



# Market information summaries

## Europe

**Health foods and nutrition**  
June 2021



## Introduction

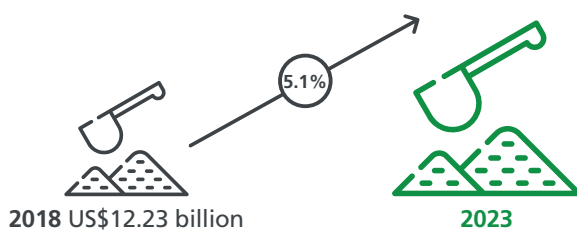
This is a summary of the health foods and nutrition market in Europe, and compliance requirements for market access. It is based on multiple published sources.

The summary aims to address challenges that small biotrade companies have in finding information on markets and industry trends.

The data was compiled by Kruger Swart Associates, Proof Africa and Profound. Although every effort has been made to provide accurate information, circumstances change and users of the information are encouraged to do their own research before using this data to guide business strategy or investments.

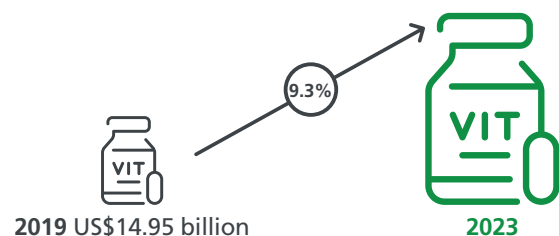
## European market for health foods and nutrition

- The European market for health products is increasingly competitive, especially for organic raw ingredients.
- Examples of popular exotic food ingredients include avocado, Baobab, mango, Marula, Moringa, açai, goji berry and papaya.
- Increasing life expectancy of European consumers, rising disposable incomes and growing consumer awareness are key drivers for demand in health products:
  - Germany, the UK, France, the Netherlands, Italy, and Spain have the biggest nutritional supplements markets



- **The European food additives market was valued at US\$12.23 billion in 2018. The market is projected to show a compound annual growth rate of 5.1% between 2018 and 2023. The upward trend creates opportunities for suppliers of natural food additives in developing countries.**

- The trend of removing synthetic ingredients from food products is gaining momentum in Europe. Food and beverage companies in Europe are looking at a diverse range of natural food additives, such as flavourings (e.g. essential oils), thickeners (e.g. gum Arabic), sweeteners and colourants (e.g. curcumin).
- There is a growing demand for vitamins and supplements to increase immunity, which offers opportunities for ingredients with beneficial health properties like Baobab. An increasing demand for plant-based supplements offers opportunities for suppliers of plant-based proteins.
- European companies are launching new natural health products and some are replacing synthetic ingredients with natural ones in product formulations.



- **In 2019, the European dietary supplements market was valued at US\$14.95 billion, and is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate of 9.3% from 2019 to US\$33.8 billion by 2027.**
- Suppliers of natural ingredients can target end-user health product companies directly if they can supply substantial volumes. Some end-user companies source directly from suppliers, though most small-to-medium producers source ingredients from European traders and distributors.

## Compliance in the European health foods and nutrition market

- Ensuring the highest standards of food safety for its citizens is a key policy priority for the EU. Regulations have been getting stricter, creating barriers to market entry for ingredient suppliers in developing countries.
- Suppliers of natural ingredients or food additives from developing countries need to meet strict EU regulations and buyer requirements:

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**Increasing life expectancy of European consumers, rising disposable incomes and growing consumer awareness are key drivers for demand in health products**

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# There is a growing demand for vitamins and supplements to increase immunity, which offers opportunities for ingredients with beneficial health properties like Baobab

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- Suppliers of ingredients used in herbal medicinal products must comply with [EU Directive 2004/24/EC](#)
- Ingredients must be registered in the [European Pharmacopoeia](#) or by the [European Medicines Agency](#) as a traditional herbal medicinal product.
- Suppliers of natural ingredients used in food supplements need to comply with all food legislation (see below) and additional EU food supplement legislation.
- EU member states keep lists of botanicals allowed in food supplements. Some European countries are signatories to harmonised lists of natural ingredients for food supplements such as [BELFRIT](#); other European countries follow these lists despite not being signatories.
- Regulatory requirements:
  - The EU defines novel foods as any food not used for human consumption to a significant degree within the Union before 15 May 1997.
  - [General Food Law](#) ensures the safety of natural food additives. It mandates that companies have a traceability system throughout their value chain, that guarantees the quality of an ingredient from consumer to producer.
  - The EU legally requires companies to prove that natural food additives are not contaminated, or within set limits regarding physical, chemical and biological contamination.
  - The EU's [Classification, Labelling and Packaging \(CLP\) Regulation](#) identifies hazardous chemicals and informs users about their hazards through standard symbols and phrases.
  - [EU Regulation 1333/2008](#) sets rules for the use of additives, such as colours and thickeners. [EU Regulation 1334/2008](#) sets rules for the use of flavourings, such as essential oils.

## Certifications

- Most common certifications for food safety:
  - International Organization for Standardization (ISO) [22000](#) food safety management system certification and ISO [9001:2015](#) quality management systems certification;
  - Food Safety Certification ([FSSC 22000](#)) which is based on ISO 22000 and is specifically aimed towards food manufacturers; and,
  - British Retail Consortium Global Standard for Food Safety ([BRCGS](#)) certification which provides technical standards for food safety.
- European buyers are increasingly demanding food safety certifications such as:
  - [Food Safety System Certification \(FSSC 22000\)](#)
  - [ISO 22000](#) and [ISO 9001:2015](#)
- Certification that demonstrates compliance with a food management system shows superior quality of ingredients.
- The trend towards ethical certification will continue to increase.
- The number of natural and organic standards increased from about five in 2005 to more than 30 in 2018. The most important standards in Europe currently are COSMOS and Natrue.
- Certifications such as [FairWild](#), [FLO Fairtrade](#) and [Fair for Life](#) show supplier commitment to environmental and social sustainability
- One important development for natural ingredients from developing countries is the increased presence in the market of the Union for Ethical BioTrade certification, which requires practices that respect biodiversity and reduce biodiversity loss.
- Downsides of adopting these standards include high certification costs and additional paperwork and bureaucracy.

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## Market access strategies

- Industry trade fairs and congresses are key to identify customers and markets.
- Trade fairs for food and health ingredients are:
  - [Vitafoods Europe](#)
  - [Food and Health Ingredients](#)
  - [BioFach](#)
  - [ANUGA](#)
  - [Sial Paris](#)
  - [Natural & Organic Products Europe \(NOPE\)](#)
  - [NatExpo](#)
  - [Nutraceuticals Europe](#)
- Relevant sector organisations for food additives include the [European Flavour Association \(EFFA\)](#), [The International Federation of essential oils and aroma traders \(IFEAT\)](#) and [EU Specialty Food Ingredients](#).
- Relevant sector organisations for health ingredients include the [European Federation of Associations of Health Product Manufacturers \(EHPM\)](#), and the [European Federation for Complementary and Alternative Medicine](#).
- Manufacturers and exporters should consider participating in programmes such as those run by:
  - [Centre for the Promotion of Imports from developing countries \(CBI\)](#)
  - [Swiss Import Promotion Programme \(SIPPO\)](#)
  - [Import Promotion Desk \(IPD\)](#)
  - [Open Trade Gate Sweden \(OTGS\)](#)
- Organisations such as the [Food and Agricultural Organization \(FAO\)](#) and the [International Trade Centre \(ITC\)](#) also provide market access services.
- The EU can help in producing and marketing organic ingredients through The International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM).
- Exporters can also seek assistance from:
  - [Centre for the Promotion of Imports from developing countries \(CBI\)](#)
  - [Import Promotion Desk](#)
  - [EU Trade Helpdesk](#)
  - [Open Trade Gate Sweden](#)
  - [Global Logistics Associates](#)
  - [Logistics Alliance Germany](#)
  - [EvoFenedex](#)