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Romania Challenges US Suppliers of Dry Legumes

Report Categories:

Vegetables

Agricultural Situation

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Report Highlights:

In 2011, higher local production of peas and beans coupled with falling consumer purchasing power resulted with declining demand satisfied through trade. While area planted to peas increased by 64 percent over the last two years, area devoted to beans declined. Dried lentils remains the most promising market for U.S. suppliers, although declining consumer buying power in 2011 dampened emerging interest for the higher quality U.S. product.

General Information:

Ministry of Agriculture data show over the past three years area planted to peas and beans moving in opposite directions while production of fresh peas and beans remained an upward trend. Fresh pea harvested volume nearly doubled between 2009 (9,151 MT) and 2011 (16,980 MT). Bean production followed a similar but much smoother trend between 2009 (16,002 MT) and 2011 (18,159 MT). Major factors leading to larger yields of peas and beans include expansion of area planted, favorable weather conditions, and application of better technology.

Areas and production, Pea and beans, Romania, 2009-2011

Product	2009		2010		2011	
	HA	MT	HA	MT	HA	MT
Peas, total	23,511	29,010	24,274	43,132	29,128	56,628
of which for feeding	17,261	19,859	18,885	32,061	18,827	39,648
for consumption	6,250	9,151	5,389	11,071	10,301	16,980
Beans	14,905	16,002	13,894	16,199	13,783	18,159

Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development

In 2011, the rich vegetable crop in general, and peas and beans in particular, enables households and vegetables canners to source fresh raw material at very competitive prices on the domestic market. With a larger number of households turning to home processing for winter use of their grown and acquired vegetables, the import demand for raw materials declined. Overall, canned food sales fell domestically due to lower consumer demand influenced heavily by the availability of own product and weakening purchasing power.

Although no major changes are expected in terms of area for selected types of legumes, it is unlikely the same volume and quality will be achieved in 2012, given the long range forecast for less favorable weather conditions during the growing season.

In 2011, dried pea imports declined almost 50 percent as a result of the increased availability of fresh pea locally. Hungary and Canada, the country’s two largest suppliers, each exported about 200 MT to Romania. For the last three years the United States has not supplied the Romanian market. In 2011, imports of fresh and chilled pea rose 6 percent, while frozen peas declined slightly (please see table below). Hungary and Czech Republic remain major suppliers of fresh and chilled peas, while Belgium and Poland are the top providers of frozen peas.

Trade, Peas Romania, 2009-2011

Type	2009	2010	2011
Peas, fresh or chilled			
• Import (MT)	982	936	1,000
• Export (MT)	4,686	4,820	4,282
Peas, frozen			
• Import (MT)	3,503	4,324	4,196
• Export (MT)	477	228	255
Peas, dried			
• Import (MT)	996	1,231	637
• Export (MT)	613	1,069	235

Source: Global Trade Atlas

In 2011, similar to peas, imports of beans (all types) fell by 11 percent. In 2010, imports of beans fell by 21 percent. China remains the major supplier of dried beans – the main category of beans - accounting for half of such imports, followed by Egypt and Bulgaria.

Trade, Beans Romania, 2009-2011

Type	2009	2010	2011
Beans, fresh or chilled			
• Import (MT)	855	1,686	872
• Export (MT)	159	888	203
Beans, frozen			
• Import (MT)	1,905	2,639	2,583
• Export (MT)	5	215	58
Beans, dried			
• Import (MT)	34,862	25,197	22,714
• Export (MT)	331	2,290	996

Source: Global Trade Atlas

Unlike peas and beans, imports of dried lentils reflect an upward trend – from 187 MT in 2009, to 254 MT in 2010, to 352 MT in 2011. The United States, an important lentils supplier of lentils in 2009 and 2010, recorded no exports in 2011. The U.S. Dry Pea and Lentil Council, a U.S. trade organization, returned to the market recently to ascertain opportunities for U.S. products and to monitor activities of competitive suppliers.