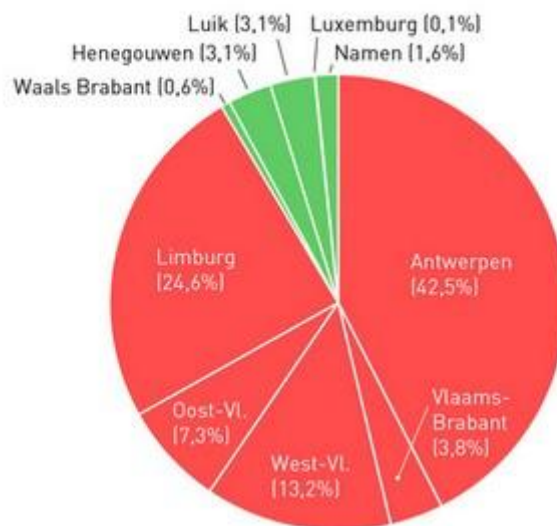


## One hundred hectares more Belgian strawberries in 2016

The VBT (an association of Belgian horticultural cooperatives) has calculated that the Belgian strawberry area amounted to 1,900 hectares last year. That is approximately 100 hectares more than in 2015. Since 2012, the area has increased every year. The FOD economy (figures from administrative databanks) talked about 950 hectares of outdoor strawberries and 435 hectares of greenhouse cultivation in 2015.



About 42 per cent (569 hectares) is in the province of Antwerp, followed by Limburg with 25 per cent and West Flanders with 13 per cent. Nowadays, strawberries are available year-round due to the combining of various cultivation systems and cooling the strawberry plants. For this, the cultivation systems are alternated (illuminated winter cultivation, heated greenhouses, plastic tunnels, outdoor, etc.) so that strawberries can always be available on the market.

The largest volumes arrive on the market in the May/June period. For Coöperatie Hoogstraten sold in 2016 a volume of 30,063,000 kg strawberries (30,063 ton). Coöperatie Hoogstraten has got a 63,6 % market share within Belgium, as the total volume of strawberries was 47,252 tons through the VBT-coöperaties.