

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: Dutch Apple and Pear Orchards Poised for a Fruitful Season

Country: Netherlands

Post: The Hague

Report Category: Agricultural Situation, Fresh Deciduous Fruit, Special Certification - Organic/Kosher/Halal

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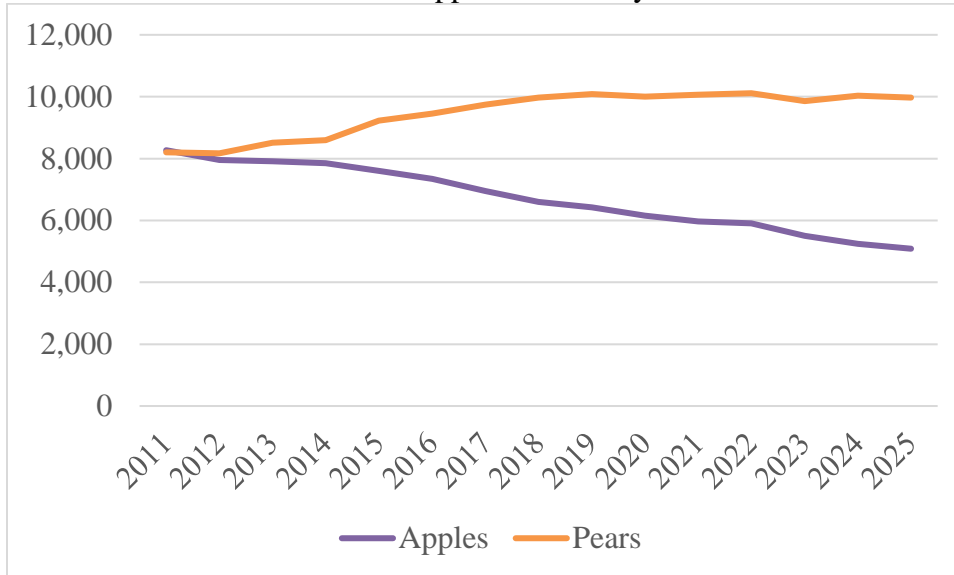
Report Highlights:

The Netherlands expects a strong apple and pear harvest in 2025, following a season of favorable growing conditions. Apple production is projected to reach 226,000 metric tons (up 17 percent from last year), led by Elstar, Jonagold, and Kanzi varieties. Pear production is set to rebound to 348,000 metric tons, with the Conference pear making up three-quarters of the total. Unlike the weather-related setbacks of 2024, this season has supported both yield and quality, giving growers reason for cautious optimism despite ongoing challenges such as rising costs and plant health regulations. The new harvest will begin reaching the market by late August.

Apple Acreage in Decline

About 25 years ago, apple orchards in the Netherlands spanned approximately 15,000 hectares – three times more than the current estimated acreage of 5,086 hectares, which represents a three percent drop from last year. This decline is expected to continue due to several factors: declining profitability, limited interest from the next generation to continue family farms, stricter pesticide regulations, and the high costs associated with replanting. However, yield is up this year due to favorable weather conditions.

Chart 1. Dutch Area Harvested Apple and Pear by Year in Hectare



Source: [Central Bureau of Statistics](#) and [Royal Dutch Fruit Growers Organization](#)

Pear Acreage: A Steady Climb

In contrast, pear cultivation has grown significantly. In the late 1990s, pear orchards covered around 6,000 hectares. By 2018, this had increased to about 10,000 hectares – a level that remains stable today. In 2025, pear orchards are projected to cover 9,969 hectares. Over 1,100 Dutch farms grow pears, with an average orchard size of 8.7 hectares. Around 40 percent of these producers also grow apples, cherries, or plums.

Picture 1. Apples Orchard



Source: [Royal Dutch Fruit Growers Organization](#)

Good Harvest Expected in 2025

Dutch apple production is forecasted at 226,000 metric tons (MT) in 2025, a 17 percent increase from last year, despite the three percent reduction in acreage. This year's favorable growing conditions, unlike last year's erratic weather, have resulted in a high-quality harvest. Elstar remains the leading variety (41 percent of total apple production), with an estimated 93,000 MT. Other major varieties include Jonagold (52,000 MT), Kanzi (15,000 MT), and Rode Boskoop (11,000 MT).

Pear production is expected to reach 348,000 MT, recovering from a poor harvest in 2024. The Conference pear dominates, accounting for 260,000 MT (over 75 percent of total production), followed by smaller volumes of Beurré Alexander Lucas, Xenia, and Doyenné du Comice. Despite rising input costs and stricter plant health regulations, the industry remains cautiously optimistic. The new season's apples and pears will enter the market by the end of August.

Table 1. Dutch Commercial Appel and Pear Production by Year in 1000 MT

	2023	2024	2025
Total Apples	199	194	226
-Elstar	76	79	93
-Jonagold	48	47	52
-Kanzi	18	15	15
-Rode Boskoop	10	9	11
-Wellant	6	5	9
-Golden Delicious	5	4	5
-Junami	6	4	3
-Other	30	31	38
Total Pears	358	322	348
-Conference	274	249	260
-Beurré Alexander Lucas	19	17	21
-Xenia	14	14	21
-Doyenné du Commice	26	18	21
-Migo	8	7	7
-Sweet Sensation	5	5	6
-Other	12	12	12

Source: [Central Bureau of Statistics](#), [Royal Dutch Fruit Growers Organization](#), and [Fresh Produce Centre](#).

Organic Production Remains Low

Organic apples and pears represent only a small share of total production – about four percent (9,000 MT) for apples and two percent (7,000 MT) for pears. Growing organic apples is difficult due to new pests, diseases, changing weather, and quality issues. At retail level, organic apples and pears are typically about 50 percent more expensive than their conventional counterparts.

Shifting Consumption Patterns

Over the past decade, per capita apple and pear consumption in the Netherlands has declined. Consumers increasingly prefer exotic or premium fruits such as berries, mango, pineapple, and melon.

In response, retailers are offering convenient single-portion fruit mixes for home or on-the-go consumption.

Despite this shift, apples remain the second-most consumed fruit after bananas, while pears rank tenth. About 20 percent of Dutch people eat an apple daily, compared to only five percent for pears. Most apples and pears are eaten at home or work as a snack and are purchased from supermarkets, specialty fruit and vegetable shops, or street markets. Consumers choose apples and pears for their health benefits, freshness, convenience, and as a healthier alternative to processed snacks and desserts.

Picture 2. A Selection of Fruit Offerings by Dutch Retailers



Source: <https://www.plus.nl/product/plus-handappels-pink-lady-stuk-4-st-655890>, <https://www.aldi.nl/product/xenia-peren-1220565.html>, <https://www.hoogvliet.com/product/healthyhand-fruitmix-tropisch>, and <https://www.spar.nl/healthy-hand-ananas-blokjes-9220182/>

Younger Generations Prefer Convenience - Young consumers, who already eat the least fruit, tend to opt for more convenient snacks like candy, cookies, and flavored drinks. The need to peel or cut fruit, its price, and the perceived inconvenience are key barriers.

Domestic Market Dominates for Apples - Roughly 85–90 percent of apples grown in the Netherlands are sold domestically. The most consumed locally grown varieties include Elstar and Jonagold, while Pink Lady® is the most popular imported variety, with the majority coming from France and Italy. The Conference pear remains the leading pear on the Dutch market. While apples mostly serve the domestic market, Dutch pears are significant export products. About 15 percent of total pear production is shipped outside the EU annually, with key markets including the UK, Norway, and Belarus.

Supermarkets Launch Premium Apple Brands

Supermarkets are expanding beyond traditional apple varieties like Elstar and Royal Gala. Locally grown club varieties such as Pink Lady®, Kanzi®, and Morgana® now feature prominently. Additionally, retailers are promoting exclusive in-house apple brands.

[Albert Heijn](#)'s [Sprank](#) and [Jumbo](#)'s [Tessa](#) are performing well. Both are positioned as premium, Dutch-grown apples known for flavor and freshness. These branded apples feature prominently in seasonal promotions and offer supermarkets better differentiation and potential pricing advantages.

Picture 3. TV Commercial Introducing *Tessa*



Source: www.youtube.com

Outlook for Dutch Apple and Pear Sector

In southern and eastern Europe, fruit production is increasingly affected by extreme weather – frost, drought, heatwaves, and hail. The Netherlands, by contrast, is relatively insulated from these effects. However, the long-term outlook for Dutch apple and pear growers will depend on farm profitability, regulatory pressure on pesticide use, and the ability to attract new generations to continue the business.

Attachments:

No Attachments.