

Only 5% of Dutch fruit and vegetable exports go outside the EU

The EU market is crucial for fresh fruit and vegetables in the Netherlands. More than 90 per cent of the total export is consistently sent to other EU countries. The importance of the EU for export has even increased in the past ten years. Last year, of the total export, including re-export, 94 per cent was sent to EU countries. Including export to “almost EU countries” Norway, Sweden, Russia and Belarus (EU+), it even concerns 98 per cent. This has been consistent in the past ten years.

In the past ten years, the Netherlands hasn't exactly managed to find other meaningful sales markets, except Russia. However, the amount sent to other markets has grown along with the total export. In 2005, 115,000 tonnes of fresh fruit and vegetables was sold to markets further away. Last year, this volume was almost 180,000 tonnes. After the Russian market was lost, more energy was put into finding new markets. The export to markets further away was fairly stable until 2014, but in 2015 it increased rather considerably, relatively speaking. The growth continued in the following years, but last year the increase was halted.

Something similar can be seen in the export of exclusively Dutch product. The share of markets further away is slightly larger, about five per cent. The export of Dutch fruit and vegetables increased after the Russian market was lost as well, although that growth didn't continue in 2018.

After the Russian boycott was implemented, a market of 140,000 tonnes of Dutch product was lost. After that, the country managed to sell 20 to 25,000 more tonnes to markets further away. However, in total it still concerns less than 100,000 tonnes in a total of 1.9 million tonnes.

Onion sales patterns very different from other products

Onions weren't considered in the above. This product has a completely different sales pattern from other fruit and vegetables. Of



all Dutch onions, half to two-thirds is sold outside of the EU+. When talking about fruit and vegetables, onions and shallots are excluded in the following.

Bell peppers to the US

Which are the most important markets further away, and which products does it concern? As for the countries, the US is the most important distant market for Dutch fruit and vegetables. In 2015, sales to the US showed a considerable increase. In 2016, it became even more, but in the past two years, the export decreased again. After the peak of nearly 28,000 tonnes in 2016, it concerned less than 20,000 tonnes last year. Even longer ago, about 30,000 tonnes was exported to the US.

Nearly 90 per cent of this export is bell peppers. Last year, leek came second, but this concerned less than 1,000 tonnes. Other products shipped across the ocean were aubergines, cucumbers and sprouts. However, the export of sprouts dropped in 2018 after a 'turbulent' increase in 2017.

Increase of sales to Gulf states stopped in 2018

According to Eurostat figures, the export to North America is about 10,000 tonnes larger than KCB figures. It isn't likely that this just concerns re-export; Eurostat and KCB figures to other distant destinations also differ from each other. For example, in 2018, just over 20,000 tonnes of fresh fruit and vegetables was exported to the Gulf states, according to the KCB. However, according to Eurostat, it was nearly 40,000 tonnes. Re-export is larger for the Gulf states than for North America.

Eurostat's biggest amount is the code for miscellaneous vegetables. Tomatoes are the second biggest with an amount of 5,500 tonnes. According to KCB figures, it would be 4,000 tonnes of tomatoes. Other products sent to the Gulf states are bell peppers, headed cabbage, butterhead lettuce, mushrooms and a typical re-export product like avocados.

The export to the Gulf states increased until 2017, but it was less in 2018.

Modest amounts of pears and tomatoes to Southeast Asia

Onions are sent to countries in South and Eastern Asia in large volumes, but the export of other products is limited. A line cannot actually be discerned in this regard. The export of bell peppers to



Japan is a very decisive factor. This has been fluctuating between 6,000 and 7,000 tonnes for years. However, an increase can be seen in the export of pears and tomatoes to the Far East. But it (still?) concerns limited amounts; according to the KCB it was 4,700 tonnes of pears and 1,300 tonnes of tomatoes in 2018. According to Eurostat it was slightly more: 5,500 and 2,400 tonnes respectively.

Pears are mostly sent to China (2,450 tonnes), and to India (780 tonnes). Eurostat reports an export of pears to China of 3,000 tonnes, 1,700 tonnes to Hong Kong and 800 tonnes to India in 2018.

Carrots to Africa and pears to small European markets

A lot of onions are sent to Africa, more than half a million tonnes, but not many other products. In the past year, the other products amounted to more than 10,000 tonnes, the majority of which were carrots.

In the past year, approximately 20,000 tonnes of fruit and vegetables was sent to European countries, excluding Norway, Switzerland, Belarus and Russia. Eurostat's figure is much higher: 56,000 tonnes. The difference can mostly be explained by re-export. The trend of export to these relatively nearby markets is rising slightly.

Bosnia, Iceland and Serbia are the most important markets. Pears are by far the most important product grown in the Netherlands sent to these countries. Additionally, smaller amounts of tomatoes, bell peppers, cabbages and apples are sent there. Besides, there's also the re-export of pineapple, citrus and avocado.

Rapport complet :

<http://www.fruitandvegetablefacts.com/sites/default/files/Factsheet%20NEDERLAND%20export%20buiten%20EU%20SITE.pdf>

Lien article : <https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9089174/very-modest-sales-of-fruit-and-vegetables-on-new-sales-markets/>

