India emerges as largest exporters of cucumber and gherkins in the world

India exports gherkins worth USD 114 million from April-Oct 2021, while in 2020-21 exports exceeded USD 200 million

India has emerged as the largest exporter of gherkins in the world. India has exported cucumber and gherkins to the tune of 1,23,846 Metric Tonnes with a value of USD 114 million during April-October (2020-21).

India has crossed the USD 200 million mark of export of agricultural processed product, - pickling cucumber, which is globally referred as gherkins or cornichons, in the last financial year.

In 2020-21, India had shipped 2,23,515 Metric Tonnes of cucumber and gherkins with a value of USD 223 million.

Following directions of the Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) undertook a series of initiatives in infrastructure development, product promotion in the global market and adherence to food safety management system in processing units.

Gherkins are exported under two categories -- cucumbers and gherkins, which are prepared and preserved by vinegar or acetic acid and cucumbers and gherkins, which are provisionally preserved.

Gherkin cultivation, processing and exports started in India during the early 1990s with a modest beginning in Karnataka and later extended to the neighbouring states of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Nearly 15% production of the world’s gherkin requirement is grown in India.

Gherkins is currently exported to more than 20 countries, with major destinations being North America, European countries and Oceanic countries such as USA, France, Germany, Australia, Spain, South Korea, Canada, Japan, Belgium, Russia, China, Sri Lanka and Israel.

Apart from its export potential, the gherkin industry plays a key role in the creation of rural employment. In India, cultivation of gherkins is carried out under contract farming by around 90,000 small and marginal farmers with an annual production area of 65,000 acres.

Processed gherkins are exported in bulk as industrial raw material and in jars as ready to eat. The bulk production is still occupying a high percentage of the gherkin market. In India there are about 51 major companies producing and exporting gherkins in drums and ready-to-eat consumer packs.

APEDA has played a significant role in promotion of export of processed vegetables and it has been providing financial assistance for development of infrastructure and enhancing quality of processed gherkins, products promotion in the international market and implementation of food safety management systems in the processing units.

On an average, a gherkin farmer produces 4 metric tonne per acre per crop and earns about Rs 80,000 with a net income of Rs 40,000. Gherkin has a 90-day crop and the farmers take two crops annually. Processing plants of international standards have been established here to cater to the requirement of foreign buyers.
All the gherkin manufacturing and exporting companies are either ISO, BRC, IFS, FSSC 22000 certified and HACCP certified or possess all the certifications. Many of the Companies have adopted Social Audits. This ensures all statutory benefits are given to the Employees.

The APEDA is also focusing on value addition of gherkins to increase the export value of the product.

**India’s Cucumber / Gherkins exports (in US million tonne)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HSN code</th>
<th>Products</th>
<th>2020-21</th>
<th>2021-22 (April-November)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20011000</td>
<td>Cucumber/Gherkins prepared and preserved in Vinegar / Acetic acid</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07114000</td>
<td>Cucumber/Gherkins provisionally preserved</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>223</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Source: DGCIS

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DJN/PK