



THE POWER OF FRUIT & VEGETABLES

Boosting Health & Sustainability



ACTIVITY REPORT 2025

Freshfel Europe's Activity Report is published annually at Freshfel Europe's Annual Event

This Activity Report covers the period of May 2024 to April 2025. It reviews the areas of work and activities of Freshfel Europe over the past 12 months. More importantly, it evaluates the achievements of the association. It also identifies new challenges and opportunities that are arising from the new European legislative term 2024-2029. Freshfel Europe's activities are dedicated to building a brighter future based on the "power of fruit and vegetables" to boost the category based on its strong assets.

This report highlights the actions and efforts of the Association to represent and advocate solutions that work for the entire European fresh fruit and vegetable supply chain, from production to retail. The activities are guided by priorities identified by the members and coordinated by the Secretariat under the leadership of President Salvo Laudani, assisted by the two Vice-Presidents Anders Lind and Frédéric Rosseneu, and General Delegate Philippe Binard.

The work of Freshfel Europe would not have been possible without the leadership of the Board at large, nor the active involvement of all the members in the meetings and dayto-day collaborative work, based on confidence and mutual understanding. Business advice, operational knowledge, and production, trade, logistics and retail insight perspectives contribute to the most professional work and advocacy of Freshfel Europe. The strength and reputation of Freshfel Europe are built through the invaluable input of members across the fresh produce supply chain, constantly keeping the specifics of fresh fruit and vegetables at the centre of priorities.

Freshfel Europe is a membership-driven association. Engagement of the members for a better future is essential. All companies and associations with an interest in building a stronger and more resilient sector for the European fruit and vegetables sector are invited to join forces with Freshfel Europe for mutual benefits and to further reinforce the voice of the sector at the European level.

I would like to thank the Presidency Team, the Board at large and all Freshfel members and associated members for their continued support in helping Freshfel Europe represent the common interests of the entire European fresh fruit and vegetables supply chain for the benefit of all stakeholders and consumers.

The Freshfel Europe **Presidency Team**



Salvo Laudani



Fréderic Rosseneu



Anders Lind



General Delegate **Philippe Binard**



The land is our life.

the land to bring you the healthy treasures it produces. Local production rural areas, through: grown in Europe* that guarantees maximum freshness, optimum ripeness production and a lower carbon footprint. We strive for excellence in quality and flavour, which are the main demands of consumers today.

As producers, we cultivate and nurture We promote sustainable development by improving the lives of people in

- Efficient use of water in agricultural
- Biological solutions for pest control
- Increased biodiversity
- Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions
- Adaptation of food production to climate
- Prevention and reduction of food waste





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WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT



Last May in Paris, I initiated my second mandate as President of Freshfel Europe. As expected, the last year has brought unprecedented changes and uncertainties. The European Parliament election in June, the new Commission in December, the US presidential election in November, and the farmers' protests have significantly modified the political and business landscape in 2024.

Addressing climate change with a limited toolbox while securing productivity and yields, ensuring competitiveness under a revamped sustainability focus, trading globally under growing protectionism and geopolitical tensions, and raising consumption while consumers experience limited purchasing power. These are some of the challenges that will again test our sector's resilience and response capacity.

Fresh fruit and vegetables are essential and benefit the planet, society, and European citizens. Unfortunately, many opportunities to boost the category were missed in 2024. First, the consumption increase during COVID was not consolidated and deteriorated rapidly due to the economic recession resulting from the war in Ukraine. Second, the European Commission's ambition to shift to a plant (based) diet was lost by an absence of concrete measures to stimulate consumption. Meanwhile, obesity rates in the EU continue to rise dramatically along with the proliferation of non-communicable diseases. Unhealthy eating, driven by ultra-processed products, is getting out of control for social security, with an estimated €2 of medical expenses for each €1 spent on food. This is neither sustainable nor acceptable for public spending President of Freshfel Europe in times of recession.

Earlier this year, the new Commissioner for Agriculture and Food

released the Vision for Agriculture and Food. We have yet to see whether concrete actions and much-needed positive discrimination towards fruit and vegetables will finally be taken to fully utilize the "power of fresh fruit and vegetables" in policy making. This is a new opportunity to deliver in boosting the sector, following the failures of the previous European legislative term. Unfortunately, the Commission has decided to guide its priorities based on the influence of a newly-created board of stakeholders (EBAF), which excludes the voice of the fruit and vegetable sector, only making space for the food industry as the sole sector-specific representative.

It is time to act with shared public-private responsibility and vision to secure a generational shift towards a successful and competitive sector and guide consumers' attitudes towards healthier and more sustainable food options.

In Freshfel Europe, we are convinced and proud of the assets of fruit and vegetables based on their undisputed health and environmental benefits. We are confident that creating fresh business perspectives by joining forces in the sector will give us a stronger voice, and we call on all stakeholders of the European fresh produce sector to unite behind these perspectives. Many thanks for your support.

Salvo Laudani

IN BRUSSELS AND BEYOND



Freshfel Europe works hard to promote and advocate for the value and needs of fresh fruits and vegetables and has become an important voice for the sector both in Brussels and in international fora.

Freshfel Europe is a trusted advisor and active participant in several advisory constellations, ranging from informal agri-food groups to EU expert groups and WTO advisory meetings. By working together with stakeholder partners and policymakers, Freshfel Europe boosts the voice of fruits and vegetables.

FRESHFEL EUROPE IN THE EU

- Civil Dialogue Groups: Agricultural Markets. Organic Farming. Environment and Climate Change. International Aspects of Agriculture. CAP and Horizontal Matters. Quality and Promotion.
- Market Observatory for Fruits and Vegetables.
- EU Agri-food Chain Observatory.
- Expert Group on the European Food Security Crisis Preparedness and Response Mechanism.
- EU Health Policy Platform.
- EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste.
- EU Biodiversity Platform.
- SPS Market Access Working Group.
- Market Access Advisory Committee.

FRESHFEL EUROPE AND PARTNER **STAKEHOLDERS**

- The Global Coalition of Fresh Produce.
- Agri-food Roundtable for Plant Protection.
- Informal Agri-food Sustainability Roundtable.
- Freshfel Environmental Footprint Initiative.
- GLOBALG.A.P. ESS Framework Subgroup.
- EU Promotion Policy Projects ("Life is Better with Fruit & Vegetables" finished 2025, with a new project starting soon!)

FRESHFEL EUROPE COLLABORATIONS WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

WTO UNECE FAO OECD



































KEYS TO COMPETITIVENESS

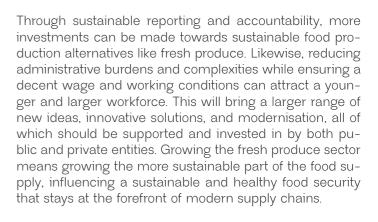
The European Commission has taken up a strong stance towards a more competitive Union, putting the word 'competitiveness' at the heart of its economic agenda. In recent years, Freshfel Europe has closely monitored the evolution of rising costs in production and in the supply chain, as well as the impact of inflation on consumption due to reduced purchasing power. Steps need to be taken to address the profitability and competitiveness of the sector while keeping fruit and vegetables an affordable option for consumers. This means focusing on fostering innovation in production and supply chain efficiency, promoting a skilled workforce while also coordinating internal policies at both the EU and national levels and strengthening the Single Market. Meanwhile, a greener supply chain by, for instance, improving carbon sequestration is a priority for decarbonisation targets and to maximise the value of carbon and nature credits.

THE POWER OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES BOOSTING COMPETITIVENESS

Fruits and vegetables have assets making them the key to many of the goals of the competitiveness ambition. With a strong performance on all three pillars of sustainability, fresh produce has the potential for societal, environmental, and economic issues. Through its low use of natural resources in production, its carbon sequestration ability, and its benefits to public health and in providing jobs and creating living rural communities, fresh produce has the capacity to encapsulate the essentials of a sustainable and competitive food system.

DOGGTHAG GOIMI ETHTALIGO

Empowering the fruit and vegetable sector would result in a win-win-win situation: for people, the planet, and the economy. The strong assets of the fresh produce sector must be harnessed and taken advantage of. This includes ensuring efficient CAP tools, policy coherency, cutting red tape, supporting new and established producers to invest in their business to secure generational shifts, creating valuable work opportunities, and providing legal reliability and a strong investment incentive in sustainable practices and choices.





In recent years, Freshfel Europe has closely monitored the evolution of rising costs in production and in the supply chain, as well as the impact of inflation on consumption due to reduced purchasing power.



BEL ()RTA

redefining fruit & vegetables



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TOWARDS BUSINESS SIMPLIFICATION

The complexity and proliferation of legal requirements and certification schemes have reached a tipping point. During the EU mandate of 2024-2029, the European Commission is undertaking to simplify and harmonise obligations and legislative demands. Already the first steps have been taken through one so-called 'Omnibus' proposal, meaning an initiative bringing together multiple proposals for changing several files at once, and there are more simplification packages to come.

THE POWER OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

The fruit and vegetable sector is proactive, aiming above and beyond legislative requirements on issues of food safety, sustainability, and accountability. The sector prioritises transparency towards consumers to ensure they receive healthy, safe, and high-quality products. However, this has become increasingly difficult due to added complexities of standards, unfounded and nonsensical restrictions, and short-term perspectives. To foster simplification, harmonization, and competitiveness, Freshfel Europe engaged in several initiatives such as a common methodology for environmental footprint, a joint CSRD/DMA initiative, and an enhanced collaboration with GLO-BALG.A.P. for a better cohesion of IFA and the new ESS with the evolving sustainability agenda.

The sector prioritises transparency towards consumers to ensure they receive healthy, safe and high-quality products.



BOOSTING SIMPLIFICATION

Freshfel Europe advocates well-functioning and efficient value chains. While the legislative framework is essential to harmonise production and trade rules, the legislation must be based on operational realities and feasible methods that do not jeopardise productivity, quality, or competitiveness. Freshfel Europe identified several simplification opportunities, some examples being:

Marketing standards. Simplify the legal requirement to indicate the origin of pre-cut fruit and vegetables given the irrelevance and unfeasibility of such a requirement.

Plant protection products. Work on targeted changes to Regulation No 1107/2009 to grant faster market access to biocontrol and safe innovative non-biocontrol plant protection products. This would provide growers with a comprehensive toolbox to address challenges across the supply chain. Rules to improve the functioning of mutual recognition, as well as to reconsider the zonal division of the European Union given the migration of diseases and pests resulting from climate change must also be revised.

Food waste reduction. Align the EU food safety legislation and allow food additives to manage food waste requirements, using food additives as an alternative to plastic packaging.

Organic policy. Revise and adapt production rules to modern production practices. This can motivate growers to produce organic fresh produce while ensuring that production levels correspond to consumer demand.

Sustainable finance. The current Omnibus proposal could be one step, but simplification must not mean a loss of ambition. Allowing joint endeavours in areas of common activity keeps ambition while removing costs and administrative barriers

Packaging. Keep the format of a Regulation also for fresh fruits and vegetables. The current text allows for severe diverging national legislation on packaging and stickers, putting the good functioning of the single market at risk and increasing the costs and complexity of logistical infrastructure.

A FUTURE-PROOF SECTOR

The fruit and vegetables sector is on the front lines of climate change. In 2024, major fresh produce production areas were hit by wildfires, droughts, water scarcity, floods, late frosts, and other extreme weather conditions enhanced by climate change. These events have affected production but also had severe implications downstream in the supply chain, creating barriers to the movement of fresh produce in and outside the EU.

The sector has so far shown great resilience to these challenges, and while some areas saw an impact on their production, this has been compensated for by other production regions, ensuring a continued steady supply of fresh fruits and vegetables to consumers.

THE POWER OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES BOOSTING RESILIENCE

While the effects of climate change are unpredictable, the fresh produce sector has already managed to take steps to increase resilience. Whether this is by investing in sma-Il-scale mitigation solutions such as hail nets, or through larger cooperative efforts. Working together is one of the best ways to create a robust and flexible sector.

Harnessing the Internet of Things, digitalization, and automatisation are other tools for the sector to increase its resilience. Smart farming practices like aerial vision, GPS-based field machinery, precision farming, and enhanced weather predictions help producers make smooth and swift adjustments when faced with rapid changes in production patterns.



Resilience is not only about mitigation and managing what comes next.

Freshfel Europe works to create a sector that can prosper and continue to grow even under unpredictable conditions

Freshfel Europe works to increase sector resilience twofold. On the one hand, starting from the field, Freshfel Europe serves as a platform to exchange best practices and experiences but also to unite the sector to together improve performance and resilience, and proactively undertake the necessary steps to respond to, and exceed, consumer and market expectations.

On the other hand, Freshfel Europe engages with EU institutions proactively. Informing on the requirements of the sector in the initial phases of policy planning rather than responding to already drafted legislation allows for regulatory frameworks adapted to the essential fruit and vegetable sector. This includes work on, for instance, climate impact reports and securing access to finance through sustainability assessments and reporting. The association is also contributing to several of the European Commission's expert groups, including crisis response and management mechanisms and the newly formed Agri-Food Chain Observatory.

Freshfel Europe took several initiatives to assess the impact of climate change and coordinated the response and implementation of emergency measures adopted by the European Commission package on exceptional measures.



















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COOPERATING WITH THE ENVIRONMENT



The fruit and vegetables sector naturally works alongside nature. It is dependent on good soil conditions, water availability and biodiversity while also managing naturally occurring pests, wildlife and diseases. Ensuring long-term activity of production means balancing all these aspects to achieve a positive feedback loop strengthening environmental conditions.

There is an increased focus from the EU on these topics, especially on water. The upcoming EU Water Resilience Strategy will be a major effort to address the use of water, and the Soil Monitoring Law and food waste reduction targets are still under negotiation.

THE POWER OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

Fresh fruits and vegetables have a small environmental footprint compared to other agri-food products. Water usage is in general low, and any excessive irrigation water is immediately reabsorbed by the ground. Even further down the supply chain, the efficient cleaning and reuse of water means that the sector is a minimal user of global water resources.

Agricultural land also serves as natural biodiversity areas and has a positive effect on soil health and water. Since these are crucial aspects for sustained production, these are continuously reinforced through environmental legislation on plant protection products and fertilizers that contribute to safeguarding the environmental well-being of European agricultural land.

BOOSTING ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

Freshfel Europe continuously aims for improved performance of the sector, supporting and advocating for working alongside the natural environment and towards circular systems. The association supports and encourages accountability, proven for instance by its work on joint supply chain double materiality assessment and the development of an official Product Environmental Footprint Methodology, while also collaborating with private environmental schemes.

The association views initiatives that allow the fruit and vegetable sector to communicate its good assets as crucial and actively encourages inclusion in, for instance, the EU Taxonomy, albeit under less administratively burdensome circumstances. The Green Claims directive has also been welcomed by Freshfel Europe as it prevents greenwashing and conveys an honest and substantiated understanding of product sustainability to consumers.

Local at heart, Global by nature www.doleplc.com

TRACKING SUSTAINABLE PROGRESS

In recent years, the fruit and vegetable sector has seen a significant multiplication and proliferation in reporting requirements from both public and private sources. These requirements, especially when it comes to sustainability aspects, are often similar but not identical. This means that actors in the fresh produce sector, and especially producers, must spend an increasing amount of time, money, and resources to comply with multiple audits. The average producer selling their products on the EU market needs about 10 different certifications, meaning audit time can reach up to 29 days per year with an approximate cost of €900 per audit. These certifications are not a competitive element but rather a market/customer access requirement Often, audits have a topic overlap of around 60%, which is not considered during the actual audits.

THE POWER OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

Production of fresh produce is generally in line with both public and private expectations of sustainability. It is a low-impact food commodity in a sector dedicated to due diligence on environmental and social issues. While sustainability is highly contextual, many production methods and supply chain elements are joint for the sector, regardless of the crop or the geographical location. This means the sector is adept to a certain level of harmonised assessments, as it faces similar challenges and opportunities.



While contributing to public Framework Working Group, Freshfel workshops, bringing together the sector, GLOBALG.A.P. representatives and the European Commission.

BOOSTING HARMONISATION

Freshfel Europe actively works to create a foundation for more harmonised tools and requirements for reporting. The association has gathered the sector in two main projects, a sector Double Materiality Assessment (DMA) under the CSRD and a shadow PEFCR (Product Environmental Footprint Category Rules) for fruit and vegetables (FreshProducePEFCR). These have already proven themselves to be valuable tools in sector assessment and reporting obligations and serve as a foundation for the association's future engagements and advocacy.

One example is the European Commission proposal on a benchmarking scheme to relieve some of the reporting burdens for farmers. Freshfel Europe is in regular contact with the unit responsible and emphasises the importance of building on already existing tools and efforts, including the PEFCR methodology.

Freshfel Europe and its members have found a lot of value in the collaborative projects already accomplished. By pooling resources and knowledge, the association is confident that future projects on, for instance, packaging requirements and climate resilience assessments will be at least as successful.

Freshfel Europe also engages with private certification bodies and, since 2023, has been actively involved in GLO-BALG.A.P.'s ongoing development of Environmental Sustainability Standards (ESS). t This has contributed to significant changes in the ESS framework and approach.



consultations and in the dedicated ESS Europe also organised three in-person

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AN EFFICIENT CAP FOR F&V



Food security remains at the top of the agenda. In the past years, productivity has been impacted not only by severe climatic havoc but also by other factors, such as restrictions of the toolbox and the shift to less productive organic production. The pursuit of greater sustainability goals in Europe is, however, ongoing. This includes, among others, the production and supply of food in a sustainable manner. To achieve this, the European Commission has proposed several initiatives, although not all have yet been successful.

THE POWER OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

In order to continue and bring a more vibrant and dynamic sector, Freshfel Europe is advocating to decision-makers that it is vital to strengthen a sustainable toolbox for the fresh fruit and vegetables sector. To enhance productivity, reduce food loss, and mitigate the impact of climate events and other collateral effects such as the proliferation of new pests and diseases, it is essential that the EU review and engage in a process to secure a well-equipped toolbox for growers and guide and support adequately future investments.

Tools available within the CAP should be further strengthened to further reinforce the role of producer organisations, interbranch structures, emergency crisis schemes and other instruments such as promotion policy or school schemes. The current discussion on the future of the CAP budget is one of extreme importance. A change in the structure could impact negatively the suitability of CAP tools to the specific needs of the fresh fruit and vegetables sector, especially in the framework of market structure and sustainability. The current CAP 2023–2027 has been assessed in light of the geopolitical situation, trying to find new and better pathways. Close monitoring is necessary to ensure the next CAP moves in the right direction.

BOOSTING FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

Today the fruit and vegetables sector, despite being an essential sector part of the solution to societal concerns, is only granted 3% of the CAP budget while generating more than 15% of agriculture value output. In times of pressed budgets, financial priorities need to be reassessed to adequately direct funding to enhance the sustainable fruit and vegetable sector. Freshfel Europe considers that positive discrimination is needed to drive the shift towards a more sustainable food system, shifting consumers towards a more plant (based) diet based on genuine plant elements such as fresh fruit and vegetables and away from ultra-processed food. Getting the right tool to deliver all its power will be for the economic benefits of growers, the social benefits for the consumers and the environmental benefits of the planet.

Today the fruit and vegetables sector, despite being an essential sector part of the solution to societal concerns, is only granted 3% of the CAP budget while generating more than 15% of agriculture value output.

Freshfel EU Activity Report 2025

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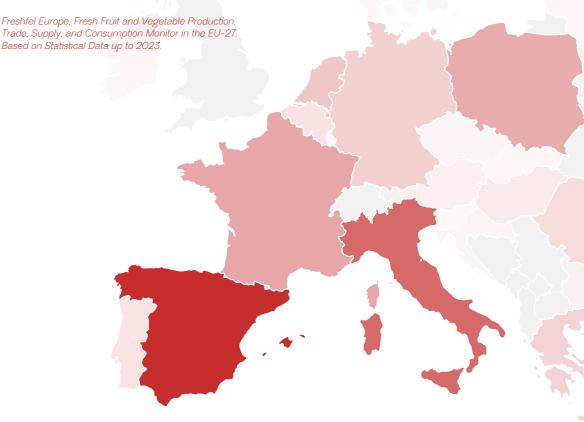


F&V IN NUMBERS: EU PRODUCTION

	EU fruit and vegetable production (1.000 t)			
	2022	2023	2022/2023%	
EU-27	65.180	64.128	-1,61%	
Spain 🐔	17.219	17.552	+1,93%	
Italy	12.581	12.280	-2,39%	
France	6.578	6.909	+5,03%	
Poland	6.867	6.461	-5,92%	
Netherlands	4.356	4.171	-4,26%	
Germany	3.514	3.402	-3,18%	
Greece	3.590	3.183	-11,34%	
Romania	2.527	2.457	-2,76%	
Belgium	1.923	1.853	-3,67%	
Portugal (f	1.802	1.767	-1,96%	
Hungary	916	1.045	+14,07%	
Austria	765	687	-10,15%	
Bulgaria	586	548	-6,46%	
Czech Republic	272	266	-2,43%	
Sweden	256	249	-2.58%	

Fruit and vegetable 2023 production by country in volume (1.000 t)

	0		,	()
0				18.000



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and vegetables

Food Freshly Germany partners with fresh-cut processors globally to enhance product quality, food safety and operational efficiency. Our nature-based Antioxidants significantly increase the shelf-life of fresh-cut fruits and vegetables, maintaining freshness and enhancing food safety.















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Securing consumer confidence in regard to food and plant safety is essential in the fresh F&V sector. Freshfel Europe pursues full compliance with the European legislation on plant and food safety and quality while minimising the use of chemical plant protection products (PPPs) and moving towards better and more sustainable agricultural practices. This is being done while coping with increased pressure and threats to plant safety due to climate change.

In recent years, the European institutions have been pursuing higher goals for sustainability. During this new legislative term, the European Commission will approach the matter from a bottom-up approach, better balancing the three pillars of sustainability to address challenges related to food safety & quality without compromising on environmental sustainability. Freshfel Europe is welcoming this new line closer to business expectations.

THE POWER OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

Despite the fact that fresh fruit and vegetables are perishable agri-food commodities, the sector demonstrated its adaptation towards different policy initiatives related to plant & food safety and quality. Freshfel Europe guided the sector restlessly in this process, calling for a necessary transition and the availability of efficient and affordable alternatives. Reducing the toolkit and lack of innovative solutions did not prevent the sector from delivering safe and high-quality fresh produce while minimising food waste in the supply chain. However, the environmental issues arising all over the world because of climate change should be addressed rapidly to keep the fresh produce sector vibrant.

BOOSTING A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT TO SECURE FOOD SAFETY & QUALITY

It is essential that EU policymakers facilitate timely access to a complete agricultural toolbox to address health, environmental and economic challenges. The European Commission aims to support European growers on identified concerns through its Vision for Agriculture and Food. The sector supports its intentions to provide a toolbox that includes targeted public support from the CAP, investments into nature-friendly solutions, economic incentives, tailored advice drawing on advances in research and innovation, and a more agile regulatory environment.

Vision for Agriculture & Food

Elimination of uses of harmful PPPs.

sults are achieved in structured & scientific manner, while remain coherent with the WTO rules and address issues providing growers with tools to produce F&Vs.

Definition for biocontrol PPPs. Provisional authorisation of biocontrol PPPs at national level.

The sector urges the European Commission

Act quickly, ensuring that all F&V commodities have a broad and competitive toolkit. Ensure that provisional applications at national level do not result in competitiveness issues across the countries.

Mirror measures on imported F&Vs.

The sector supports such ambition provided re- The sector urges the European Commission to related to production specificities in non-EU countries.

> EFSA to be reinforced with additional resources to speed up risk assessment procedures.

The sector supports such action provided that: In parallel, EU MSs will also invest in national resources for evaluations and national registrations. Reinforces resources also provide chemical PPPs speeded up risk assessments.

Plant breeding innovations.

The sector urges the European Commission to proceed with rules allowing new innovative tools to come on the market to cope with the accelerating development of climaprovide EU produced and imported F&Vs with the right toolkit te change that impacts productivity, producers' economic well-being, and competitiveness.







The sector urges the European Commission to ensure that alternative safe solutions are put on the market to to address challenges at pre & post-harvest stages.





The Guide to Healthy Generations





As a member of Freshfel, Fresh Produce Centre Netherlands is working on five ambitions.

Health

Healthy Diet, Lifestyle, and Food Environment

Promote health, prevent disease, and increase physical, mental, and social well-being of Dutch citizens, so that the sector can set an example for other countries.

Sustainability

Striving for Progression in a Sustainable Food System

Reduce the environmental footprint of fruit and vegetables, promote nature and biodiversity, and increase circularity.

Market & Economy

Innovation in the value chain

Strengthen the trading position, from production to sales, and contribute to prosperity and employment.

Social

Social value far beyond our national borders

Help increase the financial, physical, and social well-being of growers, employees, seasonal workers and stakeholders, far beyond our national borders.

Food Safety

Safeguarding food safety

Promote the food safety culture in the entire chain, and control the chemical, microbiological, and physical risks of fruit and vegetables.

Fresh Produce Centre www.freshproducecentre.com

ACTING ON EU QUALITY SCHEMES



Quality schemes like the organic production logo or the PGI-PDO scheme are available in the EU to differentiate products based on production method or produce origin's specification. These schemes are most often seen as a quality signature. Another EU quality scheme is found in organic production. In 2021, the EU committed to an Organic Action Plan, which aimed to achieve 25% of farmland dedicated to organic production by 2030. In fruit and vegetables, the production growth is still far from the target. The decline in demand and consumption consequently led to the regression and stagnation of organic production of fresh fruit and vegetables.

In 2024, new regulations on Geographical Indications (GI) schemes came into force. This new Regulation now takes into account sustainable practices, efforts of producer groups, and introduces a simplified registration procedure.

THE POWER OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

Production under organic principles is one of many ways to achieve more sustainable practices demanded by societal concerns. The reduced use of chemicals and the principles of organic farming bring an added layer of sustainable thinking to the fruit and vegetable sector. Besides the organic scheme, the sector also has other sustainable practices adjusted to specific growing conditions to match customers' and consumers' expectations.

Likewise, the use of geographical indications acknowledges unique characteristics and is key in promoting the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables, in particular in local environments

BOOSTING QUALITY SCHEMES

The EU Organic Action Plan has incentivised many operators to convert to organic farming, but it has so far failed to ensure consumers' interest and affordability. This has caused many organic fresh produce farmers to revert to conventional. The Organic Action Plan needs to strengthen itself towards consumers, promoting the uptake of organic products in shoppers' food baskets. While an increasing number of consumers become aware of the benefits of organic production, decreasing purchasing power has led to a decreased interest in organic products.

Freshfel Europe also welcomes the revision of the GI Regulation to include aspects of sustainable practices and enhancing the role of producer groups and organisations. As fresh produce plays an important role in these areas, the added value of quality recognition will be of benefit to consumers and the sector.

fruit attraction

International Trade Show for the Fruit and Vegetable Industry



30 Sept 02 Oct 2025

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A STEADFAST SINGLE MARKET

While fruit and vegetables remain primarily sold locally and in season in the Member States where they are grown, the EU Single Market lies at the heart of the EU project. It is a unique "safe bank" instrument of growth by facilitating exchanges in a market of 450 million citizens. It represents the lion's share of sales not happening locally and serves as a way of ensuring food security and diversity of fresh produce within the borders of the European Union.

THE POWER OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

Fresh fruit and vegetable trade within the EU Single market is of great importance to the sector as a whole. Every year, around 47% of European production is traded for intra-EU sales, as opposed to 10% for extra-EU export.

Trade within the Single Market has grown over the last year. Dispatches reach 30.5 million tonnes, which represents a 4.7% growth for a total value of 44.42 billion euros (+6.47%).

Such positive results highlight the importance of keeping the Single Market functional, predictable, and stable for all actors along the fresh fruit and vegetables supply chain. Especially considering, once more, the growing importance of guaranteeing a diversified supply for healthy diets and ensuring food security. Freshfel Europe remains concerned that in the past years more obstacles were hampering the free movement in the internal market with barriers relating to environmental sustainability, food safety, logistics (packaging) and labelling. This is leading to uncertainties and added costs impacting competitiveness and consumer choices.

BOOSTING INTERNAL TRADE FOR FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

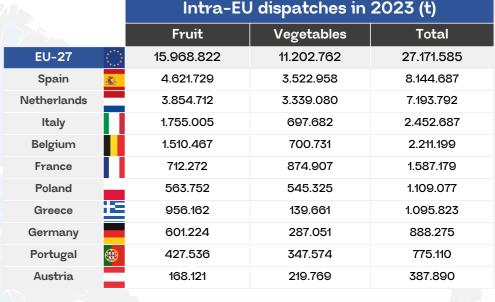
Ensuring the stability and unity of the Single Market will require a multi-faceted approach. Given the differences in national ambitions, notably in terms of sustainability and environmental protections, there is a growing risk of divergence in national interpretations or rules that would directly impact the fresh fruit and vegetable sector. This can be, for example, the case with MRLs, pesticides or packaging. It is therefore crucial for Freshfel Europe to monitor closely those changes and ensure that the European Union maintains a common legislative framework that pushes towards harmonisation on topics with the biggest impact on the sector.

The example of nutritional labelling can show how different national ambitions can lead to different levels of results and ambitions (see the page on labelling). In this case and many others, Freshfel Europe underlines the need for the Commission to ensure a level playing field across the entire Union territory.



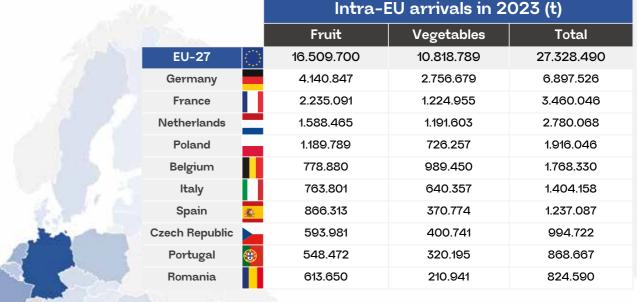


Every year, around 47% of European production is traded for intra-EU sales, as opposed to 10% for extra-EU export.



Fruit and vegetable dispatches by country in volume (t)

Freshfel Europe, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Production Trade, Supply, and Consumption Monitor in the EU-27 Based on Statistical Data up to 2023



Fruit and vegetable arrivals by country in volume (t)

Freshfel Europe, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Production, Trade, Supply, and Consumption Monitor in the EU-27 Based on Statistical Data up to 2023.





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SEPTEMBER 2025

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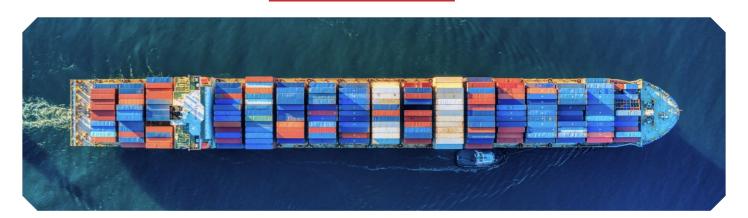








SHIFTING TRADE PATTERNS



EU trade policy relies on open trade with close partners, facilitating exchanges and promoting bilateral trade with the additional guarantee of a robust multilateral environment. Current trade uncertainties from the spiralling impact of unilateral tariffs imposed by the US could generate collateral and unpredictable consequences, including worldwide protectionism. The US disengaging from the Paris Agreement could also induce greater asymmetry of US and EU sustainability approaches, creating challenging discrepancies in business solutions for operators supplying both markets. Maintaining a level playing field, ensuring food security and sustainable trade will require efforts to maintain key trade relationships and explore new opportunities. Freshfel Europe is firmly working to maintain and boost trade opportunities on the global stage, considering that 95% of consumers are outside the European Union.

THE POWER OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

Overall, 2024 was a strong year for extra-EU fresh F&V trade. Exports, while still below potential, have grown slightly in 2024 compared to 2023. Imports have registered an ongoing growth compared to 2023, a constant trend in the last decade.

While the EU continues its approach towards bilateral agreements (e.g., Mercosur and Southeast Asia), it should closely monitor their outcome. Many trade partners with an FTA and supplying large volumes to the EU, e.g., Mexico, Peru and Chile, continue to impose excessive SPS measures for imports from the EU. A better reciprocity of market access SPS rules is required. Freshfel Europe regularly voices these concerns to the European Commission and the WTO SPS committee. Close monitoring of the follow-up of the Russian embargo and its collateral consequences, changes in UK market access, access to the EU neighbourhood, and opening of new opportunities overseas remain highly relevant for market stability.

BOOSTING INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Removing remaining trade difficulties is crucial. Besides disruptions from logistic, economic or political instability, SPS obstacles remain the main concern. Recognition of the EU as a Single Entity with high-level quality in plant and food safety should be the basis of confidence to alleviate and facilitate trade. The current revision, modernisation and negotiations of FTAs between the EU and third countries are new windows of opportunity for common ground and cooperation on sustainability. Furthermore, as the US takes a more isolationist stance, it can offer new opportunities and trading partners to the EU, for example with Canada, Mexico, Brazil, India, Japan or China.

In different consultation bodies of DG TRADE, Freshfel Europe ensures the particularities of trade in fresh fruit and vegetables remain at the forefront in all trade discussions and negotiations.

Regarding multilateralism, the WTO must remain the privileged forum of discussion, cooperation, and in finding a scientific common approach. The dispute mechanism should be unblocked as quickly as possible. Freshfel Europe, with the support of the European Commission, is closely following the work of the WTO's SPS Committee.

15.44 million tons 20.2 billion EUR

6.6 million tons 10.08 billion EUR

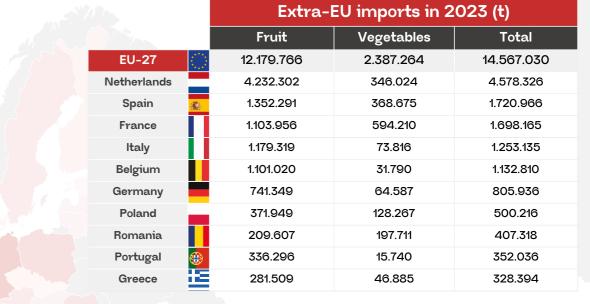
F&V IN NUMBERS: EXTRA-EU TRADE



Fruit and vegetable exports by country in volume (t)

2.000.000

Freshfel Europe, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Production, Trade, Supply, and Consumption Monitor in the EU-27. Based on Statistical Data up to 2023.



Fruit and vegetable imports by country in volume (t)

5.000.000

Freshfel Europe, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Production, Trade, Supply, and Consumption Monitor in the EU-27. Based on Statistical Data up to 2023.



PACKING & MOVING FRESH PRODUCE

Fresh fruit and vegetables are perishable and sensitive products requiring a logistical chain operating with swift handling, protective packaging, and timely transport. In the last year, packaging and timely transport have experienced particular turbulence. The EU Regulation on Packaging and Packaging Waste (PPWR) has introduced a ban on plastic packaging specifically targeting fruits and vegetables. Regarding transport, droughts in the Panama Canal, security issues in the Red Sea, sanctions and embargoes due to wars, adaptation of logistics to CO2 emissions reduction targets, and restructuring of logistical chains toward combined solutions have introduced new challenges for the movement of fresh produce globally.

THE POWER OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

Access to fresh fruits and vegetables is key to supporting healthy diets with low environmental impacts in Europe and beyond. Efficient and well-functioning logistics chains are crucial to maintaining product quality and freshness upon reaching the consumer while keeping the environmental footprint of the logistics chain as small as possible. In the EU, over 50% of the fruits and vegetables are consumed in the same country as they are grown, meaning the logistical chains are short, keeping emissions at a minimum. Beyond, the sector is repositioning its practices to minimise emissions.



Efficient and well-functioning logistics chains are crucial to maintaining product quality and freshness upon reaching the consumer while keeping the environmental footprint of the logistics chain as small as possible.

BOOSTING LOGISTICAL CHAINS AND PACKAGING SOLUTIONS

For intra-EU and inland transport, Freshfel Europe identifies several areas where the efficiency of the fresh produce logistical chain is at risk and where there is high potential for improvement. One risk area today is related to packaging, or more specifically, the risk of lack thereof. Freshfel Europe actively contributes to the discussion on implementing the PPWR, working for a solution that does not put food safety or quality at risk regardless of the distance the product needs to travel.

To maintain an environmentally sustainable approach, Member States must align on the product scope of the restriction. Diverging national legislation means that products will be unpacked or repacked at borders or in the supply chain, leading to unnecessary packaging waste and food waste. It will also impose disproportionate financial burdens on the sector, impacting competitiveness and the attractiveness of the EU as a market. One rule for the Single Market is a prerequisite for the EU's simplification ambition.

Fresh produce transport in the EU is largely road-based. Improving rail transport within the Union can improve air quality, be more space efficient and, according to Freshfel Europe's preliminary calculations, save up to 3,5 million tons of CO2 emissions. Shifts to electric vehicles and synergies for last-kilometre delivery must also be pursued.

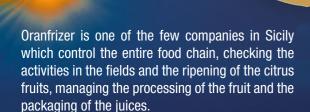
For long-distance transport, efficient and reliable routes must be established, and fresh produce needs to have a prioritised position in case of changed circumstances in ports or en route. Being perishable products, fresh produce is vulnerable to delays and disruptions, leading to food waste and economic loss for producers.







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NUTRITIOUS FOOD SECURITY



Food security, globally and within the EU, is an important, growing topic. It means coping with a growing population, but also the impact of supply disruptions from, for instance, geopolitical tensions, scarcity of natural resources or the impact of climatic havoc. It should not be disconnected from nutrition security, guaranteeing good-quality diets that positively affect public health, the planet, and the economy. European fresh produce supply allows the Union to be self-sufficient. However, to ensure nutritious diets are available and affordable for all, and since we are still well below the recommended minimum consumption of F&Vs, there is a need to increase production and availability. Adding one portion of fresh fruit and vegetables to the diet of every EU citizen would require increasing supply by 12 million tons.

A well-functioning production stage is only part of the bigger picture. Trade relationships guarantee the year-round availability of products and the availability of tropical products. Making fresh produce an attractive, diversified, and convenient food choice for consumers while ensuring long-term productivity through generational renewal and reducing labour shortages are crucial aspects.

THE POWER OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

Fruits and vegetables are a part of food security and, equally important, nutritional security. Today, the effects of unhealthy diets weigh heavily on social security and public health institutions. Healthy diets with a larger portion of fresh produce are part of the solution. Not only feeding the world but feeding it well. The sector is among the most environmentally sustainable, and together with its health benefits, it ticks many boxes of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the increasingly health-conscious expectations of citizens around the world.

The fruit and vegetable sector also serves as a major employer both within the EU and with third-country trade partners. It provides an income opportunity to rural and remote areas for people of all ages and genders. This brings added value to both the population, the community, and the country.

BOOSTING HEALTHY INDEPENDENCE

To ensure long-term productivity and efficiency and ensure year-round supply of products from different sources and to different destinations, Freshfel Europe engages in several topics. While primarily European-focused, the association maintains and builds partnerships with all regions of the world and the EU neighbourhood. The association also works actively on certification, non-financial reporting, standardisation, and benchmarking topics to reduce administrative burdens and improve sector efficiency and investment capabilities.

This, together with sustainable work conditions, fair wages and return distribution across the supply chain, are key elements to attract new talents and skills to the sector. Finally, to ensure food security and nutritional diets, fresh produce must be presented as a convenient and affordable food choice. Freshfel Europe therefore works actively with promotion programmes and policy, marketing standards, packaging and more to match those objectives.

PUT A LABEL ON IT?

Labelling is a diverse concept for fruits and vegetables. While European and national legislation encompasses an extensive list of labelling requirements to keep European consumers informed, voluntary labelling, provided it is not misleading, is also permitted.

Regulated versus unregulated and mandatory versus voluntary labelling comes with different opportunities and challenges. Transparency and invoking consumer trust are essential aspects for the fruit and vegetable sector but must not come with unnecessary costs, confusion, or environmental impacts.

THE POWER OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

Fruit and vegetables possess several positive aspects that can be communicated through labelling. With excellent environmental, social and health performance, the sector encourages transparency to enhance consumer trust and education beyond product description and origin.

The nutritional labelling scheme proposed by the European Commission in 2020 has not yet been finalised, although 7 Member States have adopted measures of it. The proposal would signal to consumers the health benefits – or lack thereof – of foods. Fresh fruits and vegetables would consistently score an A.

Today, around 50% of fresh produce in the EU is sold in bulk, making any kind of labelling difficult and leaves consumers insufficiently informed about the nutritional and sustainability values of fruits and vegetables, while unhealthy alternatives are easily labelled on their packaging. The healthy properties of fruits and vegetables are also used misleadingly, with other product categories using images of fresh produce when they in fact have little or no fruit or vegetable content.

HELLO MY NAME IS

By requiring explicit environmental claims to be substantiated by solid research and facts, labels will regain the trust and value that have been lost with the recent proliferation of labels.

BOOSTING LOGISTICAL CHAINS AND PACKAGING SOLUTIONS

Freshfel Europe welcomes initiatives that support transparency and comparability. The EU Green Claims proposal aims to do just that. By requiring explicit environmental claims to be substantiated by solid research and facts, labels will regain the trust and value that have been lost with the recent proliferation of labels. Freshfel Europe also supports standardised methodologies like PEFCRs to facilitate comparability and separation of performance elements for individual assessments.

Furthermore, established true cost analyses, which indicate not only the monetary cost of food but also the additional or subtracted costs (depending on health effects and environmental impact), would convey to consumers the added value of consuming more fresh produce.

For health and nutritional claims, the claims procedure in EFSA must be simplified to support health communication by the sector, nutritionists, scientists, and health care. This would also support the use of the scientific findings from Aprifel's EGEA conferences. The EU is currently discussing voluntary nutritional labelling – Freshfel Europe advocates for compulsory. Voluntary nutritional labelling risks causing confusion and trade constraints.

However, mandatory labelling is not always the best option. The marketing standard for fruit and vegetables that entered into force on 1 January 2025 was proof of this. The sector faced challenges in coping with new rules to indicate the origin of pre-cut fruit and vegetables, in addition to having to adjust in time to new requirements that are now perceived as misleading labelling.





** Internal data - Nov to end July 2024

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PUTTING F&V ON THE TABLE



Fresh fruits and vegetables are an essential part of healthy diets. Interest and awareness on healthy and sustainable food choices is growing in Europe. Still, the average European today only consumes about 350g of fresh fruits and vegetables daily. Meaning they do not reach WHO's recommended minimum target of 400g. An amount that is at the lower end compared to most Member States' nutritional guidelines of between 500-1000g, and the Nordic Council recommendations of 800g.

THE POWER OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

Diets rich in fruits and vegetables have a proven positive effect on gut health, can lower blood pressure, and prevent cardiovascular and non-communicable diseases. Unhealthy diets cause over 10 million preventable deaths globally every year, and while unhealthy food choices play a role, the larger problem is the lack of healthy foods in

The health benefits of fresh produce also have a positive economic impact. Healthy populations put less pressure on social security systems and public health institutions and contribute to the workforce and society.

Finally, fresh produce is among the most environmentally friendly food choices one can make. Compared to other foods, fresh produce is recognised as having among the smallest environmental footprints and is a key contributor to the One Health approach, which focuses on the health of people, planet and society.

While taste and freshness are trademarks of fresh produce, convenience and availability are equally important to increase consumption.

BOOSTING CONSUMPTION & HEALTH

One of Freshfel Europe's flagship publications is the annual Consumption Monitor, which has become increasingly important and a reference document in the EU and beyond when evaluating the trends of fresh fruit and vegetable production, trade and consumption in Europe. It is a unique document looking at the business development and the evolution of consumption of fresh produce in Europe.

Freshfel Europe emphasises the importance of establishing healthy diet patterns in the younger generations. EU tools such as the promotion policy and EU school scheme are important and should be further reinforced. While taste and freshness are trademarks of fresh produce, convenience and availability are equally important to increase consumption. Because of fresh produce's benefits, Freshfel Europe is being vocal about the need to strive for policy that enables shifts towards healthier plant diets, based on

Policy incoherence and the lack of recognition by decision-makers of the essential and public goods role of fresh produce have worked counter to the EU strategies of shifting towards healthier diets as enshrined in the Farm to Fork Strategy, the Green Deal, the EU Beating Cancer Plan, and Food 2030. Freshfel Europe is calling on authorities not to forget these ambitions in the implementation of the Vision for Agriculture and Food. Authorities should engage in positive regulatory discrimination towards fresh produce. It will be a triple win - for the planet, for the sector, and the health of EU citizens.



Fresh produce are an excellence that plastic packaging protects and delivers undamaged, to the tables of European consumers.

But the strengths of plastic packaging do not end here, we only show you the main ones because one page cannot contain them all.

Pro Food - Fresh Food Packaging Producers Association. Via San Vittore 36 – 20124 Milan, Italy info@profooditalia.it - **profooditalia.it**



F&V IN NUMBERS: CONSUMPTION

	Av. consumption (g/capita/day)			
	2022	2023	2022/2023%	
Spain 🕵	362,79	447,50	+23,35%	
Belgium	459,77	447,18	-2,74%	
Portugal 🜐	430,64	441,19	+2,45%	
Italy	440,47	438,13	-0,53%	
Poland	437,88	417,16	-4,73%	
Romania	420,28	413,66	-1,58%	
Greece	471,82	405,28	-14,10%	
Bulgaria	369,67	357,04	-3,42%	
Netherlands	350,62	354,79	+1,19%	
EU	350,82	350,79	-0,01%	
France	320,83	324,52	+1,15%	
Austria	330,09	318,02	-3,66%	
Cyprus	321,78	311,35	-3,24%	
Hungary	273,69	287,79	+5,15%	
Croatia	281,71	285,55	+1,36%	
Slovenia	300,17	281,08	-6,36%	
Lithuania	337,94	278,15	-17,69%	
Malta	279,98	270,00	-3,57%	
Germany	287,19	264,68	-7,84%	
Denmark	247,07	260,67	+5,50%	
Luxembourg	262,80	258,94	-1,47%	
Estonia	280,01	255,19	-8,87%	
Latvia	254,75	242,89	-4,66%	
Ireland	254,67	242,61	-4,74%	
Sweden	250,33	235,09	-6,09%	
Czech Republic	233,49	224,81	-3,72%	
Slovakia 🙏	205,21	219,33	+6,88%	
Finland	237,00	214,07	-9,67%	

Fruit and vegetable 2023 consumption by country in volume (g/capita/day)

447

Freshfel Europe, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Production, Trade, Supply, and Consumption Monitor in the EU-27. Based on Statistical Data up to 2023.





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SPREADING THE WORD ON FRESH PRODUCE

Fresh produce consumption remains well below the minimum recommendations. Traditionally the benchmark was 400g/person/day, set by WHO for health purposes. More recently, the benefits for the planet of eating fruit and vegetables were also recognised, adding another 400g and resulting in the Nordic Council recommending 800g. Currently, the demographic group with the lowest consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables are millennials and the youngest generations.

The EU has several tools to promote European agrifood products, for instance, the promotion policy, the CAP, and the EU School Scheme. These tools must be leveraged and honed to support the shift towards healthy and sustainable diets.

Unhealthy diets are a growing financial burden for society. The costs of unhealthy eating habits strain healthcare systems, reduce productivity and quality of life, and increase costs related to emissions and environmental degradation. Investing in nutritional diets can negate the costs of inaction and even generate financial gains.

THE POWER OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

Fruit and vegetables should be considered as public goods. They have a wealth of undisputed assets, including low environmental impact and high health benefits. These need to be understood and valued by consumers and decision-makers in policymaking. Fruit and vegetables are too often confronted with misperceptions or misinformation of those assets. Stimulating fresh produce will have a triple return on investment: for the planet, for society, and citizens.



The EU promotion policy and the School Scheme should be enhanced with a significantly higher budget and positive discrimination for fresh produce.

BOOSTING FRESH PRODUCE'S POSITION IN THE FOOD ASSORTMENT

Freshfel Europe advocates the swift undertaking of a wide range of actions by decision-makers. Part of this includes significantly upgrading CAP tools to enhance consumption. It could include, on a non-exhaustive basis:

The EU school scheme should become a daily distribution programme, stretching the full duration of the school semester, accompanying a robust education programme. A nutrition curriculum should be introduced to increase awareness and inform the younger generations of the benefits of healthy and balanced diets.

The EU promotion policy should be enhanced with a significantly higher budget and positive discrimination for fresh produce.

Nutritional guidelines and recommendations for fruit and vegetable consumption should be accompanied by concrete

Rules for health and nutritional claims should be revised to allow the sector to communicate on health and nutritional values of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Encourage Member States to introduce fiscal advantages to enhance consumption of fruit and vegetables over ultra-processed food.

Facilitate visibility and convenience of fruit and vegetables with adequate packaging to allow marketing, promotion and information on equal standards as other foods.

Freshfel Europe also continues to actively engage in EU promotion policy projects. Having just finalised the "Life is Better with Fruit and Vegetables" campaign, Freshfel Europe is now looking ahead to future projects to support fresh produce consumption.

FRESHFEL MEMBERS

FULL MEMBERS











Freshfel EU Activity Report 2025









































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TétalPréduce.















ASSOCIATED MEMBERS



















































































INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS







CHOOSE HEALTHY CHOOSE REAL CHOOSE ZESPRI



WHO WE ARE

Freshfel Europe, the European Fresh Produce Association, is the forum for the fresh fruit and vegetable supply chain in Europe and beyond.

Founded in 2001 and consolidating organisations dating from the 1960s, Freshfel Europe has a vertical membership structure with members from across the entire supply chain in Europe, including producers, traders, wholesalers, importers and exporters, logistics providers, and retailers. Service providers as associated members reinforce the organisation's actions.

Freshfel Europe is a non-profit association under Belgian Law and is registered in the EU Transparency Register.

OUR CORE OBJECTIVES

Represent the interests of the European fresh fruit and vegetable sector and ensure that the sector has a strong voice in Europe and globally.

Ensure that the European fresh fruit and vegetable sector is dynamic, supplying healthy products of the highest quality, safety, environmental and social standards to meet consumers' changing needs, address societal challenges and be part of sustainable food systems.

Position fresh produce in all policy areas and represent the sector's priorities.

Stimulate consumption and promote the health and environmental benefits of fresh produce.

Keep the association's members abreast of multiple policy initiatives to jointly build consensual and comprehensive positions and to facilitate collective actions.

FRESHFEL EUROPE MEMBER BENEFITS

Freshfel Europe members are at the forefront of the produce sector development.

Continuously gain knowledge. **Increase** your business potential. **Get** your voice heard.

Exclusive data access.

Network and connect with leading stakeholders.

Be a sector leader.

More information about membership is available via the Freshfel Europe website at **www.freshfel.org** or by contacting the Freshfel Europe Secretariat.













Freshfel EU Activity Report 2025 Freshfel EU Activity Report 2025

BECOME A FRESHFEL EUROPE MEMBER

Become a member of Freshfel Europe, the European Fresh Produce Association! Freshfel Europe is the leading EU and global association for the fresh fruit and vegetable industry.

Be part of this unique EU-wide and global network to:

Increase your business potential.

Get your voice heard at EU and international levels on key on-the-ground and policy issues.

All Freshfel Europe members have access to a large array of resources as part of their membership:

Tailored regulatory and non-regulatory information provision.

Platforms for policy and topical exchange.

Thinking of becoming a member? More information about membership is available via the Freshfel Europe website at www.freshfel.org or contact the Freshfel Europe Secretariat.



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Freshfel Europe

2025

