

Indian Export Scenario for



Grapes

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Grapes occupy a predominant position in terms of world fruit production, accounting for about 16% of the total fruit production. The total world production of grapes is estimated to be about 63 million tonnes next only to citrus and banana and followed by apple. The major producers are Italy, France, Spain, U.S.A, Turkey, Argentina, Iran, Portugal, South Africa and Chile.

Grape cultivation in India has been commercially taken up under a wide range of soil and climatic conditions. While there are three distinct regions, viz. temperate (J.K. and H.P.), sub-tropical (Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Western UP) and tropical (Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamilnadu and Andhra Pradesh), nearly 94% of the cultivated area falls in the tropical region. The current area and production under grapes in India is estimated at 57800 ha with an annual production of 1247700 tonnes.

While 78% of grape produced is used for table purpose, nearly 20 percent is dried for raisin production and 2% is used for manufacture of juice and wine. The grape export from India started in 1991 with the initiation of economic liberalisation. The export of grapes during the year 2000-01 was of the order of about 21,000 MT (which amounts to only 2% of total production) fetching an export earning of Rs. 83 crore and it reached 25680 MT during 2003-04

with a export earning of Rs. 110 crore. The export earnings from unit area of grapes is much higher when compared to that from unit area of mango, where the export of 37000 MT from a total area under production of 1522.60 lakh hectare fetched an earning of Rs.69 crore only. The major importers of Indian grapes are UK, The Netherlands, Germany, USA, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, Bahrain, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Mauritius, Singapore and Hongkong. However, our export to the Middle East accounts for 90% of the total exports while 8% is accounted by European countries and the rest by the South East Asian countries.

Though the harvesting season of grapes in India starts from January and extends to June, the export season of grapes spans from January to April. During these months, South Africa and Israel are the main competitors. Fresh grape exports from India are estimated at 35525 tonnes valued at Rs.109 crore during 2004-05. In the same year, India imported 1111.27 tonnes of fresh grape valued at Rs.5.20 crore. Another promising trend is export of dried grapes (raisin) (411.14 tonnes) valued at Rs.1.83 crore to 17 countries and wines worth of Rs.2.76 crore to 20 countries with largest exports to USA followed by Germany.

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Exports from the country have grown from a level of 15932 tonnes (Value of 3.92 crore) in 1993-94 to the present level of Rs. 108.85 crore (Table). As can be seen, the value of exports of grapes grew by 9.1 percent annually during the period from 1993-94 to 2004-05.

Though there has been a steady growth from the year 1993-94 to 1995-96 and from 1997-98 to 2001-02 there were sharp decline during the year 1998-99 and 2001-02. This was the result of rejection due to pesticide residue problem that occurred in the lots sent from Maharashtra and some other regions. However, with increasing awareness about quality standards among farmers, now grapes are free from pesticide residues and accepted in Europe.

Maharashtra accounts for more than 80% of the total production. Despite doubts of success of viticulture in tropical region, the region has recorded world's highest productivity. The area under grape cultivation is approximately 1.8 lakh acres with the total production of 9 lakh metric tonnes. Maharashtra is the leader in export of grapes too. As per the data available with Maharashtra State Agricultural Marketing Board, around 70 to 80 percent of export of grapes from India are from Maharashtra. The varieties that are exported are mainly Thomson Seedless, Tas-e-Ganesh, Sonaka and Black Seedless. In the gulf countries the major varieties preferred are Black Seedless and Sonaka whereas the major varieties of grapes preferred in the UK are Thompson Seedless and Tas-e-Ganesh.

Most of the farmers are exporting grapes by forming a society or under the license of major export firms under the brand name of the exporter. Normally, in a major export firm there will be 30 to 40 farmers.

Table : Yearwise growth of exports from India Year

Year	Quantity (Tonnes)	Value(Rs.lakh)
1993-94	15,392	3,392
1994-95	16,877	4,084
1995-96	22,414	5,475
1996-97	20,999	5,265
1997-98	23,808	6,600
1998-99	11,525	3,789
1999-2000	14,083	5,554
2000-01	20,647	8,297
2001-02	14,606	6,021
2002-03	25,681	11,015
2004-05	35,525	10,884
Total	186,032	59,492
Compound Annual Growth Rate(%)	0.58	9.1

Issues concerning export of grapes from India

- ❖ In India, very few laboratories are available for pesticide residue testing of grapes and those available are mostly located in state headquarters. Only a limited number of farmers are taking advantage of these services.
- ❖ The export to U. K. goes mainly to 8 supermarkets each having 300 - 500 retail outlets. Chile is the main competitor for India. There is a need to explore the market of grapes during off-season by developing suitable technology by research institutes.
- ❖ Grape Growers Associations of various states may strengthen their support to the farmers in production and marketing of exportable grape.
- ❖ A good example of bringing technology to farmers is the "Project Uptech" implemented by SBI where the bank is hiring scientists from National Research Centre for Grapes for providing technology to grapes growers in western Maharashtra for increasing productivity and quality. SBI "Project Uptech" has helped to increase export from the western Maharashtra region.