

The European market potential for dried ginger

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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-3 markets in Europe: the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Germany. These countries import huge volumes of ginger from developing countries, which makes them ideal target markets. Italy and Spain could be interesting to exporters due to their sizeable markets and high share of direct imports from ginger-producing countries.

Contents of this page

1. [Product description](#)
2. [What makes Europe an interesting market for dried ginger?](#)
3. [Which European countries offer most opportunities for dried ginger?](#)
4. [What trends offer opportunities or pose threats on the European dried ginger market?](#)

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 China and India. Nigeria, Thailand, Peru, Brazil and Myanmar are smaller ginger producers. Around 3 million tonnes of ginger are produced worldwide each 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. It is included in our studies of [Fresh fruit and vegetables](#). Note that most fresh ginger is partly dehydrated to 70% moisture content before shipping, so drying of fresh ginger generally takes place in the countries of origin. The markets for fresh and dried ginger are closely connected and more fresh ginger than dried ginger is exported.

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 that fresh ginger is also traded under the 09.10.1100 code. This means that the statistics presented in this study incorporate fresh ginger. Where this study refers to 'Europe', this includes the 27 member states of the European Union, plus the United Kingdom, Switzerland and Norway.

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 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 relieve a sore throat or flu symptoms. As COVID-19 continues to affect Europe, the demand for ginger as an immunity-boosting ingredient remains high.

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 and consistent supplies. In 2021, direct imports of dried ginger from developing countries to Europe totalled 167 thousand tonnes. Since 2017, the import volume has increased by 8.8% annually. In that same period, the (direct) import values increased by 16% annually, totalling €359 million in 2021.

In 2021, around 83% of total ginger imports to Europe were sourced directly from developing countries. The remaining share (17%) was sourced via other European countries, mainly the Netherlands, as a result of re-exports.

Tips:

Remember that fresh ginger is also traded under the same code, 09.10.1100. This means that the statistics presented in this section also incorporate fresh ginger. The most important thing to take into account is that virtually all ginger from Brazil, a large share of Peruvian exports, and a substantial (at least 50%) part of Chinese ginger exports are fresh ginger.

Use the [ITC Trademap](#) to compile and explore your own statistics for ginger.

Read more about the general developments in the spices and herbs market in our study '[What is the demand for spices and herbs on the European market?](#)'

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

The Netherlands, Germany and the United Kingdom form the top-3 markets considered to be most interesting for dried ginger in Europe, as seen in Figure 2. The Netherlands ranks first only because the country is an important European trade hub for spices, while Germany and the UK are the two largest consumer markets in Europe for dried ginger. The UK is traditionally the largest market in Europe because of the large Asian diaspora living in the country, whose main dishes use high amounts of ginger.

In Germany, but also in 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 foods or drinks, such as fruit and nut bars, as well as tea/herbal infusions. In recent years, ginger tea has become very popular across Europe. While the fresh ginger market benefited from this trend tremendously, also the dried ginger market growth can be partly attributed to the growing use of ginger as an ingredient in tea mixes and herbal infusions.

Among other small importers, Eastern European suppliers Poland and Czechia could also be of interest to ginger suppliers in developing countries. Poland accounted for 3.4% of total European imports in 2021, and had a 64% share of ginger imports coming from developing countries. Polish imports have grown at a strong annual rate of 13% since 2017. Czechia experienced a decrease in imports in this period, but sourced 82% of its ginger

supplies directly from developing countries in 2021. The country accounts for over 1.0% of total European imports.

The Netherlands: large ginger trader and European hub

The Netherlands is the largest importer and trader of ginger in Europe by far. Its imports increased in volume by 13% annually between 2017 and 2021. In 2021, more than 96% of Dutch imports came 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.

In 2020, China was the main supplier to the Netherlands, at 45 thousand tonnes. Imports from Brazil increased compared to 2019 (14 thousand tonnes, compared to 8.8 thousand tonnes in 2020). The Netherlands has a particularly high share of imports coming from Peru, its third-largest supplier in 2021. In 2019, the Netherlands imported 6.0 thousand tonnes of ginger from Peru, and in 2021 this volume more than doubled to 13 thousand tonnes. The Netherlands is the destination for roughly 70% of Peru's total ginger exports to Europe.

Both Thailand and Nigeria saw their imports to the Netherlands decrease between 2017 and 2021, supplying similar volumes to the Dutch market in 2021 – Thailand at 658 tonnes and Nigeria at 657 tonnes.

The Netherlands has a tradition of spice trade, dating back hundreds of years. This tradition continues to this day, with Dutch exports of ginger totalling nearly 60 thousand tonnes in 2021. This amounts to almost 77% of the total import volumes of ginger to the Netherlands. The main destinations are all European countries with Germany ranking first (13 thousand tonnes and a share of 22% of total Dutch imports), followed by Poland (9.2 thousand tonnes), France (4.8 thousand tonnes), Belgium (3.7 thousand tonnes) and Sweden (2.5 thousand tonnes).

[Silvo](#) (part of the McCormick group), offering ground ginger, [Verstegen](#) and [Euroma](#) are among the top spice companies in the Dutch market. These companies import spices directly from developing-country suppliers. Important Dutch spice traders include [Catz](#) and [Nedspice](#); smaller traders also distributing ginger are companies like [H.J. Albring](#) and [Keyzer & Company](#). Even if the Netherlands is not your main end market, it is relevant to explore the country as a point of entry to your ginger supplies to Europe. [A full list of Dutch companies](#) trading spices is available on the website of the Dutch Spice Association. This association also supports sustainable sourcing of spices. Among other things, [the Dutch Spice Association offers a toolkit](#) for their members that helps them implement [social responsibility guidelines](#) in their supply chain. The toolkit includes a special module about child labour.

Germany: European hub and large consumer market

Germany is the second-largest importer of ginger. Its total import volume has increased by 13% annually since 2017, to a volume of 35 thousand tonnes in 2021. Around 87% of Germany's imported ginger comes directly from developing countries.

German imports originating from China are relatively large, accounting for nearly half of total imports. Peru is the third-largest supplier to Germany, accounting for 20% of Germany's imports. Peru has surpassed Nigeria, which was the third-largest supplier to Germany in 2019. But Nigeria also increased its share of total German imports, having grown at a strong annual rate of 20% between 2017 and 2021. In 2021, Nigeria accounted for 12% of German imports at 4.1 thousand tonnes.

Much smaller volumes come from a few other European countries (Spain and the United Kingdom with around 800 tonnes each), India (350 tonnes), France (220 tonnes), Thailand (80 tonnes), and Indonesia (70 tonnes). With other countries like Vietnam, Costa Rica, Burkina Faso and Nepal also supplying small volumes to Germany, the country can be considered a promising market for small ginger exporters.

The port of Hamburg is an important hub for spice trade, and an entry point into the German food and beverage industry. This places several relevant spice traders in the country, connecting suppliers to several end-using industries like [Worlée](#) and [AKO The Spice Company](#).

German consumers are not very loyal to brands; instead many prefer to buy the cheapest or best price/quality product. This is also reflected by the above-average number of discount retail formulas in Germany. Despite this fact, the German supermarket shelves show quite a few spices and herbs brands, but several of them (Fuchs, [Ostmann](#), [Ubenä](#)) are owned by the same company and the clear market leader, [Fuchs](#) (website in German), with a 75% market share.

While being the largest spices manufacturer, Fuchs is also one of the more innovative companies in the segment. For example, the company recently launched 'limited edition' spice ranges, an own online shop and also offers seasonal thematic items such as the spices Advent Calendar.

Germany is a highly important market for sustainable and niche products, and is worth exploring if you are a supplier of certified and high-quality ginger. For example, the organic food market in Germany is the largest in Europe. As a result, there are several spice companies handling organic-certified ginger and mixes, including ginger, active in the German market. A few examples are [Herbaria](#), [Hartkorn](#) and [Grünberg](#). Specialised shops offering high-quality spices, like [Gewürze der Welt](#), are also common in Germany.

The United Kingdom: important spice and herbal infusion market

Since the United Kingdom sources around 95% of its ginger from developing countries, it is an interesting market for exporters in producing countries. The country is also the third-largest importer of ginger in Europe, which is probably the result of the relatively substantial population of Asian descent (Indians, Chinese).

Around 77% of the UK's ginger supplies are imported directly from China. Brazil is the second-largest supplier, following China at a considerable distance and accounting for 5.5% of the UK's imports. Other smaller suppliers from developing countries in 2021 were India (4.3%) and Nigeria (1.6%). The UK also sources some of its ginger supplies through other European countries, mainly the Netherlands (2.0% of total imports) and Germany (1.2%).

There are several spice companies in the UK offering ginger, such as [Schwartz](#) (part of McCormick), [British Pepper & Spice](#) and [Quay Ingredients](#). Most tea and herbal infusion companies also use ginger in their blends, like [Pukka Herbs](#) and [Twinings](#) – which [sources ginger from a variety of origins](#) that include Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Nepal, Vietnam, China and Indonesia.

Many UK importers also have ginger in their product assortment, offering a wide range of conventional spices that include ground ginger, like [Rye Spice Co](#) and [The Spice Company](#), or focusing on organic ginger, like [Organic Herb Trading](#). The UK organic market is among the largest in Europe, and its fair trade market is the largest in the region, making it a very promising market for certified ginger. One of the main UK spice companies in this segment is [Bart Ingredients Company](#). If you are an exporter of conventional or certified ginger, and are particularly targeting herbal infusion/tea and spice companies, the United Kingdom is an interesting market.

Spain: a dynamic spice-processing industry

Spain registered a significant share in European ginger imports in 2021, at 5.4% of total imports. The country had one of the strongest growth rates in the region since 2017, at an annual rate of 7.8%. Imports sourced directly in developing countries had an even stronger growth, at 8.2% between 2017 and 2021.

The main developing-country supplier to Spain is China, accounting for 45% of total Spanish imports. Imports from China remained stable between 2017 and 2021, at nearly 5.0 thousand tonnes. Peru, Spain's second-largest supplier in 2021, has experienced a strong increase in its supplies since 2017. It registered an annual growth of 64% between 2017 and 2021, and accounted for 24% of Spanish imports in 2021. Other substantial direct imports in 2021 came from Brazil (1,373 tonnes) and Nigeria (505 tonnes).

Intra-European imports to Spain came predominantly from the Netherlands (480 tonnes in 2021), which remained stable between 2017 and 2021.

Spain has an [association for spice processors and packers \(AEC\)](#) consisting of around 20 members targeting the retail and the food industry. The country has a very dynamic food industry, focusing strongly on formulations for food products, seasonings and spices. There are around 110 companies in Spain [specialised in the trade and manufacturing of spices](#). Some of the companies offering dried ginger are [Doscadesa](#), [Ceylan](#), [Carmencita](#) and [Lomar](#). If you are an exporter targeting the spice-processing segment, Spain and its dynamic industry might represent a promising destination.

France: a leading food and drink market

France is an important spices and herbs market in Europe, with ginger imports totalling nearly 9.0 thousand tonnes in 2021. In 2021, France accounted for 4.4% of total European imports, a large share of which (88%) is sourced directly from developing countries. China (45%), Brazil (20%), Peru (6.8%) and Nigeria (5.1%) are the main suppliers. China had a small annual decrease of nearly 1.0% between 2017 and 2021, but the other main developing-country suppliers all registered growth in this period.

France is a leading food and drink market in Europe, home to interesting and large spice companies that source directly from origin, like [Ducros](#) and [Cepasco](#). But France is also characterised by a large number of small and medium-sized companies, which makes the role of traders significant. The French market has large mainstream importers like [SOCO herb](#), and more specialised importers like [L'Arcadie](#) and [Comptoir des Épices](#). The diverse French market represents opportunities to a broad range of suppliers, whether you're offering lower or higher qualities and quantities.

Italy: a traditional spice market

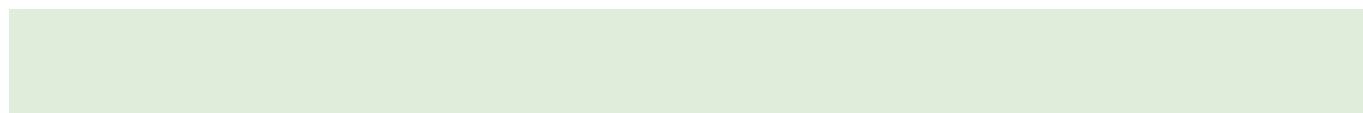
Italy shows some similarities with Spain. But where Spanish imports showed a strong growth (which is related to the market recovery after the several years of crisis that impacted the Spanish economy until 2014), Italian imports have decreased since 2017, at a rate of 11% per year.

Italy's main supplier is China, which accounted for over 30% of its ginger imports in 2021. But Chinese exports of ginger to Italy have decreased strongly since 2017, with an annual drop of 23%. At the same time, supplies from Brazil grew at a fast pace, registering an annual increase of 91% since 2017. In 2021, Brazil accounted for 14% of Italian imports. Peru also saw an increase in this period, registering an annual growth of 14% in Italian imports between 2017 and 2021.

Italy also imports part of its ginger supplies via other European countries, notably the Netherlands, which serves as a trade hub. In 2021, Italy's imports from the Netherlands accounted for 26% of its total imports, registering an annual decline of 4.5% since 2017.

[Cannamela](#) is among the most recognised and purchased spice brands in the Italian market, [offering ground ginger in its Gold line](#). The company sources ginger and other spices directly from processors in producing countries. Part of its herb and spice range comes from different Italian regions. Another well-known brand, also offering ground ginger, conventional and organic, is [La Drogheria](#). This traditional spice company was founded in 1880 and is now part of the McCormick group.

Italy is also home to traditional and established spice imports like YES Spices, which supplies different segments of the Italian market, including the retail and food industry. Its vast product portfolio [includes ginger root and powder](#). If you are a consolidated supplier, have consistent qualities and volumes of ginger, and have experience in the European market, the Italian market can offer specific opportunities.



Tips:

Conduct additional market research for more insight into the differences between the countries mentioned above. Use free statistical databases such as the [ITC Trade Map](#) or [Access2Markets](#).

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.

Visit trade fairs and/or check out their exhibitors' lists to identify interesting buyers in individual European countries. Examples include [Food Ingredients and Health Ingredients Europe](#), [Anuga](#), [SIAL](#), for food products and ingredients, and [Biofach](#) specifically for organic products and ingredients.

Consider also targeting smaller and fast-growing importers of ginger. Between 2016 and 2020, Austria, Czechia and Portugal increasingly imported directly from developing countries. This shows that it is certainly possible to export directly to the smaller markets. Although the import volumes of those markets are smaller, they may still be interesting, in particular for small to medium-sized exporters.

See the CBI study [Tips for finding buyers on the European spices and herbs market](#) for valuable information on how to approach European buyers successfully.

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

Search for healthier ingredients drives ginger demand in Europe

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 botanical ingredients like spices and herbs, fruits, and plants.

The perceived health benefits of ginger are described, amongst others, in blogs, vlogs and health magazines. These publications often mention that ginger consumption 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 are:

- [Ginger root health supplement](#) at Holland & Barrett (the United Kingdom and the Netherlands);
- [Organic ginger tea](#) from Alnatura, available at Alnatura and other retailers such as Rewe;
- [Ginger Nuts \(biscuits\)](#) at Morrisons (the United Kingdom).
- [Super food powders and shakes](#) from Your Super (Germany).

In addition, ginger is also increasingly used in aromatherapy and wellness, such as in hair care products, essential or massage oils and diffusers. Examples are:

- [Ginger Essential Oil](#) at Douglas (the Netherlands)
- [Scent sticks – Ginger and Lime](#) at Bol.com (the Netherlands)
- [Hair care](#) products from Herbal Essences (USA)

In the last three years, many new products containing ginger appeared on the cold juices/beverages shelf, including ginger shots and syrups. One example is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Ginger-curcuma shot with Demeter certification



Source: Voelkel

Tips:

Visit the websites of [Food Navigator](#) and [Food Ingredients First](#) 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. Refer to our study on [Entering the European market for dried ginger](#) for more information on these requirements.

Make sure to provide complete documentation and specifications of your ginger to European buyers. This information will allow them to assess the potential of your product in different applications. See the example of a [product specification sheet from the UK-based importer Infinity Foods Wholesale](#) to identify the type of data that can be useful to your potential buyers.

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 enjoy discovering new flavours, new cuisines, and exotic products, are also driving this development. This goes hand in hand with some other developments, such as:

- An increase in global relations and communications. In the past decade, more Europeans travelled to Asian destinations and more foreigners came to Europe each year. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, people travelled less in 2020. But consumers' desire for exotic flavours only grew, and people increasingly [searched for ingredients for that 'exotic effect' in cooking](#).
- Growing consumption of so-called 'superfoods'. Superfoods are functional ingredients with a particular benefit and ginger is considered to be one of them.
- Ongoing popularity of TV cuisine programmes 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.
- Growth in the multicultural population in Europe. In 2014, 20% of immigrants to Europe were of Asian descent, while [in 2020 this share increased to 23%](#).

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

Growing demand for organic certified spices and herbs

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. For example, UK-based Pukka Herbs has an extensive description of how it sources its various ingredients, including [ginger](#), in its [annual impact report](#).

Organic certification is one of the growing buyer requirements when it comes to sustainable sourcing, and often one of the baseline requirements. [The global organic spice market was worth €17 billion in 2021](#) and is estimated to reach a (retail) valuation of almost €20 billion by 2026. This amounts to an annual growth rate of 7.5% between 2021 and 2026. North America and Europe are the largest markets for organic spices. Within Europe, the growth rate of organic spice consumption is forecast to be particularly high in Sweden and the UK (more than 5.5% per year over the next seven years).

The growth in organic spices reflects the overall growth in organic sales for food and beverages in Europe.

Overall retail sales in Europe reached about [€52 billion in 2020](#), making it the world's second-largest region for organic retail sales (after North America). The largest national markets for organic foods are Germany (29% of the European market in 2020 with organic retail sales of over €15 billion), France (at nearly €13 billion) and Italy (at €3.9 billion).

Certified ginger is still a niche market, but at the same time, ginger, along with curcuma, cumin seeds and pepper, is among the most traded organic-certified spices. Overall, 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 you become certified.

One example of an exporter that has become very successful in exporting organic and fair trade-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.

In Africa, an example of a successful organic ginger exporter is [OUTSPAN Agric Export](#), from Uganda. The company exports ginger (around 700 tonnes/year) and several other products like cocoa beans, sesame seeds and soya beans. OUTSPAN works with more than 900 farmers and holds 20% of Uganda's organic exports. Beyond organic, the company has a strong focus on sustainability around three pillars: social, environmental and economic.

In an example from Indonesia, the company [Tripper](#) has a strong focus on adding value at origin, offering organic-certified ginger in ground, cut and extract forms. In addition to the EU certification, Tripper holds Fair for Life (not for ginger), USDA Organic, JAS, FSSC 22000, Kosher and Halal certifications – thus offering a full spectrum of food safety standards to buyers. The company also has projects related to sustainability: water conservation, soil regeneration, preservation of biodiversity, energy management, fair compensation, social development, transparency and health are a few of the themes.

Tips:

Read the FiBL/IFOAM's [latest version of the publication World of Organic Agriculture \(2022\)](#) to find out more about the global and European organic sector.

Explore the database of Organic-Bio [to identify potential importers of organic ginger](#) as well as competing suppliers from other producing countries.

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

This study was carried out on behalf of CBI by [Autentika Global](#), updated by [Gustavo Ferro](#).

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