

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Nile Nuggets for July 2015

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Approved By:

Ron Verdonk

Prepared By:

Mohamed Hamza, Ahmed Wally & Ibrahim Al-Habbal

Report Highlights:

News on Developments in Agriculture and Food in Egypt.

Nile Nuggets

News on Developments in Agriculture and Food in Egypt

July 2015

First: News

EGYPT'S FLEETING BAN ON COTTON IMPORTS: On July 4, 2015 Egypt's Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation imposed a *de facto* ban on cotton imports from all origins by announcing that it was suspending the issuance of import permits. The move was intended to protect and improve marketing of the domestic cotton crop, of which a considerable quantity from the 2014 harvest is in storage. In the days that followed, significant opposition to the announcement was expressed by cotton spinners/weavers and garment manufacturers and importers of foreign cotton. Subsequently, on July 15, 2015 it was announced that the Egyptian Cabinet had decided to rescind the ban on imported cotton.

SAUDI SUPERMARKET CHAIN, PANDA, CONSIDERS EXPANSION IN EGYPT: Panda, the Saudi supermarket chain, is considering expanding into Egypt with the roll out of 16 outlets in Egypt, Supplies Minister Khaled Hanafy said. The company is looking to open 6 stores in greater Cairo area in addition to 10 stores in different governorates including governorates in Delta region and Upper Egypt.

EGYPTIAN FEAST COOKIES "KAHK": pronounced Ka-hk is a special dessert that is associated with holidays in Egypt. These cookies appear on the Egyptian Muslims' table yearly during Eid-el Fitr that immediately follows Ramadan and biannually on the tables of Egypt's Christians at Christmas and Easter.

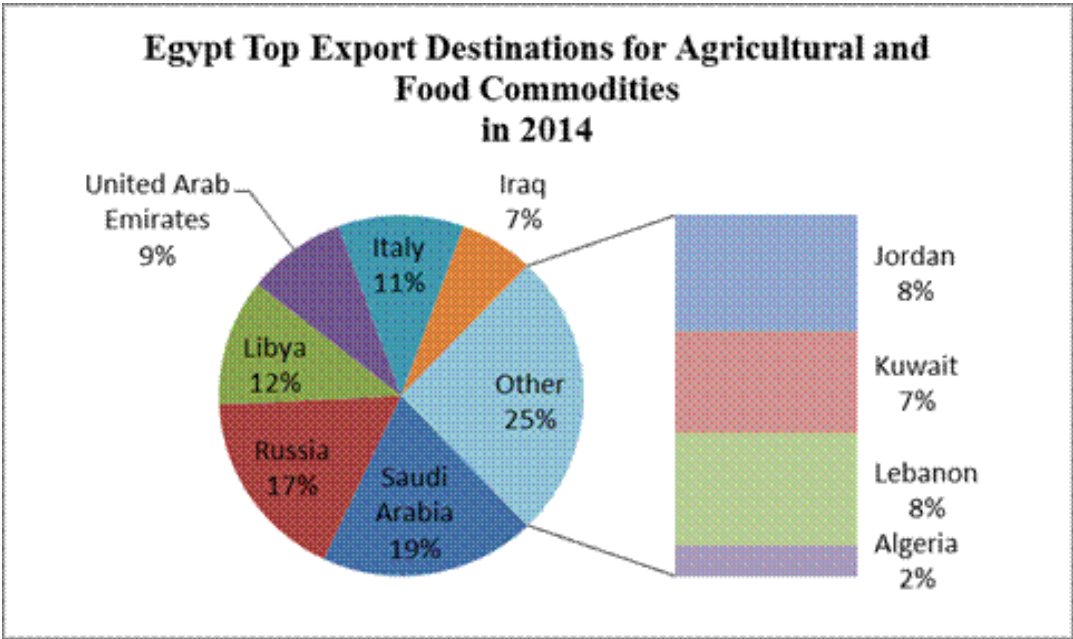


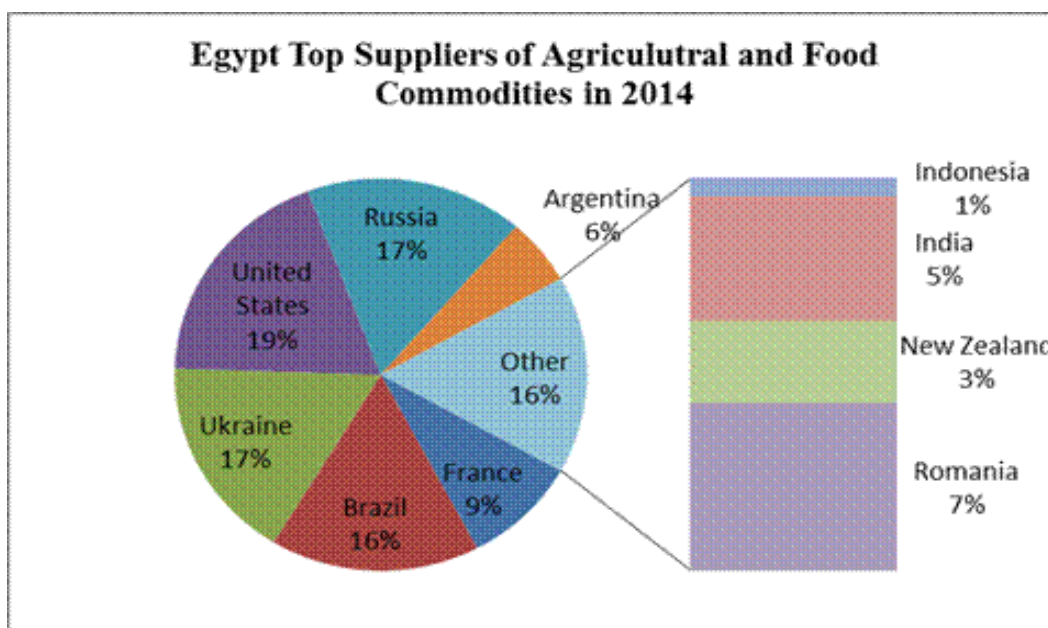
Also when a girl is married, her family packs the newlywed's pantry with these kinds of cookies. These types of sweets have been around for thousands of years as there are drawings in some of the Pharaonic temples illustrating the making of kahk. Images of the sun goddess were carved on the cookies, and these kinds of cookies are still similarly shaped and "stamped" with the shape of the goddess today. The word "kahk" means cookies or biscuit in Arabic language. This ritual extends to other Middle Eastern countries though products elsewhere are often made with semolina and the cookies are oftentimes stuffed with dates. Kahk is usually filled with "agameya" (a special honey filling), walnuts, and pistachios or simply left plain and covered with powdered sugar.

THE MEDICINAL AND AROMATIC PLANTS SECTOR: In Egypt, medicinal and aromatic plants represent a significant source of income for many farmers and traders. Total area cultivated with such plants was estimated at about 30 thousand hectares in 2014, concentrated to the south of Cairo in El-Fayoum, Beni Suweif, El Menia and Assiut governorates which account for about 80 percent of the medicinal and aromatic plants area in Egypt. There are about 50 species of aromatic and medicinal plants cultivated on a commercial scale in Egypt, the bulk of which is for export. The most important ones are fenugreek, cumin, chamomile, coriander, fennel, mint, basil and anise. More than 90 percent of total production is being exported to international markets. The current value of Egyptian medicinal and aromatic plant exports amounts to US\$100 million annually and represents approximately 10% of the country’s total processed food exports. Main destinations for Egyptian exports are the European Union, the United States and Morocco. However, due to outdated production methods and inadequate quality and safety standards, the medicinal and aromatic plant sector has yet to reach its full potential.

Second: Agricultural Trade Picture

Egypt Exports & Imports with World





Egypt and USA

For January to May 2015, the US exported about \$500 million in agricultural commodities and food products to Egypt. Major categories include bulk commodities (like corn, soybeans, wheat, cotton and others), consumer oriented (like beef and beef products, dairy products, tree nuts and others) and intermediate products (like processed animal feed, soybean meal, and vegetable oil).

	Jan - May 2015
Product	Value (\$000)
Agricultural Products	499,473
Bulk Total	236,512
Corn	50,946
Soybeans	117,581
Wheat	33,241
Cotton	30,887
Others	3,855
Consumer Oriented Total	110,750
Beef & Beef Products	55,728
Dairy Products	29,574
Tree Nuts	16,897
Prepared Food	2,495
Others	6,056
Intermediate Total	152,212
Feeds & Fodders	65,759
Soybean Meal	48,383
Distillers Grains	5,839
Vegetable Oils (ex. soybean)	19,309
Others	12,923

Source: GTIS

From January to May 2015, U.S. imports of Egyptian agricultural and food products were valued at \$45 million. Most of what Egypt exports that is agricultural in nature is value-added products including processed fruits and vegetables, spices and essential oils.

	Jan - May 2015
Product	Value (\$000)
Agricultural Products	44,944
Consumer-Oriented	33,395
Processed Fruits & Vegetables	15,550
Spices	9,947
Fruit & Vegetable Juices	3,301
Other Consumer Oriented	2,647
Cheese	1,092
Other Dairy Products	284
Snack Foods	248
Others	327
Intermediate Total	7,808
Essential Oils	2,802
Other Intermediate Products	3,349
Other Vegetable Oils	1,355
Planting Seeds	286
Others	16
Bulk Total	3,741
Other Bulk Commodities	2,100
Tea, Incl Herb	1,623
Others	18

Source: GTIS