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By David Simmons

## Adelaide gelato maker scoops up sweet export success

### BUSINESS

A Ridleyton-based ice cream and gelato brand has cracked the Chinese market after sending its first container-load of artisan, dairy-free goods to the Asian giant on Friday.



Gelista export manager Jenn Yet and founder Peter Cox. Photo: David Simmons/InDaily.

It has been “years of investment” for Gelista founder Peter Cox to get international exports out of his inner-suburban gelato factory and to the world.

Having moved into a new, state-of-the-art manufacturing facility in Ridleyton just about a year ago, Gelista was well-prepared to go global.

But it was success on Chinese social media that secured the company its first major export deal into the Asian giant.

On Friday, Gelista loaded a shipping container up with hundreds of pots of gelato, rebranded for the Chinese consumer but still with that same South Australian taste and provenance.

They'll make their way to an undisclosed customer in China, and will hopefully satisfy Chinese consumers as much as they've already done back home.



The box of 12 gelati pots that Chinese consumers will soon enjoy. Photo: David Simmons/*InDaily*.

Boxes of 12 gelati pots in raspberry, mango and coconut flavour make up Gelista's Chinese play. The gelato is vegan, gluten-free, and comes in an ideal size – 150ml per serving.

It is not the company's first export order, but it is Gelista's inaugural full-container shipment overseas. Another shipment to Malaysia is on the cards, and the company's export arm now has its own dedicated manager – Jenn Yet.

For the Adelaide-based and founded company, the Chinese deal is a coup. It was one driven organically, with importers finding out about the local brand via Chinese social media.

"We actually got really popular on Chinese language social media," Yet told *InDaily*.

"I can read and understand Mandarin, so I have been keeping an eye on how the Asian market comments feedback and share their experiences of taste.

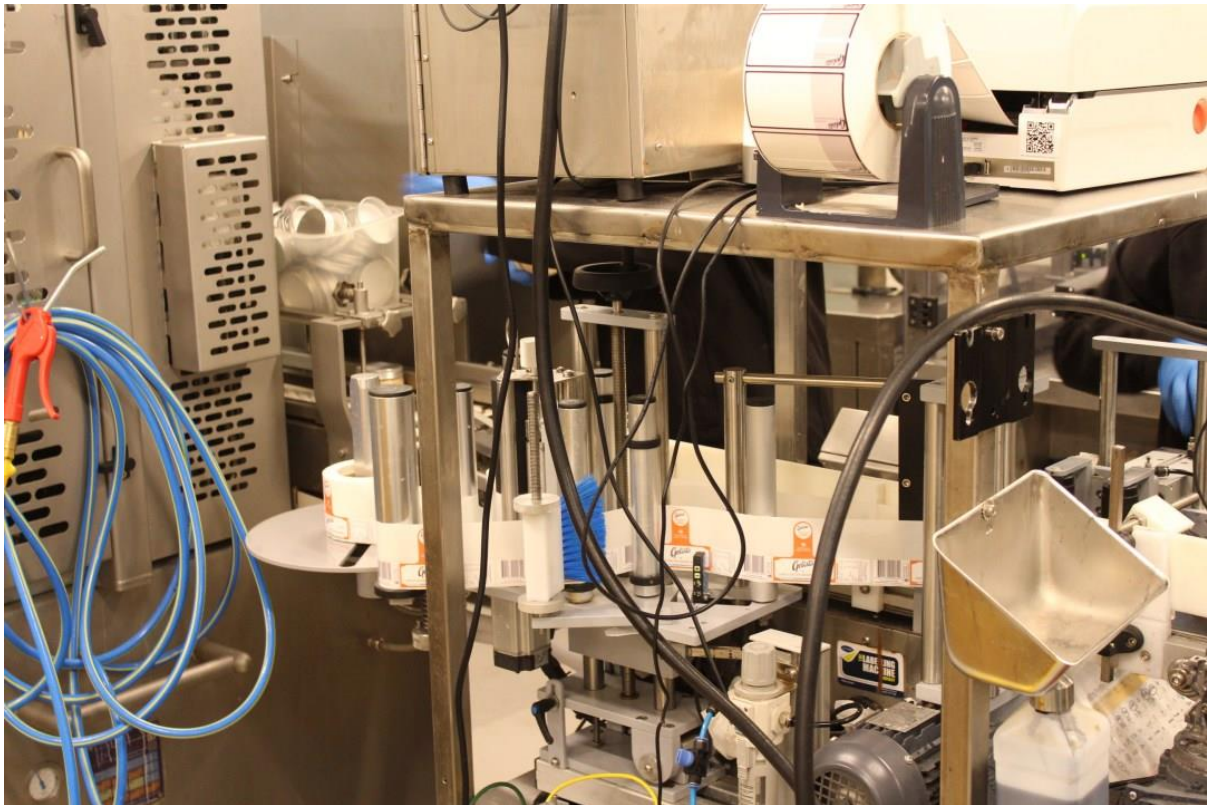
“We started getting more and more and more on social media until one point we got inquiries from Chinese importers.”

Cox, who founded the company in 2009, said Gelista had seen an increase in international inquiries for its gelato since 2020.

“That’s when I said to Jenn that we’re probably ready to press the button on spending a bit more time with these inquiries and put the processes in place,” he said.

“Export is not an overnight journey – it’s years of investing to actually get to this point where we’re ready to impress potential customers overseas.

“There’s buyers out there who are from overseas who are actively looking at quality, innovative products and also looking to Australia to find and source their products because they know of our clean, green status and the quality of our products.”



Gelista’s factory, where the sweet success is made. Photo: David Simmons/InDaily.

Cox said it was always his ambition to be an exporter of Adelaide-made products.

“When I built this new facility, I knew that it would be not only for growth in Australia but growth abroad too,” he said.

It caps off a busy year for Gelista. Earlier this year, the company revived a lost local ice cream brand, Freesia.

Not seen on shelves since the mid-1980s, Freesia was reborn at Gelista's western suburbs manufacturing facility in a new tub reminiscent of the original colourful tin the ice cream used to be sold in.

Another highlight for family-owned Gelista has been launching new flavours, including new half-litre products Choc Coconut Rough and Lemon Sorbet. The former is the "most technical product" Gelista makes according to Cox.

"I attribute our success to two key things. First, we have a very clear brand promise to our customers," Cox said.

"It is all about the quality of our ingredients, the care and expertise in our crafting techniques, our commitment to innovation and our overriding desire to delight our customers that all come together in a taste and texture that our customers will distinctively recognise as uniquely Gelista.

"Secondly, I have a fantastic team. It is really what makes Gelista so special."