

Russia: Increase in per capita consumption of fruit and veg

In 2016, Russia's per capita consumption of fruits and berries, including fresh processed products, increased by 1.6%, from 61 to 62 kg/person, Rosstat reported this week. At the same time, consumption remains below the level of 2013 and 2014, when every citizen of the country consumed an average of 64 kg of fruit and berries.

The maximum increase in consumption was recorded in the Volga Federal District, where it grew by 3.5%, even though it still remained below the average Russian figure (59 kg/person), and in the Southern Federal District, where fruit consumption stands at 78 kg/person and has grown by 2.6%. In the North-West District, the consumption of fruits and berries increased from 61 to 62 kg/person; in the North Caucasus, from 60 to 61 kg/person, and in the Urals and the Far East, the decline in 2015 continued in 2016, falling by another kilo, to 63 kg/person and 64 kg/person, respectively.

Fewer fruits and berries are eaten by residents of the Siberian district, where consumption amounts to 47 kg/person, up 1 kg compared to the previous year. In the central part of Russia, consumption has not changed and amounts to 63 kg/person. Among the regions, the largest consumption was recorded in Kabardino-Balkaria (101 kg/person), Krasnodar Territory (94 kg/person) and Kaliningrad Region (79 kg/person), and the lowest was recorded in Chukotka (10 kg) the Tyva (20 kg/person) and Karachaevo-Cherkessia and Kalmykia (32 kg/person each).

Simultaneously, during 2016, the per capita consumption of vegetables increased slightly. According to Rosstat, while in 2015 the population consumed an average of 111 kg of vegetables, in 2016 this figure stood at 112 kg (an increase of 0.9%); the highest figure since 2012. This growth was mainly due to the rise in the Urals, where consumption increased by 1.1% to 91 kg per year, and also in the Volga region, where growth stood at 0.9%, to 109 kg/person. As in the category of fruits, most vegetables are consumed in the south of Russia; in the North Caucasus Federal District, each inhabitant eats an average of 171 kg, and in the Southern Federal District, consumption stands at 146 kg.

These figures are similar to those of the previous year. The leaders in per capita consumption of vegetables are Dagestan (245 kg), Kabardino-Balkaria (183 kg) and Volgograd Region (171 kg), and last in the ranking are Chukotka (28 kg), Tyva (41 kg) and Buryatia (73 kg).

The rise in the consumption of vegetables and fruits is associated primarily with the growth in the production of domestic products, according to the Director of the Institute of Agricultural Marketing Elena Tyurina. "The supply of Russian products is gradually increasing, competition is growing and prices are being held back," Tyurina told Agroinvestor. Moreover, she recalled that the rouble began to strengthen in 2016. "Accordingly, the cost of imported vegetables and fruits declined, which also stimulated consumption growth," she noted.

The changes in the consumption of fruits and vegetables are also associated with positive dynamics in their production, as stated by the analyst of IFC Markets Dmitry Lukashov. "In 2016, the production of fruit and berry crops increased by 14%," he recalls. "There was also progress made in vegetable growing; the country's tomato production increased by 3.7%, and that of cucumbers grew by 1.2%. Obviously, agro-businesses sold their goods at attractive prices, and consumption growth occurred despite a drop in the population's income."

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