

Extra-EU trade in agricultural goods

Statistics Explained

*Data extracted in April 2025.
Planned update: May 2026.*

Highlights

" In 2024, EU exports of agricultural products accounted for 9.1% of the total EU trade in goods while imports accounted for 8.0%. "

" Between 2023 and 2024, EU exports of agricultural products grew by 2.8%, which was substantially less than imports (6.7%). "

" In 2024, the United Kingdom was the EU's largest export destination for agricultural products and the second largest origin of EU imports, behind Brazil. "

This article analyses data on trade in agricultural products, concentrating on exports and imports between the [European Union \(EU\)](#) and all countries outside the EU ([extra-EU](#)). In 2024, extra-EU [trade in agricultural products](#) accounted for 8.1% of the total extra-EU international trade in goods. The share of agricultural products in total exports (8.9%) was higher than in imports (7.2%). Data on trade in agricultural products is central for 2 important EU policies: the [Common Agricultural Policy \(CAP\)](#) and the common trade policy, which manages trade relations with non-EU countries.

This article is part of an [online publication](#) providing recent statistics on international trade in goods, covering information on the EU's main partners, main products traded, specific characteristics of trade as well as background information.

EU trade in agricultural products: surplus of € 46 billion

In 2024, the value of EU exports of agricultural goods to the EU rest of the world was € 234 [billion](#) (see Figure 1), while imports from the rest of the world were (€ 195 billion) resulting in a trade surplus of € 39 billion. In 2024, compared to 2023, EU exports of agricultural grew by 2.8% while imports grew by 6.7%. On a longer timescale, between 2014 and 2024, EU exports of agricultural had an average annual growth of 4.7% while imports grew by 4.8%.

Figure 1 In 2024, the EU share of agricultural products in total exports was 9.1%, up 0.9 [percentage points \(pp\)](#) compared with 2014 (see Figure 2) while imports reached 8.0%, up 0.8 pp. Since 2014, the share for exports has been higher than for imports. This difference was largest in 2022, when it reached 2.4 pp.

Figure 2 The EU exported 132 million tonnes of agricultural products in 2024, while it imported 158 million tonnes (see Figure 3). Between 2014 and 2024, the total trade volume had an average annual growth rate of 1.5%. Imports (2.2%) increased more than exports (0.7%).

Figure 3

Agricultural products: four groups

Agricultural products can be subdivided into four groups: animal products, vegetable products, fats and oils and foodstuffs (see Figures 4 and 5). In 2024, measured in value, the largest group in exports was foodstuffs (57%) followed by animal products (20%), vegetable products (18%) and fats and oils (5%). In imports, the largest group was vegetable products (38%) followed by foodstuffs (36%), animal products (18%) and fats and oils (8%).

Figure 4Figure 5Each of the categories discussed above can be subdivided into chapters (see Figure 6).

The animal products category consists of five chapters. In exports of animal products, the largest chapters were 'meat and edible meat offal' (36%, € 17 billion) and 'dairy produce; birds' eggs; natural honey; edible products of animal origin, not elsewhere specified or included' (42%, € 19 billion). In imports of animal products, the largest chapter was 'fish and crustaceans, molluscs and other aquatic invertebrates' (70%, € 24 billion).

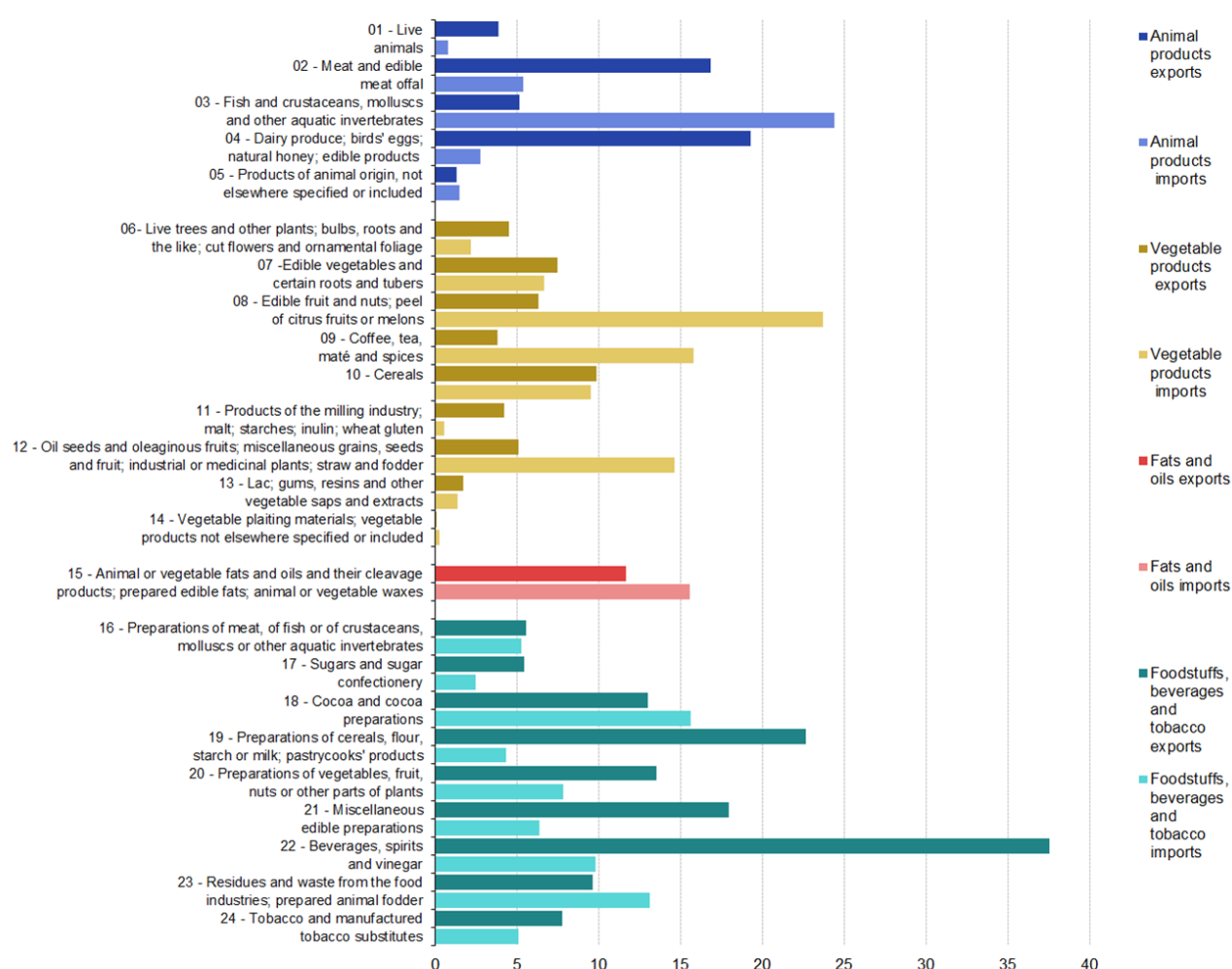
There are nine chapters in the vegetable products category. In exports of vegetable products, the largest chapter was 'cereals' (23%, € 10 billion). In imports of vegetable products, the largest chapter was 'edible fruit and nuts; peel of citrus fruits or melons' (32%, € 24 billion).

Fats and oils are a category on their own, exports were € 12 billion and imports € 16 billion.

Foodstuffs consist of various types of processed foods. The largest chapter in export of foodstuffs was 'beverages, spirits and vinegar' (28%, € 38 billion). In imports of foodstuffs, the largest chapter was 'cocoa and cocoa preparations' (22%, € 16 billion)

EU exports and imports of agricultural products by product category, 2024

(€ billion)



Source: Eurostat (online data code: DS-045409)

eurostat

Figure 6: EU exports and imports of agricultural products by product category, 2024 (€ billion) Source: Eurostat (ds-045409)

Agricultural products - developments between 2014 and 2024

In 2024, the value of exports of animal products (€ 46 billion) was higher than the value of imports (€ 35 billion) resulting in a trade surplus of € 12 billion (see figure 7). In 2024, compared with 2023 exports grew by 1.0% and imports grew by 0.1%. On a longer timescale, between 2014 and 2024, EU exports of animal products (3.5%) grew faster than imports (3.3%).

Figure 7 In 2024, the value of exports of vegetable products (€ 43 billion) was lower than the value of imports (€ 75 billion) resulting in a trade deficit of € 32 billion (see figure 8). In 2024, compared with 2023 exports fell by 4.5% while imports grew by 4.4%. On a longer timescale, between 2014 and 2024, EU imports of vegetable products (5.5%) grew faster than exports (3.1%).

Figure 8 In 2024, the value of exports of fats and oils (€ 12 billion) was lower than the value of imports (€ 16 billion) resulting in a trade deficit of € 4 billion (see figure 9). In 2024, compared with 2023 exports grew by 11.4% and imports grew by 5.5%. On a longer timescale, between 2014 and 2024, EU exports of fats and oils (7.8%) grew

faster than imports (6.1%).

Figure 9 In 2024, the value of exports of foodstuffs, beverages and tobacco (€ 133 billion) was higher than the value of imports (€ 70 billion) resulting in a trade surplus of € 63 billion (see figure 10). In 2024, compared with 2023 exports grew by 5.3% and imports grew by 13.3%. On a longer timescale, between 2014 and 2024, EU exports of foodstuffs, beverages and tobacco (5.5%) grew faster than imports (4.7%).

Figure 10

Main trading partners for agricultural products

In 2024, the United Kingdom was the EU's largest export destination (€ 54.0 billion, 23%) of agricultural products and the second largest origin of EU imports (€ 16.6 billion, 9%), behind Brazil (€ 17.1 billion, 9%) - see Figures 11 and 12.

Figure 11 Figure 12 In 2024, the United Kingdom (€ 10.6 billion, 23%) was the EU's largest export destinations for animal products, while Norway (€ 8.2 billion, 24%) was the largest origin of EU imports, mainly due to imports of fish products (see Figures 13 and 14).

Figure 13 Figure 14 In 2024, the United Kingdom (€ 9.9 billion, 23%) was the EU's largest export destination for vegetable products, while Brazil (€ 9.2 billion, 12%) was the largest origin of EU imports (see Figures 15 and 16).

Figure 15 Figure 16 In 2024, the United States (€ 2.7 billion, 24%) was the EU's largest export destination for fats and oils, while Ukraine (€ 3.1 billion, 20%) was the largest origin of EU imports (see Figures 17 and 18).

Figure 17 Figure 18 In 2024, the United Kingdom was both the EU's largest export destination (€ 31.6 billion, 24%) and the largest import origin (€ 9.8 billion, 14%) of foodstuffs, beverages and tobacco (see Figures 19 and 20).

Figure 19 Figure 20

Source data for tables and graphs

[Extra-EU trade in agricultural goods Excel file](#)

Data sources

EU data comes from [Eurostat's COMEXT](#) database. COMEXT is the Eurostat reference database for international trade in goods. It provides access not only to both recent and historical data from the [EU Member States](#) but also to statistics of a significant number of non-EU countries. International trade aggregated and detailed statistics disseminated from Eurostat website are compiled from COMEXT data according to a monthly process. Because COMEXT is updated on a daily basis, data published on the website may differ from data stored in COMEXT in case of recent revisions.

In this article, agricultural products are classified according to the sub-headings of the [Combined Nomenclature \(CN\)](#), based on the international classification known as the [Harmonised commodity description and coding system \(HS\)](#) administered by the [World Customs Organisation](#). The 24 chapters (2-digit codes) of agricultural products in the CN nomenclature are grouped into 3 major types: animal, vegetable and foodstuff products. Chapter 15 (animal or vegetable fats and oils and their cleavage products; prepared edible fats; animal or vegetable waxes) is included in vegetables.

EU data are compiled according to community guidelines and may, therefore, differ from national data published by Member States. Statistics on extra-EU trade are calculated as the sum of trade of each of the 27 EU Member

States with countries outside the EU. In other words, the EU is considered as a single trading entity and trade flows are measured into and out of the area, but not within it.

As of January 2021 onwards, data on trade with the United Kingdom is based on a mixed concept. In application of the Withdrawal Agreement Protocol on Ireland / Northern Ireland, for trade with Northern Ireland the statistical concepts applicable are the same as those for trade between Member States while for trade with the United Kingdom (excluding Northern Ireland) the same statistical concepts are applicable as for trade with any other extra-EU partner country. For these reasons, data on trade with the United Kingdom are not fully comparable with data on trade with other extra-EU trade partners, and for reference periods before and after the end of 2020.

Classifications

In international trade statistics, several classifications are used. Apart from the harmonised commodity description and coding system (HS), managed by the World Customs Organisation, data on trade is also available in the United Nations' Standard International Trade Classification ([SITC](#) revision 4) and in the Broad Economic Categories (BEC) classification, the latter using end-use categories more adapted to economic analysis.

Unit of measure

Trade values are expressed in millions (106) or in billions (109) of euros. They correspond to the statistical value, i.e. to the amount which would be invoiced in case of sale or purchase at the national border of the reporting country. It is called a [FOB](#) value (free on board) for exports and a [CIF](#) value (cost, insurance, freight) for imports.

Context

The EU is the largest partner in international trade of agricultural products. While the EU imports mostly simple unprocessed agricultural goods, exports from the European Union are principally processed food products.

Data on international trade in agriculture products is used for two of the common EU policies: the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and the common trade policy which manages trade relations with non-EU countries. These are major policy areas of the European Union on which decisions are taken at Community level.

Statistics on international trade in agricultural commodities are fundamental in the evaluation and understanding of problems related to several political agendas, such as trade negotiations, food security, cooperation and aid towards developing countries and global sustainability.

View this article online at http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Extra-EU_trade_in_agricultural_goods

Explore further

Other articles

- [International trade in goods - other articles](#)
- [Agriculture - other articles](#)

Database

[International trade in goods - database](#)

Thematic section

[International trade in goods - dedicated section](#)

Methodology

[International trade in goods - methodology](#)

External links

- [European Commission - DG Trade](#)

Legislation

- [International trade in goods - legislation](#)

Visualisation

- [International trade in goods - visualisations](#)