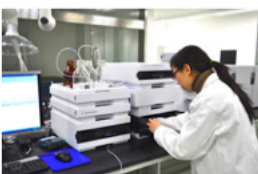


CHINA UPDATES

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China Healthcare Monthly: Gov't Expenditure Up 26% Through March

The central government's expenditure on healthcare rose 26.4% year on year to 217.2 billion yuan in the January-March period, according to the Ministry of Finance.

April 16 – Consumer spending on drugs rose 13% year on year to 53.2 billion yuan in March, according to the National Bureau of Statistics. Between January and March, the amount rose 16.8% to 154.4 billion yuan.

April 2 – China is forecast to become the world's second biggest drugs market after the US by 2016, with annual sales worth \$165 billion, the Financial Times reported, citing research company IMS Health.

March 31 – China said it will introduce a new regulation on June 1 to increase supervision of safety and effectiveness of medical equipment. The new rules require medical equipment in China to be registered and divided into three categories based on the potential health risks, with high-risk equipment to be placed under stricter control. The new regulation is expected to raise entry threshold to the market and to prompt mergers and acquisitions.

March 17 – China's Food and Drug Administration announced a five-month campaign against false registration, illegal production and abuse of in vitro diagnosis reagents in the medical equipment industry. Output from the industry has grown 21% annually in recent years to more than 400 billion yuan in 2013.

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March 13 – The central government's expenditure on healthcare rose 22.9% year on year to 103.2 billion yuan in January and February combined, according to the Ministry of Finance.

March 13 – Consumer spending on drugs rose 18.8% year on year to 101.4 billion yuan in January and February combined, according to the National Bureau of Statistics.

March 7 – China will step up its reform of public hospitals at county level, with the number of pilot counties rising to 1,000 this year from 311 in 2013, the National Health and Family Planning Commission said. China has drafted a plan for private and foreign capital to invest and operate hospitals.

March 5 – China's growing health industry will be a \$70 billion market by 2020 as Chinese people grow more health conscious, according to a report released by the Boston Consulting Group.

March 3 – Sales of healthcare products in China are projected to top 400 billion yuan by 2020 as the nation's incomes grow and awareness of food quality gets stronger, according to a report released by the Boston Consulting Group after surveying 2,600 middle class Chinese persons aged 18 to 65. (Source: thechinaperspective.com)

China's Arsenic-Laced Soil Harming Food, Health, Survey Shows

China's soil is laced with pollutants including mercury and arsenic, according to a nine-year government survey, posing a threat to agriculture and human health and raising new concern about the environmental costs of China's three decades of economic growth.

Safety guidelines were breached in 16 percent of the 6.3 million square meters of land tested, with toxic pollutants also including cadmium, a radioactive material, the Ministry of Land and Resources said in a statement announcing the results.

The government initially refused to publish results from the survey, which it called a state secret, said Wu Yixiu, head of Greenpeace East Asia's toxics

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campaign. The release marks the first time soil pollution data has become available on a nationwide scale, she said. Environmental issues such as the safety of air and water have become a growing concern amid incidents including a spike in benzene, a carcinogen, in tap water in the northern city of Lanzhou this month.

“It’s a breakthrough that this very important data is released because it shows the authorities are now responding to people’s worries,” Beijing-based Wu said in a telephone interview yesterday. “Soil is the ultimate destination of heavy metals carried in water and air, so it can be a comprehensive reflection of pollution by heavy metals.”

Food Scandals

More than 2 percent of China’s arable land, or an area the size of Belgium, is too polluted to grow crops, Vice Minister of Land and Resources Wang Shiyuan said in December.

Environmental concerns have extended to food after a series of scandals from melamine-laced baby formula to rat meat sold as mutton. China’s State Council announced a plan in February to enhance food quality and prioritize development of organic and pollutant-free agriculture over the next six years amid a surge in demand for organic food.

Faced with the “grim situation” in its soil environment, China is taking a series of measures to curb contamination, including preparing an action plan to prevent pollution and speeding up soil protection laws, the Land Ministry said in yesterday’s statement.

The government will conduct further studies on soil quality and implement steps for its gradual restoration, as well as strengthen supervision over areas such as the disposal of waste water and gas, and control over agricultural production such as the use of pesticides and fertilizers, according to the statement. (Source: Bloomberg)

Home Shopping in China

US home shopping networks are finding success among Chinese consumers seeking safe, high-quality products.

US companies looking to do business in China—especially those looking to sell cosmetics, consumer

the comfort of their home. Increasing overseas exposure for Chinese citizens means they have greater expectations of retailers, local and international alike. Many Chinese are demanding high-quality, genuine foreign products; especially US brand-name products. Furthermore, as average disposable incomes rise in China, price is becoming less of an issue for Chinese consumers. For example, \$2,200 Tahitian black-pearl necklaces were selling like hot cakes on the New Year special on one home shopping network, CNR Mall TV.

What Chinese consumers want

Almost any product that makes Chinese families safer and healthier will appeal to Chinese consumers. These products include non-perishables, agricultural products, baby formula, organic foods, cosmetics and nutritional supplements, and personal healthcare accessories. Chinese consumers also want high-quality products that are uniquely foreign, and many customers look for attributes that display a



goods, food products, and nutritional supplements—may want to consider exploring China’s burgeoning home shopping television networks. In 2012, the combined total revenue for China’s home shopping industry was \$9.3 billion, a 31 percent increase over 2011.

There are currently 39 home shopping television networks in China, including 11 with national TV home shopping licenses. With a national license, the shopping network can be viewed anywhere in China; otherwise it can only be aired in certain regions.

The momentum for home shopping in China is being fueled by a growing consumer-driven economy, and a more demanding consumer. Convenience is becoming king, and if consumers can trust the quality of the product and the reliability of delivery services, many prefer comparing prices and purchasing from

supplier’s attention to detail, such as certain types of stitching on clothing. The more suppliers can weave in the history, symbolism and cultural significance of a product, the more appealing it tends to be for Chinese consumers. For example, a jewelry company that models its designs on famous landmarks and uses stone pulled from an historically significant quarry, might find its products resonate well in the Chinese market.

But, in general, many products selling on home shopping channels in the United States would sell in China. The easiest way to test it out is to talk with the home shopping networks and see what they think about the opportunity.

Chinese viewership of home shopping programs is on the rise. For example, the global home shopping network, QVC Inc., a division of Liberty

Interactive Corp., has partnered with CNR Mall. The partnership has seen its viewership in China grow to 70 million homes in 2012—a growth of 83 percent in one year. There’s certainly a sense among the QVC staff that they are on to something fresh after years of skepticism in the home shopping space. The company boasts over 600, mostly young, staff members who work in jobs including sales, merchandising, broadcasting, and customer support.

Challenges in China’s home shopping industry

Home shopping networks in China have had a history of false product claims in advertising. In recent years, several home shopping networks have started to recognize the Chinese consumer’s growing appreciation for honest feedback, quality customer service, and the desire for more experimental shopping. However, even if a US company has rigid quality control measures and an appealing luxury product, the firm will still have to work hard to build the confidence and trust of the Chinese consumer.

Other key challenges include unreliable delivery services and under-developed payment systems. Delivery infrastructure, while improving, is still inadequate: big cities tend to have more reliable transport services, but most Chinese cities often rely on shipments that pass through multiple local couriers, usually consisting of several legs, and numerous transport companies. All this can slow delivery.

After overcoming the initial problem of how to get the merchandise to the customer, the next problem is making sure the customer can purchase the product. Cash is still king in China, with cash-on-delivery (COD) the preferred payment system. While growing fast, credit card penetration remains low, at 38 percent; COD still accounts for 50 percent of payments, which includes credit card swipe on delivery. This method adds hardware and training costs.

The home shopping networks’ largest competitors are ecommerce platforms. As more Chinese consumers become comfortable with in-home

purchasing via ecommerce, they may also become more comfortable with home shopping.

Another challenge home shopping networks face in China is that Chinese customers are accustomed to inspecting a product before they hand over their money, and many Chinese consumers have a tendency to buy the same item in different sizes and colors, keep one, and return the rest. Therefore, companies in the home shopping space face extremely varied and cumbersome inventory costs and controls. While US and European customers can do this as well, return rates tend to be lower because consumer culture makes them less likely to return something they already paid for online.

But competition has driven logistics costs even higher. For example, to bolster long-term trust, some networks offer free shipping and return service regardless of the item’s price. A simple calculation calls into question the economics of sending a \$6 fan on a one-day trip to a customer for free, only to have it returned to the warehouse and restocked for free. But most businesses see this as a small price to pay to capture long-term customer loyalty, which is hard to come by in China.

The battle for market share among the at-home shoppers in China is underway. Ecommerce will likely continue to lead the way, but at-home shopping is nothing to shake the remote at. The at-home shopping industry in China is projected to keep growing due to the rise of consumer sophistication, growth of disposable incomes, the Chinese government’s newfound confidence in the industry, and the increased home-based purchasing habits created through ecommerce growth. (Source: China Business Review)

Tea Pest Control Advances in China

Endosulfan is a broad spectrum DDT-era pesticide once widely used by tea gardens to control insects and mites. The toxic chemical has the potential of bioaccumulation and long-range transport, thus categorized as a POP (persistent organic pollutant).

Effective from mid-2012, endosulfan was banned



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for used by the UN Stockholm Convention, a global treaty to protect human health and the environment from POPs. A phase-out period of up to five years allowed relevant parties to switch to alternative pest control measures.

Acting upon the convention, many countries have banned or established phase-out deadlines. China officially banned endosulfan use in tea gardens in 2011; the EU has set a zero tolerance standard for imported tea and the U.S. has granted China a 5-year phase-out at the request of the Chamber of Commerce of the Zhejiang International Tea Industry, which sought additional time to meet the zero tolerance standards.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency began the phase out on American soil in July 2012. The last legal application date is July 31, 2016.

Zhejiang province is the leading tea exporting province in China, contributing more than half of China's tea exports. Endosulfan was once a popular alternative to older generations of pesticides with more severe health and environment impacts. Tea gardens that previously used this chemical have soil residue issues that will take 2- to 3-years or even longer to reduce or eliminate.

The U.S. is currently maintaining a 24 ppm standard for imported Chinese tea until a full ban on July 31, 2017. Industry sources revealed that current tests indicate Endosulfan residue in tea exported to the U.S. is around 0.1 ppm.

STiR Tea & Coffee Industry International interviewed China's top expert in tea plant protection and pesticide residue research for a closer look at the pesticide issue.



Professor Chen Zongmao is a senior research fellow of China Tea Research Institute. He joined the national body in the 1960s and has since initiated and led research into tea pesticides. He also pioneered the introduction of chemical ecology in pest control in the 1990s, and was elected academican of the Chinese Academy of Engineering in 2003, a prestigious lifetime academic honor given to the nation's top ranking scientists in the field of applied science.

"The use of pesticides is an inevitable and common plant protection measure in today's agriculture," Prof. Chen said, beginning his conversation with the stark truth. Though organic tea farming has been advocated and is on the rise in recent years, its actual share of world tea production is minimal, he said.

Since pesticides are part and parcel of conventional tea farming, "it is rather important to set practical MRLs to safeguard pesticide usage," explains Chen.

"Since the 1960s the standards have been more and more stringent, tea garden pesticide MRLs were

reduced tenfold every 20 years. Now more than 60% to 80% of pesticide MRLs are lower than 1ppm (parts per million) and 5% are at an even smaller ppb (parts per billion) level,” said Chen, who formerly served as chairperson of CCPR (Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues).

Chen elaborated on the evolving global MRL standards. He advocates a program launched in China to replace the use of water-soluble pesticide in tea gardens.

“We’ve tested hundreds and thousands of pesticide samples annually,” he explained. “In water solubility tests, oil-soluble pesticides and water-soluble ones showed a maximum difference of 300 times in solubility,” he said.

“We are drinking tea liquid rather than consuming the leaves: water-soluble pesticide residues can easily dissolve into water, while oil-soluble ones have a much narrower chance to dissolve and the actual intake from drinking tea is significantly reduced,” he said.

Since 2012, a total of 250,000 Chinese mu (41,000 acres) of tea gardens have successfully switched to four well-tested oil-soluble alternatives replacing a broad range of water-soluble pesticides. This figure is less than 1% of China’s total tea gardens but demonstrates the value of the program which will now continue at a national level.

Endosulfan is difficult to dissolve in water. Even at the U.S. 24 ppm standards, the actual intake from drinking tea is minimal. However, as a POP chemical, it has a longer half-life and is capable of bioaccumulation in fatty tissues.

“This volatile chemical will adhere to soil particles and evaporate into the air under the sun. Vaporized Endosulfan is carried along by the wind to nearby or distant places, and will be disposed back to the earth,” Chen said. “If a cotton field is sprayed with Endosulfan, a nearby tea garden that never uses this chemical will be contaminated through air transport,” he said.

“I recommend three alternative pesticides to replace Endosulfan: Indoxacarb by DuPont, Palit by

BASF and Arica by Syngenta,” said Chen, “Indoxacarb is pending a MRL standard, and we are testing that.”

Green Pest Control is another of Chen’s key pursuits. Growers use chemicals with an understanding of the local ecology to reduce the use of synthetic pesticides. Beneficial insects like ladybugs, for example, offer natural aphid control eating 50 aphids a day and then attack leaf scale for dessert. A ladybug will consume 5,000 aphids during its lifespan.

“We also experimented with color on glue boards designed to trap tea green leaf hoppers, a common pest found in tea gardens, and discovered the most attractive color code to lure the hoppers,” Chen said, adding that authorized manufacturers have produced coverings for thousands of these boards. “Insects and mites are attracted to a tea garden by semiochemicals emitted by healthy tea plants,” he continued. “When the plants were bitten by insects or mites, they will emit defensive, repelling and/or predator attracting semiochemicals. We’ve spent 10 years to identify these chemicals with the potential to repel pests or to attract their predators,” said Chen.

Semiochemicals are substances that communicate a message by chemical means, examples include pheromones and kairomones.

“We are now able to produce semiochemicals for plant protection purposes: however, the capsules only last one week in the field, which is not cost-effective. We are looking for potent time technology to obtain sustained release lasting half a month or longer,” he said.

Planting selective aromatic trees in the tea garden also can help to repel pests. Furthermore, these trees shade surrounding tea plants which will acquire a sweeter taste due to the less intense sunlight, explains Chen.

Other research targets the use of sex pheromones. Female pests emit sex pheromones to attract male partners for mating. Chemical imitation of strong sex pheromones can lure male insects away and⁶

disturb their reproduction combined with proper setting of glue boards or water buckets to kill the allured male pests.

Chinese tea planters are mainly small holders. There are more than 300,000 tea producers and four million farmers growing tea. It is difficult to educate and monitor such large numbers. The Tea Research Institute has been appointed by the Ministry of Agriculture to take charge of building a national-level tea plant protection system.

The program is funded by the Ministry of Agriculture and focuses on planters' training, prediction and forecast of pest and disease outburst, replacement of water-soluble pesticides and green pest control. (Source: www.stir-tea-coffee.com)

TCM Wonder Drug Yunnan Baiyao Forced to Reveal Secret Formula



Yunnan Baiyao, a hemostatic over-the-counter Chinese herbal medicine developed more than a century ago, has long enjoyed preferential policies from the Chinese government, which allowed its formula to remain a secret — until now.

The medicine, widely touted as a "miracle drug," was developed in the southwestern province of Yunnan by Qu Huanzhang in 1902. In China, the drug enjoys a similar reputation to the discovery and development of penicillin in the West.

The complete formula and ingredients, however, are a great mystery. The "white drug from Yunnan"

has been designated as a Class-1 protected traditional Chinese medicine formula in mainland China, which has allowed its producer, the state-run Yunnan Baiyao Group, to keep the formula a secret.

Recently, after authorities renewed their guidelines for the publication of ingredients of Chinese medicines connected to classified state-level technical knowledge, Yunnan Baiyao reluctantly published the ingredients of the powdered medicine, which it said was a Chinese herb called "caowu," or "duanchangcao," in Chinese, and aconite or wolfsbane in English.

The substance is classified as a poison, as are many other substances used in traditional Chinese medicine.

Shanghai's China Business News said Yunnan Baiyao had not made public that the medicine contained aconite even in 2002, when the company listed eight ingredients of the drug in its application to the US Food and Drug Administration for a sales permit.

Faced with safety concerns, Yunnan Baiyao executive Wu Wei stated in an interview with the newspaper that the toxicity of the ingredient had been reduced to "a safe range" through the company's unique processing techniques.

The China Food and Drug Administration issued a notification in November 2013 stating that all Chinese medicinal drinks that contained ingredients classified as toxic must have ingredient notes that detail the toxins and a warning.

Following the new regulations, Yunan Baiyao received criticism over its mystery ingredients, including aconite, which contains an alkaloid that affects the kidney. An overdose of aconite can cause symptoms similar to poisoning, including nausea, vomit and limb paralysis.

Defending the toxicity of certain poisonous traditional Chinese medicine materials, Gao Xuemin, a professor at the Beijing University of Chinese Medicine, said that all the materials had to undergo a series of complicated processing procedures before they could be used for medicinal purposes.

During that process, their toxicity was greatly reduced. "It's the science and characteristic of the 5,000-year-old traditional Chinese medicine," Gao said.

The West became familiar with Yunnan Baiyao during the Vietnam War when American soldiers noticed Vietcong soldiers wearing vials of the powder around their necks. They discovered that the powder was used topically to stop bleeding from bullet and knife wounds, preventing wounded combatants from bleeding out before getting medical attention. Source: wantchinatimes.com)

China's E-Commerce Penetration to Overtake US this Year



With at least 300 million online shoppers and the rising urbanization rate, China's e-commerce penetration is forecast to overtake that of the United States this year, according to Swiss global financial services company UBS AG.

Erica Poon Werkun, UBS head for Asian Consumer and Internet Research, said China's rapidly growing online shoppers, improvement in payment systems and logistics, and high competitive online pricing, will propel the country's e-commerce penetration to become number one around the world.

At present, Poon said China's online shopping sales hit two trillion Yuan (US \$323 billion), accounting for about eight percent of the country's total retail sales last year, and could further grow this year with the introduction of faster network systems.

And with the Chinese government's urbanization plan, Poon said the number of online shoppers in China will grow tremendously, driving more retailers to bring their businesses online.

A recent survey showed that 7 out of 10 Internet users in China said they make online purchases on a regular basis, higher than the global average. Experts said the popularity of high-speed yet cheap smart phones and gadgets in the country will further drive the popularity of online shopping among Chinese consumers.

More Chinese also prefer to buy online because products sold online are cheaper than those sold in physical stores. The development of trusted online payment systems, including Alipay and Tenpay, also lure online buyers to make purchases.

While physical store owners claimed that e-commerce is slowly killing their businesses, Poon said these retailers need to ride on the opportunity of e-commerce by linking their physical stores to online shops, and transform their stores into showrooms, where customers can actually see and feel their products before making purchases through the Internet.

Physical retailers must adjust their strategies in order to survive and compete with the rapidly-growing e-commerce business in China, Poon said. Source: (chinatopix.com)

Fake Wine Continues to Stun Nation

On December 27, 2010, the Global Times published a story entitled, "Fake Wine Stuns Nation", which focused on the endemic and lucrative business of producing fake wine. The article centered on Changli County in Hebei Province and involved three wineries that chemically altered and falsely labeled wine for sale across China.

The story ended with confiscation of over 5,000 cases of forged wine, templates for printing fake labels, frozen assets of over half a million dollars and supermarkets across China ripping wine from shelves. One of the wineries shutdown was selling 2.4 million bottles a year in China.



Huang Weidong, a leading expert on the wine industry from the China Alcoholic Drinks Industry Association, said that the additives could cause headaches and irregularities in the rhythm of the heart, as well as cancer.

Fast Forward to 2014

Well over three years have passed since the Global Times published this article. One would think forgery on this scale not to mention the health risks this caused the public would have long been squashed by the government. However, it is still alive and kick'in.

This week published in Yahoo News via "The Western Australian" shows just how alive the fake wine business is.

China Central TV reported that 50 per cent of wine sold in China could be fake but many in the industry believe the true figure for high-profile brands - such as Bordeaux's Chateau Latour and Chateau Laffite, as well as premium Australian names such as Penfolds Grange - is as much as 90 per cent.

One source told West Business that as he watched a shipment of wine being unloaded in China he was approached by someone who offered to double the consignment overnight - obviously with cleverly faked bottles.

The problem is that with so much money involved there are many who stand to lose millions and until recently they have managed to protect their business interests with heavy hands and deep pockets.

But things are starting to change. Speaking in Perth, the head of a major Chinese state-owned enterprise group, with extensive businesses in technology, industry, trading and investment, said China's Government had already taken significant steps.

Danyang Zhu, chairwoman of the Guangdong Guangxin Information Industry Development Co, said the Government had established the China Food and Drug Administration, which aimed to fix safety issues surrounding food products in China.

"And for wine, the Guangdong Provincial Wine Testing Centre has been established to determine the authenticity of the wines that can ultimately lead to counterfeiters being prosecuted," she said.

Ms Zhu's group and WA-based Linkar Group have joined the fight against counterfeit wines in China with the launch of a wine app and tracing technology, with the first shipment of wines using the new technology set to leave Perth next month.

A container of McHenry Hohnen wine worth more than \$100,000 will be shipped to China with the bottles incorporating new labelling that allows the tracing system to be activated and the wines tracked.

"As a small premium producer, it is vital that wines sold into the China market are protected from being copied, which destroys the integrity of our crafted product," Murray McHenry said.

"By having a tracking system on each carton and bottle we will be able to ensure our premium wines are what the consumer is purchasing.

"Australia is the second-biggest exporter to China, and growing."

The tracing system is a collection of search engines that allow consumers, retailers, wholesalers, distributors and suppliers to access a range of data related to their wines.

A special label with coding is applied to each bottle, which can be scanned with a smartphone using an app. Consumers can also read a description of the wine, its background and reviews.

According to Linkar operating director Max Ma, most Chinese consumers did not know what to look for on the labels.

"Bottles use the original label, artwork and trademarked name, but the name and logo are altered slightly to look like the original, and it's different enough not to be a counterfeit and yet, still fool consumers," he said. "The inability to read French or English makes it even more difficult for some unsuspecting buyers.

"Another method is for counterfeiters to buy empty wine bottles and simply refill them with cheap wine. Or they use a syringe to remove some or all of the wine from a bottle and refill it with cheap wine.

"Today, high-end restaurants, hotels, collectors and auction houses regularly smash empty bottles after consuming them to avoid their re-entry into the marketplace."

Mr Ma believes the Chinese Government will eventually demand that all food, wine included, be required to adopt a system to guarantee its authenticity.

Wine Australia general manager of regulatory advice Steve Guy said it was essential any wine company thinking of selling into China protected its intellectual property by registering their trademark in China before they started to distribute.

For Australia, the stakes are high. The exorbitant price of Bordeaux wines and the recent bad vintage from 2013 is providing Australian wine producers with an opportunity to capture a greater share of the market.

In terms of imports, Australia remains second behind France but it is achieving the highest average value among the top-10 importing countries.

China remains the biggest destination for Australia's premium wines above \$7.50 a litre. Source: (Global Times/Yahoo News/USCHPA)



USCHPA Visits Tianjin Airport Economic Area

US-China HPA paid a visit to Tianjin Airport Economic Area (TAEA) at the invitation of TAEA Investment Promotion Bureau.

TAEA, 120 Square kilometers' large, located in Binhai New Area of Tianjin City, enjoys equally popularity with Shanghai Pudong New Area and Shenzhen Special Economic Zone in Mainland China.

Tianjin port ranks 4th in the world, which makes TAEA an attractive shipping and logistics center in North China, providing great business opportunities for global enterprises wishing to penetrate China's huge consumer base.

In the meeting, HPA exchanged information with TAEA team. Mr. Crowther gave a presentation on the Global dietary supplement and nutritional ingredient industry as well as discussed China's FDA regulations on imported dietary supplements. Mr. Dai, Vice Director of TAEA team, talked potential business opportunities for HPA members and privileges that foreign enterprises can enjoy in Tianjin Port Free Trade Zone.

If you want to learn more about the trade zone and what it can offer, contact the association. Source: (USCHPA)

China Updates is published weekly by the U.S. – China Health Products Association, a non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of dietary supplements and the nutritional / functional ingredients. The association's major focus is the continued development of China's dietary supplement and nutritional ingredient industry as well as offering business services to global companies wishing to enter the China Market

If you want to learn more about the association and how it can help your business, contact

us at: **info@uschinahpa.org**

If have China related news that you would like to share with the association for publication

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