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Netherlands

Organic Products

Organic Market in the Benelux

2006

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Report Highlights:

This report gives an overview of the organic market in the Benelux region.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
The Hague [NL1]
[NL]

Market Overview

The Netherlands

In 2005, the Dutch spent €467.4 million on organic food products, an increase of 1.4% compared to the previous year. The market share of organic food grew from 1.9% in 2004 to 2.0% last year, although there are different developments among the various product categories. The market shares of bread and cheese/butter are going up and amounted 2.1% and 1.3% respectively last year. The market shares of potatoes/fruit/vegetables, dairy and meat were respectively 4.8%, 2.9% and 2.7% and all declining. The market share of other organic food was stable at 0.9%.

On the distribution side, the natural/health foods stores, responsible for 38% of total organic foods sales, are and continue to gain in popularity. The more traditional supermarket channel on the other hand saw its market share decline to 49% of organic food sales last year. The remaining channels are catering, farms, wet markets, etc. Sales of organic products via the internet, although still being very small, grew by 10% last year.

Belgium

In 2005, consumers spent €201 million on organic food products, an increase of 2.1% compared to the previous year. The average market share of organic food in 2005 was 1.4% with great differences between the various product categories. The highest market shares were 8.3% and 3.4% respectively for eggs and vegetables. Big product categories like dairy and meat had the same market share of 1% in 2005.

On the distribution side, farms and wet markets have gained market share at the expense of the specialty stores. The supermarket remains by far the biggest channel for sales of organic product with a share of 60%.

Organic Farming

The organic acreage within the EU continues to grow. In 2004, the acreage grew by 170,000 hectares to an estimated 5.8 million hectares or 3.6% of the total EU utilized agricultural area. The 5 countries with the largest organic acreage in 2004 were Italy, Germany, Spain, the UK and France. Together they accounted for 63% of total acreage. The Netherlands has the 17th largest organic acreage, about 50,000 hectares. Belgium's acreage devoted to organic farming is approximately 24,000 hectares or 1.7%.

Market Opportunities

Various European traders have confirmed that the US market, in recent years, has developed from a net exporter into a net importer of organic products. The US organic market is growing fast due to the fact that leading retailers are increasingly moving into the organic market.

Several US organic products still find their way to Europe. Pears from Washington State are occasionally imported for the North West European wholesale and retail market. Industry contacts see potential for organic citrus products from Florida if the Citrus Canker problems can be solved. For the food processing industry, US pulses, seeds, rice and nuts are imported. Import of those products however have gone down due to a shortage of organic ingredients on the US market. US organic ingredients have proved to be price competitive on the European market.

More detailed information on the foodservice and food retail market in the Benelux can be found on USDA's [attaché reports](#). Here you will also find more information on how to export to the Benelux market.

Trade Shows

There is no trade show being organized in Belgium and the Netherlands specifically for organic products. Buyers of organic products from the Benelux frequently visit leading trade show BioFach in Germany.

BioFach

Nuremberg, Germany
15-18 February, 2007
www.biofach.de



For more details about Dutch and Belgian trade show opportunities for U.S. companies, contact FAS/The Hague

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Organic Production

The rules for organic production in the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg (Benelux) are based on the [EU-regulation \(EEC\) nr. 2092/91](#). All EU Member states have to meet at least the requirements of this regulation. In the Netherlands this regulation has been implemented by the Decree "Landbouwkwaliteitsbesluit en -regeling biologische productiemethode" and in Belgium by the Decree "Koninklijk besluit van 17 april 1992 inzake de biologische productiemethode en aanduidingen dienaangaande op landbouwproducten en levensmiddelen". Both decrees refer directly to the EU-regulation without additional requirements.

In the Netherlands, the certifying organization known as Skal has been assigned by the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality as inspection body for the organic production. Skal performs this task by means of inspection finally leading towards certification. Skal also informs the organic farmers and processors about the applicable legislation. In Belgium both Ecocert Belgium and Integra BLIK have been assigned as certifying and inspection bodies for organic production. In Luxembourg, the German Kontrollverein ökologischer Landbau has been assigned to certify organic farmers while Prüfverein Verarbeitung ökologische Landbauprodukte certifies the processors and importers. The Belgian Ecocert, from their Walhain office, is authorized to certify Luxembourg companies as well.

Stichting Skal

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Ecocert Belgium sprl

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Fax: 0032-81-600313
Email: info@ecocert.be
Contact person:
Mr B. Hommelen

Organic labels per country:

The Netherlands:



Luxemburg:



Belgium:

**Importing Organic Products From Outside the EU**

For the importation of organic products from outside the EU, the Dutch importer needs an import certificate and an import authorization. The import certificate is issued by Skal while the import authorization is issued by Dienst Regelingen*, the executive body of the Ministry of agriculture. When you are importing from a country that is registered on the [list of third countries](#), for some product categories, an import authorization is not necessary.

*Dienst Regelingen

P.O. Box 965
6040 AZ Roermond, The Netherlands
Phone: +31 (0)475 355 444
Fax: +31 (0)475 318 939

In Belgium, requesting and processing of an import authorization is handled by both Ecocert Belgium and Integra. In addition to the import certificate and authorization, each shipment needs to be accompanied with a EU certificate of inspection. The certificate will be verified at the border by member states authorities. The model of the certificate of inspection can be found in Annex 1 of [Commission Regulation 1788/2001](#). For more information on importing from outside the EU, go to <http://useu.usmission.gov/agri/organic.html>.

Tariffs

To obtain the appropriate commodity code for your product, you can contact the Dutch customs at +31 45 574 3031 or visit the following website http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/dds/en/tarhome.htm. This website also provides tariff classification and rates.

It is also possible to obtain a written binding ruling called a Binding Tariff Information (BTI). This will provide assurances that you have the correct tariff classification for your product. More information on how to apply for BTI is available online at: <http://www.douane.nl/zakelijk/invoer/en/invoer-05.html>

More information on EU import duties can be found on <http://useu.usmission.gov/agri/import.html>.

Related Reports from FAS/The Hague

Report Number	Report Title	Date Released
NL5005	HRI Industry	03/2005
NL5010	Food Processing Industry	03/2005
NL5024	FAIRS	08/2005*
BE5008	FAIRS	08/2005*
NL5025	Export Certificate Report	09/2005
BE5009	Export Certificate Report	09/2005
NL5029	Exporter Guide	09/2005
NL5035	Food Retail Industry	11/2005

* An update will be published soon

Reports from other European FAS offices can be found on <http://useu.usmission.gov/agri/organic.html>

For more information on this industry, please contact at AgTheHague@usda.gov or +31.(0)70.3102.299