

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Greece

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Stone Fruit Annual 2014

Report Categories:

Stone Fruit

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Report Highlights:

Greece is the third largest producer of peaches in the EU-28, after Italy and Spain. Greece's MY 2014/15 peach and nectarine production is forecast to surge by 30 percent—after last year's production drop— thanks to favorable weather conditions. As reported by the Greek industry, the Russian food embargo dealt a devastating blow to the country's agricultural economy, leaving approximately 250 truckloads of peaches and nectarines either rotted or sold at knockdown prices to buyers in countries on the way back.

GREECE

I. PEACHES AND NECTARINES

Table 1: Production, Supply, and Demand (MT)

Peaches and Nectarines	2012	2013	2014
	Estimates 2012/2013	Estimates 2013/2014	Forecast 2014/2015
	Post Data	Post Data	Post Data
Area Production	39,300	44,100	44,100
Production	680,210	577,000	750,000
For Processing	440,000	210,000	444,000
Losses & Withdraws	20,000	20,000	20,000

Sources: Greek industry; GTA (Global Trade Atlas)

PRODUCTION

Greece is the third largest producer of peaches in the EU-28, after Italy and Spain. Greek farms are typically four to five hectares, much smaller than the average size in either the EU or the United States. According to industry estimates, there are approximately 44,100 hectares currently cultivated for peaches and nectarines. The main producing areas include six territories (Imathia, Pella, Pieria, Kozani, Larissa, and Kilkis) of Central Macedonia and Thessaly, located in northern Greece. The peach production area is located in an active hail belt that stretches from the Iberian Peninsula to northern Greece. Most of the crop is harvested in June and July.

Greece's MY 2014/15 peach and nectarine production is forecast to surge by 30 percent—after last year's production drop— thanks to favorable weather conditions. Fresh peaches production is forecast to rise 37.7 percent (650,000 MT compared to 472,000 MT in 2013), while nectarines production is forecast to slightly decrease by 4.7 percent (100,000 MT compared to 105,000 MT in 2013). Greece's MY2014/15 cling peach crop is forecast to go back to MY2012/13 volumes (440,000 MT), thanks to favorable weather conditions.

CONSUMPTION

Greek nectarine production is destined mainly for the fresh market. Freestone peaches are used for fresh consumption, while clingstone varieties are predominantly used in processing.

TRADE

Greece is an important exporter of fresh peaches. In 2013, Greece exported 157,165 MT of fresh peaches and nectarines, mainly to Russia (46,746 MT), Ukraine (29,061 MT), Romania (18,125 MT), and Bulgaria (11,892 MT). In 2013, Greece imported 1,283 MT of fresh peaches and nectarines, mainly from Bulgaria (377 MT), Spain (248 MT), Germany (219 MT), and Russia (183 MT).

On August 7, 2014, Russia issued a decree banning certain food products from the EU-28 Member States, the United States, Australia, Canada, and Norway. The ban came into force immediately and is expected to be in place for one year. The list of banned agricultural products is extensive and includes fruits, vegetables, beef, fish, poultry, pork, dairy products, nuts, prepared meats, and certain prepared products.

As reported by the Greek industry, the Russian food embargo dealt a devastating blow to the country's agricultural economy, leaving approximately 250 truckloads of peaches and nectarines either rotted or sold at knockdown prices to buyers in countries on the way back. Incofruit-Hellas, the Greek fruit export association, says it is now seriously worried that oversupply will end up hitting the entire fresh produce market at a time when Greece desperately needs the money.

II. OTHER STONE FRUITS

CHERRIES

Table 2: Production, Supply and Demand (MT)

Cherries	2012	2013	2014
	Estimates 2012/2013	Estimates 2013/2014	Forecast 2014/2015
	Post Data	Post Data	Post Data
Area Production	11,030	10,400	10,000
Production	51,310	60,000	60,000
For Processing	2,560	3,000	3,000

Sources: Greek industry; GTA

PRODUCTION

Greece's MY 2014/15 cherry season is forecast to stay flat. Pella and Imathia are the main producing areas.

CONSUMPTION

Greek cherries production is mainly destined for the fresh market, with a small percentage processed into jams, spoon sweets, and the Vissinada, a traditional sour cherry concentrate mixed with iced water.

TRADE

In 2013, Greece exported 10,751 MT of cherries, mainly to Russia (2,875 MT), Bulgaria (1,841 MT), the Netherlands (1,351 MT), and Germany (1,044 MT).

Abbreviations and definitions used in this report:

MY Marketing year: June/May

Peaches/nectarines: HS Code 080930

Cherries: HS Code 080920

MT Metric ton = 1,000 kg

Ha Hectare; 1 ha = 2.471 acres