



EXPORT POTENTIAL OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES AND FOOD PRODUCTS OF UZBEKISTAN

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Abstract: This article discusses the concept of export potential, describes the directions of the agricultural development strategy of the Republic of Uzbekistan, presents and analyzes data on the state of the country's food industry, trends in the development of the agricultural sector over the past four years, statistical data on the export of fruits and vegetables of the republic are presented, shortcomings are identified and directions for increasing the country's export potential are determined.

Keywords: export potential, food industry, agriculture, development strategy, raw material base, problems, efforts to solve problems.

Export potential is the ability of the national economy, its sectors, industries, enterprises and companies to produce goods and services that are competitive on the world market. It includes both comparative national advantages (large-scale natural resources, favorable geographical, infrastructural and other factors) and new competitive advantages based on the achievements of science and scientific and technological progress. Export potential can be applied at different levels: an individual enterprise or an integrated group of enterprises, a specific industry, region or the economic system of the country as a whole.

In Uzbekistan, a draft National Strategy for Agricultural Development for 2019-2030 has been developed, which defines the strategic priorities for agricultural development and the main indicators of achieving the goals of the strategy, and the implementation mechanism. This document specified 53 main targets and indicators.

The goal of the strategy is to develop a competitive agri-food sector oriented towards domestic and foreign markets, which will increase the incomes of agricultural producers, create new jobs, increase food security and ensure the sustainable use of natural resources. It is expected that the implementation of the Strategy will allow achieving several general targets in 2018-2030

Industry is the most important, leading sector of the economy, which has a decisive influence on the level of development of the company's productive forces. Today, global industry employs about 500 million people, and industrial production has increased more than 50-fold in recent decades.

It is known that the food industry is a group of industrial sectors that produce food products in finished form or in the form of semi-finished products, as well as drinks and tobacco products. In some classifications, food industry products also include soap and detergents (in fat production). The main task of the food industry is to satisfy the basic needs of the population for food. Enterprises in the industry collect raw materials, process them and bring them to a form in which it is best to organize delivery to the end consumer.

The food industry is closely connected with agriculture as a supplier of raw materials and with trade. Some of its industries gravitate towards raw materials areas, others towards consumption areas. Food production directly affects the solution to humanity's food problem. The food industry is present in all countries of the world, but varies greatly not only in level of development, but also in specialization.

The food industry of Uzbekistan includes enterprises producing meat and dairy, oil and fat, fish products, flour milling, bakery and confectionery products, pasta, canned fruits and vegetables, tea, alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, soft drinks and other goods. The average annual growth rate of food production is 9-10%.

Consistent implementation of measures to develop and diversify the industry has made it possible over the past 5 years to ensure an expansion of the raw material base and an increase in volumes. The total volume of imports to Uzbekistan amounted to 30.67 billion soums (+20.4%). Currently, there are over 19,000 food industry enterprises operating in the republic.. The food industry of Uzbekistan makes a significant contribution to the development of the country's economy. Over 6 years, employment in the industry increased by 122%, the number of enterprises grew by 224%, and exports increased by 336%. In terms of gross production of vegetable oil, the republic is among the 20 world producers, producing mainly cottonseed oil (a tenth of world production). Uzbekistan is also one of the world's largest producers of tomato paste, raisins, dried fruits

Some trends in the development of the agricultural sector of Uzbekistan in 2024:

Agriculture, forestry and fisheries of the Republic of Uzbekistan (January-March 2024): total volume – 45.4 trillion. sum growth rate – 103.6% share in the structure of gross domestic product – 11.5%.

Agricultural production volume:

Agricultural products total 42.4 trillion. soum, growth rate - 103.6%,
of which:

livestock products 39.5 trillion. soum, - 103.6%

crop production 2.9 trillion soums - 104.4%

Total volume of agriculture, forestry and fisheries

Indicators	2020 year	2021 year	2022 year	2023 year	2024 year	2024 year compared to 2020 year %
Total volume of agriculture, forestry	24,8	29,4	33,5	40,4	45,4	183

and fisheries (trillion soums)						
Vegetable production volumes, (thousand tons)	62,6	65,7	77,2	71,9	75,3	120

As can be seen from the table data, the volume of vegetable production is growing every year. The total volume of agriculture, forestry and fisheries in 2024 compared to 2020 increased by 83%, the volume of vegetable production in physical terms by 20%.

The export potential of Uzbekistan's agricultural products is considered high. The country has its own raw material base, accumulated experience in growing products, material production and logistics base, as well as established connections with traditional importers, primarily in neighboring countries of the post-Soviet space.

In 2023, industry exports in Uzbekistan amounted to almost \$2 billion. In 2024, it is planned to increase this figure to \$3.5 billion. In 2023, sales of vegetables and fruits increased to 1.76 million tons (+1.1%), and in value terms - to 1.18 billion dollars (+3.3%). The main markets for the export of fruits and vegetables were Russia (37%), Pakistan (16.7%), China (12.3%) and Kazakhstan (10.3%).

Exports of grains and products from them increased to 478.8 million dollars (+34.4%), coffee, tea, cocoa - up to 27.6 million dollars (+12.1%), drinks - up to 60.1 million . dollars (+35.3%). The best-selling products were cherries (\$71.7 million), onions (\$53.3 million), apricot (\$47 million) and cabbage (\$41.6 million). Among the popular fruits and vegetables were also dried grapes (\$23.3 million), carrots (\$23.2 million), millet (\$18.9 million), dried prunes (\$15.4 million) and other fruits and vegetables. According to the organization, in January – June of this year, Uzbekistan exported 1 million tons of fruits and vegetables worth \$607.3 million abroad. Onions and cabbage from Uzbekistan became the preferred products in foreign markets in the first quarter of 2024. During this period, 103 thousand tons of

onions worth \$25.9 million and 94 thousand tons of cabbage worth \$22.2 million were shipped to foreign consumers. These two types of agricultural products accounted for almost a quarter of the total exports of fruits and vegetables from Uzbekistan in value terms.

The volume of exports of fruits and vegetables during the period under review amounted to \$607.3 million (the growth rate compared to the same period in 2023 was 8%). In total, the export of vegetables and fruits amounted to 4.7%.

The main buyer of fruits and vegetables from Uzbekistan was Russia, which accounted for more than a third of the total export volume. Next come Kazakhstan, Pakistan, China and Afghanistan.

But there are also problems in the development of the agro-industrial complex of Uzbekistan. Here are some of them:

- ✓ Wear and tear of equipment. This is especially true for small businesses that do not have the appropriate resources to completely replace equipment.
- ✓ Rising prices for raw materials on the world market. This leads to an increase in the cost of domestic food products.
- ✓ Low level of competitiveness of Uzbekistan's food products on the foreign food market. Food products produced in Uzbekistan are of high quality, but they are not sufficiently advertised abroad.
- ✓ Insufficient number of qualified specialists at food industry enterprises. The lack of experience, theoretical knowledge and practical skills of workers in the field hinders the development of the industry at the present stage of development of industrial enterprises..
- ✓ Undeveloped recycling of food packaging materials. This leads to an excessive accumulation of used packaging, an increase in landfills and environmental pollution.

The government of Uzbekistan is making a lot of efforts to find solutions to these problems and is encouraging foreign investment in the industry. Thus, to increase

the export potential in the country, it is necessary to increase the production of fruits and vegetables, melons, grapes and legumes. You also need:

- create about 20 more mobile laboratories in the regions and integrate them into the electronic platform “uzagrolab.uz”;
- digitalize all processes related to the circulation of pesticides, and the import and illegal trade of low-quality pesticides will be prohibited;
- bring 6 thousand gardens, more than 3 thousand vineyards and fields, 344 packaging enterprises into compliance with foreign phytosanitary requirements;
- introduce highly effective entomophages and launch a new type of biological control of insect pests;

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