

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

THIS REPORT CONTAINS ASSESSMENTS OF COMMODITY AND TRADE ISSUES MADE BY
USDA STAFF AND NOT NECESSARILY STATEMENTS OF OFFICIAL U.S. GOVERNMENT
POLICY

Voluntary Public

Date: 11/20/2014

Israel

Post: Tel Aviv

Tel Aviv Tidbits -Developments in Israel's Agriculture and Food Sectors

Report Categories:

Agriculture in the News

Approved By:

Orestes Vasquez
Sr. Agricultural Attaché

Prepared By:

Gilad Shachar

Report Highlights:

The following developments in Israel's Agriculture and Food Sectors are summarized in this report:

- ISRAFOOD To Be Held on November 25-27 in Tel Aviv
- Russia Growing Destination for Israeli Fresh Potatoes
- Minister of Agriculture Argues Against Tax Increase on Employing Foreign Workers in Agriculture

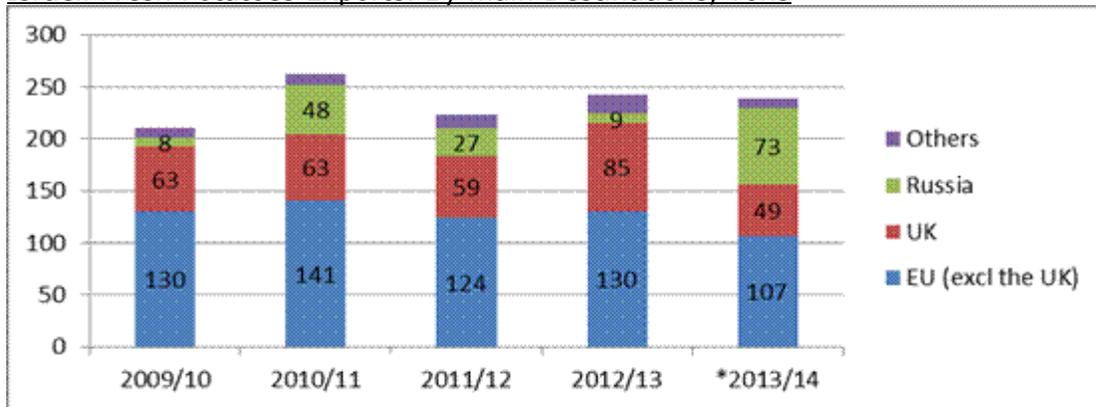
ISRAFOOD To Be Held on November 25-27 in Tel Aviv

Israfood, the major trade event for the food and beverage industry in Israel. will be between November 25-27, 2014 in Tel Aviv . This exhibition is the main platform for a professional and business encounter between manufacturers, importers, and representatives of the institutional, professional, retail chain sector as well as the private sector. Israfood 2014 will be held within the "Israeli Food & Hospitality Week" events, and concurrently with Hotex, which is the hospitality industry's premier event showcasing equipment, services, and new technologies. The event. For more information please visit: http://www.stier.co.il/israfood/index_en.asp

Russia Growing Destination for Israeli Fresh Potatoes

In recent years, Israeli fresh potato exports have averaged between 200 and 250 thousand tons per year. The majority of exports have traditionally been to the United Kingdom and the European Union, however, in marketing year 2013/14, the Russian market gained significant momentum as a destination for Israeli fresh potatoes. The increase was due to more competitive prices that European potatoes during the spring . Israel plants 16,500 hectares with a total production of about 625,000 tons, of which nearly 40% are exported, 43% to the local fresh market, 13% is delivered to the industry, and the remaining 4% used as seed potatoes . Local fresh potatoes consumption per capita is 40 kgs.

Israeli Fresh Potatoes Exports. By main Destinations, Tons



*Until

6/2014 (most exports to Russia are in May and June)

Source: Israeli Plant and Protection Services

Minister of Agriculture Argues Against Tax Increase on Employing Foreign Workers in Agriculture -

Yair Shamir, Minister of Agriculture stated: "We have managed to thwart a foolish decision made by the Ministry of Finance, and the tax on employing foreign workers in agriculture shall not be raised from 10% to 20%. Moreover, the Ministry believes this is an unnecessary tax, and that actions should be taken to bring about its complete cancellation. This tax substantially increases the cost of food production, and as a result causes an increase in the cost of living". As part of the actions taken after Operation Protective Edge in order to strengthen the farmers of the area surrounding the Gaza strip, the ministry of Agriculture recently initiated the reduction of the tax on employing foreign workers in agriculture from 10% to 5% for three years. This change was accepted as a government resolution in Oct 2014. There are about 23,000 foreign workers in the agricultural sector who are mainly from Thailand. Israel permits the entry of foreign workers to Israel under a quota regime , nearly all of them low-skilled workers employed in caregiving, agriculture and construction.