

EU–Moldova Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area

Published by AGRINFO on 04 Aug 2025

EU and Moldova reach agreement on improved access to EU market for certain fruits and garlic

Proposal for a Council Decision on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union in the Association Committee in Trade Configuration established by the Association Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community, and their Member States of the one part, and the Republic of Moldova, of the other part, as regards the reduction and elimination of customs duties

Update

The European Union (EU) and Moldova have reached agreement on expanding their trade relations – a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) – under EU Moldova Association Agreement. This will provide greater access for Moldova to the EU market for certain fruits, grape juice, and garlic. Moldova agrees to align its national rules on pesticides with EU rules by the end of 2027. The Agreement includes a safeguard clause that allows the EU to reintroduce import tariffs if imports cause social or economic disruption in the EU.

Impacted products

Apples, cherries, garlic, grapes, grape juice, plums, tomatoes

What is changing?

The EU's existing Association Agreement with Moldova includes a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA). Under the current DCFTA most agri-food products are fully liberalised, meaning they can enter the EU at zero duty. For certain products that are considered sensitive for the EU agri-food sector, zero duty access is limited to a tariff rate quota as high import volumes could negatively impact the EU's production of the same products.

In response to the trading difficulties created by the Ukraine war, Moldova has benefited from complete zero duty access to the EU market for all products ("autonomous trade measures") since July 2022 (Regulation [2024/1501](#)). The EU is Moldova's biggest trading partner, and the traditional export routes transit through Ukraine. These measures expired in July 2025.

Following negotiation on expanding the DCFTA, the EU has agreed to create greater market access for sensitive agricultural products as set out in Table 1.

The new agreement allows the EU to reintroduce import tariffs if imports from Moldova have a negative economic or social impact on the EU as a whole, or on any EU Member State.

A condition for improved market access is that by the end of 2027 Moldova should align its laws to EU rules on pesticides: plant protection products on the market (Regulation [1107/2009](#)); sustainable use of pesticides (Directive [2009/128/EC](#)); official controls (Regulation [2017/625](#)); and protection of waters against nitrate pollution (Council Directive [91/676/EEC](#)).

Why?

The Association Agreement between the EU and Moldova is reviewed regularly, aiming to strengthen ties between Moldova and the EU, and to support alignment of the country's agricultural sector with EU standards to facilitate Moldova's accession to the EU.

Timeline

The tariff rate quotas in the current DCFTA reopen on 25 July 2025 (following the expiry of autonomous trade measures). The revised quotas in Table 1 will apply once the new agreement has been formally adopted, potentially in early 2026.

Background

The existing [Association Agreement](#) and DCFTA between the EU and Moldova have applied in practice since 1 September 2014. A review of the Agreement is planned for 2027.

From July 2022 until July 2025, Moldova could export all agri-food products to the EU market without paying any duty due to autonomous trade measures put in place in response to the Ukraine war.

Resources

European Commission (2025a) [EU and Moldova reach agreement on a modernised trade relationship](#). Press release, 24 July.

European Commission (2025b) [Questions and Answers on the review of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area with Moldova](#).

[Association Agreement](#) between the EU, the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) and their Member States, and the Republic of Moldova


[Summary of the Association agreement with Moldova](#) (European Commission)

Sources

[Proposal](#) for a Council Decision on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union in the Association Committee in Trade Configuration established by the Association Agreement between the EU and Moldova

Visit the [AGRINFO website](#) to view the latest AGRINFO Update newsletters and [search](#) the database.

Table & Figures

Table 1 Improved market access to the European Union under the reviewed EU–Moldova DCFTA		
Products	DCFTA ^[1] tariff rate quotas (tonnes)	
	Current	Reviewed
Apples	40,000	50,000
Cherries	1,500	4,500
Garlic	220	Full liberalisation ^[2]
Grape juice	500	Full liberalisation ^[2]
Grapes (table)	20,000	40,000
Plums	15,000	61,000
Tomatoes	2,000	Liberalisation (no quota): under the entry price system, specific duty is maintained but <i>ad valorem</i> ^[3] component is exempt
1. DCFTA: Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area. 2. Full liberalisation: zero duty for all imports, no quota. 3. <i>Ad valorem</i> : “according to the value” – duty levied as a percentage of value of the goods imported, rather than weight or number of units.		
 www.agrininfo.eu		

Source: based on [Proposal](#) for a Council Decision

Disclaimer: *Under no circumstances shall COLEAD be liable for any loss, damage, liability or expense incurred or suffered that is claimed to have resulted from the use of information available on this website or any link to external sites. The use of the website is at the user’s sole risk and responsibility. This information platform was created and maintained with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents do not, however, reflect the views of the European Union.*