

## India's Rising Appetite for Imported Fruits: Trends, Trade, and Market Dynamics

<sup>1</sup>Nithin K. N. and <sup>2</sup>A.R. Shrivanthi

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor, School of Agricultural Sciences and Technology, SVKM's NMIMS, Shirpur, Maharashtra- 425405

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, School of Agribusiness and Rural Management, Dr. Rajendra Prasad Central Agricultural University, Pusa, Bihar

Corresponding Author : rajshravanthi@gmail.com

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### Abstract

India, a global agricultural powerhouse and the second-largest producer of fruits, is witnessing a significant shift in consumption patterns as demand for imported fruits surges. Despite producing over 112 million metric tons of fruits in 2023–24, India's appetite for exotic and temperate fruits continues to grow, driven by evolving consumer preferences, increased health awareness, and expanding global trade networks. This article delves into India's current fruit production landscape, analyzes the size and growth of the fruit industry, and explores detailed insights into the country's fresh fruit imports, highlighting key fruits, sourcing countries, major importers, and emerging market trends.

### India's Fruit Production and Consumption: A Snapshot

India, known for its rich horticultural diversity, recorded a total fruit production of 112.62 million metric tons in 2023–24, up from 110.21 million metric tons in 2022–23. Bananas and mangoes remain the dominant contributors, accounting for 31.5% and 19.8% of total fruit production respectively (2021–22 data). Major fruit-producing states include Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Gujarat. Despite this robust domestic output, India is increasingly turning to the global market to meet rising demand for diverse and exotic fruits.

### India's Role in the Global Fruit Industry

The global fruits and vegetables market was valued at USD 733.87 billion in 2023, with an expected CAGR of 5.0% from 2024 to 2030. India plays a significant part in this ecosystem. The Indian fresh fruit market is projected to reach USD 115.90 billion by 2024, growing at a CAGR of 7.58% from 2024 to 2029. This growth is bolstered by rising demand for processed and convenience fruit-based foods, reflecting evolving dietary preferences.

### India's Fruit Import Landscape (2023–24)

The country imported over 114,698 shipments of fresh fruits between March 2023 and February 2024, involving 1,051 importers and 2,581 suppliers, with an import value exceeding ₹143 billion. Leading exporters to India include Chile, Vietnam, and Thailand. These imports cater to rising demand for premium quality, taste, and variety, especially in urban and semi-urban markets.

### Top Imported Fruits in India (2024)

Following are the details of the most imported fruits in India with all the top fresh fruit importers in India:

#### 1. Apple

India's demand for apples is high, and import of apples in India require a significant amount to meet the demand. Imported apples are generally considered to be of higher quality than local apples.

- Apple fruit import in India: Based on fruits import data, in 2023, India imported about 359 thousand metric tons of apples from around the world.
- Import destinations: Turkey, Iran, Italy, Poland, and the US.
- Apple importers in India: IG International, NM Fresh, Ngk trading company

## 2. Cherries

Growing health consciousness and the popularity of fresh drinks like smoothies have led to an overall increase in demand for fresh cherries, making cherries one of the top fruits imported in India.

- Cherries import in India: In 2023, India imported fresh cherries worth \$11,037.52K, with a quantity of 2,463,920 kg.
- Import Destinations: Chile, Afghanistan, Iran
- Cherry Importers in India: Fresh Fruit Alliances Pvt. Ltd., GT fruit

## 3. Dragon fruit

Over the last two years, dragon fruit consumption has increased in the U.S. market by more than 25% in economic terms.

- Dragon fruit import in India: According to India Import data, India imported 2,918 shipments of raspberries from Mar 2023 to Feb 2024 (TTM).
- Import destinations: China, ukraine, Singapore
- Dragon fruit Importers in India: Freeze O Fresh, JMD Foods, Mandar Food Products

## 4. Avocado

Avocados have become a mainstream food in India, and the food service industry is driving the market. To cater to the Indian emerging demand for avocado, make these fruits imported in India in huge quantities.

- Avocado import in India: As per fruits import data, India's avocado import value in 2023 was \$10,437.82K, and the quantity imported was 3,931,180Kg.
- Import Destinations: Tanzania, New Zealand, Peru, Australia
- Avacado Importers in India: DRP trades, GK agro foods, JMD foods

## 5. Grapes

Grapes imported into India are known for their flavour and come in a variety of colours, including green, red, and black.

- Grapes Import in India: In 2023, India imported \$109 million worth of grapes, which is 0.016% of India's total imports.
- Import Destinations: Afghanistan, China, Greece
- Grapes Importers in India: Pisum food services, GK agro foods, Suri agro fresh pvt. Ltd.

## 6. Kiwifruit

Kiwis are a fruit with green flesh and fuzzy skin and have been a common sight on Indian tables for more than ten years.

- Kiwi Import in India: In 2023-24, the quantity of Kiwi fruits imported in India was around 43,270 metric tons.
- Import Destinations: New Zealand, Iran, Chile
- Kiwi Importers in India: Vimo Foods Private Limited, Neesheeta Impex LLP, Essar Impex

## 7. Date palm

Every year, around 64.2 thousand metric tons of table dates are consumed in India.

- Date Import in India: According to fruits import data, India imported 43,270 metric tons of date palm in 2023–24, which is a decrease from 50,920 metric tons in 2022–23.
- Import Destinations: UAE, Iraq, Iran
- Date Importers in India: IG International, NM Fresh, Ngk trading company

## 8. Banana

The demand for bananas has increased due to their affordability, nutritional value, and immunity-boosting properties.

- Banana Import in India: In 2023, India imported \$97.2k worth of bananas.
- Import Destinations: US, Oman, UAE
- Banana Importers in India: Geewin Exim, Meem Exim, NM fresh

## 9. Pears

India's demand for pears is increasing, especially for red pears and new varieties from the US.

- Pears Import in India: Based on fruits import data, in 2023, the quantity of pear fruits imported in India was around 27.9 thousand metric tons from around the world.
- Import Destinations: Turkey, Iran, South Africa
- Pears Importers in India: Geewin Exim, DRP trades, GK agro Agrofoods

## 10. Oranges

In 2023, the value of fresh or dried oranges imported to India was 76 million US dollars, which was 83% of the total citrus fruit imports.

- Import Destinations: Egypt, UAE, South Africa
- Orange Importers in India: GK Agrofoods, Freeze O Fresh, JMD Foods

## Market Drivers and Trends

- Urbanization and Rising Incomes: Increasing disposable income and exposure to global food cultures have led to a higher demand for imported exotic fruits.

- Health Consciousness: Fruits like cherries, avocados, and kiwis are seen as superfoods, boosting their popularity among health-conscious consumers.
- Food Service Industry Growth: The use of imported fruits in premium hotels, cafes, and juice bars is fueling consistent demand.
- Quality Perception: Imported fruits are often perceived as superior in quality, shelf life, and taste compared to domestic varieties.

## Conclusion

India's fruit import market is on an upward trajectory, reflecting not just changing dietary habits but also a broader integration into global food trade. While the country remains a leading fruit producer, the rising influx of imported fruits points to a dynamic and evolving consumer market. With increasing investments in cold chain logistics, food retail, and processing industries, the fruit import sector is likely to witness sustained growth. Importers, traders, and policymakers must work together to balance the scales between promoting domestic production and meeting market demand through international trade.

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