

Russia again top market for Turkey's fresh fruit, vegetable exports

Turkey's fresh fruit and vegetable exports to 118 countries amounted to \$622.5 million in the first four months of the year with Russia taking the lead among markets with \$184.2 million in the said period.

According to the Eastern Black Sea Exporters' Association (DKİB) data, in January-April 2019, \$622.5 million was generated from Turkey's fresh fruit and vegetable exports of 1.1 million tons to 118 countries.

In this period, the Russian Federation ranked first with \$184.2 million, followed by Iraq with \$61.9 million and Romania with \$60 million.

Meanwhile, in the said period, 86,288 tons of fresh fruits and vegetables were exported to 36 countries from the Eastern Black Sea, providing \$48.8 million in foreign exchange inflow.

In fresh fruit and vegetable exports made from the region, Russia ranked first with \$37.4 million, followed by Georgia with \$4.7 million and Iraq with \$1 million. DKİB Chairman Saffet Kalyoncu said that Russia stood out as the primary market for fresh fruit and vegetable exports. He noted that Russia continually ranks first in fresh fruit and vegetable exports, stressing that Russia's share in these figures has been falling due to the problems experienced in the last three years. He also added that it is possible to see an increase in exports to the Russian Federation in case of a solution to these problems and the lifting of the non-tariff barriers.

In January 2016, after Turkey downed a Russian fighter jet violating its airspace, Russia banned imports of Turkish fruits and vegetables including tomatoes, oranges, apples, apricots, cabbage, broccoli, mandarins, pears, peaches, cucumbers, plums, strawberries, onions, cloves and poultry. However, Russia relaxed trade sanctions placed



on Turkey during the summer of 2017. "We want to close 2019 with much better figures in the export of fresh fruits and vegetables," he added. "In this context, we aim to progressively increase our exports to Russia, which is our primary market."

Touching on the country diversity in exports, he said that the number of countries in foreign trade is growing. Kalyoncu further pointed out that they want to achieve the real potential of the export of fresh fruit and vegetable sector, which is one of the few sectors that provide net foreign exchange inflow to the country, and that they give importance to promotion and country diversity by attending exhibitions and visiting countries abroad in this direction.

Suggesting that they also pay attention to increasing the variety of products in exports, Kalyoncu added that they would accelerate work on further improving the transportation of fresh fruits and vegetables throughout the year.

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