

Report

Orange Export 2024



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Background

Oranges are a vital part of Bhutan's economy, particularly in the southern regions where they are cultivated as one of the major cash crops. In 2023, Bhutan exported 15,370.21 metric tonnes of Oranges¹ primarily to India and Bangladesh generating Nu. 573.73 million. The Orange industry's contribution to Bhutan's economy is substantial, generating income for farmers, strengthening foreign exchange reserves and employment generation.

The 2024 Orange export season showed promising results, marked by increased production, favorable market prices and successful exports to India and Bangladesh. The Department of Agricultural Marketing and Cooperatives (DAMC) along with its three regional offices in Mongar, Phuentsholing and Gelephu closely monitored the Orange export situation throughout the season. This report provides an overview of the 2024 Orange export season, highlighting key statistics, challenges, and future prospects.

1. Method

This report is prepared from the published data of Bhutan Trade Statistics, providing export value and quantity for Oranges in 2023 and 2024 and data from the Bhutan Food and Drug Authority (BFDA) and records maintained by the exporters.

1.1. Incomparability of the Bhutan Trade Statistics and BFDA/Exporter's Data

The Bhutan Trade Statistics 2024 and BFDA/exporter's data are not directly comparable due to their differing reporting periods. Bhutan Trade Statistics follows a calendar year (January to December) and omits the final months of the export season. On the other hand, BFDA and exporters provide data based on the actual export season which was from November 2024 to February 2025.

2. Orange Export as per Bhutan Trade Statistics

2.1. Orange Export 2023

According to the Bhutan Trade Statistics 2023, Orange was Bhutan's second most exported agricultural commodity, with over 15,370.21 metric tonnes of Oranges worth Nu. 573.73 million being exported to India and Bangladesh.

¹ Orange export includes figures for Mandarin export as well.

2.2. Orange Export 2024

Bhutan's Orange exports reached Nu. 765.1 million in 2024, demonstrating substantial year-over-year growth. The overall export value climbed by 33.36%, and volume increased by 26.52%. *Table 1* and *Table 2* provide a breakdown of the export value and volume for 2023 and 2024, along with the percentage increase.

Table 1: Orange export value and percentage increase in 2024 (Source: BTS 2023 & 2024)

Commodity	2023 Value (Nu. M)	2024 Value (Nu. M)	% increased from 2023
Oranges	500.86	624.78	24.74%
Mandarin	72.87	140.32	92.57%
Total	573.73	765.10	33.36%

Table 2: Orange export volume and percentage increase in 2024 (Source: BTS 2023 & 2024)

Commodity	2023 Volume (MT)	2024 Volume (MT)	% increased from 2023
Oranges	13,382.79	15,771.08	17.85%
Mandarin	1,987.42	3,674.60	84.89%
Total	15,370.21	19,445.68	26.52%

3. Orange Export as per BFDA and Exporter's records

According to the data received from the regional offices of the Bhutan Food and Drug Authority (BFDA) and the exporters, in 2024, Orange exports amounted to 16,252.92 metric tonnes, valued at US\$ 7.69 million (Nu. 652.1 million).

The price fetched for different grades of Orange were reported as follows from Gelephu:

- Meel = US\$ 23
- Keel = US\$ 17

The base price for Oranges for declaration is fixed at US\$ 15 for Meel and US\$ 12 for Keel per box respectively. The average weight for a box of Oranges is 27 kg.

3.1. Gateways

Oranges were exported from eight different gateways during this season. Six of these gateways which are Gelephu, Nganglam, Phuentsholing, Samdrup Jongkhar, Samtse and Sangacholing sold Oranges in boxes. The remaining two gateways, Jomotshangkha and Lhamoizingkha sold Oranges in loose without any packaging.

3.2. Total Exporters

The season recorded 27 exporters. Druk Phuensum Export and Import exported the highest quantity of Oranges which was 134,666 boxes (3635.98 MT) worth US\$ 1.74 million, followed by Kuwapani Export with 44,089 boxes (1190.40 MT) worth US\$ 0.55 million and ST Export exported the least with 1750 boxes (47.25 MT) worth US\$ 21,525.

Table 3: Total export volume and value by exporter (Source: BFDA & Exporters)

SI No	Exporter Name	Total Volume (MT)	Total Boxes (Nos)	Total Value (US\$)
1	Druk Phuensum Export & Import	3635.98	134,666	1,741,639
2	Kuwapani Export	1190.40	44,089	552,843
3	Rinyang Export	949.81	35,178	426,890
4	Peling Export	861.08	31,892	471,538
5	TD Enterprise	849.66	31,469	395,037
6	Kinley Choki Enterprise	822.93	30,479	380,898
7	Pradhan Export	735.75	27,250	342,075
8	Lamdron export	690.12	25,560	323,040
9	Kota UD Export	680.94	25,220	310,610
10	KW Export & Import	627.64	23,246	290,730
11	Uygen Enterprise	561.87	20,810	261,000
12	Sherab Thuendrel Export	494.67	18,321	237,285
13	B&B Enterprise	452.79	16,770	221,200
14	Oli Enterprise	405.78	15,029	189,573
15	Norbu Yangkhil Export	386.56	14,317	184,599
16	Jamtsho Enterprise	366.96	13,591	169,047
17	Pelden Export & Import	361.61	13,393	179,088

18	Dramzop Export	359.10	13,300	168,175
19	Adhikari Export	345.33	12,790	167,189
20	YP Enterprise	335.88	12,440	156,150
21	TS Enterprise	281.45	10,424	129,588
22	Neten Export	241.38	8,940	111,600
23	Dru-gang Enterprise	235.01	8,704	108,309
24	NC Export	165.62	6,134	76,653
25	UT Export & Import	89.59	3,318	41,670
26	TD Export	77.76	2,880	36,090
27	ST Export & Import House	47.25	1,750	21,525
	Total	16,252.92	601,960	7,694,041

3.3. Total Export Volume and Value by Gateway

3.3.1. Gelephu

Gelephu served as the major export gateway, facilitating the shipment of 358,522 boxes (9,680.1 MT) of Oranges valued at US\$ 4.49 million to Bangladesh by 17 exporters. The *Table 4*, below shows the total number of boxes and total export value obtained by each of the exporters from the gateway.

Table 4: Total value and volume by exporter from Gelephu gateway (Source: BFDA)

SI No	Exporter Name	Total Volume (MT)	Total Boxes (Nos)	Total Value (US\$)
1	Druk Phuensum Export & Import	1,988.04	73,631	920,587
2	Kuwapani Export	1190.40	44,089	552,843
3	TD Enterprise	849.66	31,469	395,037
4	Kinley Cheki Enterprise	822.93	30,479	380,898
5	Pradhan Export	735.75	27,250	342,075
6	Lamdron Export	690.12	25,560	323,040
7	KW Export & Import	627.64	23,246	290,730
8	Ugyen Enterprise	561.87	20,810	261,000

9	Oli Enterprise	405.78	15,029	189,573
10	Peling Export	374.00	13,852	176,019
11	Jamtsho Enterprise	366.96	13,591	169,047
12	YP Enterprise	335.88	12,440	156,150
13	TS Enterprise	281.45	10,424	129,588
14	Dru-gang Enterprise	235.01	8,704	108,309
15	UT Export & Import	89.59	3,318	41,670
16	TD Export	77.76	2,880	36,090
17	ST Export & Import House	47.25	1,750	21,525
	Total	9,680.1	358,522	4,494,181

3.3.2. Samdrup Jongkhar

Samdrup Jongkhar exported the second highest with 93,255 boxes (2517.89 MT) of Oranges worth US\$ 1.17 million by five exporters. *Table 5* below presents the export volume and value for each exporter.

Table 5: Total value and volume by exporter from Samdrup Jongkhar gateway (Source: Exporters)

Sl No	Exporter Name	Total Volume (MT)	Total Boxes (Nos)	Total Value (US\$)
1	Rinyang Export	949.81	35,178	426,890
2	Kota UD Export	529.74	19,620	244,890
3	Sherab Thuendrel Export	494.67	18,321	237,285
4	Norbu Yangkhil Export	386.56	14,317	184,599
5	NC Export	165.62	6,134	76,653
	Total	2517.89	93,255	1,166,387

3.3.3. Phuentsholing

The Phuentsholing gateway exported 67,040 boxes (1810.08 MT) worth US\$ 0.96 million by three exporters. *Table 6* below provides a detailed breakdown of each exporter's shipments.

Table 6: Total value and volume by exporter from Phuentsholing gateway (Source: Exporters)

SI No	Exporter Name	Total Volume (MT)	Total Boxes (Nos)	Total Value (US\$)
1	Druk Phuensum Export & Import	870.21	32,230	441,000
2	Peling Export	487.08	18,040	295,519
3	B & B Enterprise	452.79	16,770	221,200
	Total	1810.08	67,040	957,719

3.3.4. Nganglam

A value of US\$ 0.56 million worth of Oranges, 42198 boxes (1139.35 MT), was shipped from the Nganglam gateway by two exporters. The Table 7, below shows the total number of boxes and total export value obtained by the two exporters from the gateway.

Table 7: Total value and volume by exporter from Nganglam gateway (Source: Exporters)

SI No	Exporter Name	Total Volume (MT)	Total Boxes (Nos)	Total Value (US\$)
1	Druk Phuensum Export & Import	777.74	28,805	380,052
2	Pelden Export & Import	361.61	13,393	179,088
	Total	1139.35	42,198	559,140

3.3.5. Samtse

Two exporters exported 26,090 boxes (704.43 MT) of Oranges from the Samtse gateway with a total value of US\$ 0.36 million. Table 8 below provides a detailed breakdown of each exporter's shipments.

Table 8: Total value and volume by exporter from Samtse gateway (Source: Exporters)

SI No	Exporter Name	Total Volume (MT)	Total Boxes (Nos)	Total Value (US\$)
1	Dramzop Export	359.1	13,300	168,175
2	Adhikari Export	345.33	12,790	167,189
	Total	704.43	26,090	335,364

3.3.6. Sangacholing

Exports from the Sangacholing gateway was the lowest this season with an exporter exporting 8940 boxes of Oranges worth US\$ 0.11 million.

Table 9: Total value and volume by exporter from Sangacholing gateway (Source: Exporters)

SI No	Exporter Name	Total Volume (MT)	Total Boxes (Nos)	Total Value (US\$)
1	Neten Export	241.38	8,940	111,600

4. Challenges

Following are some of the challenges shared by the Exporters:

- I. Delayed payments from the exporters to sawmillers for the boxes have resulted in a significant disruption in boxes production. Sawmillers, in response to these payment delays, withheld box deliveries until full payment was received. This led to shortage of wooden box production thereby impacting the overall export efficiency.
- II. FASTag suspension for Bhutanese vehicles plying through India resulted in double payment of toll fees thus increasing the overall logistical cost.
- III. Exporters reported insufficient INR to cover incidental expenses in India due to the limitations imposed by the Royal Monetary Authority (RMA) on availing INR currently.

5. Way Forward

In order to discuss issues and challenges and to plan for the smooth conduct of the orange export from the coming season, a consultation meeting will be conducted with the Orange Exporters by the DAMC in collaboration with the relevant stakeholders.

Conclusion

The Orange export is a vital contributor to Bhutan's economy. By capitalizing on the opportunities and addressing the challenges, Bhutan can further strengthen its position in the regional Orange market and ensure a prosperous future for its Orange export industry.