

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: Overview of the Egyptian Sweetpotato Market - 2025

Country: Egypt

Post: Cairo

Report Category: Potatoes and Potato Products

Prepared By: FAS Cairo

Approved By: Jenny Morgan

Report Highlights:

Egyptian sweetpotato production continues to expand as the demand in export markets increase. Egyptian exports of sweetpotatoes have risen significantly over the past few years, primarily to the European market due to geographic proximity. Domestic consumption of sweetpotatoes is also popular amongst Egyptian consumers due to its competitive price and high nutritional value.

Production

In Egypt, sweetpotato cuttings or seedlings are planted in April (which is considered the optimum planting month) and harvested in August. Driven by export demand, sweetpotato planted area has increased by 33.3 percent since 2021. Similarly, production has increased by 16.8 percent during the same period, reaching 440,000 metric tons (MT), primarily driven by the increase in area planted. The increasing demand for sweetpotatoes has also led to the exploration of new varieties and cultivation techniques to meet the preferences of consumers in international markets, particularly for the European Union (EU) and United Kingdom (UK) markets.

Sweetpotatoes are primarily grown along the Nile Delta and in Middle Egypt. Egypt grows several varieties of sweetpotatoes, each catering to different market demands and consumer preferences. The main sweetpotato varieties available for cultivation are Beauregard, Evangeline and Bellevue. These varieties are orange fleshed and are known for their vibrant color, sweet flavor, and nutrition, making it highly requested in European markets, especially in the Netherlands. There are also several producers of organically cultivated sweetpotatoes.

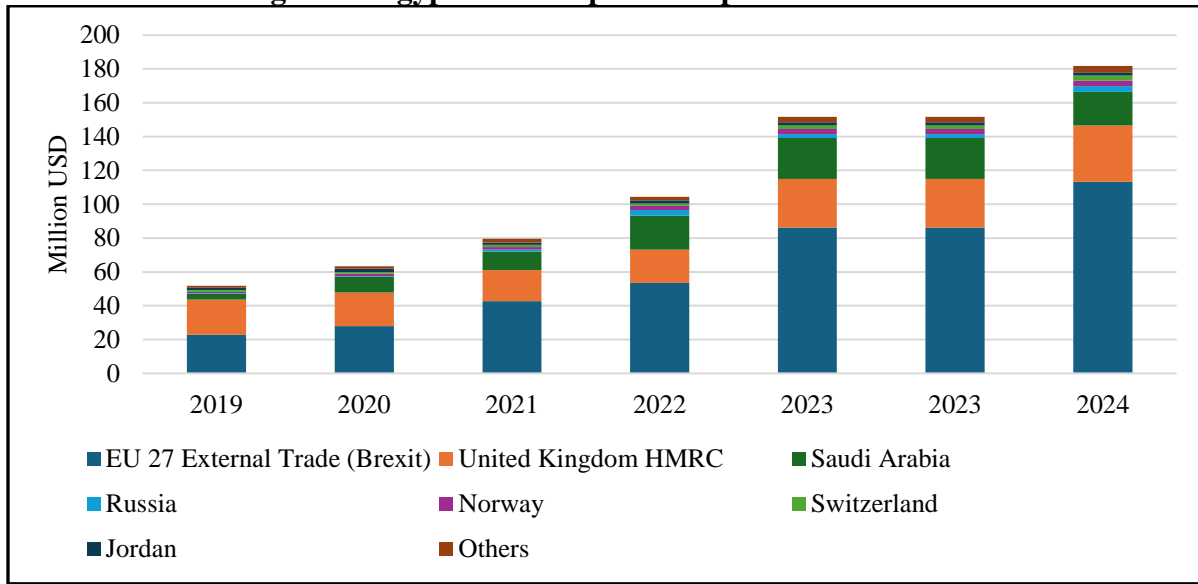
Consumption

Known for their adaptability, nutritional benefits, and growing popularity amongst health-mindful Egyptian consumers, sweetpotatoes are increasing in demand in the domestic market. Around 40-45 percent of local production is consumed locally, while the rest is produced for exports. Egyptians either consume sweet potatoes directly (after being oven baked) or add sweetpotatoes to their meals in winter as a nutritious snack, a simple side dish, or use it in cakes, pastries and other desserts. Small carts with simple ovens are common in streets of urban cities in Egypt during the winter season and sell sweetpotatoes at reasonable prices. Domestic consumption of sweetpotatoes is expected to continue growing, driven by an increasing healthy lifestyle among a large segment of the population.

Trade

The global sweetpotato market has experienced notable growth in recent years, with significant import activity across various countries. In 2024, Egypt emerged as a top supplier to many countries around the globe with a total value of \$181.8 million and emerged as a top supplier in 2024 to the EU (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Egyptian Sweetpotato Exports to the World



Source: Trade Data Monitor LLC

In the past few years, the development of the Egyptian sweetpotato sector has been driven by high demand in Europe and the UK, and shortages in supply from periodic droughts in Spain. Moreover, Egypt's favorable growing and climate conditions and use of high yielding varieties make Egyptian varieties suitable for fulfilling consumer's demand in export markets.¹

The Agriculture Export Council (AEC) in Egypt has also invested in the expansion of Egyptian sweetpotato exports. According to the AEC, the expansion is attributed to improved production methods and the development of packaging processes in line with international standards. Furthermore, investment in agricultural infrastructure and the expansion of sweetpotato cultivation has contributed significantly to increasing the competitiveness of Egyptian sweetpotato exports to the world.²

European Union

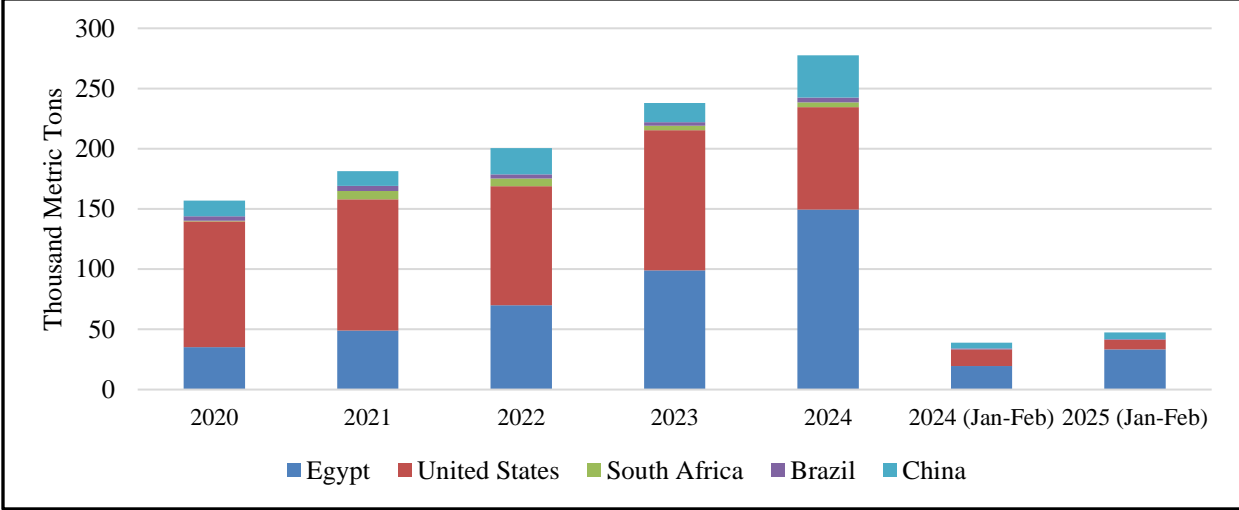
Egyptian exports to the EU have seen a remarkable rise, growing from 35,224 MT in 2020 to 149,551 MT in 2024, and from \$28 million in 2020 to \$113 million in 2024 (Figures 2 and 3). Egypt's main competitor in the EU market for sweetpotatoes is the United States. However, in recent years, the overlap in supply periods between Egyptian and American sweetpotatoes has decreased. The peak season for Egyptian sweetpotato exports is from August to January, which aligns with the period of the lowest imports from the United States. Conversely, the United States dominates the EU market from February to July, a time when Egyptian farmers are preparing for their next season (primarily April-June) (Table 1).

¹ <https://potatoes.news/egyptian-sweet-potato-supply-surges-amid-market-opportunities-and-challenges/>

² <https://www.youm7.com/story/2025/4/6/%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D8%AA%D8%B5%D8%AF%D8%B1-193-%D8%A3%D9%84%D9%81-%D8%B7%D9%86-%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8%D8%B7%D8%A7%D8%B7%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%84%D9%88%D8%A9-%D8%A8%D9%82%D9%8A%D9%85%D8%A9-97/6943579>

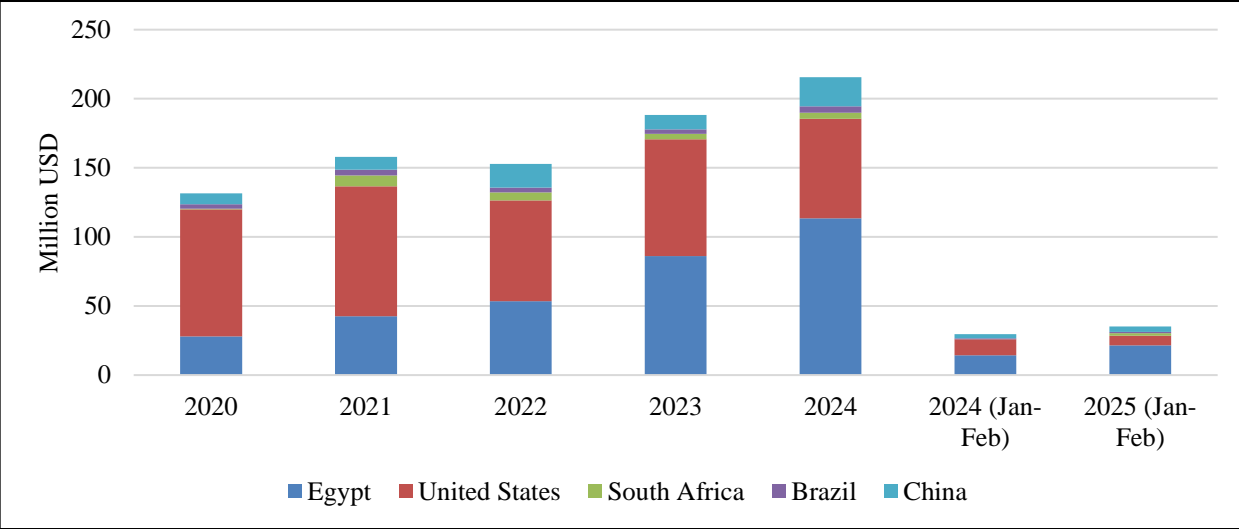
Although the EU imports from a variety of origins, Egyptian sweetpotatoes are starting to dominate the market, primarily due to the advantage of geographic proximity. Post forecasts that Egyptian sweetpotato exports to Europe will continue to grow as demand increases from European consumers who are increasing their awareness of a healthy diet, and as Egypt continues to produce different varieties to accommodate various markets in the EU.³ Lastly, Egypt’s sweetpotato production season from August to November is key for exports to the EU and UK, as it fills the gap lacking in other key exporting countries.

Figure 2: Top Five Countries Exporting Sweetpotatoes to the EU (by Volume)



Source: Trade Data Monitor LLC

Figure 3: Top Five Countries Exporting Sweetpotatoes to the EU (by Value)



Source: Trade Data Monitor LLC

³ <https://www.cbi.eu/market-information/fresh-fruit-vegetables/sweet-potatoes-0/market-potential>

Table 1: Supply Calendar for Sweetpotato Exports to Europe

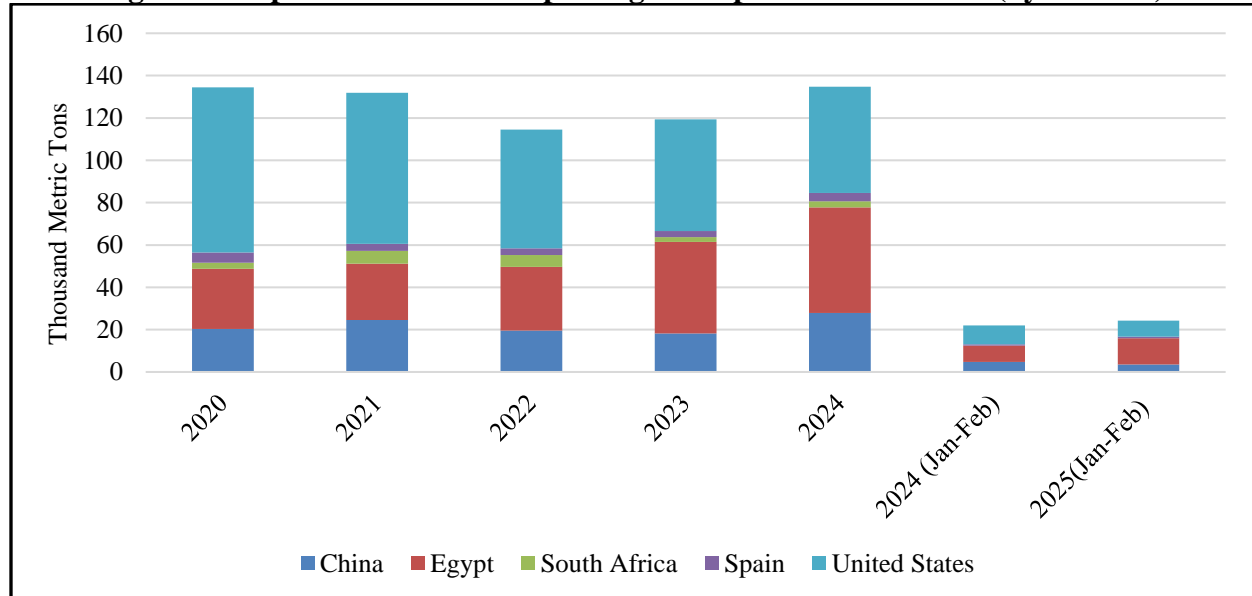
	jan	feb	mar	apr	may	jun	jul	aug	sep	oct	nov	dec
United States (USA)												
Egypt												
Honduras												
Brazil												
South Africa												
Israel												
Southern Europe (Spain)												

Source: Centre for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries (CBI)

United Kingdom

The United Kingdom is the top consumer market in Europe for sweetpotatoes due to an advanced food processing sector and consumers' willingness to try new cuisines and foodstuffs.⁴ Sweetpotatoes are consumed regularly in the UK, and have replaced some consumers' preference for conventional potatoes. Although the United States has been a large supplier for sweetpotatoes to the UK, Egyptian sweetpotato exports have started increase market share. In the past few years, export volumes of Egyptian sweetpotatoes have increased from 28,522 MT in 2020 to 49,879 MT in 2024 (Figure 4). Similarly, the value of sweetpotato exports from Egypt to the UK have risen from almost \$197 million in 2020 to \$331 million in 2024 (Figure 5).

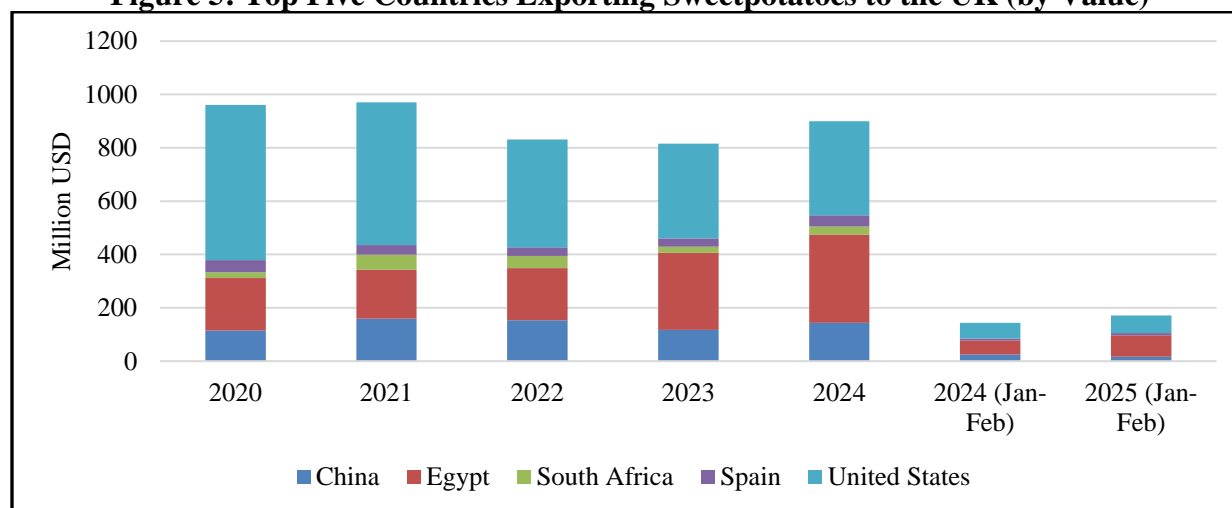
Figure 4: Top Five Countries Exporting Sweetpotatoes to the UK (by Volume)



Source: Trade Data Monitor LLC

⁴ <https://www.cbi.eu/market-information/fresh-fruit-vegetables/sweet-potatoes-0/market-potential>

Figure 5: Top Five Countries Exporting Sweetpotatoes to the UK (by Value)



Source: Trade Data Monitor LLC

Policy

In Egypt, exporters (or other agricultural companies) have contracts with sweetpotato farmers who supply farmers with the varieties to be planted, monitor the cultivation practices, and offer recommendations for good agricultural practices to meet EU or UK standards. Before a company can export, they must submit samples to the Central Lab of Residue Analysis of Pesticides and Heavy Metals (QCAP), affiliated with the Ministry of Agriculture.⁵ These samples are used to test for compliance with EU or UK standards for Maximum Residue Limits, and heavy metals. Sweetpotato fields and packing houses intended for exports must be certified by the CAPQ, in addition to Egypt's National Food Safety Authority (NFSA).⁶

Although the Egyptian government provides export assistance for some commodities, funding for such assistance has decreased over the past few years. In Egypt's Export Development Fund via the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Trade, the Egyptian government reduced the payments for the 2024/2025 budget (July-June) from 10 percent to 3 percent of the total value of fresh produce exports.⁷ According to the media, Egypt has drafted a new proposal for the July 2025-June 2026 fiscal year budget for Parliament to approve in July 2025.⁸ Media also reported that Egypt's Finance Minister announced a 2025/26 draft budget of \$878 million USD for exports.⁹ In the past, exports of fresh produce received limited fund allocation.

Attachments:

No Attachments.

⁵ <https://www.qcap-egypt.com/about-qcap/>

⁶ <https://www.cbi.eu/market-information/fresh-fruit-vegetables/sweet-potatoes/market-entry>

⁷ <https://enterprise.news/egypt/en/news/story/cebbb247-4981-4063-8651-bf94f3993eb8/a-deeper-dive-into-egypt's-revamped-subsidy-program>

⁸ <https://enterprise.news/egypt/en/news/story/5d52e79a-b993-4c24-9642-5fe1e25b7e48/The%20revamped%20export%20subsidy%20program%20is%20weeks%20away>

⁹ <https://en.amwalalghad.com/egypt-unveils-egp-78b-support-package-in-2025-26-budget-to-boost-industry-exports/>