

Ningxia's Goji Berry Industry Flourishes as Global Demand for 'Superfood' Surges

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The first harvest of 2026 Ningxia goji berries is underway in Zhongning County, the heartland of China's premium wolfberry production, coinciding with the opening of the 9th Goji Berry Industry Expo on June 14.

Nestled on the fertile Yellow River alluvial plain at the eastern foothills of the Helan Mountains, Zhongning County enjoys more than 3,000 hours of annual sunshine and mineral-rich alkaline soil. These unique growing conditions have helped establish Ningxia goji berries as China's most renowned and highest-quality wolfberries.

According to the Goji Industry Development Centre of the Ningxia Forestry and Grassland Administration, Ningxia's goji products are now exported to more than 50 countries and regions across Southeast Asia, Europe and the Americas. In 2025, fresh goji berry production in the region reached 200,000 tonnes, while the total value of the industry's supply chain exceeded 21.3 billion yuan.

"Every single goji berry is hand-picked," said Pan Tai'an, Chairman of Ningxia Wolfberry Goji Industry Co., Ltd. "The plants flower and fruit simultaneously, making manual harvesting essential for maintaining quality."

Pan noted that the region's cool climate naturally limits pests and diseases, allowing farmers to cultivate the crop without chemical fertilisers or pesticides. Instead, organic compost is used to preserve the berries' purity and nutritional value.

Traditionally valued in Chinese medicine and listed as the only medicinal goji variety in the Pharmacopoeia of the People's Republic of China, Ningxia goji berries are now gaining worldwide recognition as a nutrient-dense "superfood." Rich in antioxidants, vitamin C, and bioactive compounds, the berries have become increasingly popular among health-conscious

consumers across international markets.

The growing global interest has encouraged local companies to move beyond raw berry production and invest in value-added processing. Ningxia Wolfberry Goji Industry has developed an ambient-temperature preservation technology for goji puree after six years of research and development, addressing longstanding challenges related to the fruit's perishability and limited processing options.

The technology enables freshly harvested berries to be cleaned, pulped, sterilised and packaged within two hours, helping retain key nutrients such as goji polysaccharides, betaine and zeaxanthin. The innovation has resulted in the production of more than 100,000 tonnes of goji puree, generating cumulative sales exceeding 2 billion yuan (approximately \$293 million).

Furthermore, the breakthrough has supported the establishment of 50 high-standard production lines across Ningxia, accelerating the region's transition from raw material supplier to producer of high-value functional food ingredients and consumer products.

As consumer demand for natural health products continues to grow worldwide, Ningxia's centuries-old goji berry industry is positioning itself at the forefront of the global functional foods market through innovation, quality assurance and expanded international reach.