

# The Dutch Market for Nuts

By Wendalin Kolkman

While exports of U.S. tree nuts to the Netherlands have declined in recent years, the future of the market is bright. Because of their premium quality, U.S. nuts play an important role in Dutch imports of almonds, pistachios, pecans, walnuts and peanuts.

## Consumer Purchasing Habits

The private label market in the Netherlands is showing significant signs of growth. Many Dutch shoppers want a wider variety of private label products in supermarkets, especially in peanuts and other nuts. There is a clear trend toward growth of name brands.

Current consumer trends indicate that buying decisions are increasingly based on quality, and here is where U.S. nut products have a definite advantage. The Dutch

consumer interest in organic products is growing. According to the U.S. Organic Trade Association, the Netherlands has the highest per capita consumption of edible nuts in Europe. As a result, demand is higher for all sorts of edible organic nuts, especially peanuts, almonds, hazelnuts and walnuts. This is partly due to the Dutch inclination for Indonesian and Chinese cuisine, where these items have an important place.

The Dutch primarily consume nuts as snacks. Salted peanuts are the most popular, and supermarkets are the most popular outlets for these snack products.

## Packaging Industry for Nuts

Because of mergers, only a few nut packaging companies are left in the Netherlands. The Dutch-based Nut Company B.V. is the European market leader in the sector. This market includes nuts that are processed in various ways and nut-based products. The three major segments of this market are consumer brands, private label products and ingredients. The Nut Company is active in all of these segments and

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has production operations throughout Europe.

The Dutch company Duyvis B.V. is the main processor of coated and salted packed peanuts in the Netherlands. In this product category, Duyvis is the only premium quality brand in the country.

## Future Prospects

As a result of outbreaks of bovine spongiform encephalopathy, and foot and mouth disease and consumer concerns about high dioxin and polychlorinated biphenyl levels in North Sea and Baltic Sea fish, Europeans are eating less meat and fish. Nuts have good prospects in the European market in general—and the Dutch market in particular—as an alternative source of protein. Therefore, good export possibilities are expected in this market for U.S. nuts. ■

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