

Welsh food and drink sector reports record exports

Welsh food and drink exports hit a record high in 2021 of £641m.

Wales also had the largest percentage increase in the value of food and drink exports out of the four UK nations between 2020 and 2021 rising by £89m, a growth of 16.1%.

The highest value export category for Welsh food and drink in 2021 was meat and meat products at £187m.

Cereal and cereal preparations saw a year-on-year increase of 173%, rising from £51m to £139m, and dairy and birds eggs hit £106m.

The range of products exported is diverse, as is the range of countries Welsh businesses export to.

Welsh food and drink exports to the EU were worth £465m in 2021, a £51m increase from 2020, accounting for 73% of the total.

Eight of the top ten Welsh food and drink export destinations were within the EU, with the two non-EU countries being the USA and Saudi Arabia.

The Republic of Ireland remained the highest value destination for Welsh food and drink exports at £113m. Other top destinations included France (£100m), Netherlands (£49m) and Germany (£44m).

There was a significant increase in exports to Belgium which were worth £56m in 2021, a rise of 162% from £21m in 2020. The highest value category to the country being Dairy Products and Birds Eggs.

Rural Affairs Minister, Lesley Griffiths said: “It is great news Welsh food and drink exports have reached their highest value ever.

“The past couple of years have been very challenging and these figures clearly demonstrate the resilience and determination of our Welsh companies to succeed in overseas markets.

“The industry in Wales is also leading the way out of the four UK nations with the largest percentage increase in the value of food and drink exports.

“I am pleased the Welsh Government’s food and drink export programme is supporting businesses to broaden trade in new and existing markets in countries around the world.”

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