

EU Market Scan for Myanmar Avocado

Avocado trees (*Persea Americana*) are grown for their edible fruits, and are native to Central America. Worldwide, the trees are cultivated in countries with tropical and Mediterranean climates. These include countries in South America (e. g. Mexico, Chile, Brazil, Peru and Colombia), Africa (e. g. Kenya, Rwanda and South Africa), Asia and the Middle East (e. g. Indonesia and Israel), Europe (Spain), the USA and Australia.



Various different cultivars or varieties are available of the fruit. In Germany, both the green Fuerte and Hass varieties are preferred. There is an increasing popularity of Hass, globally the most common variety. 80% of avocados world-wide are Hass. Compared to the other main varieties like Fuertes, Pinkertons, Zutanos - Hass trees grow vigorously, are easy to propagate and produce an impressive amount of fruit by only the second or third year. They have a longer harvest season than other avocado varieties and most importantly, the Hass's thicker skin makes it superior to and other varieties when it comes to handling fruit and shipping it long distances.

Whilst Myanmar has an excellent climate and soils for avocado and has superb avocados, Hass is not common. If Myanmar wants to join mainstream avocado it will need to make the switch to producing Hass. This process has been initiated but will still take time.

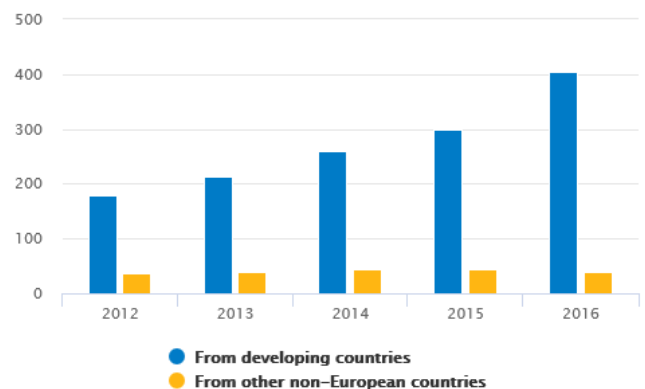
The buttery fruit is prized for being very healthy and incredibly nutritious. They contain more potassium than bananas, are loaded with heart-healthy monounsaturated fatty acids and full of fibre. Avocados are best known as the basic ingredient for guacamole, an avocado-based sauce which originated from Mexico and are used as a dip or condiment. Additionally, they are used in salads, on sandwiches and spreads, and more and more in healthy smoothies.

Avocado in the EU

Based on production and trade statistics, the total European consumption of avocados is approaching 500,000 tonnes, which is around one kilo per capita. This consumption rate is still relatively low compared to the USA, for example, where people consume four times as many avocados.

Nevertheless, avocados are gaining very rapidly in popularity. Imports into Europe of fresh avocados to the European market have doubled from 2012 to 2016. This upward trend is driven by the consumer demand for ready-to-eat and healthy food. It creates opportunities for producers and exporters, especially for the Hass avocado variety, although competition is increasing.

Figure 1: European import of avocados 2012-2016 in 1,000 tonnes



Source: International Trade Centre (ITC) Trade Map, 2018

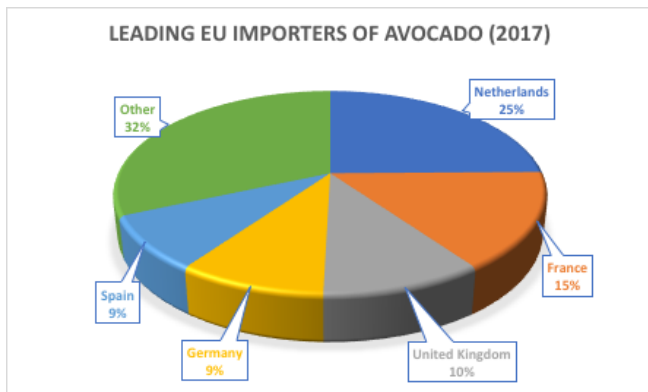


MYANTRADE MARKET INFORMATION SERVICE

Potential Target Markets in the EU

Source: International Trade Centre (ITC) Trade Map, 2018

The best opportunities are on large consumer markets such as France, Germany, Spain and the UK, which are often supplied through the Netherlands. The Netherlands is responsible for almost half of Europe's avocado imports. From there, large volumes are re-exported to Germany, France, Scandinavian countries and other countries to a



lesser extent.

Traditionally, France is the largest market for avocados and continues to be so. The United Kingdom and Spain are experiencing very strong growth. In Germany, consumers are still getting used to eating avocados on a regular basis. Being the largest European country, it offers great potential for growth. Scandinavian countries are much smaller in terms of population but maintain one of the highest consumption rates of avocados thanks to strong promotion and the attention to health food.

Sizes

- Fresh avocados are classified according to Size Codes 1 to 30, with a minimum weight of 123 grams (or 80 grams for Hass).
- In Europe, the preferred sizes for Hass avocados range between Sizes 16 and 20 (14 to 16 for the Fuerte variety).

EU Market Access Requirements

- The EU legislation on hygiene of foodstuffs is legally binding for food processors, and is recommended for farmers (primary production).

- Avocados exported to the EU often need a phytosanitary certificate, issued from the country of origin. They are listed under the Directive on Plant Health and as such require compulsory plant health checks.
- There are Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) set for mangos that are exported to the EU. The relevant MRLs for avocados must be checked. Be aware that large retailers, for example from Germany, often have stricter MRLs than specified by EU legislation.
- The EU food safety policy has set maximum levels for certain contaminants in specified products or product groups.
- The EU has set microbiological criteria for food borne micro-organisms, their toxins and metabolites
- GLOBALG.A.P. certification is the most commonly requested additional buyer requirement for fresh avocados. In Northern Europe it has become almost impossible to supply avocados without GLOBALGAP certification. Other food safety management systems that can be required include BRC, IFS, FSSC22000 and SQF.

How to Find Buyers in the EU?

- Trade Fair: You can search and find potential buyers in the EU via several sources, such as: Major trade fairs Fruit Logistica in Berlin, Germany and Fruit Attraction in Madrid, Spain.
- Member lists of associations: Freshfel, the European Fresh Produce Association

Contact:

Myanmar-EU Trade Helpdesk:
Ministry of Commerce
Myanmar Trade Centre
No. 228-240 Strand Road
Yangon, Myanmar
Email: mmeu.tradehelpdesk@gmail.com