



International Agricultural Trade Report

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U.S. Stone Fruit Exports Post New Record in 1999; Market Access Challenges Remain

Summary

U.S. stone fruit exports rose in calendar year 1999 to a record value of \$312 million. The export volume, meanwhile, reached 206,900 metric tons, the second largest level on record. Adequate supplies of good quality fruit and more moderate prices improved the overall export picture in 1999. Despite the strong performance, the industry continues to face numerous market access constraints, in the form of high duties and phytosanitary-based access barriers.

U.S. Stone Fruit Export Situation

The United States is a major exporter of stone fruits, shipping to more than 40 countries annually. Peaches and nectarines account for 45 percent of the volume of annual U.S. stone fruit exports, followed by plums and prunes at 30 percent, cherries at 20 percent, and apricots at 5 percent. In value terms, cherries are the leading commodity, accounting for a 50-percent share.

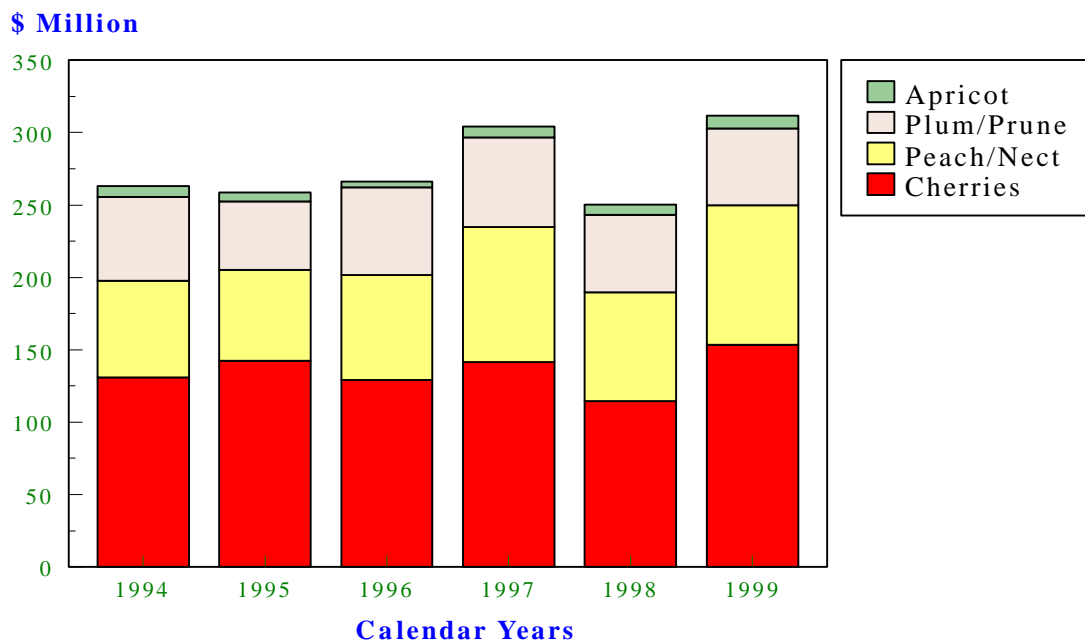
Japan, Canada, Taiwan, and Mexico are the major markets for U.S. stone fruits, accounting for more than 80 percent of total shipments. About half the volume of U.S. peach and nectarine exports go to Canada. Taiwan's share of U.S. peach and nectarine exports has increased from just 3 percent in 1990 to more than 30 percent in 1999. Japan remains the dominant market for U.S. cherries, accounting for more than 40 percent of total sales. Moreover, the United States maintains a dominant position in Canada, Japan, and Taiwan, accounting for market shares of 85 percent, 99 percent, and 86 percent, respectively. While Chile enjoys a 40-percent market share in Mexico, with U.S. product accounting for the remaining 60-percent share, counterseasonal factors tend to reduce direct competition between the two supplying countries.

The largest export growth for U.S. peaches and nectarines in developing markets has occurred in Latin American countries, such as Colombia. The value of U.S. peach and nectarine exports to Colombia reached \$1.5 million in 1999, up more than 260 percent from 1993's level. U.S. market promotion and development efforts, including activities funded through the Market Access Program (MAP), have played a key role in the expansion of U.S. stone fruit exports.

Exports remain critical to the success and viability of the U.S. stone fruit industry. More than 30 percent of the U.S. cherry crop goes to export, while 10 percent of peaches and nectarines are shipped abroad. While the Uruguay Round has served to lower tariffs in several significant markets around the world, the industry continues to face high duties in a range of key markets. Further, U.S. stone fruit faces formidable phytosanitary-based barriers, if not outright bans, in some important potential markets, including Australia, China, and Korea. Overcoming these barriers and further reducing tariffs will become increasingly important to U.S. stone fruit producers, particularly those located in the principal producing and exporting areas of California and the Pacific Northwest.

For more information, contact Samuel Rosa at (202) 720-6086.

Cherries Lead U.S. Stone Fruit Export Value



Four Markets Account For Over 80 Percent of U.S. Stone Fruit Export Value

