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WHAT'S NEW IN 2024

Exploring newly-emerged industries in Yunnan with Dr. Htike Lwin Ko

During this year's "Two Sessions," the concept "new quality productive forces" has gained popularity in China's development discourse. When discussing "new quality productive forces," we refer to the fresh impetus for growth driven by advancements in science and technology. In this context, let's embark on a journey to explore cutting-edge industries with us and Dr. Htike Lwin Ko, a vloger at China's Yunnan International Communication Center for South and Southeast Asia (YICC) from Myanmar, as we delve into what distinguishes them from the rest.



Wednesday, March 27, 2024

Uncovering the mystery of carbon neutral milk

On the morning of March 1, Dr. Htike Lwin Ko visited the Yunnan Yili Dairy located in the Yanglin Economic and Technological Development Zone of Songming County, Kunming,

"My Chinese colleagues told me that the milk produced here is labeled as carbon neutral milk. I am intrigued to discover the distinguishing features of this 'carbon neutral factory' compared to others." Upon hearing Htike Lwin Ko's words, the factory manager led him to a trash bin.

The words "This bin is crafted from recycled milk cartons" unveiled its unique characteristics. Over a thousand milk cartons that were previously discarded have been recycled and repurposed into an eco-friendly trash bin, which are now prevalent throughout the Yunnan Yili factory.

The solar panels on the rooftops and carports of the factory glisten proudly in the sunlight;

the ongoing conversion of natural gas boilers to decrease emissions and the use of water-source heat pumps showcase the factory's commitment to sustainability. Moreover, the meticulously upgraded sewage treatment system has resulted in discharged water so clean that it can support aquatic life. Furthermore, the packaging carton manufacturers and straw factories upstream and downstream of the milk factory are actively reducing emissions and enhancing their integration within the industrial chain... Htike Lwin Ko has stumbled upon some "carbon neutral tips."

In the workshops and production lines, there was almost a noticeable absence of milk and individuals. The machines on the nine production lines in the workshop were operating with precision and at a rapid pace. Throughout the entire production process at the milk factory, not a single drop of milk was visible. "See, within the completely

sealed and sterile storage tanks and pipelines, all production tasks have been finished," the factory manager said.

Pre-processing, filling, conveying, straw pasting, palletizing, packaging, and leaving the warehouse... A bottle of milk was swiftly produced at a breathtaking speed. Only at a few crucial stages, there were several workers in aseptic suits overseeing the production. The factory manager explained that the packaging workshop is equipped with robots, with each robot capable of handling palletizing tasks for two high-speed assembly lines simultaneously. It appears that automation and intelligence have significantly enhanced production efficiency, minimized energy usage, and ensured a commitment to "zero carbon."

At the Yili factory, Htike Lwin Ko has discovered the secret beyond the "zero carbon" milk innovation.

"Cows' houses are very cozy!"

The dairy industry's production chain encompasses the primary, secondary, and tertiary sectors, requiring a wealth of expertise to achieve "zero carbon," "low carbon," and "carbon neutral" standards across the extensive production process. After this morning's factory tour, Htike Lwin Ko's curiosity piqued, leading me to venture into the ranch where the milk

"How can we overcome the notion of cows being big methane emitters?" "Well, ensuring the cows have a balanced diet is key. What is on their 'dinner plate' makes a significant difference." Upon Htike Lwin Ko's arrival at the Youran Dairy's Xundian Ranch in Yunnan Province owned by Yili Group on the afternoon of March 1, the ranch manager guided him through the cows' feeding area.

Under the radiant sun, long and neat cowsheds are lined up, housing thousands of cows leisurely grazing in a spacious and well-lit environment. The seemingly ordinary forage is actually a meticulously crafted blend containing alfalfa, silage, concentrate feed, fescue, imported oats, along with salt and various trace elements. These low carbon feeds, developed through advanced rumen technology, not only enhance the cows' feed absorption and utilization but also decrease methane emissions from their intestines. Reduced cow "emissions" lead to lower carbon emissions overall,

especially when combined with selective breeding to pass on the "low carbon" gene to future generations.

"Raising a cow is no simple task!" After trekking across the mountains to visit the cows, Htike Lwin Ko made this observation, eliciting laughter from the ranch manager. He went on to explain that at Youran Dairy, a team of 23 doctoral degree holders and over 30 scholars who have returned from the United States collaboratively research dairy farming technology, developing over 650 standardized, replicable, and scalable dairy farming procedures. So the ranch not only excels in innovation but also in academic expertise with its high number of doctoral degree



Colorful Yunnan, "colorful" avocados

of three distinct layers - coffee, milk, and mashed avocado. Blend them thoroughly and take a generous sip. The flavor is a harmonious blend of sweetness, richness, and smoothness.

Today, Htike Lwin Ko finds himself at "Niuka Cha cha," a renowned beverage shop with a strong online presence in Menglian County in Pu'er City. Savoring sliced avocado paired with mustard or honey, he found the texture reminiscent of foie gras, luxuriously soft and oily. Additionally, he had the opportunity to try avocado manna, avocado cookies, and even an avocado pizza. The wide selection of avocado-based beverages here has truly taken him by surprise.

Wang Yan, general manager of Menglian Agricultural Commodity Supply Chain Co., Ltd, shared that Menglian avocado is not just enjoyed as a fresh fruit. With the recent completion and operation of the Menglian Fresh Fruits

A cup of "Niuka" consists and Vegetables Cold Chain Warehousing and Logistics Center in 2022, a production line for avocado powder and beverages is set to undergo trial production by the end of March this year. H o w d o e s Menglian manage to utilize a v o c a d o in so many innovative ways? Htike Lwin Ko uncover the answer at the Avocado Planting Base in Mangxin Village, Mangxin Township, Menglian County.

Amidst the fruit trees at the planting base, clusters of diminutive yellowish flowers stand unassuming. Zhao Shimin, deputy general manager of

Pu'er Lüyin Biological Co Ltd, revealed to Htike Lwin Ko that these flowers are none other than avocado blossoms. A single mature avocado tree yields over 1,300 avocados annually. Contrasting with imported avocados that endure a journey of over 30 days across the ocean for Chinese consumers, Menglian avocados have the advantage of ripening naturally while still on the tree. This results in a higher dry matter content and a more refined taste. Back in 2007, the general manager of Lüyin, Qi Jiazhu, made history by planting

of avocado trees, it took over a decade of continuous exploration in breeding, cultivation techniques, and technology promotion by Lüyin to truly establish a strong foundation for them here.

climate and soil in Menglian

naturally favor the growth

Zhao Shimin, known by his WeChat moniker "Avocado Grove Guardian," said, "The locals were once unfamiliar with avocados and skeptical about their wealth-generating potential. Now, their earnings have surged multiple-fold, with some of them evolving into skilled technical

As more individuals engage in avocado cultivation, processing, logistics, cultural activities, and tourism, the residents of Menglian continue to invest their dedication, nurturing a growing confidence in avocados.

(Reported by Han Chengyuan, Huang Yixian, Zhang Ruogu, Li Wenjun, Liu Ziyu, and Guo Yao)

YUNNAN: A MANY-SPLENDORED LIFE

All is well with the Yunnan lifestyle

Yunnan, referred to as the "tourists' paradise," launched its "many-splendored life" campaign in 2023, welcoming visitors from around the globe. The province attracted 1.04 billion tourists and generated a total tourism revenue of 1.4 trillion yuan, marking a 129 percent and 130 percent increase from 2019, respectively. The diverse experiences offered by the "many-splendored life" initiative have solidified Yunnan as a premier tourist destination.

In 2024, the "manysplendored life" concept in Yunnan has taken on a new

significance, reflecting a joyful existence where everything goes well. "All is well" is a common saying in the Yunnan dialect, signifying "may all go as you wish!" This expression is frequently used by locals to convey their best wishes and blessings to one another.

Foreign residents living in Yunnan hold diverse perspectives on the concept of the "all is well" lifestyle in the province. For example, Jiang Ziyuan from the US finds his own version of the "all is well" Yunnan life on his farm in Yongsheng County.

After completing his PhD at the Kunming Institute of Botany, Chinese Academy of Sciences (KIB/CAS) in 2017, Jiang ventured to this area to cultivate avocados. Today, he has expanded his farm to include raspberries, strawberries, and various other fruits. A group of avocado enthusiasts even initiated an avocado dish competition on his farm. Jiang said, "Our family has formed close bonds with many locals in Yunnan, and I am captivated by the region's natural beauty, expansive mountains, and diverse flora and fauna. Avocado

cultivation in Yunnan holds vast potential for growth, and there are many exciting prospects ahead for us!"

the first avocado tree

in Menglian. While the

Jacob from Kenya has chosen to reside in Yunnan due to his fascination with wild mushrooms. His primary focus is on researching how fungi can be utilized to break down plastics, thereby contributing to a more environmentally-friendly lifestyle. Akihiro Nakamura, originally from Japan, has dedicated over a decade to living in Xishuangbanna, where he is deeply engaged in the study and preservation of insect diversity within the forest canopy, aiming to promote sustainability. Fernando Munoz Bernal, a Colombian travel blogger, embarked on a cross-country journey through China to reach Kunming in his own caravan. His special visit to meet the inheritor of the cucurbit flute, an intangible cultural heritage, was a unique endeavor aimed at enriching his life experiences.

In Yunnan, surprises and romance abound, embodying the essence of true happiness for the people of the region, as highlighted by the concept of the "all is well" life. (Yunnan Daily)