

Chinese potato production forecast to rebound, french fry imports to fall

China’s MY2017/18 fresh potato production is forecast at 97 million metric tons (MMT), about a five percent increase from the estimated 92 MMT in MY2016/17, due to a continued expansion of potato area.

China’s exports of fresh potatoes have held stable at 300,000-500,000 MT annually since MY2010/11, a negligible amount considering China annual production of about 100 million MT. China’s MY2017/18 fresh potato exports are forecast at 550,000 MT, about 10 percent increase from the 497,829 MT in MY2016/17.

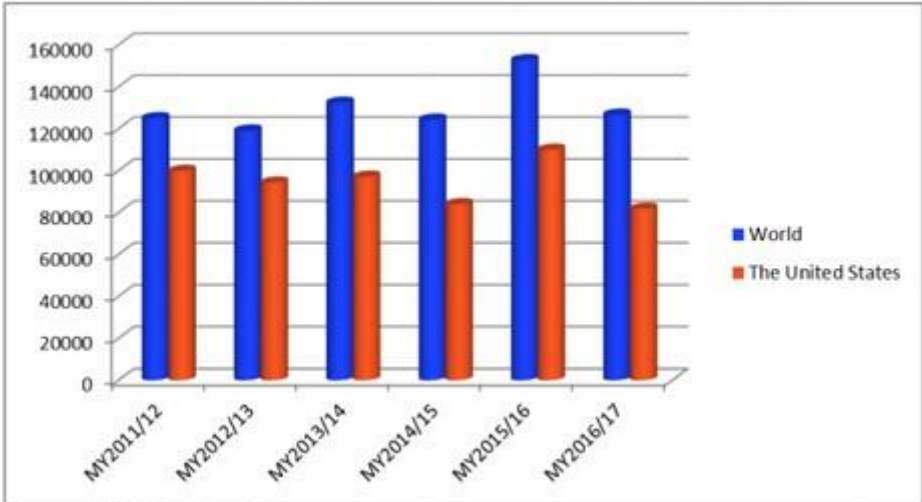
Industry believes “One Belt, One Road” will facilitate China’s fresh potato exports to its major fresh potato exporting countries, such as Malaysia, Vietnam, and Russia, which combined account for about 65 percent of China’s total fresh potato exports in MY2016/17.

Processing potatoes account for about 15 to 20 percent of total production, and include such products as starch, dehydrated potatoes, chips, and frozen french fries.

China’s potato chip production continues to grow in response to strong market demand. Industry sources estimate China’s MY2017/18 sliced potato chip and fabricated potato chip production at 450,000 MT and 350,000 MT, a 7 percent and 13 percent year on year increase, respectively.

China’s Frozen French Fries (FFF) production is forecast at 250,000 MT, a 10 percent increase from 230,000 MT in MY2016/17, driven by strong domestic demand.

Figure 2: China’s FFF imports in MY2011/12-MY2016/17 (MT)



Source: Global Trade Atlas

Post forecasts China's MY2017/18 FFF imports at 120,000 MT, about a 5 percent decrease from 126,620 MT in MY2016/17, due to increased domestic production. The United States continues to dominate China's FFF import market.

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