

## Export Scenario of Spices and Condiments from India

Sachin A. J<sup>1</sup>, Siddharood Maragal<sup>2</sup>, Swapnil Bharti<sup>1</sup> and J. N. Srivastava<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor cum Jr Scientist, <sup>3</sup>Associate Professor cum Senior Scientist, <sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor

<sup>1,3</sup>Bihar Agricultural University, Sabour, Bhagalpur, Bihar, <sup>2</sup>College of Horticulture and Forestry, Pasighat, Arunachal Pradesh

Corresponding Author: [sachin.ihr@gmail.com](mailto:sachin.ihr@gmail.com), [sachinaj@bausabour.ac.in](mailto:sachinaj@bausabour.ac.in)

### Introduction

Spices are special kind of natural products that offer not only great food/culinary value in terms of aroma, taste, colour and so on, but also tremendous nutritive and therapeutic value because of their chemical composition. There are more than 100 different spices grown across the world and India is home to most of them. Under the act of parliament, a total of 52 spices are brought under spice board.

India the land of spices, has supreme role in the export of major spices (Black pepper, cardamom, ginger and turmeric) from the South Indian states and seed spices from central and western states.

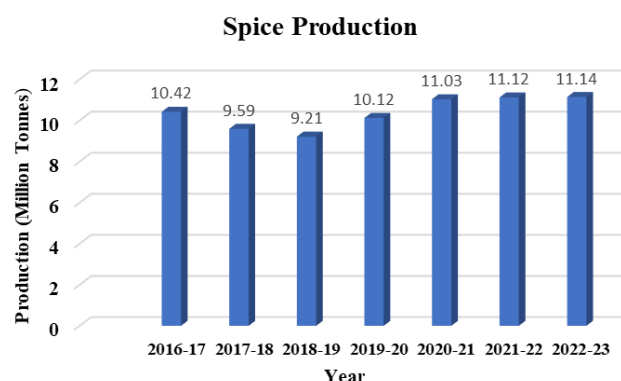
India is the world's biggest spice producer. It is also the largest importer and exporter of spices. The production of various spices has increased rapidly in recent years. Production in 2022-23 was 11.14 million tonnes, compared to 11.12 million tonnes in 2021-22. Spice exports from India totalled US\$ 3.73 billion in 2022-23, up from US\$ 3.46 billion the previous year (Figure 1).

India is the world's largest exporter of spices and spice products. During 2023-24, the country exported spices worth \$4.46 billion. In 2024-25 (until June 2024), India exported spices worth \$1.09 billion. For fiscal year 2023, the country exported spices worth \$3.73 billion. In July 2023, India's spice exports increased to US\$ 298.77 million, up from US\$ 293.84 million in June. From 2016-17 to 2022-23, the total quantity exported from India increased at a CAGR of 5.85%. Total export volumes of chilli, cumin, turmeric, and ginger in FY23 were 0.51, 0.18, 0.17, and 0.05 million tonnes, respectively. Turmeric, coriander, garlic, curry powder, and other spices such as asafoetida, tamarind, and so on were exported in greater quantity and value in 2022-23 than in 2021-22 (Table 1).

Foreign exchange makes a major source of income for a developing country, where in exports act as a source of income. Along with this which benefits a large number of producers by adding to their income, in this way spices are the potential crops to earn a good

foreign exchange both for the producers and for the country. India has the largest domestic market for the spices in the world. Even though Indian spices have been traditionally grown in small land holdings, these are known in the world for their aroma, texture and taste. The biggest buyer of Indian spices were the US followed by China, Vietnam, UAE, Malaysia, UK, Germany, Soudi Arabia, Thailand and Sri Lanka.

India is the world largest producer, consumer and exporter of spices, the country produces about 75 of the 109 spices listed by the international organization for standardization (ISO) and accounts for half of the global trading in spices. Out of which pepper, cardamom, chilli, ginger, turmeric, coriander, cumin, celery, fenugreek, ajowin, dillseed, garlic, tamarind, clove and nutmeg are in top spices produces in the country.



**Fig. 1. Spice production in India (Source- DGCI & S, Spices Board of India and IBEF)**



**Fig. 2. Trends in Indian Spice export (Source- DGCI & S, Spices Board of India and IBEF)**

Spectroscopy (NIRS) has emerged as a crucial, non-destructive analytical tool for rapid, precise, and cost-effective food analysis. Operating within the 780–2500 nm spectral range, it detects and quantifies key components such as moisture, protein, fat, and carbohydrates by analyzing molecular vibrations. Its versatility has led to widespread applications across food sectors, including meat, dairy, grains, and beverages, offering high-speed, multi-component analysis that enhances quality assurance and process control. While challenges such as calibration requirements and complex data interpretation persist, the ongoing integration of advanced technologies ensures that NIRS will continue to play a pivotal role in promoting efficiency, precision, and sustainability in the food industry.

### Major Export Destinations

India sold spices and spice products to 200 countries as of 2024-2 (till June 2024). The top destinations were China, the United States, Bangladesh, the United Arab Emirates, Malaysia, the United Kingdom, Thailand, Saudi Arabia, and Germany. These nine destinations accounted for more than 60% of total export revenues in 2024-25 (through June 2024). China purchased spices for US\$192.40 million from India, while the United States imported spices worth US\$156.32 million. Bangladesh imported spices worth US\$ 90.75 million. Furthermore, the UAE purchased spices worth \$84.50 million from India in 2024-25 (up to June 2024). Chilli was the most widely exported spice from India. During 2022-23, China bought \$409.44 million in chillies. During the same year, the United States imported chilli worth \$96.38 million. Celery, cumin, curry powder, fennel, fenugreek, garlic, chili, and mint are the most often imported items in the United States.

### Competition to Indian Spices in Trade

India faces a stiff competition in world spice trade as many countries are close competitors to India (Table 3)

#### The reasons behind the stiff competition are

- i. Unlike India other competing countries growing spices in large extensive areas, whereas Indian spices are in small land holdings.
- i. Southern states of India mainly growing spices as a mixed crop, whereas most of the competing countries as a mono crop.
- ii. Low productivity of some spices in India.
- iii. Inefficiency in meeting export specifications and standards for few spice crops in India.

- iv. Pesticidal residues are also making problem in export market of Indian spices.
- v. Mycotoxins/aflatoxin content exceeding beyond limits for specific spices.
- vi. Lack of processing industry for processing of spices which traded in the form of processed or value added.
- vii. Poor post harvest operations which hindering to get quality output.
- viii. Quality issues pertaining to world market specifications.

**Table 2. Major competing countries to Indian spice trade**

Crop	Competitors
Black pepper	Vietnam
Small cardamom	Guatemala
Chillies	Pakistan
Ginger and turmeric	China
Cumin seeds	Turkey and China

### Characteristics of Spices Which are Need to be Standardized

The export of Indian spices can be categorised into 3 classes:

1. Both quantity and value increasing: e.g., large cardamom, chilli, turmeric, cumin, celery, fennel, nutmeg and mace
2. Both quantity and value decreasing: e.g., Pepper, small cardamom and coriander
3. Quantity increasing but value decreasing: e.g., Ginger and fenugreek

### Future Thrust

- Among the spices, tree spices (cinnamon, clove, nutmeg and allspice) production is very limited (5000MT) compared to the requirement of domestic demand (7000-8000MT). There is a wide scope for enhancing area and production of these spices.
- Similarly, the consumption and export of demand of seed spices are also increasing day by day both international and inside the country.
- To evolve universally acceptable quality standards for spices, codex Alimentarius commission standards to be followed.
- Advanced technologies like cryogenic grinding and microencapsulation of spices are required.

- Organic cultivated spices are required (e.g., organically grown large cardamom in north eastern states especially Sikkim).

## References

Spices Board of India, Cochin, Feb 19 2024, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Govt. of India, accessed 20 February 2025, major itemwise export 2024 web(1).xls.

Spices industry and export in India, Oct, 2024, India Brand Equity Foundation, accessed on 19 February 2025, Indian Spices, Spices Manufacturers and Exporters in India - IBEF.

DGCI&S, Kolkata, 2025, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, accessed on 19.02.2025. Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics.

**Table 1. Item wise export of spices from India**

ITEM-WISE EXPORT OF SPICES FROM INDIA (QTY. IN TONNES & VALUE IN Rs. LAKHS)										
	2019-20		2020-21		2021-22		2022-23(*)		2023-24(*)	
Item	Qty	Value	Qty	Value	Qty	Value	Qty	Value	Qty	Value
	(Mt)	(Rs. Lakhs)	(Mt)	(Rs. Lakhs)	(Mt)	(Rs. Lakhs)	(Mt)	(Rs. Lakhs)	(Mt)	(Rs. Lakhs)
PEPPER	17,000	57,370.94	19,980	57,068.74	21,863	75,331.23	17,958	72,686.41	17,890	73,648.88
CARDAMOM(S)	1,850	42,537.15	6,486	110,346.58	10,571	137,566.95	7,352	87,514.87	6,168	99,959.85
CARDAMOM(L)	1,310	7,090.17	1,220	9,635.74	1,981	15,448.21	1,883	13,720.19	1,281	14,815.41
CHILLI	496,000	671,039.53	649,815	924,126.56	557,144	858,458.36	516,177	1,044,412.31	601,084	1,249,248.45
GINGER	60,410	52,905.00	145,974	84,982.34	147,677	83,651.76	50,885	43,246.06	60,833	64,688.57
TURMERIC	137,650	128,690.53	183,868	172,264.56	152,758	153,442.05	170,085	166,699.49	162,019	187,586.79
CORIANDER	47,135	39,831.38	57,359	49,627.93	48,656	48,247.51	54,481	66,501.19	108,624	94,820.97
CUMIN	214,190	332,806.00	298,423	425,154.66	216,971	334,367.40	186,509	419,359.76	165,269	579,723.43
CELERY	6,230	6,903.85	7,438	9,815.24	7,579	9,854.19	5,248	7,755.76	6,599	10,074.31
FENNEL	24,220	23,162.14	33,742	29,396.40	40,139	41,197.20	21,201	31,437.42	39,565	66,960.91
FENUGREEK	26,570	15,690.38	40,340	26,703.34	32,402	26,285.83	35,055	26,680.17	30,855	26,612.76
OTHER SEEDS (1)	37,580	22,080.72	68,266	42,629.21	47,167	40,445.48	57,431	48,089.08	39,438	36,177.50
GARLIC	22,280	17,182.52	17,643	14,971.04	22,135	18,575.04	57,346	24,579.64	73,950	44,118.84
NUTMEG & MACE	2,900	13,280.00	3,812	19,115.33	3,597	21,798.86	3,447	22,127.57	5,143	28,687.69
OTHER SPICES (2)	37,235	66,545.96	128,755	297,147.8	109,369	159,957.89	116,269	193,701.29	102,133	186,808.08
CURRY POWDER/PASTE	38,370	81,278.66	51,347	117,064.38	52,479	115,836.50	57,924	141,689.27	72,421	175,727.66
SPICE OILS & OLEORESINS	13,000	244,682.74	16,997	340,568.76	21,920	447,823.73	18,398	408,551.25	18,762	412,300.59
MINT PRODUCTS (3)	24,470	383,202.24	27,519	366,713.38	36,254	444,144.18	26,708	357,386.49	27,659	343,919.81
TOTAL (incl others)	1,208,400	2,206,279.91	1,758,985	3,097,331.96	1,530,661	3,032,432.44	1,404,357	3,176,138.22	1,539,692	3,695,880.50
Value in Million USD		3,110.63		4,178.80		4,068.47		3,952.68		4,464.17
(*) Provisional										
INCLUDE BISHOPS WEED(AJWANSEED), DILL SEED, POPPY SEED, ANISEED, MUSTARD ETC.										
INCLUDE ASAFOETIDA, CINNAMON, CASSIA, CAMBODGE, SAFFRON, SPICES (NES) ETC.										
INCLUDE MENTHOL, MENTHOL CRYSTALS AND OTHER MINT OILS.										
SOURCE: DGCI&S., CALCUTTA/DLE FROM CUSTOMS/EXPORTERS' RETURNS UPTO 2019-20.										
are taken from DGCIS/MoC only										
SOURCE- Spice Board Website										
Note:2020-21onwards figures										

\*\*\*\*\*