

Bulgarian fresh produce market increasingly relies on imports

Bulgarians consume increasingly less domestic vegetables, as the availability of Bulgarian vegetables on the market is falling, according to an analysis of the Center for Economic Research in Agriculture.

"The country is becoming less self-sufficient when it comes to the supply of vegetables. While self-sufficiency in tomatoes reached 70% in 2017 and fell to 68% in 2018, in 2007, that figure stood at 82%," said experts from the Center.

The situation with peppers is also a cause for concern. Domestic peppers covered 71% of the market's needs in 2018. By comparison, a year earlier they had a 72% share, and ten years earlier the share stood at 87%.

For cucumbers, self-sufficiency levels in Bulgaria last year were about 98%, down from the 101% recorded in 2007.

Data from the National Statistical Institute confirm the growth of Bulgaria's fresh fruit and vegetable imports. In January, 22.8 thousand tons of fresh vegetables and 30.7 thousand tons of fresh fruit were imported into the country, 2.3% and 8.4% more respectively, compared to the same month of 2018.

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