

## CBI MARKET SURVEY

## THE FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLES MARKET IN CYPRUS

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**Introduction**

This CBI market survey gives exporters in developing countries information on some main developments in the fresh fruit and vegetables market in Cyprus. The information is complementary to the information provided in the CBI market survey 'The fresh fruit and vegetables market in the EU', which covers the EU in general. That survey also contains an overview and explanation of the selected products dealt with, some general remarks on the statistics used as well as information on other available documents for this sector. It can be downloaded from <http://www.cbi.nl/marketinfo>.

**1. Market description: consumption and production****Consumption<sup>1</sup>**

Compared to other EU countries, Cyprus has a high per caput consumption of fruit and vegetables. In 2003, consumption of fruit was 177 kg per head and of vegetables 150 kg (FreshFEL Europe 2004). With a population of 715 thousand people in 2003, this amounted to 127 thousand tonnes of fruit and 107 thousand tonnes of vegetables. From 2001 to 2003, consumption of fruit increased by 5% and of vegetables by 3%.

In 2003, oranges were the most popular fruit consumed, accounting for 12% of total fruit consumption, followed by apples (11%) and table grapes (10%). Tomatoes were the most popular vegetable, accounting for 30% of total vegetables consumption.

**Production**

Cyprus is a small producer of fruit and vegetables, accounting for less than 1% of total EU production (FAOSTAT 2006). The Mediterranean climate of mild, wet winters and dry, hot summers makes production of sub-tropical species possible, such as citrus fruit.

From 2001 to 2005, fruit production increased by 4%, to reach 310 thousand tonnes in 2005. The most important fruits are grapes (26% of total fruit production), watermelons (13%) and tangerines (12%). Cyprus accounts for 37% of the EU production of grapefruits.

From 2001 to 2005, vegetables production remained stable at 100 thousand tonnes. The most important products in 2005 were tomatoes (38% of total vegetables production), cucumbers (16%), onions (7%) and cabbages (6%). Potatoes, which are not part of this market survey, are by far the most important agricultural export product of Cyprus.

**Opportunities and threats**

The Cypriot market is small but Cypriots appreciate fruits and vegetables very much. They have a preference for domestically produced products, leaving open an opportunity for off-season supply of these products.

**Useful sources**

- Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment of Cyprus - [http://www.moa.gov.cy/moa/Agriculture.nsf/index\\_en/index\\_en?OpenDocument](http://www.moa.gov.cy/moa/Agriculture.nsf/index_en/index_en?OpenDocument)
- FAOSTAT, Statistical Database on Agricultural Production - <http://faostat.fao.org>

<sup>1</sup> These figures may differ from figures in the CBI market survey Fresh fruit and vegetables in the EU. In the CBI market surveys covering individual countries, national sources are preferred for providing the most detailed information, while the general survey uses statistics that are easily comparable between countries.

- FreshFel, forum for the European fresh fruits and vegetables chain- <http://www.freshfel.org>
- Cyprus Trade Centre Berlin – <http://www.zypern.com>

## 2. Trade: imports and exports

In 2005, fruit imports were €14 million and 14 thousand tonnes, which was 0.08% of total EU import value. From 2001 to 2005, import value of fruit increased by 131% (Eurostat 2006). 84% of total fruit import value came from other EU countries; 11% from developing countries.

The fruits with the largest import value in 2005 were apples, bananas, and pears and quinces. Greece was the main supplier of fruits to Cyprus followed by Italy and the Netherlands. Fruits with the largest imports from developing countries were apples, lemons and limes, cherries, dates and grapes (Table 2.1).

In 2005, vegetables imports were €4 million and 5 thousand tonnes, which was 0.05% of total EU import value. From 2001 to 2005, import value of vegetables increased by 135%. 79% of total vegetables import value in 2005 originated from other EU countries; 5% came from developing countries.

Vegetables with the largest import values in 2005 were sweet peppers, mushrooms (excl. Agaricus spp.), and onions and shallots. The Netherlands, Israel and Poland are the main suppliers. Vegetables with the largest imports from developing countries were cabbage lettuce, beans tomatoes, sweet peppers, and onions and shallots (Table 2.1).

**Table 2.1 Import from developing countries by Cyprus and leading suppliers, import value in thousand euro (€)**

<b>Total fruit</b>	<b>11% of total fruit import value 2005</b>	
<b>Products</b>	<b>DC imports</b>	<b>Leading DC suppliers</b>
Apples	389	Chile (45%), Argentina (35%), China (20%)
Lemons and limes	336	Argentina (100%)
Cherries	314	Lebanon (96%), Chile (4%)
Dates	155	Lebanon (73%), Tunisia (20%), Iran (4%)
Grapes	136	Chile (84%), Lebanon (16%)
<b>Total vegetables</b>	<b>5% of total vegetables import value 2005</b>	
<b>Products</b>	<b>DC imports</b>	<b>Leading DC suppliers</b>
Cabbage lettuce	97	Egypt (84%), Lebanon (16%)
Beans	87	Egypt (100%)
Tomatoes	19	Lebanon (100%)
Sweet peppers	10	Egypt (100%)
Onions and shallots	3	Egypt (100%)

Source: Eurostat 2006

### Exports

Exports of fruit by Cyprus amounted to €37 million and 72 thousand tonnes in 2005 (0.3% of total EU export value of fruit). From 2001 to 2005, export value of fruit increased by 30% (Eurostat 2006). Main fruits in exports were citrus fruit (tangerines, grapefruit, oranges and lemons and limes).

In 2005, exports of vegetables by Cyprus amounted to €11 million and 8 thousand tonnes (0.1% of total EU export value). From 2001 to 2005, exports of vegetables increased by 35%. Main vegetables in exports were sweet peppers, mushrooms and tomatoes.

### Opportunities and threats

Cyprus is a very small importer of fruit and vegetables in the EU and imports from developing countries are limited. Most exotics and off-season fruit and vegetables are imported from other EU countries.

Exporters from developing countries can therefore more easily address the EU countries that supply Cyprus with products from developing countries (mainly Greece, Italy and the Netherlands).

### Useful sources

- EU Expanding Exports Helpdesk - <http://export-help.cec.eu.int/>
- Eurostat – official statistical office of the EU - <http://epp.eurostat.cec.eu.int>
- Cyprus Trade Centre Berlin – <http://www.zypern.com>

### 3. Trade structure

Imports take place through importers or agents. Cyprus has two ports for large reefer container vessels: Larnaca and Paphos.

Four local retailers dominate the retail sector: Orphanides –<http://www.orphanides.com.cy->, Carrefour-Marinopoulos –<http://www.carrefour.gr->, Ermes Group – <http://www.dart.com.cy/ermes-> and Alpha Mega –<http://www.alphamega.com.cy/EN>.

For information on export to Cyprus and Cypriot importers, try the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry, section Members Directory – <http://www.cci.org.cy>

### 4. Prices

From 2003 to 2005, the average import price of fruit increased by 2% to €1.03 per kg. The average price of fruit imported from developing countries decreased by 1% to €0.93 in 2005. The price levels and trends of selected products imported from developing countries are the following: apples -6%, €0.76 per kg; lemons and limes no import in 2003, €0.65; dates -11%, €0.77; grapes no import in 2003, €1.37.

During the same period, the average import price of vegetables increased by 43% to €0.98 per kg in 2005. The average price of vegetables imported from developing countries increased by only 1% to €0.86 per kg. Price levels in 2005 of selected products are the following: cabbage lettuce €0.57 per kg; beans €2.05; tomatoes €0.84; sweet peppers €1.13; onions and shallots €0.35.

Information on prices is available from Today Market European markets - [http://www.todaymarket.com/eu\\_pric.htm](http://www.todaymarket.com/eu_pric.htm) and can also be obtained from importers and agents.

### 5. Market access requirements

Manufacturers in developing countries should be aware of the market access requirements of their trading partners and the country government. Requirements are demanded through legislation and through labels, codes and management systems. These requirements are based on environmental, consumer health and safety and social concerns. For more information go to 'Search CBI database' at <http://www.cbi.nl/marketinfo>

For fresh fruit and vegetables, the reduced value-added tax (VAT) rates of 5% and 8% are applicable.

### 6. Business practices

For information on doing business in Cyprus, try the following sources:

- Cyprus Trade Centre Berlin – <http://www.zypern.com>
- Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry – <http://www.cci.org.cy>

### 7. References

Eurostat. 2006. Statistical Office of the European Communities, COMEXT database on external trade, available at <http://fd.comext.eurostat.cec.eu.int/xtweb/>.

FAO. 2006. FAOSTAT, Statistical Database on Agricultural Production. Available at <http://faostat.fao.org>.

FreshFel Europe. 2004. Fruit and vegetables market and consumption monitor. <http://www.freshfel.org>.

This survey was compiled for CBI by Mercadero in collaboration with Bureau Leeters.

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