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Growing trend of walnut exports from India: A global perspective

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The Indian appetite for walnuts has continued to rise since COVID-19, as the country's rapidly rising population learns about its health benefits. Traditional and modern retail shops, including India's e-commerce sector, are also helping to boost consumer demand. Besides exports, walnut consumption in India has the potential to grow by 50 per cent annually. For walnut exports from India to be successful, exporters need to adopt a multifaceted strategy that focuses on quality improvement, market expansion, value-added product development, supply chain efficiency, and building brand recognition.

According to Mordor Intelligence, the Walnut market size is anticipated to be $9.26 billion in 2025, rising to $11.77 billion by 2030, with a CAGR of 4.9 per cent between 2025 and 2030. The walnut industry is continuously developing, fuelled by rising demand for healthful and nutritious foods, particularly due to walnuts' high omega-3 content and well-known health benefits. The global production of walnuts is concentrated in a few major regions, with China, the United States, and Chile leading the way.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, China is the largest producer, accounting for more than half of global walnut production, with 1.4 million metric tonnes predicted in 2023. The country's extensive walnut growing is assisted by favourable weather and government incentives to boost nut output. The United States, particularly California, is another major supplier, accounting for more than 30 per cent of global walnut production each year, according to the Dried Fruit Association of California. Walnuts are widely consumed in North America, Europe, and parts of Asia Pacific.

The United States and China are not only major producers, but also significant consumers. The walnut oil sector is also growing, driven by demand from the cosmetics and skincare industries, which use walnut oil for its moisturising and anti-ageing properties. Furthermore, walnut meal, a byproduct of oil manufacturing, is becoming more popular in the food business as a protein-rich ingredient. According to Fact. MR, the global walnut oil market has been estimated at $1.4 billion in 2024 and

is projected to reach $1.95 billion by 2034, at a CAGR of 6.5 per cent.

Furthermore, technological advancements in processing and packaging have contributed to the country's large exports, since walnut manufacturers in the United States employ improved hulling, drying, and packaging techniques to extend the shelf life of walnuts. As a result, while China is the world's leading producer of walnuts, the United States has established itself as a top exporter due to superior quality, product variety, and access to global markets.

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