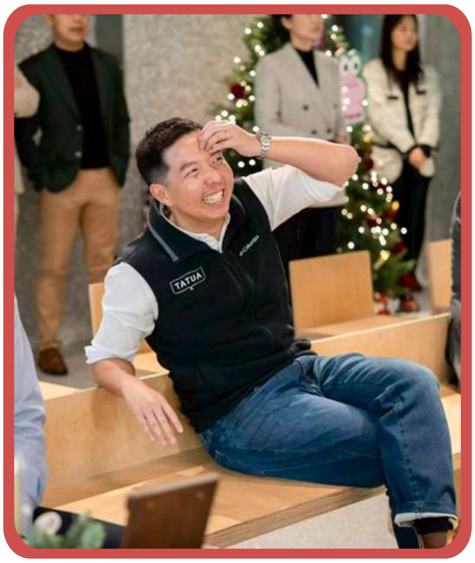
MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR



DANIEL YOUNG
Chair
NZBRiC

Dear Readers,

It is my pleasure to present the NZBRIC Quarterly Industry Report. This report is a platform designed to advance key trade sectors of both New Zealand and China by leveraging the expertise and on-the-ground knowledge of our NZBRIC members across different industries.

Through this report, we provide a content-driven platform for our member companies to share their China-specific industry insights and experiences via stories, opinion pieces, official industry reports, and other relevant content.

The report is widely read in both China and New Zealand by our partner organizations, government stakeholders, and members.

As we round out the year for New Zealand business in China, this edition is packed with valuable insights. We share member stories from CIIE and feature reflections on 2025 from the New Zealand Consul General, Ardi Barnard. You will also hear from Tatua on the latest developments in the Dairy Industry, Zespri on the fruit sector, Sparks Partners on recent wins in legal protections for New Zealand brands, and ANZ will provide their valuable economic insights. We are sincerely grateful for these contributions, which reflect our shared goal of fostering informed dialogue and building stronger connections across the New Zealand-China business landscape.

We encourage you to share your comments, feedback, and suggestions for future editions. If you would like to collaborate with us, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Thank you for your support, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Best regards,
Daniel Young
Chair, NZBRIC

The views expressed in the articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of NZBRiC.

New Zealand Consulate-General in Shanghai: Reflecting on 2025

Strengthening Partnerships and Driving Success for Kiwi Businesses in China

ARDI BARNARD

New Zealand Consul-General in Shanghai

NEW ZEALAND EMBASSY
Te Aka Aorere

As 2025 draws to a close, now is a good opportunity to reflect on another big year for the New Zealand–China relationship, and for New Zealand businesses in Shanghai. The Consulate-General's mandate spans Shanghai and the broader Yangtze River Delta, a region that is critical to New Zealand's trade and economic footprint in China. The Consulate team, including New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE), Tourism New Zealand, and Education New Zealand and Customs and the Ministry for Primary Industries from Beijing, has been working alongside the New Zealand Business Roundtable in China (NZBRIC), to create a more enabling business environment and to help New Zealand companies thrive in one of the world's most dynamic markets.

I'd like to thank NZBRIC for the invitation to write this article for their final industry report of 2025, and to acknowledge in particular Mark Anderton's steady and expert leadership as NZBRIC Chair over the past three years. Mark oversaw a significant expansion in NZBRIC's membership and activities, and I wish Mark well in his next endeavours. Congratulations to Dan Young, newly appointed Chair, who we look forward to working with when he takes the reins in 2026.

Prime Minister's visit, and a year of high-level engagement

New Zealand's relationship with China is one of our most significant, and most consequential. China is central to New Zealand's prosperity, with close to NZ$20 billion in exports going to China as at October 2025, up 16% year on year. It remains our most valuable two-way goods trade relationship, around $100m in bilateral trade per day. Beyond trade, the relationship encompasses strong people-to-people and cultural connections: China is our largest source of international students and third largest source of tourists.

Regular and high-level engagement with China is more important than ever – this year nine New Zealand Ministers visited China, covering portfolios as varied as rail, tourism, universities, science, innovation and technology, through to climate change, trade, agriculture, and of course a centrepiece visit by the Prime Minister in June.

Prime Minister Luxon's Mission to China, accompanied by Ministers Upston and Mitchell, and 28 senior business leaders, provided an opportunity to engage with the Chinese system at the highest level. In addition to political calls in Beijing with President Xi, Premier Li, and Chairman of the Nationals People's Congress Zhao Leji (the latter of whom was recently welcomed again to New Zealand), Prime Minister Luxon spent two days in Shanghai focused on trade, education and tourism, including a meeting with Party Secretary Chen Jining. Over NZ$1 billion dollars in new B2B and G2G deals were announced and over 30 events were held across three days in China.

Highlights for business included new grass fed credentials to support our dairy and meat sectors, the launch of a new global "Find Your 100%" tourism campaign (and a strategic agreement with global booking platform Trip.com), the recognition of New Zealand as Country of Honour at the China Annual Conference and Expo for International Education (one of the largest international education events in China), the announcement of the Southern Link air route between Shanghai, Auckland and Buenos Aires which in December saw its first flights take off, and the resumption of New Zealand cosmetic exports to China via general trade.

We were pleased, too, to see NZBRIC's Board hand an advance copy of their 2025 business outlook report to the Prime Minister. The report captured the optimism expressed by the New Zealand businesses operating in China that were surveyed, tempered by the need to navigate China's competitive environment and evolving consumer trends. While we've observed China's slower than expected growth, as it navigates the challenges of an ageing population, low domestic consumption, and ongoing trade tensions with the United States, and while we've noted diversification in China's trading relationships, we are confident that New Zealand's value proposition stands firm. New Zealand companies do, however, need to compete hard to make sure Chinese consumers understand what sets New Zealand's world-class, premium products and services apart.

The Prime Minister's visit reinforced what NZ Inc agencies are here for: to get a result for New Zealand. To work with Kiwi exporters and their Chinese partners to unlock opportunities. Whether it's in food and beverage, health products and pharmaceuticals, tourism, education or advanced manufacturing, it's about taking our economic relationship from strength to strength, and creating new pathways for Kiwi businesses in China's evolving market, underpinned by a Free Trade Agreement that contributes to growth and continues to deliver new market access.

Showcasing New Zealand at CIIE and Beyond

November's annual China International Import Expo (CIIE) continues to be Shanghai's top calendar event for New Zealand businesses. The eighth edition of CIIE saw over 80 New Zealand exhibitors and the largest-ever Taste New Zealand Pavilion, covering more than 1,000 square metres, with a delegation led by Trade and Investment Minister Todd McClay.

The results speak for themselves: more than NZ$450 million in new deals and partnerships were signed during the week. Beyond the exhibition floor, New Zealand took centre stage at events hosted by NZBRiC, such as the largest ever Kiwi Drinks at the iconic pop-Ahi restaurant pop-up, and a breakfast event attended by New Zealand Ambassador to China Dr Jonathan Austin. Companies' participation at CIIE and these events reinforces New Zealand's reputation for quality, sustainability, and innovation. Livestreaming took centre stage in 2025, and Ministers and officials have done a number of livestreams this year to promote New Zealand tourism and products, and New Zealand businesses are increasingly leveraging this platform to reach Chinese consumers.

Tourism and hospitality featured prominently in 2025. In September, Tourism Minister Louise Upston led a delegation to Shanghai, promoting New Zealand as a year-round destination with excellent air connectivity. Insights from Chinese partners highlighted the importance of convenience, integrated bookings, and adapting to evolving consumer preferences.

Various cultural connections were marked throughout the year, including New Zealand artists' work showcased at the Shanghai Biennale, one of the highest-profile contemporary art events in Shanghai.

Agriculture and rural industries also remained a priority. Associate Agriculture Minister Mark Patterson's wool-focused mission to Shanghai and Nanjing underscored China's role as New Zealand's largest wool export market and explored opportunities in high-end textiles and activewear. Similarly, our support for horticulture and pet food exporters at major trade fairs reflect the growing demand in China for premium, safe, and sustainable products.

Ambassador Austin has also made a number of visits to Shanghai since taking up his role in Beijing this year, including a visit in April to meet Shanghai Mayor Gong Zheng and the NZBRIC Board, and a four-day programme in November prior to Minister McClay's arrival at CIIE to support additional activities and exporters.

Partnering with NZBRIC to Shape the Business Landscape

Throughout the year, NZBRIC has been an invaluable partner with the Consulate and NZ Inc agencies across China in amplifying the voice of New Zealand businesses in China. Regional engagement is a priority, and we worked with NZBRIC to boost New Zealand's profile outside Shanghai in the Yangtze River Delta, including joint visits to Yiwu, Wenzhou, Taizhou, Jinhua, and Hangzhou.

There are many areas of opportunity for cooperation between the regions and New Zealand businesses in China, and we'll seek to lift engagement outside the Tier One city of Shanghai into Tiers Two and Three, strengthening relationships with local authorities and distribution partners.

Looking Ahead

To maintain momentum and hit the ground running in the new year, our focus will remain on deepening partnerships, supporting exporters, and leveraging platforms like CIIE to showcase the best of New Zealand. We look forward to working further alongside NZBRIC as it continues to expand its membership and advocate for New Zealand businesses.

APEC is sure to be the headline in 2026 as China takes up hosting responsibilities, and we hope the busy year that awaits us brings continued optimism for New Zealand businesses without complacency, and a safer, more prosperous, more sustainable future for all New Zealanders.
Wishing all a restful end-of-year break!

New Zealand’s Strategic Triumph at the Record-Breaking 8th China International Import Expo

JAMES O’RILEY
NZBRiC Events & Communications Manager

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The 8th China International Import Expo (CIIE), held in Shanghai from November 5–10, marked a watershed moment for New Zealand's commercial relationship with China. With a record-breaking delegation of 80 businesses exhibiting, the New Zealand presence was not only it's largest to date but also its most sophisticated. Spanning the Food and Agriculture, Health, and Consumer Goods Halls of the National Exhibition and Convention Centre, Kiwi brands presented immersive, high-quality booths that showcased premium offerings to an audience of over 400,000 visitors.

The sheer scale of the New Zealand presence was most palpable in the highly trafficked 'Taste NZ' Pavilion. Here, 40 New Zealand businesses exhibited collectively within the Food and Agriculture Hall, creating a unified national brand block that stood out amidst intense international competition.

Given this record level of participation, we surveyed New Zealand exhibitors to reflect on their key takeaways from CIIE 2025. We asked where they found the most value, what elements of the experience resonated most, and how the expo is reshaping their long-term approach to the market. Their collective feedback provides a distinct strategic lesson that challenges common misconceptions about CIIE. The consensus is clear: for New Zealand exporters, CIIE is not a traditional sales event focused on immediate retail turnover. Instead, it functions as a vital strategic platform for building unassailable brand credibility and consolidating long-term relationships with key customers and partners.

The True CIIE Value Proposition: Credibility, Trust, and Connections

An analysis of the objectives and outcomes reported by the exhibitors reveals a sophisticated understanding of the Chinese market. New Zealand companies are moving beyond simple transactional goals, focusing instead on three overarching commercial trends that defined the 2025 experience: the primacy of trust, the necessity of strategic partnerships, and the demand for localised preparation.

1. The Primacy of Credibility and Trust

Across sectors ranging from healthcare to dairy, the most valuable outcome reported by exhibitors was overwhelmingly related to intangible assets: brand credibility, trust, and the demonstration of a committed presence in China.

For NutriAge, a New Zealand cellular anti-aging nutraceutical brand, CIIE represented more than a brand showcase; it marked a critical milestone in building deep trust-based engagement with the Chinese market. In an environment where health and wellness products are increasingly marketed online and differentiation has become more difficult, NutriAge leveraged CIIE's high-level international platform to present its full product portfolio and scientific foundations in a credible, offline setting.

As a FernMark Licence holder, NutriAge reinforces its positioning through New Zealand–sourced ingredients and its own GMP-certified R&D and manufacturing facilities, strengthening confidence in product safety, compliance, and traceability. While New Zealand's reputation for purity and quality remains a powerful national advantage, it is no longer sufficient on its own. At CIIE, face-to-face engagement and institutional endorsement emerged as decisive differentiators – enabling NutriAge to establish verifiable trust and stand apart in a highly competitive market.

Similarly, for Tracel Health, a nutritional drink company and member of NZBRiC, the exhibit was treated as a stage for high-level corporate engagement rather than a simple sales counter. Tracel leveraged their presence to facilitate interviews with key media outlets and host government officials. These were not passive visits; Tracel curated them into publicly engaging spectacles. By showcasing official endorsements and high-profile interest, they significantly enhanced their brand's legitimacy in the eyes of prospective clients.

In both instances, the strategy is evident: by solidifying the brand's reputation as a high-quality, government-backed, and trustworthy supplier, these companies are building the foundational capability for long-term stability. This credibility is the currency required to unlock future growth. Furthermore, establishing this reputation at a national-level event creates a ripple effect. By exhibiting at CIIE – an event centrally located in Shanghai but drawing attendees from every province – New Zealand brands can project their credibility to a nationally distributed audience of regional buyers. For Chinese partners in high-growth Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, seeing a brand succeed at CIIE acts as an indispensable risk-mitigation tool, allowing them to align themselves with a trusted international partner with confidence.

2. Focus on Strategic Relationship-Building

The second defining trend observed at the 8th CIIE was the prioritisation of strategic relationship outcomes over immediate spot sales. Exhibitors consistently set objectives focused on deepening engagement and structurally consolidating their market position.

Synlait Milk Limited, a leading dairy company and NZBRiC member, exemplified this approach. They explicitly set three interlocking objectives: to host a visiting group of Synlait farmers, to showcase their corporate presence and product breadth, and to scout for new business opportunities. These objectives were not isolated; they were mutually reinforcing. By successfully hosting their visiting farmers at the stand, Synlait offered a transparent window into their supply chain, visually connecting the "pasture to plate" narrative for prospective clients. The physical exhibit did not just display products; it demonstrated the company's entire supply-chain model.

This focus on long-term infrastructure was echoed by NZBRiC member Seasons Nutrition Limited, whose brand DAIRIALLI made its debut at the New Zealand Pavilion this year. For a first-time exhibitor, the priority was not individual transactions, but rather "branding and distributor interaction". By inviting hundreds of distributors to participate in online promotions and engage with the brand on-site, Seasons Nutrition used the expo to build a network of advocates who will drive sales long after the event concludes.

This relationship-first focus frequently led to tangible, albeit long-term, commercial gains. Grin, a natural oral health company and NZBRiC member, reported achieving several core strategic goals, including the signing of strategic cooperation agreements and the launch of co-branded items. This emphasis on partnership structures, such as co-branding and cooperation agreements, confirms that CIIE is best utilised as a high-level networking and deal-structuring platform.

The importance of this approach is underscored by the aggregate success of the New Zealand delegation, which secured an estimated NZD$450 million in new deals and partnerships during the week. It is crucial to interpret this figure correctly: these millions do not primarily represent retail transactions made on the floor. Rather, they represent foundational agreements, Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), and long-term supply contracts. These figures are the result of months of relationship-building that culminated at CIIE, showcasing the depth of the strategic bonds forged between New Zealand suppliers and Chinese distributors over 2025 and beyond.

3. Success Demands Intense Preparation and Localisation

Finally, the feedback from seasoned exhibitors serves as a reality check: the strategic outcomes described above are not accidental. They require intense, localised preparation and a willingness to adapt to "China speed."

Synlait advised newcomers to "Prepare for lots of people coming, and pre-plan your objectives and expectations." With the sheer scale of the event, a lack of planning can result in missed opportunities and logistical chaos. The volume of traffic requires a clear vision of what success looks like before the doors even open.

Nutriage expanded on this by emphasising the need for clarity in the value proposition. They noted that Chinese buyers are increasingly becoming more values-driven in their purchasing preferences, prioritising brand origin and sustainability. Exhibitors must be ready to answer "detailed questions about supply chain, compliance, and product effectiveness." To meet this demand, Nutriage stressed the importance of investing in simplified, high-impact messaging in Chinese. Translating a brochure is not enough; the value proposition must be localised to resonate with local cultural and commercial norms.

Tracel Health further stressed the operational side of success. They highlighted the critical need to coordinate with local teams for logistics and to produce high-quality visual content for live broadcasts. Most importantly, they pointed to prompt lead follow-up as the deciding factor in post-expo success. In the fast-paced China market, a lead that is not actioned within days is often lost. Without a dedicated local team ready to act quickly on the connections made at CIIE, the significant investment in building credibility and relationships risks being wasted.

Concluding Remarks

The New Zealand experience at the 8th CIIE confirms that the event is far more than a marketplace; it is a strategic investment in the future of the China-New Zealand commercial relationship.

While the "trade show” atmosphere grabs headlines, the real value for New Zealand exporters lies deeper. The most significant returns are not found in short-term sales figures, but in the accumulation of brand credibility, a robust network of strategic partners, and distributed market access. These assets are the essential prerequisites for sustained growth in China's dynamic and rapidly evolving consumer base. By using CIIE to anchor their reputation and deepen their roots in the market, New Zealand businesses are ensuring they remain competitive not just for a week in November, but for years to come.

Tatua: Driving Premium Dairy Innovation in China

DANIEL YOUNG
President of Tatua China

Company Overview

Founded in 1914 and proudly headquartered in Morrinsville, New Zealand, The Tatua Co-operative Dairy Company (Tatua) has evolved into a global leader in specialty dairy ingredients and premium value-added cream products. With ownership shared among 101 dedicated farmer-shareholders, Tatua operates as a true co-operative, blending tradition with innovation.

In the last financial year, Tatua delivered a record NZD 578 million in sales, a testament to its unwavering commitment to quality and customer collaboration. This focus on high-value, specialised dairy solutions enables Tatua's shareholders to consistently receive one of the highest milk payouts in New Zealand, reinforcing the strength of its co-operative model.

Tatua's diverse product portfolio spans functional dairy proteins, advanced nutritional powders, and indulgent creams, catering to food manufacturers, foodservice operators, and discerning consumers worldwide. Behind this success lies advanced processing technologies and a determined drive to create tailored solutions that meet the evolving needs of global markets.

Tatua in China: A decade of delivering value-added dairy

China is a cornerstone of Tatua's global strategy, accounting for 25% of total revenue. Tatua China, the company's wholly owned subsidiary, celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2025, marking a decade of strong presence in the market. Since establishing the Shanghai office, revenue and volume sales have grown consistently year-on-year, reflecting Tatua's ability to meet the evolving needs of Chinese customers.

Tatua's China business is built on three pillars: premiumization, innovation, and customer collaboration. The company supplies high-quality creams and specialty dairy solutions for infant, medical, bakery, and beverage sectors. It develops tailored formulations for local applications, ensuring superior functionality and performance. Tatua also provides technical support and co-development opportunities to help partners differentiate in a competitive market.

China Dairy Market Trends: Growth through Premiumisation

China's dairy market is valued at approximately USD 80 billion in 2025 and is projected to reach USD 100 billion by 2030. Key drivers include urban income growth, health awareness, and demand for premium products. Consumers in tier-1 cities are willing to pay price premiums for high-quality dairy, while tier-2 to tier-4 households continue to drive volume growth. Stricter national standards and improved cold-chain infrastructure have elevated product quality.

Premiumization and functional dairy products are gaining traction, with rising demand for high-protein, probiotic, and organic offerings. E-commerce platforms are expanding into inland regions, improving accessibility and convenience for consumers. Liquid Milk and Cream imports have surged, with approximately 600,000 MT imported last year due to evolution and rise of bakeries and milk tea consumption. New Zealand is the largest supplier of cream for this category, underscoring strong demand for premium cream into this segment.

Unlocking Capacity: Tatua's Landmark Cream Plant Investment

A major milestone in October 2025 is the commissioning of our new cream plant in New Zealand. This state-of-the-art facility represents an investment of approximately NZ$80 million and significantly expands Tatua's capacity to produce premium creams for both domestic and international markets, including China.

The new plant will increase supply security for fast-growing segments in China and enable the development of next-generation cream products such as mascarpone, sour creams and more. This investment underscores Tatua's long-term commitment to innovation and customer satisfaction, ensuring that Chinese partners have access to world-class dairy solutions.

New Zealand - China Fruit Sector Update

IVAN KINSELLA

Ivan Kinsella, Head of Corporate Affairs China at Zespri International

Zespri KIWIFRUIT 佳沛

Overview

- China's is a very large and growing importer of fruit, particularly durians, cherries, kiwifruit and mangosteens and new apple varieties.
- While the rapid growth of recent years has started to slow, China's total fruit imports in 2024 reached US$20 billion/ NZ$32 billion, up 3% by value.For context, that figure is 50% higher than NZ's total exports to China.
- In the first 10 months of 2025, China's fruit import growth has continued to increase. Value was up 3% to US$17.6bn/NZ$30 billion while the imported fruit volume increased by 17%.
- China 's imports of New Zealand fruit are dominated by kiwifruit and apples which comprise 98% of the total value. Kiwifruit alone accounts for nearly 80% of this total.
- New Zealand is also China's largest supplier of these two fruits. NZ kiwifruit make up 98% of total kiwifruit imports while NZ apples comprise 80%.
- This year the value of China's overall fruit market has declined 4%. This is in response to continued lower consumer sentiment leading to their buying less expensive fruit.
- The key driver of the downgrading is the continuing slide in China real estate market which accounts for the bulk of Chinese families' investments.

China's fruit imports

- China's fruit import growth rates from 2022 to 2024 show a clear upward trend, with each year's value increasing over the previous year.
- While the fruit import growth rate has slowed, the 2024 total value of US$17.75 billion (NZ$32 billion) was a record high.
- For the first 10 months of 2025, the value of China's fruit imports increased by 3% while volume increased by 17% resulting in an overall unit price decrease of 12%.
- Despite the overall decline in per unit fruit prices, New Zealand kiwifruit and apples have maintained stable unit pricing.
- Durians are China's largest imported fruit category making up 39% of import share in the first 10 months of 2025. The volume of durians imported was 1.7 million tonnes in this period, up 14%, while value increased 2% to US$6.8 billion (NZ$30.3 billion).
- This is quite remarkable growth for a fruit which was not well-known by Chinese consumers. China does not grow durians and in 2019 durian imports were only US$1.6 billion
- Cherries comprise China's second largest imported fruit category and well over 90% are sourced from Chile. From Jan. to Oct. 2025, volume grew 28% on the same period a year earlier to reach 456,000 tonnes.
- However the value of cherry imports declined 13% to US$2.5 billion (NZ$4.5 billion) leading to a unit price decrease of 31%. This decline reflected the enormous volume increase for a premium fruit at a time when consumer willingness to pay high prices had been affected by declining consumer sentiment.
- Despite the cherry unit price decline, it is worth noting that the per kilogramme price of imported cherries at the border averaged US$5.47 (NZ$9.40).
- Bananas, China's 3rd largest imported fruit, bucked the declining trend. While volume increased by 22% to 1.7 million tonnes, value increased by 25% to US$916 million leaving per unit prices broadly stable.
- This year kiwifruit overtook mangosteens to become China's fourth largest imported fruit category.
- In the 10 months to October kiwifruit volumes and pricing are down slightly. Volume decreased 2% while value was down 3% to US$580 million (NZ$997 million).
- New Zealand apples are doing well this season. In the 10 months YTD, there was a 19% volume increase and a 21% value rise to US$250 million (NZ$430 million) leading to a per unit value increase of 1%.
- New Zealand continues to be China's largest foreign apple supplier, although imported apples comprise only around 0.1% of total apples consumed.

Zespri kiwifruit

- For the full 2025 season Zespri's volume exports to China are expected to increase around 3.5% to 44 million trays, just under 160,000 tonnes. Value for the full year is expected to hold steady at last year's NZ$1.1 billion.
- The volume is slightly lower than Zespri forecast at the beginning of the season. Stronger returns in Europe and the US meant that some fruit was diverted to those markets during the year.
- On a per capita consumption basis, this volume works out on average at a little over one Zespri kiwifruit for every person in mainland China.
- Continued investment by Zespri in brand development has also supported value growth in the China market. Zespri's brand tracking survey showed that consumer's unaided brand awareness has increased to just over 60% among Zespri's targeted urban consumers.

China G3 and plant variety right protection

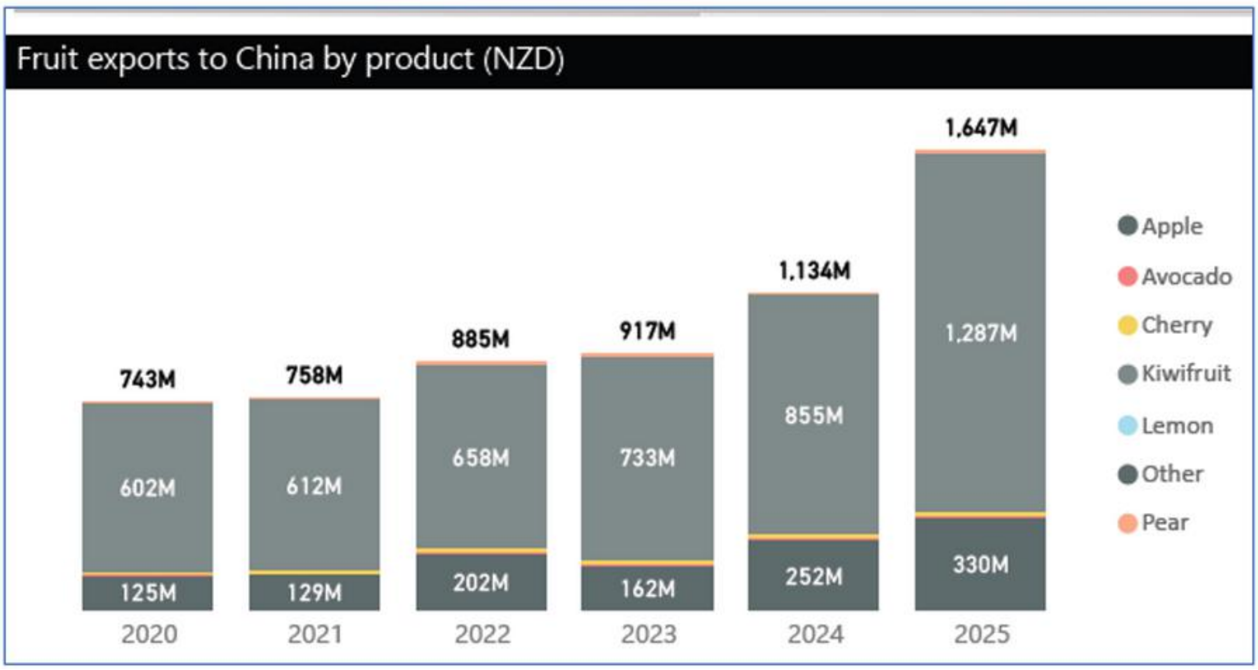
- Zespri's external consultants estimate is that the area of unauthorised G3 growing in China is now around 7,500 hectares.
- While the area planted is slightly lower than 2024 volume growth has continued and is estimated to be around 40 million trays (144,000 tonnes). Of this 65% is believed to be of Zespri Class 1 standard.
- In mid-2023 Zespri initiated legal action against a Hubei province grower with more than 260 hectares of Gold3 orchards. In August 2025 the Wuhan intellectual property court found in favour of Zespri and ordered the grower to pay the equivalent of NZ$1.3 million in punitive damages and ordered the removal of infringing plant material. The grower has lodged an appeal to China's Supreme People's Court.
- State media outlets have given extensive coverage of the judgment which has been positive to Zespri's case and acting as a deterrent to large players growing Zespri's varieties.
- The Wuhan court judgement follows a judgement earlier this year in the Supreme Court upholding a judgement in favour of T&G Global which sued a Gansu Province grower for infringing the company's Envy apple variety. In that case the grower was ordered to pay the equivalent of NZ$800,000 and required to remove the infringing trees.
- In early 2025 China also issued new regulations further strengthening plant variety right protection bringing the country's plant variety IP protection system into line with internationally agreed norms.

China's fruit exports

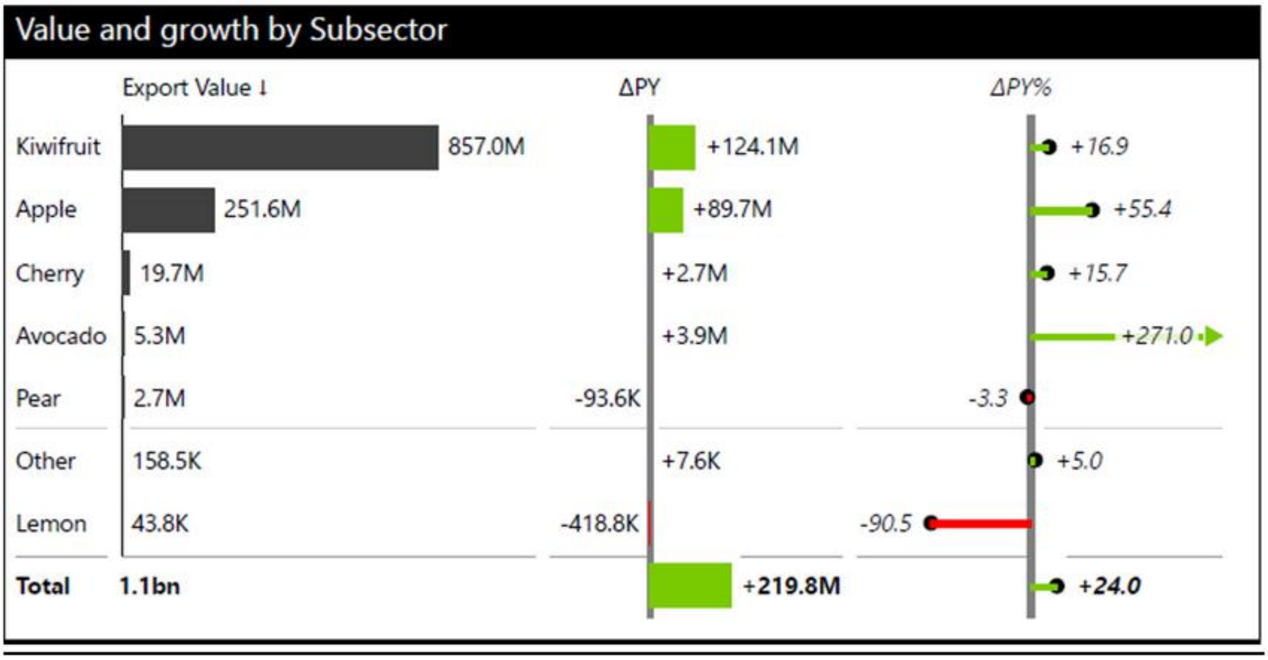
- China's fruit and nut exports are growing rapidly. From 2022 to 2024, total exports increased 31% to US$7.2 billion (NZ$12.4 billion) of which more than 80% were fruits.
- In the 10 months to October, the value of China's total fruit and nut exports value grew by 10% to US$5.92 billion (NZ$XX billion) while volume grew by 7%, showing an increase in per unit value.
- The top four fruit exports are now grapes, apples, mandarins and pears.
- Grapes have overtaken apples as China's top export fruit by value, growing 36% by volume and 7% by value.
- China's kiwifruit exports are also growing rapidly, although from a low base. For the year to date (Jan-October) volume increased by 102% to 43,000 tonnes (about 12 million trays) worth USD$58m (NZ$100 million), up 95%. This works out at around NZ$8.30 a tray.
- Since 2023, for the same 10-month period, China's kiwifruit exports are up 310% by value and 290% by volume. Per unit prices increased by 4% over this 2-year period which suggests China is exporting new higher value varieties which likely includes Zespri's Gold3 variety.
- China's new kiwifruit markets are mainly in South East Asia and have been facilitated by the steady expansion of new railway routes to the region.
- China is the largest global kiwifruit grower with an estimated in 2.5 million tonnes of production, about 3 times more than New Zealand's total production.

The following charts give more detail on New Zealand fruit exports to China.

New Zealand fruit exports to China by fruit type YE Sep 2025



New Zealand fruit value and growth by sub-sector YE Sept 2024



Data source NZ China Trade Status NZTE Sep 2025 from Global Trade Atlas

Beyond the Refusal: Forging Your Trademark Success – the Trademark Journey of "Garage Project"

ROCKY MENG
Founder of Sparks Partners
Vice-Chair of NZBRiC

SPARKS PARTNERS
上海辉岩律师事务所

In fierce market competition, trademarks serve as not only the core identifiers of a business's brand, but also as vital intangible assets. Nonetheless, numerous enterprises encounter a common predicament during trademark application procedures – rejection due to the obstacle of prior similar trademarks. Faced with this scenario, how can businesses efficiently eliminate such obstacles and facilitate the smooth registration of their trademarks? Conventional solutions encompass invalidation declarations, trademark oppositions, as well as applications for the cancellation of trademarks that have not been used for three consecutive years ("non-use cancellation"). Among these, "non-use cancellation" stands out as the preferred strategy for businesses to remove trademark obstacles, attributed to its high specificity and success rate.

According to statistics, at the end of 2024, China has 49.777 million [1] valid registered trademarks. However, a large number of these marks, due to prolonged non-use, have become "dormant trademarks". Not only do they occupy precious registration resources, but they may also impede the legitimate application process of other enterprises. Legally removing these idle marks through the "non-use cancellation" procedure can clear obstacles from your brand's path.

SPARKS PARTNERS (hereinafter referred to as "SP") has a proven track record of successfully helping clients navigate and overcome numerous trademark examination barriers over the years to cross the try line. How can trademark owners proactively defend their rights when faced with such challenges? Through a real-world case study – shared with the kind permission of Garage Project – this article systematically explains how to use the "non-use cancellation" procedure as a strategic counterattack to actively protect your trademark rights.

Garage Project (hereinafter referred to as "GP") is a craft beer brand from New Zealand. Its core trademark "Garage Project" corresponds to Class 32 of the Nice Classification (beer and other non-alcoholic beverages). In 2023, SP submitted trademark registration application in China on behalf of GP for the Chinese mark "车库计划 (CHE KU JI HUA)" (a direct translation of the English "Garage Project") under Class 32. This trademark has a dual-strategic value: it serves as the brand's official Chinese language mark and covers the core product category – beer. The China National Intellectual Property Administration (CNIPA) rejected the application on the grounds that it was similar to a prior registered trademark (hereinafter referred to as the "obstacle mark").

[1] https://www.cnipa.gov.cn/art/2025/4/26/art_53_199324.html

Application Date: April 18, 2023	Application Number: 70980762
Applicant: BREWWELL LIMITED	

Trademark Rejection Notice

The trademark registration application is rejected pursuant to Article 30 of the Trademark Law and Article 21 of its Implementing Regulations for the following reasons:

The applied - for trademark is identical or similar to the prior trademarks registered under Nos. G1236072, 13868498, and 10052822. (Details of the cited trademarks are provided in the attachment and can be accessed on the China Trademark Network.)

Pursuant to Article 34 of the Trademark Law, the applicant may request a review with the National Intellectual Property Administration within 15 days of receiving this notice.

You are hereby notified.

August 15, 2023

商标审查业务章

SPARKS PARTNERS

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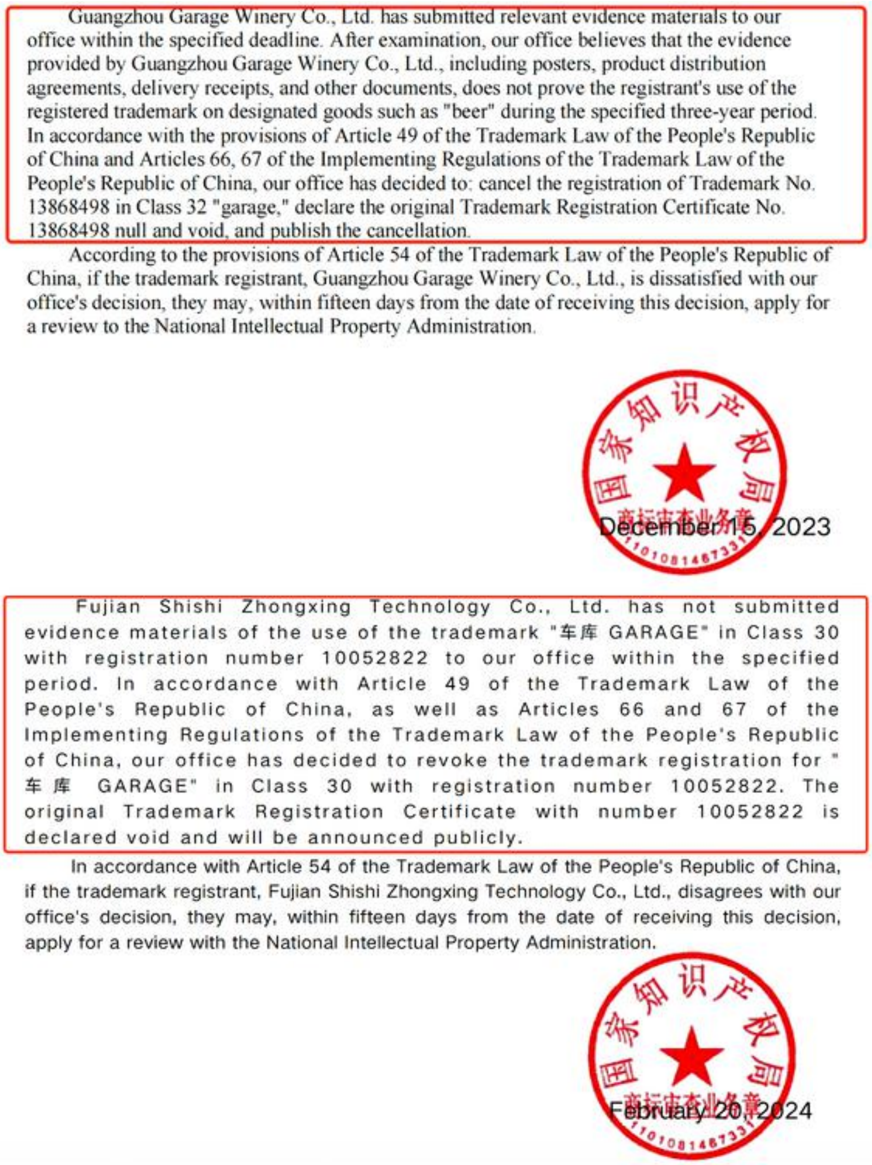
(*GP's Trademark Application Rejection Notice*)

Comparison Items	Application TM	Cited TM 1	Cited TM 2	Cited TM 3
App Number	70980762	G1236072	13868498	10052822
Logo	车库计划	GARAGE PROJECT	车库	GARAGE车库
App Date	2023-04-18	2016-12-15	2014-01-07	2011-10-11
Registration Date	/	/	2015-08-07	2013-09-28
Applicant	BREWWELL LIMITED	BREWWELL LIMITED	广州车库葡萄酒业有限公司 (Guangzhou Garage Wine Industry Co., Ltd.)	福建省石狮市中兴科技有限公司 (Fujian Province Shishi City Zhongxing Technology Co., Ltd.)

(*Comparison Chart of the Rejected Trademark*)

After conducting a comprehensive search to investigate this obstacle, our results confirmed that both cited trademarks were vulnerable to cancellation. Firstly, “Cited TM 3” specialises in trademark hoarding and trading, and its registration constitutes a clear case of bad faith filing without intent to use. Furthermore, our market research confirmed that there is no record of actual use of this trademark on beer (Class 32) products. Secondly, although the owner of “Cited TM 2” is an active business entity, our investigation reveals that the trademark has only been used on wine (Class 33) products and has never been involved in beer sales – indicating that it has not been used on the designated goods either. Based on these findings, we simultaneously filed non-use cancellation requests against both cited trademarks. We were confident that these two obstacles can be removed, thereby paving the way for the smooth registration of the GP trademark.

The outcome confirmed our initial assessment: “Cited TM 3” was cancelled after its owner failed to submit proof of use. “Cited TM 2”, despite submitting evidence and appealing the decision, was also cancelled after its appeals were rejected by the CNIPA.


Guangzhou Garage Winery Co., Ltd. has submitted relevant evidence materials to our office within the specified deadline. After examination, our office believes that the evidence provided by Guangzhou Garage Winery Co., Ltd., including posters, product distribution agreements, delivery receipts, and other documents, does not prove the registrant's use of the registered trademark on designated goods such as "beer" during the specified three-year period. In accordance with the provisions of Article 49 of the Trademark Law of the People's Republic of China and Articles 66, 67 of the Implementing Regulations of the Trademark Law of the People's Republic of China, our office has decided to: cancel the registration of Trademark No. 13868498 in Class 32 "garage," declare the original Trademark Registration Certificate No. 13868498 null and void, and publish the cancellation.

According to the provisions of Article 54 of the Trademark Law of the People's Republic of China, if the trademark registrant, Guangzhou Garage Winery Co., Ltd., is dissatisfied with our office's decision, they may, within fifteen days from the date of receiving this decision, apply for a review to the National Intellectual Property Administration.

December 15, 2023

Fujian Shishi Zhongxing Technology Co., Ltd. has not submitted evidence materials of the use of the trademark "车库 GARAGE" in Class 30 with registration number 10052822 to our office within the specified period. In accordance with Article 49 of the Trademark Law of the People's Republic of China, as well as Articles 66 and 67 of the Implementing Regulations of the Trademark Law of the People's Republic of China, our office has decided to revoke the trademark registration for "车库 GARAGE" in Class 30 with registration number 10052822. The original Trademark Registration Certificate with number 10052822 is declared void and will be announced publicly.

In accordance with Article 54 of the Trademark Law of the People's Republic of China, if the trademark registrant, Fujian Shishi Zhongxing Technology Co., Ltd., disagrees with our office's decision, they may, within fifteen days from the date of receiving this decision, apply for a review with the National Intellectual Property Administration.

February 20, 2024

(CNIPA's Decision to Cancel the Two Cited Trademarks)

Comparison Items	Application TM	Cited TM 1	Cited TM 2	Cited TM 3
App Number	70980762	G1236072	13868498	10052822
Logo	车库计划	GARAGE PROJECT Resolved	车库 Canceled	GARAGE车库 Canceled
App Date	2023-04-18	2016-12-15	2014-01-07	2011-10-11
Registration Date	2025-07-21	/	2015-08-07	2013-09-28
Applicant	BREWWELL LIMITED	BREWWELL LIMITED	广州车库葡萄酒业有限公司 (Guangzhou Garage Wine Industry Co., Ltd.)	福建省石狮市中兴科技有限公司 (Fujian Province Shishi City Zhongxing Technology Co., Ltd.)

(*Summary of Outcomes for Cited Trademark*)

After over two years of professional legal operations, SP successfully assisted GP in overcoming all trademark registration barriers and secured the approval and registration of the Chinese trademark for the core product "beer". This milestone signifies a crucial breakthrough in GP's intellectual property strategy in the Chinese market and lays a solid legal foundation for its future business expansion.


No.70980762

Trademark Registration Certificate

车库计划

Approved goods/services (Nice Classification 32)

Class 32: Beer-based cocktails; beer; ginger beer; malt beer; non-alcoholic beverages; fruit juices; water (beverages); aerated waters; mineral water (beverages); soda water (End).

Registrant 博威有限公司 BREWWELL LIMITED

Registrant's Address 新西兰惠灵顿市阿罗谷阿罗街68号，邮编6021 68 ARO STREET, ARO VALLEY WELLINGTON 6021

Registration Date 21 July 2025 Expires 20 July 2035

Director

Issuing Authority

(GP, Class 32 No. 70980762 – Certificate of Trademark Registration [2])

[2] *Please note that if an application is submitted directly to the CNIPA, upon successful registration, CNIPA will issue a Trademark Registration Certificate exclusively in Chinese. The English information presented here is a service translation provided for the client's convenience and reference only, and it does not possess any legal effect.*

Against the backdrop of China’s vast stock of existing registrations, the road to a new trademark is rarely smooth as shown through GP’s journey. Looking back at the entire application and clearance process, we distilled three ‘Best Practice’ tips:

- ***Strategic Pre-Filing:*** *Broaden protection by registering across all relevant trademark classes as early as possible. This secures your brand's territory and deters squatters before they can act.*

- ***Comprehensive Pre-Submission:*** *Conduct a thorough search to identify all potential conflicts. This provides a clear landscape, enabling an informed filing decision.*

- ***Dynamic Post-Refusal:*** *Transform an official refusal into a strategic opportunity. Neutralize conflicting marks by challenging them on grounds of non-use or bad faith.*

If you wish to gain a more in-depth understanding of the detailed content regarding the recommended ‘Best Practices’, please refer to the additional reading materials provided in the footnotes at the end of the text [3].

It is worth emphasizing that the rejection by the CNIPA is not the end, but rather the starting point for strategic adjustments. The registration of GP's Chinese trademark took nearly two years from application to final registration. It was through continuous professional responses and persistent efforts that the two cited trademark obstacles were successfully removed. Further steps have been taken by SP to not only building a solid barrier for GP in core categories (Class 32), but also to secure registrations in related categories such as Classes 9, 29, and 30. This forms a comprehensive, three-dimensional trademark protection network that is both offensive and defensive, supporting the brand's steady and long-term growth in the Chinese market.

Comments from Peter Fenton – CEO Garage Project:

Experienced and tenacious legal counsel: Garage Project has been very fortunate with the quality of the legal advice we received, the clarity of the commercial guidance we received and the persistent and determined manner in which Rocky negotiated the various obstacles on the way and advocated our interests throughout the process.

issue a Trademark Registration Certificate exclusively in Chinese. The English information presented here is a service translation provided for the client's convenience and reference only, and it does not possess any legal effect.

[3] Trademark Insights Series: Understanding Trademark Registration (https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/yY2jh-yohntcIWSBhz-W4w)

Trademark Insights Series: Filing Risks You Didn't Know (https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/Zv4KkQjbJbuFkY_hZA-q2Q)

Trademark Insights Series: Hidden Trademark Infringements (https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/PcuuyUGIJyktD1F134RQWQ)

Greater China Insight

China's Economic Outlook 2026

RAYMOND YEUNG
Senior China Strategist
ANZ Bank

ZHAOPENG XING
Senior China Strategist
ANZ Bank

VICKY ZHOU
Economist
ANZ Bank

ANZ 澳新银行

China's economic outlook 2026

- China's economy is forecast to expand 4.8% in 2026. The growth is uneven. Tech activities are vibrant, but the property downturn will weigh on domestic consumption.
- Fiscal policy will likely serve as a stabilising mechanism, while monetary policy remains cautious. We anticipate a modest 10bp reduction in interest rates.
- Under the 15th Five Year Plan (2026–2030), sectoral transitions will play a more significant role than GDP figures in guiding China's development strategy.

A K-shaped, USD20trn economy

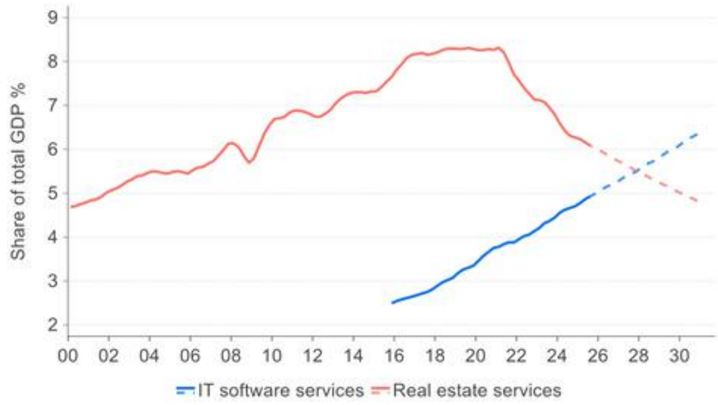
China will continue its economic transformation in 2026. The 2026 GDP is forecast to rise by 4.8% in both nominal and real terms (2025e: 4.0% and 5.1%, respectively). GDP is expected to approach USD20trn this year. Next year marks the first year of the 15th Five Year Plan 2026–2030. Government policy will be biased towards quality development rather than quantitative expansion. Instead of GDP growth, reform will likely take centre stage.

GDP expansion is uneven. On the production side, China is a prime example of a K-shaped economy. Traditional sectors such as real estate (Q3 2025: -0.2% y/y) and construction (-2.3%) are expected to remain subdued, while technology-driven industries will continue to advance and contribute to productivity gains. The IT sector has achieved notable double-digit growth (+11.7%), significantly outperforming the national average of 5%. Its share of total GDP is likely to surpass that of real estate services by 2028.

However, increased automation and digitalisation are likely to exert downward pressure on labour demand. Urban youth unemployment remains elevated (October: 17.3%). China's economy faces a challenge in term of distribution.

On the spending front, declining wealth is likely to dampen domestic consumption.
Based on property prices from 70 cities and national transaction figures, we estimate that buyers from 2016–24 could experience mark-to-market losses totalling CNY15trn (Figure 2), which amounts to 11% of projected 2025 GDP. Those who purchased during the 2021 peak have seen asset values fall by CNY3.2trn over the past four years. With home prices unlikely to rebound soon, these wealth losses will continue to impact domestic demand in 2026.

Figure 1. IT services could overtake real estate service by 2028



Source: NBS, Bloomberg, Macrobond, ANZ Research

Note: The sectoral projection is based on the average annual nominal growth rate.

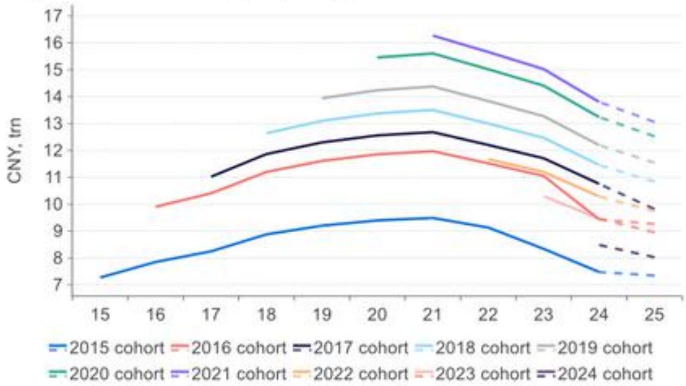
Investment as a buffer

China's 15th Five Year Plan (2026–2030) targets a tech-driven economy and digitisation across all sectors. 2026 is the year to kick off the plan. Manufacturing investment fell to 2.7% y/y ytd from 7.5% in H1, partly due to the anti-involution campaign and withheld capex (Figure 3). Fixed asset investment started to turn negative since September. In the first year of the plan, companies are expected to restart investment activity.

The real estate outlook will still be weak in 2026. The oversupply will likely result in another double-digit contraction in property investment in the whole year. We maintain our view that the downward adjustment of property market will only reach an equilibrium when rental yield can justify mortgage interest rate. The average rental yield across the country should be no less than 3%. To reach the bottom, housing price will need to drop another 20% from the current level as rents are unlikely to climb.

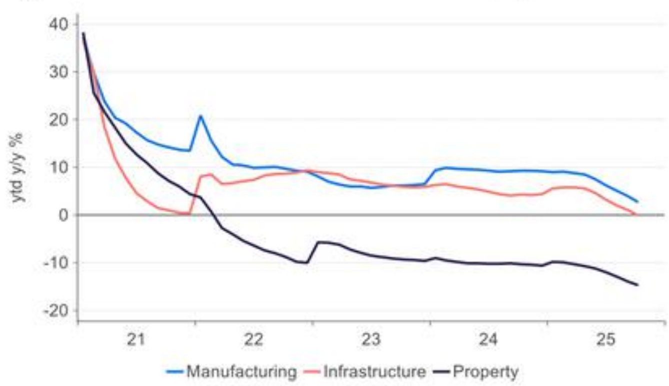
2025 may mark China's first decline in infrastructure investment (-0.1% y/y ytd in October versus 4.6% in June), with slow project execution due to funding constraints. However, growth is expected to rebound in H1 2026. As the 15th Five Year Plan begins, China must stay on track for its net zero emission goals by 2030/60. In 2025, the central government raised CNY800bn through ultra-long bonds to support 1,459 projects, which will help maintain economic activity across years.

Figure 2. Value of property transactions



Source: CREIS, Bloomberg, Macrobond, ANZ Research

Figure 3. China's investment fell sharply in H2 2025



Source: NBS, Macrobond, Bloomberg, Macrobond, ANZ Research

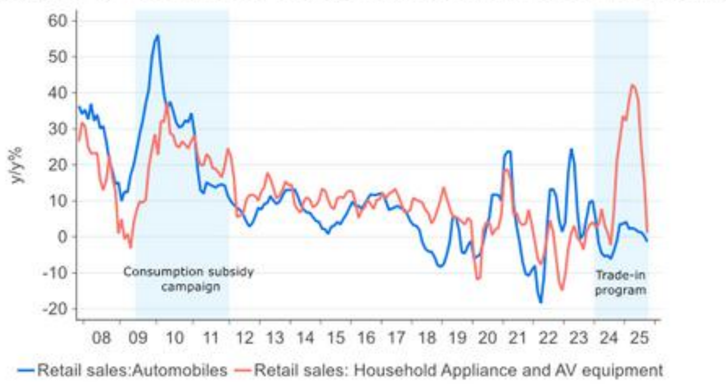
Weak consumption appetite

China will continue efforts to boost domestic consumption in 2026, including renewed consumption subsidies funded by special government bonds. Household subsidies for child allowance, preschool education, and elderly care are expected to total CNY300bn, with an additional CNY200bn in bonds supporting investment and equipment upgrades under the "Two Key Two New" (两重两新) campaign. The current consumption subsidy is not effective, compared with the previous one in 2009–2011. If China ends subsidies for autos and appliances in H1, year-on-year consumption will drop sharply. The current programme will likely continue in 2026.

China's property downturn will remain a drag of consumer sentiment because of its influence on personal wealth (Figure 5). Potential measures like mortgage subsidies and tax rebates for homebuyers could boost property transactions and increase household disposable income. The government hopes to direct more funds toward households who have mortgage obligations. But these long-term policies probably won't lead to immediate recovery in the housing sector.

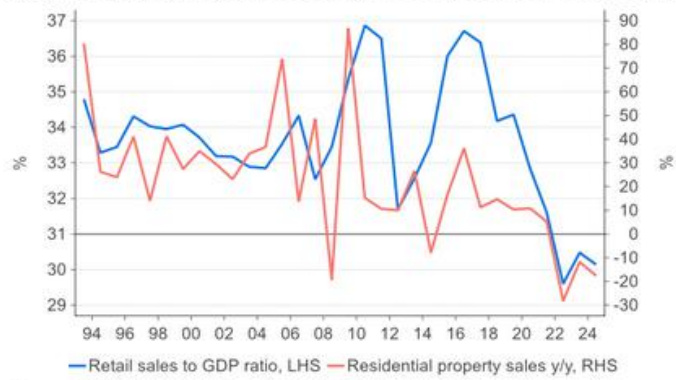
On the supply side, China is working quickly to expand ways people can shop and spend. A recent pilot program for new consumption models in 50 cities aims to encourage digital services, improved lifestyles, and eco-friendly purchases. This shows a shift in focus from goods to services and experiences. Despite these efforts, weak demand, rather than limited supply, is still the main reason for China's subdued consumer activity, so the impact of these targeted policies will likely be small.

Figure 4. Current subsidies effectiveness declines faster



Source: NBS, Macrobond, ANZ Research

Figure 5. Property is still key to retail sales rebound



Source: NBS, Bloomberg, Macrobond, ANZ Research

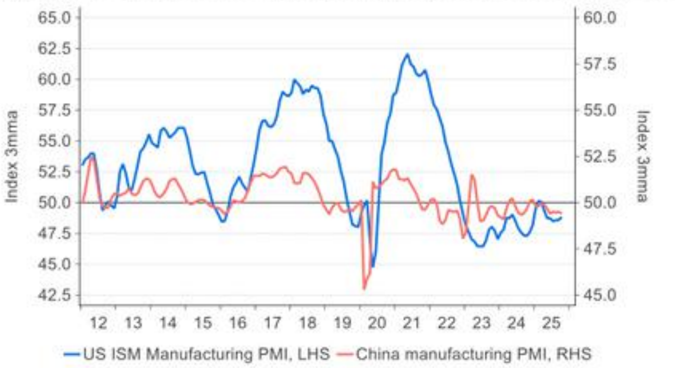
Tariff truce and AI risks

China has begun preparing the draft for its 15th Five Year Plan (2026-30) for national economic and social development. Going forward, the meaning of urbanisation will likely be very different from the previous model. As data flows become more critical, technology and innovation will play a central role in Total Factor Productivity growth rather than infrastructure related to people or goods flows.

Chinese policymakers aim for an annual economic growth of 4.7% to double the GDP per capita in the period 2020-35. Using investment to attain this goal will only extend the deflationary cycle for a few more years. Capacity expansion will continue to exaggerate the supply-demand imbalance in China. Potential growth rate is high. But output gap will stay negative. We expect PPI deflation will stay negative in 2025 and probably 2026.

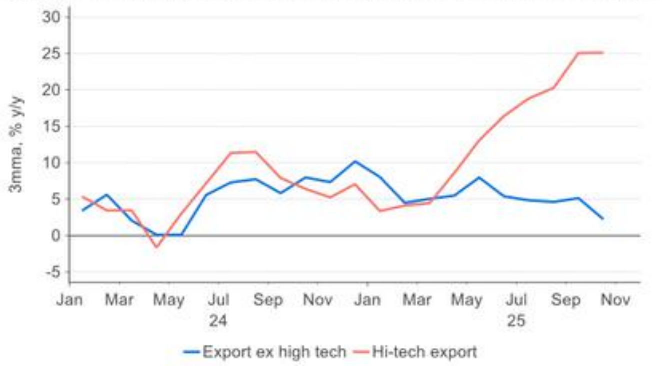
Structurally, investment will be the main growth driver rather than consumption if China's economy remains capital-intensive. As labour contribution will continue to shrink, wage growth will be constrained. This will limit household spending. Stimulus measures such as consumption subsidy or equipment replacement programmes are not long-term recipe for consumption-investment rebalancing.

Figure 6. China's manufacturing cycle follows the US



Source: ISM, CFLP, Bloomberg, Macrobond, ANZ Research

Figure 7. High-tech export led China's export in 2025



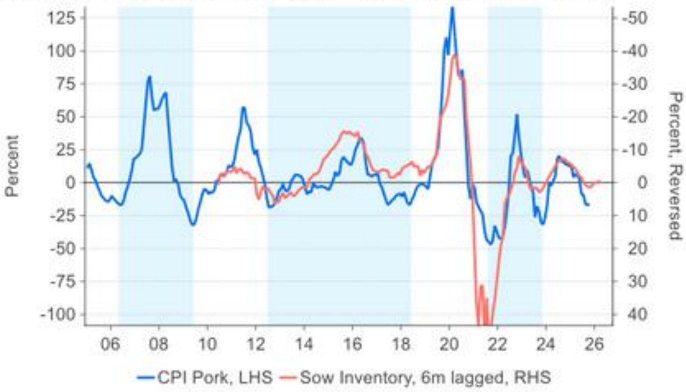
Source: GAC, Bloomberg, Macrobond, ANZ Research

Deflationary risk to ease

China's price pressure is biased downward, with a flat CPI and negative PPI since Q4 2022. Recent data suggests some recovery, driven by higher commodity prices and a low base effect. Steel and non-ferrous metals contributed significantly to the monthly PPI increase, showing the impact of government policies to control excessive competition. Rising gold prices have added approximately 0.5ppt to headline CPI and 0.6ppt to core CPI this year.

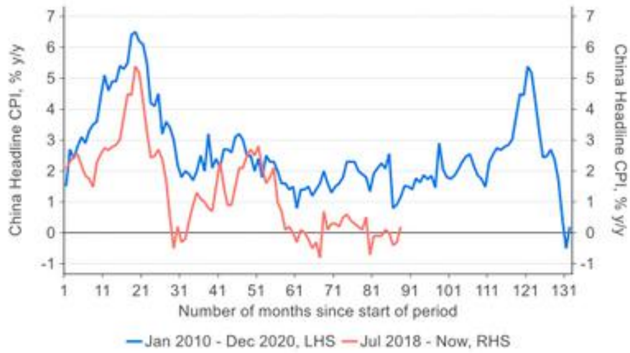
With weak domestic demand, China's output gap is expected to stay negative, keeping 2026 inflation subdued. Deflation pressures should ease somewhat, partly due to anti-involution efforts. We project 2026 CPI at 0.9% and PPI at -0.3%. A late Spring Festival 2026 could push February's CPI near 2.0% y/y, and food prices are likely to rise due to the pork cycle. The CPI outlook may repeat the 2010–20 cycle, influenced by similar supply-side policies. The anti-involution campaign will alleviate the deflationary pressure in the near term. But a healthy 2–3% inflation scenario remains too remote for 2026.

Figure 8. China's pork price will likely bottom up



Source: NBS, MOFCOM, MoA, NDRC, Bloomberg, Macrobond, ANZ Research

Figure 9. China CPI to pick up two years later



Source: NBS, Bloomberg, Macrobond, ANZ Research

Lifting fiscal policy intensity

We expect China to budget a headline deficit of 4.0% at the National People's Congress in 2026 (Figure 10). However, the spending will likely slow as trade tension with the US has alleviated. Our broad measure of China's fiscal deficit (General Public plus Managed Funds budget) will likely edge down to 9.8% of GDP from 10.0% in 2025. China has pledged a hidden debt swap programme of CNY6trn. Some regions such as Guangdong and Shanghai have already cleaned up their hidden debts. But many local authorities will need to meet the deadline of zero hidden debts (隐债清零) by mid-2027.

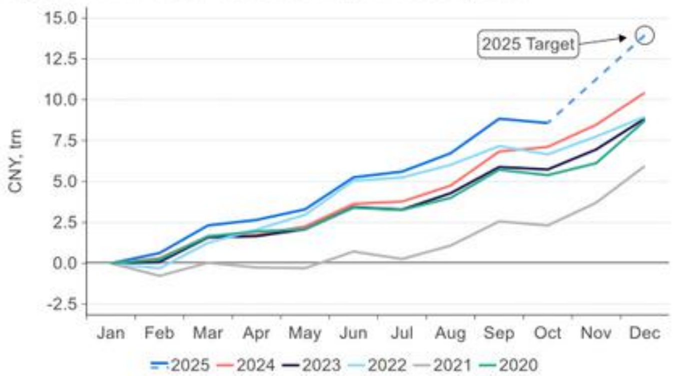
China's fiscal policy challenges are more about execution than budget size. Combined General Public Budget and managed fund spending rose 5.2% y/y ytd in October, slowing from 7.9% in the first nine months. October spending was weak at CNY2.37tn (down 19%), with managed fund spending at CNY597bn, down 38% y/y from September's CNY1.2trn. Besides holiday effects, local authorities may have delayed action pending clarity after the Fourth Plenum. In 2025, much of the bond issuance went to debt replacement instead of boosting real economic activity, a trend that is likely to continue into Q1 2026.

Figure 10. Forecasts of major fiscal indicators

		2026 budget	2025 budget
Official deficit (CNY bn)		5,880	5,660
As % of GDP		*4*	*4*
Broad deficit (CNY bn)		14,360	13,950
As % of GDP		*9.8*	*10*
New debt quota (CNY bn)	Ultra-long special treasury bonds	1,500	1,300
	Special treasury bonds	500	500
	Special local bonds	4,600	4,400

Source: MoF, ANZ Research

Figure 11. Fiscal deficits in previous years



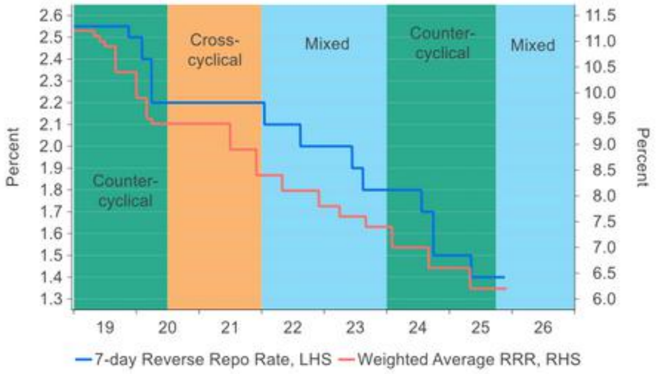
Source: MOF, NBS, NDRC, Bloomberg, Macrobond, ANZ Research

Prudent monetary policy easing

In terms of monetary policy, we expect the PBoC to be more measured in 2026, as the latest policy communication indicated a more hawkish stance by reintroducing a mixed setting of 'counter-cyclical and cross-cyclical adjustments' that were last seen in 2022–23 (Figure 12). In addition, the Q3 Monetary Policy Committee meeting also deleted 'intensifying efforts on incremental policy (加力实施增量政策)' from its statement. The PBoC will prefer the required reserves ratio (RRR) cuts to interest rate cuts in 2026. We expect two 25bp RRR cuts in Q1 and Q3, respectively, and an interest rate cut of 10bp in 2026.The PBoC will likely focus on policy framework reform. In a recent article, Governor Pan Gongsheng indicated reforms to the reserves system as well as the interest rate corridor.

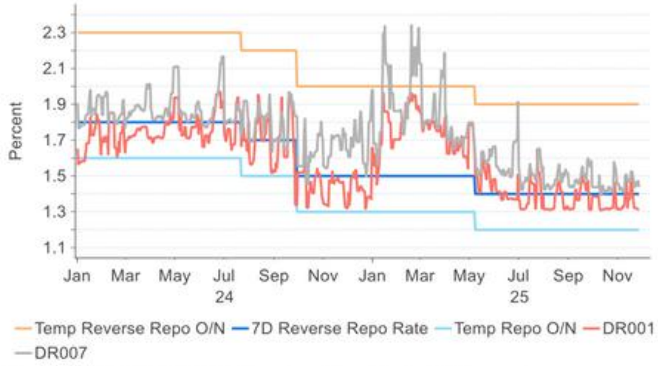
To break the 5% RRR floor, the PBoC may allow banks to replace part of their required reserves by short-dated treasury bonds. Required reserves may further serve as a macro-prudential assessment tool. The interest corridor may be narrowed by aligning the overnight temporary reverse repo rate to the 7-day rate plus 20bp. In H2 2025, “DR001” and “DR007” have largely stayed below 1.60%. A 40bp corridor of 7-day ± 20bp and stable money markets should enhance monetary policy transmission.

Figure 12. Policy setting: counter-cyclical vs cross-cyclical



Source: CFETS, PBoC, NBS, Bloomberg, Macrobond, ANZ Research

Figure 13. Interest rate corridor



Source: CFETS, PBoC, NBS, Bloomberg, Macrobond, ANZ Research

ABOUT US

The New Zealand Business Roundtable in China is a non-profit organization that brings together industry, corporate, and individual members who share a common interest in the success of the New Zealand/China trading relationship. Our goal is to promote mutual business interests and advance key trade sectors in the New Zealand and China trade relationship.

As a collaborative network of key business and government leaders in the New Zealand-China relationship, we strive to be the leading voice and advocate on New Zealand-China trade matters. Our members represent a wide range of sectors from New Zealand, including food and beverage, services, cosmetics, technology, travel, HR, FMCG, health, and more.

In the past few years, NZBRiC has focused on collaborating and supporting NZ businesses and their teams through various challenges created by ever-changing responses to the pandemic. From 2023, we have moved into our post-COVID recovery phase with an emphasis on advocacy, representation, and providing insights to our members. We are dedicated to advancing the interests of our members and promoting a successful New Zealand-China trading relationship.

FOLLOW US

mail: information@nzbric.com
website: www.nzbric.com