

EU AGRI-FOOD TRADE: A VITAL FACTOR IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

EUROPE IS A KEY PLAYER IN THE GLOBAL FOOD MARKET, OFTEN RELYING ON IMPORTED MATERIALS FROM OTHER REGIONS OF THE WORLD.

European consumers are able to enjoy coffee or chocolate due to strong trade relations and extensive supply chains. However, the COVID-19 pandemic and war in Ukraine have highlighted the vital need for free, transparent, and resilient food supply chains in the EU and globally.

This is especially important in the current geopolitical landscape, as food insecurity, impacts of climate change and distribution issues pose a significant threat to the global food supply chain.

EU AGRI-FOOD TRADE

€407 BILLION*

imports

€172
BILLION

40%**

**OF THE EU AGRI-FOOD
HIGH VALUE & HIGH
QUALITY EXPORTS
RELY ON IMPORTS OF
RAW MATERIALS**

(e.g. for
chocolate or
coffee) or
feed items
(e.g. for
meat, milk).

exports

€235
BILLION



* Data for 2024: <https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/media/news/eu-agri-food-exports-reach-record-levels-eu2354-billion-2024-2025-04-08/en#:~:text=1%20min%20read-EU%20agri%20food%20exports%20reach%20record%20levels%20of%20the%20EU%20AC235.4,report%20describes%20several%20positive%20developments>

** Calculated based on data available at <https://www.fao.org/faostat/en/>

HOW WE BENEFIT FROM INTERNATIONAL TRADE?

➤ TRADE IS ESSENTIAL

for ensuring that EU citizens have access to a wide variety of safe and nutritious food options. Global food supply chains, especially products that cannot be grown locally, increase the availability of diverse food choices.

➤ TRADE BENEFITS EU EXPORTERS

The EU is top exporter of food products (per value). Imposing unilateral trade restrictions could trigger a race-to-the-bottom dynamic in which non-EU countries could consider adopting similar measures on key EU exports.

➤ TRADE PROMOTES

social and economic stability by protecting against supply chain and price shocks, ensuring that food remains available even during shortages.



➤ TRADE PLAYS A KEY ROLE

in reducing food waste by ensuring that surplus food is sold to countries where it is needed.

➤ OPEN STRATEGIC AUTONOMY

means cooperating multilaterally wherever we can, acting autonomously wherever we must – trade in food is an excellent example of working together to build supply chain resilience.

➤ TRADE SUPPORTS

small-scale farmers by providing them with market opportunities, boosting their income and their contributions to food security.