



## EURONION

20 Years of co-ordinating bulb onion production across Europe

### EURONION

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#### Average onion yield the Netherlands

The total yield of onions in the Netherlands this season is still uncertain due to huge differences in the various production areas. Last year, the national average was 54 tonnes, which might not be reached this year. Given the harvest results so far and the current market, a constant demand for larger onions is expected. There is for sure much less 75 mm+ in both yellow and red onions crops. Since Friday September 22<sup>nd</sup>, the harvest and lifting of the onions continued after a two-week break due to the weather circumstances. It is expected that the later harvested onions will show somewhat more large onions but not in excessive sizes.

In the South West part (Zeeland/Brabant), where cultivation was plagued by trips and drought, the yields are relatively low (estimated at the lowest 25-40 ton/ha). Especially in Zeeuws-Vlaanderen the consequences are sometimes dramatic. On the other hand the yields up North (Polders) are good, but in the South and Belgium yields are below average.

The quality of the onions is in general good, with some problems regarding fusarium or bacterial rot, due to the weather conditions. Due to the wet conditions lately, attention to drying at the storage facility is extra important.

#### Onion surface

In recent years the area of onions in the Netherlands has increased significantly:



Source: CBS, Rabobank 2017

The Dutch statistical office (CBS) has estimated that the total onion surface 2017/18 in the Netherlands amounts to 34.930 ha. This would be an increase of 4% in comparison to 2016/17 and the highest onion area in the Netherlands ever recorded. The area of sown onions was reported to reach 26.690 ha (76% of the total onion area), an increase of about 6%. The area with onion sets (including first year onion sets as planting material for next season) has slightly decreased compared to last year (7,810 ha, -2%). This is the end of a continuous upward trend in the last 5 years. In the Dutch agricultural media there was some discussion about the CBS figures. There was unanimity on the increase, but the degree was disputed.

### **Dutch Exports**

Based on (preliminary) data from KCB/Fresh Produce Centre, in week 36 a total of 21,134 t of onions were exported from the Netherlands. The top export destinations in week 36 were Senegal (4,963 T), Great Britain (1,778 T), Ivory Coast (1,622 T) and Indonesia (1,450 T). From the beginning of the season up to week 36 exports reached 176,000 T, an increase of 2% compared to last year and 14 % more than in 2015. Up to week 36 this year 27% of the onions were exported to Senegal, 13% to Ivory Coast and 9% is sold in Great Britain.

Last export season a new record of 1,074 million tonnes of Dutch Onions were exported to 130 different countries world wide. About ten new customer countries were discovered and also relative new markets expanded. Last few years about 15-20 percent of the total export is shipped to these new destinations.

### **Renewing approval maleic hydrazide**

After quite an exciting period, the active substance *maleic hydrazide* has been granted official renewal of its EU approval for the coming fifteen years, until 31 October 2032. Condition for approval is to set a lower maximum level (0,028 mg/kg) for the impurity hydrazine.

As a result, the European onion sector is assured of an effective plant growth regulator for the coming period. On behalf of the Holland Onion Association: thanks to the European onion industry, including Euronion, for all the efforts put into this dossier on national- and European level!

### **Launch of unique research program**

The Dutch onion sector has recently launched a unique research program. Under the flag of the Holland Onion Association the project "Uireka" is created, a large-scale and long-term integral research program lasting three years. The total project costs amount to 2 million Euro for the next 3 years and the intention is to continue the research program after that. In light of the unique freshness of the Holland Onions hazardous storage diseases such as neck rot and fusarium are at the top of the list to be addressed. Both of these spearheads for the first year of research will be executed by different knowledge partners under the supervision of Wageningen University & Research (WUR). Besides the theme 'diseases and plagues' we will also be looking at 'fertilization' -and 'starting material'. More information: [www.uireka.nl](http://www.uireka.nl)

### **More about Dutch Onions?**

For more information about the Dutch onions, please visit our website: [www.holland-onions.org](http://www.holland-onions.org)  
Here you can also register for our quarterly newsletter.



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