

# Imports to account for half of U.S. fruit by 2023

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Imports of fruit will account for about half of total per capita U.S. fruit and nut use by 2023, while imported vegetables will make up 25% of per capita vegetable use.

Those new projections from the [U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service](#) compare with 2013 levels of a 42% import share for fruit and nut use and 19% import share for vegetable per capita use. "Use" refers to all fresh produce grown/imported and shipped in the U.S.; actual consumption is lower after shrink and other losses are considered.

Another measure of the growth of imports is the trade imbalance between imports and exports. On that count, the USDA reports the U.S. trade deficit in horticultural crops and products will grow from \$12.8 billion in fiscal year 2013 (October 2012 to September 2013) to \$23.1 billion in fiscal year 2023.

U.S. fresh vegetable imports will grow from \$6.5 billion in 2013 to \$11.3 billion by 2023; fresh vegetable exports will climb from \$2.3 billion in 2013 to \$3.1 billion by 2023.

U.S. fresh fruit imports will rise from \$8.3 billion in 2013 to \$13.4 billion by 2023; fresh fruit exports will rise from \$5.01 billion in 2013 to \$7.44 billion in ten years.

While imports are expanding faster than exports, the USDA predicts exports will continue to grow in significance for U.S. producers. By 2023, 27% of U.S. fruits and nuts will be exported, up from 23% in 2013. Likewise, about 20% of U.S. vegetable output will be sold in foreign markets by 2023, up from 16.7% in 2013, according to the USDA.

Other projections are:

- All domestic and imported fruits, nuts and vegetables will expand by an average rate of 1.2% a year through 2023;
- Value of U.S. fruit and tree nut production will grow at annual rate of 2.2% through 2023;
- Fresh market vegetable production will decline over the next 10 years

- Fresh-market vegetable production will decline over the next 10 years, from 39.5 billion pounds in 2013 to 37.5 billion pounds; and
- Fruit and nut production will expand by 0.2% per year.