

The European market potential for dried ginger

Last updated:
16 March 2021

Europe is an interesting and growing market for exporters of dried ginger. The demand is expected to grow in the coming years and prices are slowly rising. The most interesting markets are the top three markets in Europe: the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Germany. These countries import huge volumes of ginger from developing countries, which makes them good focus markets. In addition, also Italy and Spain could be interesting for reasons of size and direct imports coming from Developing Countries.

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1. Product description

Ginger is the irregularly shaped root (rhizome) of the ginger plant (*Zingiber officinale*). The plant is cultivated in the tropics. The main producing countries are India and China, but ginger production also takes place in Pakistan, Nigeria, Peru, Vietnam, Burkina Faso, Thailand, Nepal and Myanmar. The total worldwide production of ginger is larger than 2 million tonnes per year.

Ginger is mainly used in:

- oriental and Indian cooking;
- bakery and confectionery products;
- liqueurs.

This fact sheet focuses only on dried ginger (both whole and crushed/ground). Fresh ginger is not included in this fact sheet, since it belongs to the fresh fruit and vegetables market (note that most fresh ginger is partly dehydrated to 70% moisture content before shipping). It is included in our studies of [Fresh fruit and vegetables](#). The markets for fresh and dried ginger are closely connected, however, and fresh ginger exports are even larger than dried. Drying of fresh ginger generally takes place in the countries of origin.

Within the Combined Nomenclature (CN) classification, dried ginger is covered under the following codes.

0910.1100	Ginger neither crushed nor ground
0910.1200	Ginger crushed or ground

Note: Fresh ginger is also traded under code 0910.1100, which means that the statistics presented in this study also incorporate fresh ginger.

2. What makes Europe an interesting market for dried ginger?

Growing imports of dried ginger in Europe

The worldwide consumption of ginger is forecast to continue to grow in the next 3-5 years. This is mainly because ginger is considered to be a healthy ingredient (see "Search for healthier ingredients"). Especially in the winter of 2016-2017, the European demand for ginger peaked due to the cold weather. Consumers buy ginger during the winter mainly because they use it to relief a sore throat or flu symptoms. Last but not least, as

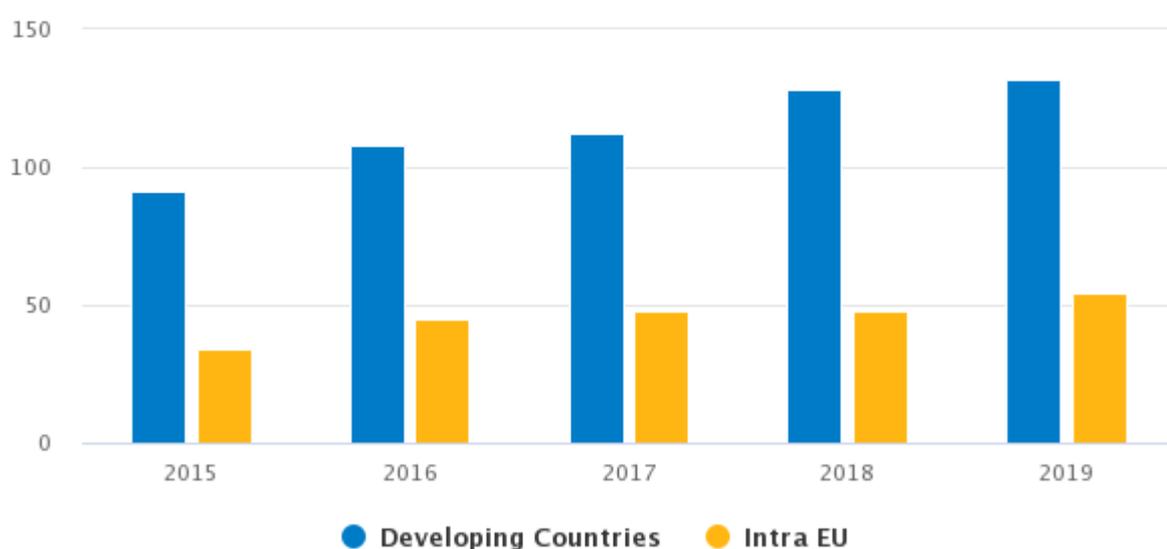
the Covid-19 crisis is expected to linger, demand for natural relief products is expected to continue to grow.

The growing ginger market in Europe provides opportunities for you as an exporter. Buyers are increasingly willing to invest in long-term relationships or collaborations with their suppliers to ensure sufficient supplies. In 2019, European direct imports of dried ginger from developing countries reached 132 thousand tonnes. Since 2014, the import volume has increased by 10% annually. The direct import value increased in that same period by 7.9% annually, reaching €182 million in 2019.

In 2019, more than 70% of the total European imports were sourced directly from developing countries. European re-exports accounted for 29% of total imports in 2019.

Figure 1: European dried ginger imports from developing countries and other European countries (re-exports)

in 1000 tonnes



Source: Eurostat

Tips:

Learn more about the European ginger market, as it has grown considerably in the past years and is expected to grow further. Carefully read all the information presented in the factsheet and translate it into an action plan for your company.

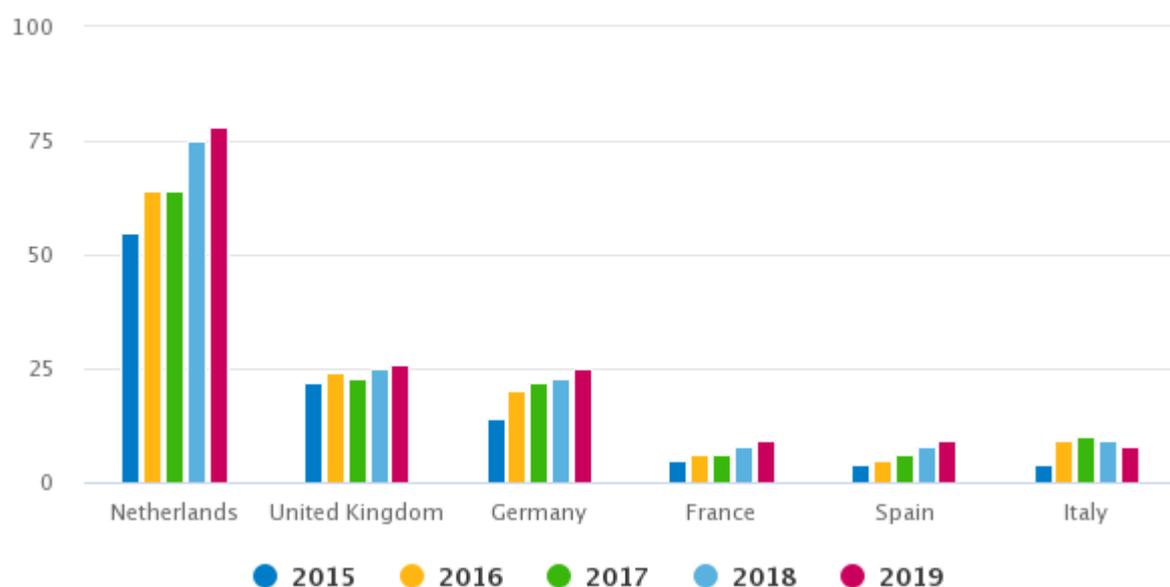
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3. Which European countries offer most opportunities for dried ginger?

The Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Germany are together the top six most interesting markets for dried ginger in Europe. The Netherlands' leading position is only justifiable because the country is an important European trade hub for spices, while the UK and Germany are simply the two largest markets in Europe for dried ginger. The UK is traditionally the largest market in Europe because the large Asian diaspora living in the country typically consume a lot of ginger. In Germany, but also Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and France, the

market has grown considerably in recent years because of the increasing popularity of ginger as a healthy ingredient in dishes and other food or drinks, such as fruit and nuts bars, or tea. Although mentioned last, tea is certainly not the smallest market for ginger. On the contrary, in recent years ginger tea has become very popular across Europe. While the fresh ginger market benefited from this trend tremendously, growth of the dried ginger market can also be partly attributed to the growing use of ginger tea.

Figure 2: Leading European importers of dried ginger
in 1000 tonnes



Source: Eurostat

Additionally, it is worthwhile to mention that two of the “larger” small importers are increasingly importing ginger directly from developing countries over the period under review: Czech Republic (+16%) and Sweden (+9.2%). These countries might also be interesting for you.

Netherlands

The Netherlands is the largest importer and trader of ginger in Europe by a long way. Its imports have increased in volume by 5.6% annually between 2015 and 2019. In 2019, 97% of Dutch imports were sourced directly from developing countries. The country is the leading trade hub for spices in Europe and therefore also the leading intra-European supplier of ginger within Europe.

The Netherlands has a particular high share of imports coming from Peru. In 2019, the Netherlands imported 7.5 thousand tonnes of ginger from Peru, which was equivalent to almost 75% of Peruvian ginger exports to Europe. In 2019, imports from China dominated with 53 thousand tonnes, while Brazil surpassed Peru, becoming the second-largest supplier of ginger to the Netherlands with 10.8 thousand tonnes. Nigeria and Thailand exported 2.4 thousand and 1.4 thousand tonnes to the Netherlands respectively. Imports to the Netherlands from within Europe are small, with Belgium at 750 tonnes and Germany and France at between 200 and 700 tonnes per year.

The Netherlands has a tradition of spice trade dating back hundreds of years, which is in place until today. For instance, the Dutch 2019 exports of ginger reached 61 thousand tonnes, which is equivalent to almost 80% of the country’s import volume. Leading destinations include all European countries, with Germany taking the first position (15 thousand tonnes, 25% share), followed by France (5.2 thousand tonnes), Poland (4.6 thousand tonnes), Italy (3.7 thousand tonnes), Sweden (3.5 thousand tonnes), and Belgium, United Kingdom, Czech Republic, Austria and Denmark (between 2.3 and 2.9 thousand tonnes each).

The [Dutch Spice Association](#) strongly supports sustainable sourcing of spices in the Netherlands. Among other incentives, the association offers a toolkit for their members to help them implement [social responsibility initiatives](#) in their supply chain, which includes a special module about child labour.

United Kingdom

The United Kingdom sources more than 90% of its ginger from developing countries, making it an interesting market for ginger exporters. The country is also the second-largest importer of ginger in Europe, probably because of the relatively substantial population of Asian and South Asian descent, which is responsible for the UK having the highest per capita consumption of ginger in Europe.

Most of the ginger imported into the UK comes directly from China (81%), while second and third-place Netherlands and India contribute 4% and 3% respectively. Germany is also an important intra-European supplier of ginger to the UK (1.7% share). In addition to China and India, other developing countries supplying ginger to the UK include Pakistan (310 tonnes in 2019), Nigeria (320 tonnes), Vietnam (240 tonnes), and Uganda (110 tonnes).

The UK's ginger export volume (1,011 tonnes in 2019) is rather limited when compared to the import volume, making up less than 2.7% of the import volume. The two leading export destinations are Ireland (282 tonnes) and Germany (225 tonnes). Other destinations receive relatively small quantities.

The export volume has seen a drop since 2018. The annual export volume was 1,200–1,500 tonnes per year in the 2015–2017 period, but dropped to 1,166 tonnes in 2018, and again to 1,011 tonnes in 2019. Brexit is assumed to be the main reason for this development.

Germany

Germany is Europe's third-largest importer of ginger. Germany's total import volume increased by 16% annually since 2014, to a volume of 25.4 thousand tonnes in 2019, half of which comes directly from developing countries.

Almost 45% (or 11 thousand tonnes) of Germany's ginger import volume comes from the Netherlands, but China also has a relatively large share (31%) of it. Nigeria is the third-largest supplier of ginger to Germany with a 9% share of Germany's imports. Much smaller volumes come from a few other EU countries (United Kingdom and Spain with approximately 600 tonnes each), India (324 tonnes), Brazil (278 tonnes), and Costa Rica (267 tonnes). Smaller volumes ranging from 87 to 150 tonnes come from a range of developing countries, such as Thailand, Burkina Faso, and Vietnam. Other countries, such as Madagascar, Myanmar and Indonesia also supply small volumes to Germany, indicating that Germany as a very high-potential market for countries that are small ginger exporters.

Only 9% of the German import volume is re-exported, predominantly to European countries. Germany's neighbouring countries are the leading destinations: Poland (22% share), Netherlands (13%), Czech Republic (9%), United Kingdom (8%), and Austria (7%) together receive 60% of Germany's ginger exports.

German consumers are generally not very loyal to brands, instead preferring to buy the cheapest products or products with the best price-quality relationship. This is also reflected in the above-average number of discount retail chains in Germany. While German supermarket shelves display several brands of herbs and spices, several of these brands, such as Fuchs, Ostmann, and Ubena, are owned by the clear market leader, [Fuchs](#), which has a 75% market share. Fuchs is not only the largest German spice producer, but it is also one of the more innovative companies in the segment. For example, the company recently launched 'limited edition' spice ranges, its own online shop, and it also offers seasonal thematic products, such as the Advent Calendar spices series.

Picture 1 shows an example of a herbs and spices shelf in one of Germany's mainstream supermarkets, which are relatively large (6–10 m long) and offer a huge variety of products, packages, brands, etc., compared to

other European countries, such as the Netherlands. Note that the product information on the package also includes the country of origin.

Picture 1: Herbs and spices shelf in a German mainstream supermarket



France, Spain and Italy

France, Spain and Italy are medium-sized importers of ginger in Europe. The shares of imports directly from developing countries to those countries are 32%, 80%, and 72% respectively. The highest growth in recent direct imports among these countries was registered in Spain (+23% per year), followed by France (+15%), and Italy (+2.8%). This data suggests that buyers in France seem to be a bit reluctant to import directly from developing countries until now, although direct imports show an upward trend. Overall, all three countries can be interesting target countries.

Spain's import volume of 8.6 thousand tonnes in 2019 was more than double the volume of 2015 (3.6 thousand tonnes). This strong growth is related to the market recovery since 2014, after several years of crisis that impacted the Spanish economy. In that period, direct supplies from China grew sharply (from 2.3 to 4.5 thousand tonnes), while the volume from Peru was relatively stable until 2018, getting a boost in 2019 (from 500 tonnes in 2018 to 1,500 tonnes in 2019). Other substantial direct supplies came from Brazil (473 tonnes) and Nigeria (327 tonnes). Intra-European supply to Spain is dominated by the Netherlands (1,100 tonnes in 2019). Germany is far behind (170 tonnes) and the same goes for Belgium (96 tonnes).

Spain's export volume was 4 thousand tonnes in 2019 (equivalent to 33% of the import volume). The range of destinations changed over the 2015–2019 period, but on average the top destinations were France, Portugal, Germany, Morocco, Netherlands, and Italy.

Italy shows some similarities with Spain, although Italian imports of ginger have remained relatively stable since

2016. This stability is also reflected in the 2.8% average annual growth rate of ginger import volumes. Italy's main ginger supplier is China: 2 thousand tonnes in 2015 growing to 4.6 thousand tonnes in 2019. Brazil's exports to Italy also more than doubled in the same period, from 200 to 560 tonnes, while Peru also started to develop exports to Italy, with volumes of 386, 334 and 283 tonnes in 2017, 2018 and 2019 respectively.

Several other production countries export ginger to Italy, including Thailand (114 tonnes in 2019), India (68 tonnes), and Nigeria (43 tonnes).

With 1.5 thousand tonnes, Italy's exports are small compared to its import volume of 10.8 thousand tonnes. The leading destinations for Italian ginger exports are Germany and the Netherlands (334 and 328 tonnes respectively, 22% and 21% shares), followed by France (276 tonnes, 18%), and the United Kingdom (100 tonnes, an 8% share).

France is an important herbs and spices market in Europe, whose ginger imports reached 10.7 thousand tonnes in 2019. Only one-third of France's total ginger imports comes directly from developing countries and most of it comes from China (2.2 thousand tonnes). While China's exports to France grew 10% per year from 2015 to 2019, Nigeria also had a striking export performance to France, growing 25% per year since 2015 to reach 200 tonnes in 2019.

Tips:

Remember that fresh ginger is also traded under code 0910.1100, which means that the statistics presented in this section also incorporate fresh ginger. Most importantly, virtually all ginger from Brazil is fresh ginger, as is a large share of Peruvian exports, and at least half of all Chinese ginger exports.

Check the latest developments on [ITC Trademap](#) or the [Indian Spices Board](#). ITC Trademap offers details of trade volumes and values, per year and per importing and exporting country. The Indian Spices Board's data predominantly covers details of Indian production and exports.

Target leading Western European countries importing ginger from developing countries. The most interesting are the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Germany, while Italy and Spain could also be interesting.

Consider also targeting smaller and fast-growing importers of ginger. In the 2015-2019 period, Czech Republic and Sweden increasingly imported directly from developing countries, which suggests that direct exports to markets outside the large ones can certainly be developed. Although import volumes in these smaller markets are naturally smaller as well, they may still be interesting, in particular for small to medium-sized exporters.

4. What trends offer opportunities on the European dried ginger market?

Search for healthier ingredients

Consumers searching for healthier ingredients stimulate the growing demand for dried ginger on the European market. This is not a surprise, as healthy living is one of the most important trends in Europe. Consumers perceive food ingredients such as salt, sugar and synthetic additives as unhealthy. Other products that also add flavour, such as spices and herbs, increasingly replace these products. This trend is not only visible in food, but also cleaning products and cosmetics are increasingly based on spices and herbs, fruits and plants.

For this reason, consumers increasingly use dried ginger for its promoted beneficial health effects. For example,

ginger consumption is a popular topic in blogs and health magazines, which often mention it helps with [digestive problems](#), [the flu](#) and [stress](#). Due to its growing popularity, ginger is also increasingly used as a health supplement as well as in other food products, such as tea, beer and snacks. Examples include:

- [Ginger root health supplement](#) at Holland & Barrett (United Kingdom and Netherlands);
- [Organic ginger tea](#) from Alnatura, at Rewe (Germany, see also picture 2);
- [Ginger Nuts \(biscuits\)](#) at Morrisons (United Kingdom).

Picture 2: Organic ginger tea of the Alnatura brand ginger from Peru



Ginger is also increasingly used in aromatherapy and wellness, such as essential or massage oils and diffusers. Examples include:

- [Ginger Pure Essential Oil](#) at Holland and Barrett (United Kingdom)
- [Scent sticks - Ginger and Lime](#) at Bol.com (Netherlands)

In 2019 and 2020, product introductions with ginger have often taken place in the cold juices and beverages shelf, including ginger shots, syrups, etc. One example is shown in picture 3.

Picture 3: [Ginger and curcuma shot with Demeter certification](#)



Source: Voelkel

Tips:

- Focus on the application of your dried ginger in healthy product ranges, such as herbal teas.
- Promote your product as healthy ingredient and stress the benefits of your ginger in people's diets.

Growing popularity of ethnic cuisines

The demand for ethnic food in Europe is rising. Since dried ginger is an important ingredient in Asian dishes, it is becoming increasingly popular on the European market.

Examples of Asian recipes that are popular in Europe and that contain ginger are:

- Hot meals, such as ginger and hoisin glazed pork and [ginger beef stir-fry](#);
- Snacks, such as [ginger cookies](#), often consumed during the Chinese New Year.

Consumers who like to discover new tastes, new cuisines, exotic products, etc., further drive this development, which matches some other developments, including:

- Growth of global relations and communications. In the past decade, more Europeans travelled to Asian destinations every year, and more foreigners came to Europe every year.
- Growing consumption of so-called 'superfoods'. Superfoods are ingredients with a particular benefit and ginger is one of them.
- Ongoing popularity of TV cuisine programs or social media influencers like Master Chef encouraging cooking at home and experimenting with different products.
- The increase of Asian (managed) restaurants Europe, which results in an increase of Europeans becoming

acquainted with Asian dishes and flavours.

Because of all these developments, ginger has become a popular ingredient in the kitchen, in product development, and a [popular conversation topic](#).

Sustainability is on the rise

Sustainable sourcing is an important trend in Europe, especially in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Germany. As a supplier, you will be increasingly faced with sustainability requirements from your buyer. Many buyers see sustainable sourcing as a must. By certifying your ginger, you can proof your compliance with sustainable sourcing. Certified ginger is still a niche market, but still, ginger, curcuma and pepper are among the most traded organic certified spices. Overall, certified ginger represents only a small section of the total European market for ginger (smaller than 5%). In addition, most buyers in the mainstream market are unwilling to pay more for certified products. As a result, it is important to discuss the opportunities for certification with your buyers before seeking certification.

Certification does give you a competitive edge. For dried ginger, the main certifications are Organic and Fairtrade. For organic certified ginger, the most interesting markets are Germany and Switzerland, since these countries are leading organic food markets in Europe. For Fairtrade certified ginger, the most interesting market is the United Kingdom, as that is the main European market for Fairtrade products. However, ginger represents only less than 5% of all spices and herbs certified by Fairtrade International in Europe (pepper is the leading spice).

One example of an exporter that has become very successful in exporting organic and fairtrade certified ginger to Europe, is the Peruvian cooperative [La Campina](#). Take a look at their website. In the menu of webpage, you can already see that people are the most important for them, as “People” comes in the first place, and only then their products.

Tips:

Have a look at the website of [FoodNavigator](#) to learn more about food health trends and other developments in the food sector.

Do not make any health claims regarding the consumption of ginger if you cannot use reliable and scientific sources. [European legislation](#) is very strict in terms of health claims on consumer packaging.

See our study of [Trends for spices and herbs](#) for more information on trends on the European market for spices and herbs.

This study has been carried out on behalf of CBI by [Autentika Global](#).

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