

CBI MARKET SURVEY

THE FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLES MARKET IN SLOVENIA

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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 Slovenia. 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**

Slovenia is one of the wealthier countries of the new EU countries. In 2005, GDP per caput was 85% of the EU average, which is about the same as in Greece but more than in Portugal (Eurostat 2006).

In 2003, domestic fruit consumption was 97 thousand tonnes, an increase of 1% compared to 2001 (Statistical office of the Republic of Slovenia 2006).¹ Apples were the most popular fruit, accounting for 32% of fruit consumption. Other popular fruits were bananas (23%) and oranges (19%).

Domestic consumption of vegetables amounted to 97 thousand tonnes, a decline of 3% compared to 2001. Lettuce was the most popular vegetable in 2005, accounting for 20% of total consumption, followed by tomatoes (16%), onions and garlic (15%).

Production

Production of fruits in 2005 was 391 thousand tonnes, 1% of total EU production (FAO 2006). Apples and grapes were by far the main fruits produced in Slovenia, accounting for respectively 58% and 31% of total fruit production in 2005. There is also production of pears, peaches and nectarines, and plums. Fruit production of fruit has grown remarkably: from 2001 to 2005 by 86%, most of which because of apples.

In 2005, vegetables production was 56 thousand tonnes, less than 1% of total EU production. From 2001 to 2005, vegetables production increased by 15%. Cabbages account for 34% of total vegetables production, lettuce 13%, onions 11%, peppers 11% and tomatoes 8%.

Trends

Slovenian people are slowly changing their eating habits, choosing healthy products such as fruit more often, but at the same time consuming less vegetables. The Slovenian economy is growing and consumers have more money to spend. This results in an increased demand for quality products, exotics and off-season products. Especially sub-tropical and tropical fruits such as citrus fruit and banana were consumed more.

¹ 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.

Opportunities and threats

Slovenia is one of the smaller EU countries and the market is therefore small. The country is a net exporter of fruit and a net importer of vegetables. In both categories, nevertheless, it relies on imports to meet demand for exotics and off-season products.

Useful sources

- Slovenian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food - <http://www.mkgp.gov.si>
- Statistical office of the Republic of Slovenia - <http://www.stat.si/eng>
- USDA, Foreign Agricultural Services - <http://www.fas.usda.gov>
- FAOSTAT, Statistical Database on Agricultural Production - <http://faostat.fao.org>

2. Trade: imports and exports

Imports

In 2005, fruit imports amounted to €96 million and 157 thousand tonnes, 0.5% of total EU import value (Eurostat 2006). From 2001 to 2005, import value of fruit increased by 73%. In 2005, 60% of fruit imports came from other EU countries; 32% of from developing countries. The main imported fruits in 2005 were, by value, bananas, oranges, tangerines, peaches and nectarines. Italy was the main supplying country. The main fruits imported from developing countries were bananas, lemons and limes, oranges, tangerines and watermelons (Table 2.1).

In 2005, total vegetables import amounted to €52 million and 64 thousand tonnes, 0.5% of total EU import value. From 2001 to 2005, import value of vegetables increased by 57%. In 2005, 76% of total import value came from other EU countries; 16% from developing countries. The main vegetables imported were tomatoes and sweet peppers. As for fruits, Italy is the main supplier. The main vegetables imported from developing countries were tomatoes, sweet peppers, mushrooms (excl Agaricus species) and garlic.

Table 2.1 Slovenian import from developing countries leading supplying countries with their market share, by value in thousand euro (€)

Total fruit		32% of total import value 2005	
Product	DC imports	Leading DC suppliers	
Bananas	21,429	Colombia (46%), Ecuador (45%), Brasil (8%), Costa Rica (0.8%)	
Lemons and limes	4,682	Argentina (56%), Turkey (37%), South Africa (4.7%), Egypt (1.9%)	
Oranges	1,584	Egypt (78%), South Africa (18%), Argentina (3.4%)	
Tangerines	1,234	Croatia (61%), Turkey (39%)	
Watermelons	537	Egypt (86%), FJR Macedonia (6%), Bosnia and Herzegovina (3.9%), Turkey (2.3%)	
Total vegetables		16% of total import value 2005	
Product	DC imports	Leading DC suppliers	
Tomatoes	5,165	Turkey (81%), FJR Macedonia (16%), Egypt (1.6%), Croatia (0.8%)	
Sweet peppers	1,219	FJR Macedonia (72%), Turkey (14%), Croatia (13%), Egypt (1.3%)	
Mushrooms (excl Agaricus spp.)	511	Croatia (57%), Bosnia and Herzegovina (33%), FJR Macedonia (9%)	
Garlic	415	China (71%), Egypt (29%)	

Source: Eurostat 2006

Exports

Exports of fruit by Slovenia amounted to €33 million and 66 thousand tonnes in 2005, 0.3% of total EU export value (Eurostat 2006). From 2001 to 2005, fruit exports increased by a spectacular 600% in value and 300% in volume. The main exported fruits were bananas, apples and grapefruits. Apparently, Slovenia has started to engaged in re-exporting bananas.

In 2005, exports of vegetables were €7.4 million and 6.0 thousand, 0.08% of total EU export value. In 2001, exports of vegetables were only €1.0 million and 0.7 thousand tonnes, indicating a tremendous increase. The main exported products were sweet peppers and mushrooms (excl. Agaricus species).

Opportunities and threats

The domestic market for fruit is small but imports are increasing. Slovenia is growing in importance as an importer and re-exporter. In 2005, banana imports measured €26 million, of which 80% came directly from developing countries. 49% of this value was exported, mainly to Italy. Other exotics may follow this trend as well.

Imports of vegetables from developing countries are very small and limited to few products.

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>
- Statistical office of the Republic of Slovenia - <http://www.stat.si/eng>

3. Trade structure

The food retail sector in Slovenia is highly concentrated: the three largest retailers account for 80% of the market (EVD 2005). Most multiple retailers have own import facilities or are part of buying group. The main multiple retailers in Slovenia are:

- Mercator Group - <http://www.mercator.si>
- Spar Slovenija - <http://www.spar.si>
- Engrotuš - <http://www.engrotus.si>
- Leclerc (French) - <http://www.e-leclerc.com>
- Hofer (part of Aldi International) - <http://www.hofer.si>

The major Slovenian seaport is located in the city of Koper. For contact information of importers and agents, please refer to the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia (<http://www.gzs.si>).

4. Prices

From 2003 to 2005, the average import price of fruit increased by 6%, to €0.61 per kg. The average price of fruit imported from developing countries increased by 6% to €0.50. Price levels and developments of selected products from developing countries were: bananas +19%, €0.48; lemons and limes -6%, €0.60; oranges -22%, €0.43; tangerines -6%, €0.63; watermelons +236%, €0.64.

Over the same period, the average import price of vegetables increased by 27% to €0.81 per kg. The average price of vegetables imported from developing countries increased by 52% to €0.63. Price levels and developments of selected products from developing countries were: tomatoes +35%, €0.74; sweet peppers +7%, €0.48; mushrooms -43%, €3.07; garlic +26%, €0.59.

For price information, you may refer to Today Market European markets - http://www.todaymarket.com/eu_pric.htm. Alternatively, importers and agents may also be able to give up-to-date information on the price levels of individual products.

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 defined through legislation, 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) rate of 8% is applicable.

6. Business practices

For information on doing business in Slovenia, you may refer to the following sources:

- Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia - <http://www.gzs.si>.
- TIPO - Slovenian Trade and Investment Promotion Agency. <mailto:tipo@gov.si>.

Slovenia organises an international fair for agriculture and food industry: Kmetijsko – Živilski Sejem. For more information, please go to <http://www.pomurski-sejem.si>.

7. References

Eurostat. 2006. GDP per capita in PPS. Data available at Eurostat. 2006. Statistical Office of the European Communities, COMEXT database on external trade, available at <http://fd.comext.eurostat.ec.eu.int/xtweb/>.

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

EVD. 2006. Food sector in Slovenia, market survey. Economische voorlichtingsdienst/Royal Netherlands Embassy in Ljubljana. Available at <http://www.netherlands-embassy.si/>.

Statistical office of the Republic of Slovenia. 2006. Household budget surveys, available at <http://www.stat.si/eng>.

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