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Report Highlights:

The 1998 tomato crop is estimated to be 2.12 mmt, up from 1.97 mmt last year. Poor weather conditions reduced yields of most tomato crops by 10%. Tomato paste prices were higher in 1997 due to shortages in world supplies.

Includes PSD changes: Yes
Includes Trade Matrix: Yes
Semi-Annual Report
Athens [GR1], GR

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Executive Summary

Official forecasts for the 1998 tomato crop are not yet available but Ag. office estimates project production at 2.12 mmt. up from last year's revised production of about 1.97 mmt. Yields would have been higher but last summer's heat wave reduced tomato crop by over ten percent. The overall quality this year was fair. Total industrial tomato production is estimated at 1.36 mmt, of which 92 percent is for use as tomato paste, passata and juice. Tomato paste quality was fair to average. Canned tomato production was down slightly from 1997 to 30,800 mt due largely to the poor quality of the tomatoes delivered to the processors.

The minimum grower prices for 1998 were approximately 3% lower than in 1997 while the processing subsidy in the case of tomato paste was reduced by 12% and that for canned tomatoes was reduced by 9%. Prices for tomato paste were considerably higher than a year earlier and fluctuated from \$760 to \$1,000/mt due to shortages in world supplies. Most of the 1998 production, plus any stocks from previous campaigns, has already been sold or committed.

TOMATO PRODUCTION

Data presented in the PS&D table are Ag office estimates based on information crosschecked with official industry and trade sources. Trade matrices are also Ag office estimates. Trade data provided by the National Statistical Service are used as a base to determine origin and destination of trade; but its raw data is not considered to be reliable. *NOTE:* PS&D's are based on market year data and trade matrices are calendar year data.

Preliminary forecasts for the 1998 tomato crop based on data gathered from the Min. of Ag. Bank and industry sources, are shown in the PS&D tables. The overall conditions for field grown tomatoes, both for table and industrial use were not very favorable during this 1998 season. A heat wave during July and August damaged the crop in the field and reduced overall production by over 10 percent. Table tomatoes grown under cover were not affected by the adverse weather conditions. As regards the industrial tomato production the overall quality was satisfactory. The Brix content of the fruit, depending on the region, fluctuated from 4.9 in Thessaly to 5.6 in Central Greece (Fthiotis - Beotia) while it was 5.3 in Macedonia and 5.5 in Ilia as compared to an average 1997 Brix content of 5.0. In 1998, about 50,000 MT of industrial tomatoes were diverted to the fresh market to partly cover shortages in supply of table tomatoes damaged by this summer's heat wave. The average quarterly prices received by growers for fresh table tomatoes as estimated by MOA are as follows:

		Drs/kg	Cents/kg
1997 First Quarter (Jan-Mar)	a) Field Grown	135.4	49.6
	b) Greenhouse	191.0	70.0
Second Quarter (Apr.-June)	a) Field Grown	235.5	86.3
	b) Greenhouse	234.2	85.9
Third Quarter (July-Sept)	a) Field Grown	218.1	80.0
	b) Greenhouse	179.8	65.9
Fourth Quarter (Oct-Dec)	a) Field Grown	146.5	53.7
	b) Greenhouse	170.3	62.4

The MOA issued Circular No 350979 of Nov. 4, 1998 giving the mean weighted average prices received by growers for the past three calendar years which in the case of tomatoes were as follows:

	1995		1996		1997	
	Drs/kg	Cents/kg	Drs/kg	Cents/kg	Drs/kg	Cents/kg
Tomatoes	71.00	30.6	81.89	34.0	103.87	38.1
a) For fresh consumption	125.71	54.3	126.47	52.6	196.94	72.2
I) Field grown	115.37	49.8	103.38	43.0	189.38	69.4
ii) Greenhouse	148.57	64.1	161.44	67.1	204.24	74.9
b) Industrial	29.70	12.8	30.37	12.6	29.86	10.9

It should be pointed out that the exchange rates of drachmas to US \$ used for the 1995, 1996 and 1997 years were 231.67, 240.62 and 272.74 respectively.

Wholesale prices of fresh greenhouse-produced table tomatoes in the Athens central market from January through July 1998 ranged from 130 to 350 drs/kg (0.45 to 1.21 \$/kg) compared to 150 to 300 drs/kg (0.55 to 1.10 \$/kg) of a year earlier. Imported fresh table tomato prices ranged from 250 to 380 drs/kg (0.86 to 1.31 \$/kg) as compared to 200 to 410 drs/kg (0.73 to 1.50 \$/kg) of a year earlier. Field grown fresh table tomato prices from July through mid November fluctuated from 120 to 350 drs/kg (0.41 to 1.21 \$/kg) as compared to 110 to 330 drs/kg (0.40 to 1.21 \$/kg) of a year earlier. Prices of industrial tomatoes sold for fresh consumption from mid July to early October ranged from 80 to 150 drs/kg (0.27 to 0.52 \$/kg) as compared to 70 to 130 drs/kg (0.26 to 0.48 \$/kg) of a year earlier.

It should be pointed out that during the 1997 CY a total of about 8,300 MT of fresh table tomatoes were imported while 4,400 MT were exported. It is believed that the 1998 imports, for which no data are presently available, exceeded well over 10,000 MT, while exports were quite limited, due to less domestic output of summer grown table tomatoes, which were affected by high temperatures in July-August.

TOMATO PASTE

Total industrial tomato production in 1998 is presently forecast at 1,360,000 MT of which 1,230,000 MT is for tomato paste (above 12% TSS), 15,000 MT for passata (7-12% TSS) and 5,000 MT for tomato juice (5-7% TSS). Although the MOA has not as yet released a forecast for 1998, tomato paste production is estimated at about 221,400 MT (converted to 28-30% TSS basis). Another 3,600 MT of juice and passata (converted to the same concentration) was also produced. Tomato juice and passata production figures are included in the total tomato paste production number because the NSS reports foreign trade data of tomato paste in three groups of products: a) below 12% TSS concentration, b) between 12 and 30% TSS concentration and c) above 30% TSS concentration. The 1997 final production figures for tomato paste, passata and juice, all converted to 28-30% TSS basis are: 202,770 MT, 680 MT and 550 MT respectively. Comparable 1996 figures were 230,000 MT, 3,240 MT and 760 MT respectively. The 1998 processing season for tomato paste in Peloponnesos started on July 13 and ended on Sept. 29, 1998, in Beotia it started on July 25 and ended on Oct. 10, 1998 while in Macedonia it started on Aug. 3, 1998 and ended in early October.

Yields of tomato paste this year ranged from a low of 6.3 to about 5.5 kgs of tomatoes per 1 kg of tomato paste 28-30%TSS basis depending on the region. Thessaly (Larissa), as was the case last year, had the lowest yield while Peloponnesos (Ilia) and Beotia had the higher yields and Macedonia was relatively high with 5.7. Tomato paste quality was fair to average. Based on EU Reg. No 1518/98 dated July 15, 1998 the MOA issued Circular No 337797 dated Aug. 17, 1998 establishing the minimum grower prices and processing aid to growers and processors during 1998 for tomatoes and products. The price to growers was set at 9.077 ECU/100 kgs net based on a total solids content in tomatoes of 4.8 to 5.4 percent. This price is slightly lower than the 1997 price that was set at 9.358 ECU/100 kgs net. In the event that the total solids content differs from these levels, prices are adjusted as follows; by -5% when total solids content is between 4.8 to 4.0% by +5% when total solids content exceeds 5.4%. The processing aid to processors for tomato paste 28-30% TSS basis was further reduced in 1998 to 24.412 ECU/100kgs net compared to 27.769 ECU/100 kgs net for 1997. This last figure is based on the supplemental EU Reg. No 1511/98 dated July 15, 1998 by which a supplemental processing aid of 0.986 ECU/100kgs net was added to last year's processing aid. The conversion rates of ECU to drachmas from May 16, 1997 through today are:

May 16, 1997	through	May 26, 1997	311.858 drs (\$ 1.14)
May 27, 1997	through	Mar 24, 1998	312.011 drs (\$1.10)
Mar. 25, 1998	through	July 21, 1998	349.703 drs (\$1.14)
July 22, 1998	through	to present	338.319 drs (\$1.16)

The major portion of 1998 tomato paste production, as well as prior crop stocks on hand, was sold at prices ranging from 220,000 to 280,000 drs/MT (\$760 to \$ 1,000 /MT) (ex-factory, good quality product, 28-30% TSS basis, packed aseptically in drums). Comparable prices for 36-38% TSS basis product were about 280,000 to 357,000 drs/MT (\$970 to \$1,275/MT). At present, prices for the limited unsold stocks on hand are quite slack. The higher prices were secured early in the season. No changes in production policies are reported since our last report GR-8012 of May 30, 1998.

CANNED TOMATOES

Data for canned tomatoes presented in the PS&D table include whole tomatoes, as well as crushed, chopped and diced tomatoes. The following table shows the breakdown of the quantities of tomatoes delivered to processors as well as the products produced for whole, crushed, chopped and diced tomatoes during 1998 (preliminary estimates) as compared to 1997.

Fresh Tomatoes (Delivered)		Canned Products (Net Weight)		
Metric Tons				
	1997	1998	1997	1998
- Whole peeled	14,200	14,000	10,860	10,700
- Crushed/Chopped/Diced	27,620	26,000	20,950	20,100
Sub Total	41,820	40,000	31,810	30,800
- Tomato Flakes	1,270	1,000	57	45
GRAND TOTAL	43,090	41,000		

The EU minimum grower prices and processing aid to canners for canned whole tomatoes, peeled and unpeeled, as well as crushed, chopped and diced tomatoes for the 1998 campaign on a net weight basis as set by EU Reg. No 1518/98 of July 15, 1998 and MOA Circular No 337797 dated Aug. 17, 1998 were as follows:

Grower prices Processing Aid ECU per 100 kgs Net			
- Whole Tomatoes in Juice/water			
a) San. Marzano type	15.026	9.276 1/	
b) Roma Type & Similar	11.559	6.542 1/	5.561 2/
-Crushed Tomatoes	9.077	4.579	

1) When packed in juice

2) When packed in water

These prices are slightly lower than comparable 1997 prices shown in our report GR-7037 dated Dec. 15, 1997. The conversion exchange rates of ECU to drachmas were given earlier in the tomato paste section of this report.

Exchange Rates

1996	\$1.00 US=240.62 Drachmas
1997	\$1.00 US=272.74 Drachmas
1998	\$1.00 US=295.60 Drachmas

PS&D Table, Fresh Tomatoes

PSD Table						
Country:	Greece					
Commodity:	Fresh Tomatoes					
		1996		1997		1998
	Old	New	Old	New	Old	New
Market Year Begin		01/1996		01/1997		01/1998
Plnt For Fresh Consump	0	17380		16820	0	18070
Plnt For Processing	0	20600	0	20980	0	23000
TOTAL Area Planted	0	37980	0	37800	0	41070
Harv. For Fresh Cons.	0	17380	0	16820	0	18070
Harv. For Processing	0	20600	0	20980	0	23000
TOTAL Area Harvested	0	37980	0	37800	0	41070
Fresh Sale Production	0	809000	0	732000	0	760000
Processing Production	0	1350000	0	1245000	0	1360000
TOTAL Production	0	2159000	0	1977000	0	2120000
TOTAL SUPPLY	0	2159000	0	1977000	0	2120000

PS&D Table, Canned Tomatoes

PSD Table						
Country:	Greece					
Commodity:	Canned Tomatoes					
		1996		1997		1998
	Old	New	Old	New	Old	New
Market Year Begin		07/1996		07/1997		07/1998
Deliv. To Processors	0	32670	0	41820	0	40000
Beginning Stocks	1489	1489	979	1089	429	2810
Production	25490	25490	25450	31810	0	30800
Imports	13000	11640	13000	11000	0	11000
TOTAL SUPPLY	39979	38619	39429	43899	429	44610
Exports	11000	8530	11000	10000	0	11000
Domestic Consumption	28000	29000	28000	30000	0	30500
Ending Stocks	979	1089	429	2810	0	3110
TOTAL DISTRIBUTION	39979	38619	39429	42810	0	44610

PS&D Table, Tomato Paste, 28-30% TSS Basis

PSD Table						
Country:	Greece					
Commodity:	Tom. Paste,28-30% TSS Basis					
		1996		1997		1998
	Old	New	Old	New	Old	New
Market Year Begin		07/1996		07/1997		07/1998
Deliv. To Processors	0	1276300	0	1132200	0	1250000
Beginning Stocks	59807	59807	91807	24069	86807	7569
Production	234000	234000	192000	204000	0	225000
Imports	1000	4262	1000	4000	0	4000
TOTAL SUPPLY	294807	298069	284807	232069	86807	236569
Exports	190000	260000	185000	210000	0	215000
Domestic Consumption	13000	14000	13000	14500	0	15000
Ending Stocks	91807	24069	86807	7569	0	6569
TOTAL DISTRIBUTION	294807	298069	284807	232069	0	236569

Export Trade Matrix, Canned Tomatoes

Export Trade Matrix			
Country:		Units:	
Commodity:			
Time period:			
Exports for	1996		1997
U.S.		U.S.	4
Others		Others	
		France	565
		Holland	935
		Germany	350
		Cyprus	104
		U.K.	5938
		Other EU	710
		Sub Total EU	>8602
		Poland	278
		Romania	70
		Bulgaria	100
Total for Others	0		9050
Others not listed			249
Grand Total	0		9303

Import Trade Matrix, Canned Tomatoes

Import Trade Matrix			
Country:		Units:	
Commodity:			
Time period:			
Imports for	1996		1997
U.S.		U.S.	
Others		Others	
		Holland	243
		Germany	56
		U.K.	290
		Italy	9093
		Spain	1569
		Other EU	51
		Sub Total EU	>11302
Total for Others	0		11302
Others not listed			18
Grand Total	0		11320

Export Trade Matrix, Tomato Paste 28-30% TSS Basis

Export Trade Matrix			
Country:		Units:	
Commodity:			
Time period:			
Exports for	1996		1997
U.S.		U.S.	100
Others		Others	
		France	9570
		Holland	15260
		Germany	29302
		Italy	39885
		U.K.	48175
		Other EU	7850
		Sub Total EU	>150042
		Poland	6856
		Hungary	17780
		Libya	22248
Total for Others	0		196926
Others not listed			40474
Grand Total	0		237500

Import Trade Matrix, Tomato Paste 28-30% TSS Basis

Import Trade Matrix			
Country:		Units:	
Commodity:			
Time period:			
Imports for	1996		1997
U.S.		U.S.	
Others		Others	
		Holland	110
		Germany	480
		Italy	1307
		U.K.	270
		Other EU	227
		Sub Total EU	>2394
		Turkey	575
Total for Others	0		2969
Others not listed			120
Grand Total	0		3089