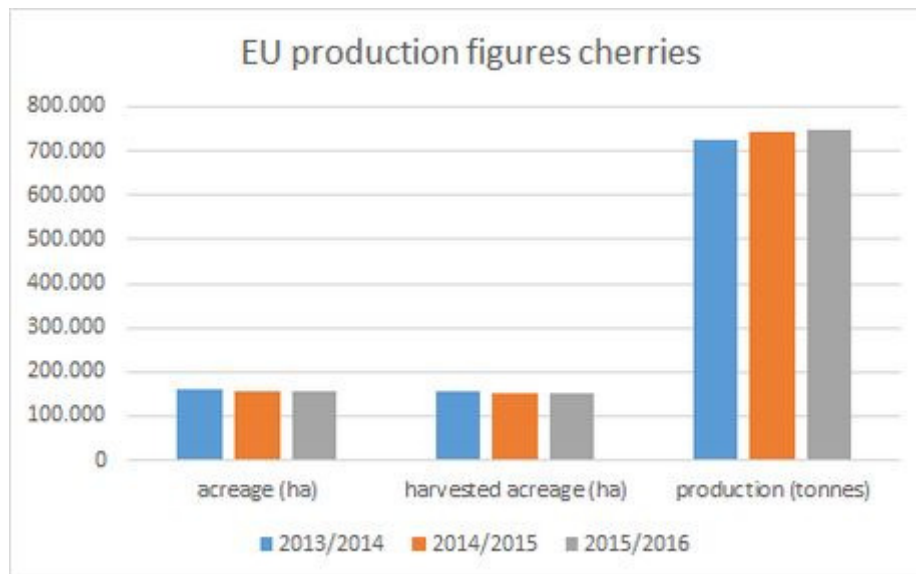


## European cherry production remains stable

The biggest producers of cherries within Europe are Poland, Italy and Spain. While Germany took fourth place for years, in the past three years the country was overtaken by Greece and Hungary, according to a USDA report on European cherry cultivation in 2015. Thanks to the early harvest, Spain leads the export countries. Italy is the biggest consumer of fresh cherries.

According to the official figures, the acreage is 154,863 hectares. The total production for 2015/2016 is estimated at 745,900 tonnes, stable compared to last year. The increase in Italy and Greece is expected to compensate for the decline in Spain. Consumption is also stable, at 443,023 tonnes.

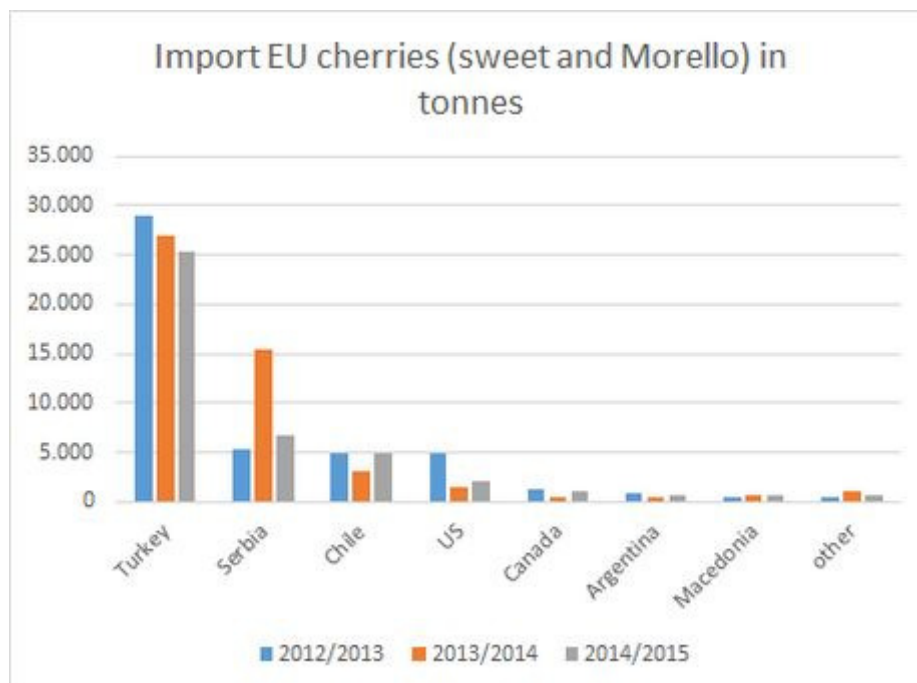


### Poland biggest producer

Poland is by far the biggest cherry grower, with a market share of a third in Europe. Cherries are the main stonefruit to be grown in the Eastern European country. According to estimates, for the 2015/2016 season production will increase by 2.4 percent to 230,000 tonnes. The biggest part of that (180,000 tonnes) are Morello cherries, supplemented with 50,000 tonnes sweet cherries. The dip in production in 2014 was the result of economic circumstances. Due to low prices, growers left part of the harvest on the trees.

The past winter was mild, which meant there was no loss in the cherry orchards due

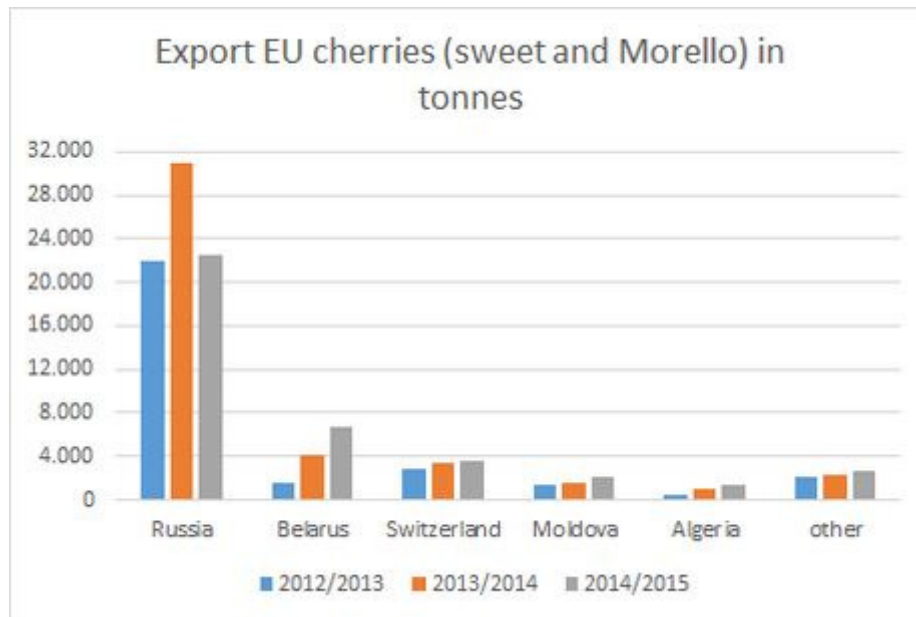
to the cold. The acreage decreased because more growers gave up on the unprofitable cultivation. Due to the low prices, there were also few investments in protection of the fruit against diseases and fungi.



### Southern Europe grows

In the south of Italy, where two thirds of the country's cherry cultivation is found, a 30 percent increase in volume is expected. That means the total volume would amount to 131,200 tonnes. In Spain, the Ministry expects a decrease to 89,300 tonnes for the 2015/2016 season. The volume would thus end up 17.6 percent lower. The main cultivation regions are Extremadura, accounting for 35% of the total Spanish production, and Aragon, with a 20% share in the total production.

In trade, Europe is a net exporter of cherries, although the difference is small. Turkey is the biggest supplier of the fruit. The import amounted to 172 million dollars in 2014/2015, a 4.33 decrease compared to the year before. The volume decreased by 15 percent to 42,331 tonnes. The import from the United States went up by 52 percent to 2155 tonnes, with a value of 13 million dollars. France has the biggest trade deficit when it comes to cherries.



### Export mainly within the EU

The export of cherries amounted to 16 million dollars in 2014/2015, 15 percent less than the previous year. The volume decreased by 10 percent to 38,816 tonnes. The main export destinations are other EU member states, while beyond the EU, Russia, Switzerland and Belarus have traditionally been big markets. A growth market is Algeria, which took over Ukraine's position. After the boycott, 27 percent of the market was lost, and it was filled by Belarus, Moldova, Algeria and Ukraine

In 2014/2015, Poland exported 42 percent fewer cherries than in the previous year, when the export amounted to 12,500 tonnes, or 14.3 million dollars. For the export of Morello cherries, the competition from Turkey, Serbia and Hungary was tough on Polish export. Most of these cherries, around 45 percent, are exported to neighbouring Germany. For the sweet cherries, Russia was an important market, accounting for seventy percent of the export, so the boycott had a big impact on the Polish cherry sector. The second most important market is Belarus, accounting for 14 percent of the export. This year, Poland is again expecting to return to the levels of before 2014.

Italy and Spain are focussing on the European market. Italy exported 10,419 tonnes in 2014/2015, with Germany being the biggest buyer at 4,686 tonnes. Spain has the United Kingdom as its biggest market, followed by Italy, Germany and France. The country exports about 38,000 tonnes. In addition, Spain exports the cherries to markets beyond Europe, like Algeria and Hong Kong.

German export is only ten percent of its production, 5,000 to 9,000 tonnes in the past

years. Main export markets are within the EU, like Austria, Belgium, France and the United Kingdom. Outside the EU, the biggest market for the German cherries is found in Switzerland.

Source: [www.freshplza.com/21/03/2016](http://www.freshplza.com/21/03/2016)