

DATES – EXPORT MARKETS & POTENTIAL

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(SECTOR REPORT)



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Executive Summary

The Date and the Date Palm have been an important part of survival in the UAE for close to 7000 years, the oldest seeds found on Delma Island dating back to 5110BC. The UAE is recognized as a globally important region for date farming and have utilized and harvested dates as part of their food source for survival in the UAE. What makes the date fruit so important and perfect for survival in the desert environment is that they are easily digested, allowing the body to take full use of its nutrients. It reduces bad cholesterol, and contains, iron, potassium, Vitamins, B, A and, K, and 15 minerals. The UAE reportedly grows about 160 varieties of dates and there are a staggering 44 million date palm trees in the UAE that produce 76,000 tons of dates per year. In this report, we will export the export potential of dates through Dubai.

HS 080410 (Fresh or Dried Dates),

In 2018, the global import value was nearly USD 1.401 Billion. Top 10 global importing markets are India (18.3% of global imports); Morocco (12.2%); USA (7.06%); France (7%); Germany (4.7%), Indonesia & UK (4.5% each); Netherlands (3.5%) and Canada (3.5%), comprising more than 60% of the world imports. (See charts). Top exporters of dates worldwide in descending order are Tunisia, Israel, Iran, Pakistan, Algeria, UAE and Egypt. More than 41% of UAE's total dates exports (of about USD 94.5 Million) was to Morocco; 29.5% to India; 11% to Indonesia; 4% to Malaysia and 1.1% to USA, while the remaining 10.5% (@ USD 9.94 Million), distributed among other countries. See graphs at the end of this report. .

While the number of significant importing countries of dates exceed 100, UAE's significant (> USD 0.5 Million) exports are only to 12 countries. From ITC graphs it is evident that while UAE companies have targeted large markets like Morocco, India, Indonesia, other attractive and large markets like North America, Europe and even some parts of the Middle East have not yet been fully exploited. A close look at ITC's Export Potential Map (<http://exportpotential.intracen.org>) shows e.g. that India has an untapped import potential of more than USD 332 Million, Morocco USD 121 Million, France USD 67 Million, UK & USD 40 Million and so on (see graphs attached).

At Dubai Exports, we believe that while pushing for increased exports to the largest two markets, viz. India and Morocco, possibly through DE Overseas offices there, efforts should be made to explore the new markets of North America, EU as well as other Middle East countries like Kuwait & Iraq. The next few pages aims at giving statistical information on the global imports and UAE exports of these products and we hope it will be useful to DE Members.

Market Access Map provides information about customs tariffs (including tariff preferences) applied by more than 200 countries. It also covers tariff rate quotas, trade remedies, rules and certificates of origin, bound tariffs of WTO members, non-tariff measures and trade flows to help users prioritize and analyse export markets as well as prepare for market access negotiations. Market Access Map is free to users in UAE thanks to generous support from the European Commission, DFID, the World Bank, the Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation and donors to ITC's trust fund. Import Tariff for Dates is relatively low in North America, Middle East and EU compared to India (30%).

Source: <https://www.macmap.org/Default.aspx>

Technical Standards & Requirements for Import

United States of America

Section 8e of the [Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937](#) (AMAA) applies to specific fruit, vegetable, and specialty crop imports into the United States. Shipments of dates greater than 70 lbs. and intended for human consumption are subject to Section 8e inspection. The cost of the inspection and certification is paid by the applicant. [View the full regulation](#) here. Dates imported into the United States must meet the following minimum grade and/or maturity requirements prior to importation:

Grade Requirements: Dates for packaging and dates in retail packages must meet modified U.S. Grade B. [View the regulation](#). "Dates in retail packages" refers to whole or pitted dates, other than dates prepared or preserved, wrapped or packaged for sale at retail. "Dates for packaging" refers to whole or pitted dates in bulk containers which are to be repacked, in whole or part, in the United States as dates in retail packages.

Specific Exemptions: Any imported shipment of dates not exceeding 70 lbs. or any lot of dates rendered unfit for human consumption may be exempt from grade and certification requirements. Dates for processing, dates prepared or preserved, and dates donated to certain charitable entities are also not subject to grade, inspection and certification requirements.

Reclassification & Re-inspection of Dates: Dates initially offered as "dates for processing" meeting U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) wholesomeness and cleanliness requirements, may be re-offered as "dates for packaging" if re-inspected by USDA and certified to meet grade requirements.

Timeline: Importers should make arrangements for inspection and certification at least 10 days prior to entry at Port by [contacting the nearest field office](#). An onboard bill of lading designating the lots to be inspected must accompany applications for inspection or be submitted promptly thereafter.

Source: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/rules-regulations/section8e/dates>

Canada

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency ([CFIA](#)) sets the policies and regulations for the importations of food, agricultural inputs and agricultural products. The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) is responsible for the initial import inspection of these imports at Canadian entry points to verify the requirements for all Departments and Agencies of the Government of Canada. Foreign businesses preparing foods for export to Canada do not need a licence under the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations ([SFCR](#)). The Canadian business importing food into Canada needs a licence under the SFCR to import and any other permission as required by other Canadian Departments and Agencies. Exporter to Canada should Work with an SFC-licensed importer to ensure that your food products meet all applicable requirements of the SFCR.

Source: <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/food/imports/eng/1526656151226/1526656151476>

For more information from our office in North America, contact us at info@dedc.gov.ae.

India

In the last decade, India has steadily replaced licensing and discretionary controls over imports with deregulation and simpler import procedures. Most of import items fall within the scope of India's EXIM Policy regulation of Open General License (OGL). This means that they are deemed to be freely importable without restrictions and without a

license, except to the extent that they are regulated by the provisions of the Policy or any other law. Labeling requirements for packaged food products as laid down in the Part VII of the [Prevention of Food Adulteration \(PFA\) Rules, 1955 \(www.fssai.gov.in/\)](#), and the Standards of Weights and Measures (Packaged Commodities) Rules of 1977, require that the labels contain the following information:

- Name, trade name or description
- Name of ingredients used in the product in descending order of their composition by weight or volume
- Name and complete address of manufacturer/packer, importer, country of origin of the imported food (if the food article is manufactured outside India, but packed in India)
- Net weight, number or volume of contents
- Distinctive batch, lot or code number
- Month and year of manufacture and packaging
- Month and year by which the product is best consumed
- Maximum retail price

Wherever applicable, the product label also must contain the following:

- The purpose of irradiation and license number in case of irradiated food
- Extraneous addition of coloring material
- Non-vegetarian food – any food which contains whole or part of any animal including birds, fresh water or marine animals, eggs or product of any animal origin as an ingredient, not including milk or milk products – must have a symbol of a brown color-filled circle inside a brown square outline prominently displayed on the package, contrasting against the background on the display label in close proximity to the name or brand name of the food
- Vegetarian food must have a similar symbol of green color-filled circle inside a square with a green outline prominently displayed

All declarations may be:

- Printed in English or Hindi on a label securely affixed to the package, or
- Made on an additional wrapper containing the imported package, or
- Printed on the package itself, or
- May be made on a card or tape affixed firmly to the package and bearing the required information prior to customs clearance

Source: <https://www.export.gov/article?id=India-Labeling-Marking-Requirements>

Morocco

The following documentation is required for all imports and exports:

- A license representing the “physical import or export.”
- A commercial invoice: Pro-forma invoices are provided in most cases. No special invoice form is necessary. The commercial or pro-forma invoice should be on the supplier’s letterhead, Fully describe the goods in French, Indicate the HS code when available, Indicate the value of the goods, Indicate the currency for payment (for foreign exchange transfer), indicate the address of the buyer & Use the date format (dd/mm/yyyy).

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- An “import commitment” (engagement d’importation), which is the authorization provided by the Foreign Exchange Office for transfer of foreign currencies from Morocco to foreign suppliers abroad.
- A “customs declaration” (declaration de douane), which is provided by the Customs Administration and is required for import and export through a port or airport. For shipments by mail, a simple form filled out at the post office replaces the “declaration de douane.”
- The importer/exporter may attach any documentation, such as technical documentation, that might assist the Customs Administration. The authority for Customs in Morocco is the Administration of Customs and Indirect Tax: <http://www.douane.gov.ma>.

No special regulations apply to the exterior marking of containers for shipments to Morocco. However, an indication on outer containers of the net weight in kilograms, together with other identification markings, will assist in locating goods on arrival and speed their clearance through customs. Duties and taxes are assessed on the value indicated on the commercial invoice. Metric measurement is mandatory. Food labels can be in French or Arabic and must show country of origin. Both local and imported canned foods and beverages must have the dates of production and expiration printed on them using the format above.

Source: <https://www.export.gov/article?id=Morocco-Import-Requirements-and-Documentation>

European Union

European imports of dates are growing. Driven by a consumer trend towards healthy foods, dates are marketed as a natural source of energy and rich in nutrients. France, the United Kingdom and Germany offer the most opportunities for you as a developing country supplier. Food safety certification supported with laboratory tests and compliance with corporate social responsibility standards can provide great advantages if you are looking to increase your exports to Europe. The basic quality requirements for dates are:

- Absence of insects, damages, moulds, fermentation and foreign smell or taste.
- Moisture content: maximum 26% for cane sugar varieties and 30% for invert sugar varieties. However, for Deglet Nour dates in their natural state, the maximum moisture content is 30%.
- Presentation: separated into individual fruits (unpitted or pitted), in clusters (dates with the main bunch stem attached) or in stems (stems that are separated from the rachis, with the fruit attached naturally).
Dates can be chopped.
- Additional ingredients should be clearly indicated.

Specific marketing requirements include: Classification — dates are classified into three classes: Extra Class, Class I and Class II; Sizing — size classification is optional. Dates can be classified into three categories, according to the number of dates per 500 grams.

Tip: Check the [UNECE standards](#) and [Codex Alimentarius standard](#) for more details on the quality requirements.

Source: <https://www.cbi.eu/market-information/processed-fruit-vegetables-edible-nuts/dates>

Note: DE Partners, SGS and Intertek provides inspection and certification services for exporters through Dubai. For further information on Import standards/ regulations, regulated or prohibited products, you may contact us or them (see below)

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- ❖ Sithara Hatim; SGS Gulf Ltd., Jebel Ali Branch; T: 9714 8809393 (Ext 249); E: sithara.hatim@sgs.com; www.sgs.com.

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Distribution Channels

The International Trade Centre's "Trade Map Tool" (www.trademap.org) provides useful information about importing and exporting companies for 133 countries. The list of potential buyers of products as acquired through ITC database are large in some countries (e.g. Germany) while practically non-existent in others. For further assistance regarding "potential" buyers from on specific products produced/sold by our exporters, please contact DE Head office or register with ITC and browse the information available. *Source: <https://www.trademap.org>*

North Americas & Europe

Most exporters to USA and Europe sell through specialized importers or appoint sales agents who often are manufacturers' brokers. Large, well-established firms with an efficient nationwide sales organizations are likely to insist on an exclusive arrangements with exporters. For more details you may contact info@dedc.gov.ae to obtain more/ specific information through our North American and EU Overseas Offices.

India

There has been a significant expansion in distribution channels in India in recent years. The Indian retail market, currently estimated at \$490 billion, is projected to grow at a compounded annual growth rate of six percent to reach \$865 billion by 2023. The total number of retail distribution outlets in the country is estimated at over 12 million, mostly family owned businesses. An annual growth rate for the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector is predicted at 10-12 percent during the next 10 years. A firm can deliver its products to the user through a variety of channels, using a range of marketing intermediaries. India's Business to Business (B2B) e-commerce market is expected to reach \$700 billion by 2020. Online retail is expected to be at par with the physical stores in the next five years. India is expected to become the world's fastest growing e-commerce market, driven by robust investment in the sector and rapid increase in the number of internet users. Indian e-commerce sales are expected to reach \$120 billion by 2020 from \$30 billion in 2016.

The three-tier system: most Indian manufacturers use a three-tier selling and distribution structure that has evolved over the years. This structure involves redistribution stockists, wholesalers, and retailers. As an example, an FMCG company operating on an all-India basis could have between 40 and 80 redistribution stockists (RS). The RS will sell the product to between 100 and 450 wholesalers. Finally, both the RS and wholesalers will service between 250,000-750,000 retailers throughout the country. The RS will sell to both large and small retailers in the cities as well as interior parts of India. Depending on how a company chooses to manage and supervise these relations, its sales staff may vary from 75 to 500 employees. Wholesaling is profitable by maintaining low costs with high turnover, with typical FMCG product margins anywhere from four to five percent. Many wholesalers operate out of wholesale markets. In urban areas, the more enterprising retailers provide credit and home-delivery. Now, with the advent of shopping malls, companies talk of direct delivery and discounts for large retail outlets.

In recent years, there has been increased interest from companies to improve their distribution logistics to address a fiercely competitive market. This in turn has led to the emergence of independent distribution and logistics agencies to handle this important function. Marketers are increasingly outsourcing some of the key functions in the

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distribution and logistics areas to courier and logistics companies and searching for more efficient ways to reach the consumer. The courier network in India now spreads to smaller Class IV towns (defined as a town with a population of less than 50,000). Most FMCG and pharmaceutical companies use clearing and forwarding (C&F) agents for distribution, with each C&F agent servicing stocks in an area, typically a state. Taxes used to vary between states until the introduction in 2017 of a national value added tax, known in India as the General Service Tax (GST). Now, at every stage from producer to end consumer, retail prices are the same throughout India. With the cost of establishing warehouses extremely high, C&F agents are fast becoming the norm.

India has 13 major (national government control) and 187 minor (local state/private control) ports, but in terms of gross weight tonnage conveyed annually, Mumbai and Marmagao on the west coast, and Vishakhapatnam and Chennai along the east coast are the most important ports in India. Mumbai, the financial capital of the country, is very important for international cargo trade. To assist companies entering the Indian market, the GOI uses free trade and warehousing zones (FTWZ) as a special category of special economic zone with a focus on trading and warehousing. The objective of the FTWZ is to create trade-related infrastructure to facilitate the import and export of goods and services with greater flexibility. These zones are established in areas close to seaports, airports, or dry ports. FDI up to 100 percent is allowed in the development and establishment of the zones and in their infrastructure facilities. The program allows duty free import of all goods for warehousing (except prohibited items such as arms and ammunition, hazardous waste, special chemicals, organisms, materials, equipment and technology items). The maximum period that goods may be warehoused within the FTWZ is two years, after which the goods must be re-exported or sold. After the two-year period expires, custom duties as applicable and would automatically become due unless the goods are re-exported with a grace period of three months.

Source: <https://www.export.gov/article?id=India-Distribution-and-Sales-Channels>

Morocco

Casablanca and Tangier are the primary ports of entry for foreign manufactured goods for direct distribution. Ferry services between Morocco and Spain allow goods to be imported and exported by truck. The Tanger-Med port on Morocco's Meditterrean coast, which has a throughput capacity of eight million containers annually, is the largest port in North Africa. Morocco has an established distribution system with wholesalers and dealers. Selling into these markets requires dealing with several key buyers or working with an intermediary or wholesaler who has access to a broad base of smaller shops.

Source: <https://www.export.gov/article?id=Morocco-Distribution-and-Sales-Channels>

UAE Exporters may use local offices or authorized agents and distributors for export to Morocco. Distributors can provide value-added technical support to end-users and often provide in-bond warehousing. Local agents and distributors can assist the UAE firms with local know-how and customs. Alternatively, UAE exporters may contact Dubai Exports for assistance through our office at Casablanca.

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Customs Duties on Dates (HS 080410)

Market Access Map - Import Tariff for Dates (HS 080410)

Importer	HS Code	Tariff regime	Applied tariff (as reported)	Applied tariff (converted)	Total AV equivalent tariff
USA	08041020	MFN duties (Applied)	13.2 cents/kg	132.00 \$/Ton	3.74%
	08041040		1 cents/kg	10.00 \$/Ton	0.36%
	08041060		2.8 cents/kg	28.00 \$/Ton	2.55%
	08041080		29.80%	29.80%	29.80%
CANADA	8041000		0%	0%	0%
INDIA	08041010	MFN duties (Applied)	30%	30%	30%
	08041020		30%	30%	30%
	08041030		30%	30%	30%
	08041090		30%	30%	30%
MOROCCO	0804100000	Preferential tariff for UAE	0%	0%	0%
EU Countries	804100030	MFN duties (Applied)	7.70%	7.70%	7.70%
	804100091		7.70%	7.70%	7.70%
	804100099		7.70%	7.70%	7.70%

Source: <https://www.macmap.org/Default.aspx>

Potential Buyers for Dates (HS 080410)

The list of potential buyers of products as acquired through ITC database are adequate in some countries while practically non-existent in others. For further assistance regarding “potential” buyers from on specific products produced/sold by our exporters, please contact DE Head office (info@dedc.gov.ae). We have offices or partners now in most of the large markets for dates. Alternatively register (for free) with ITC and browse the information available on potential buyers in various countries.

Source: <https://www.trademap.org>

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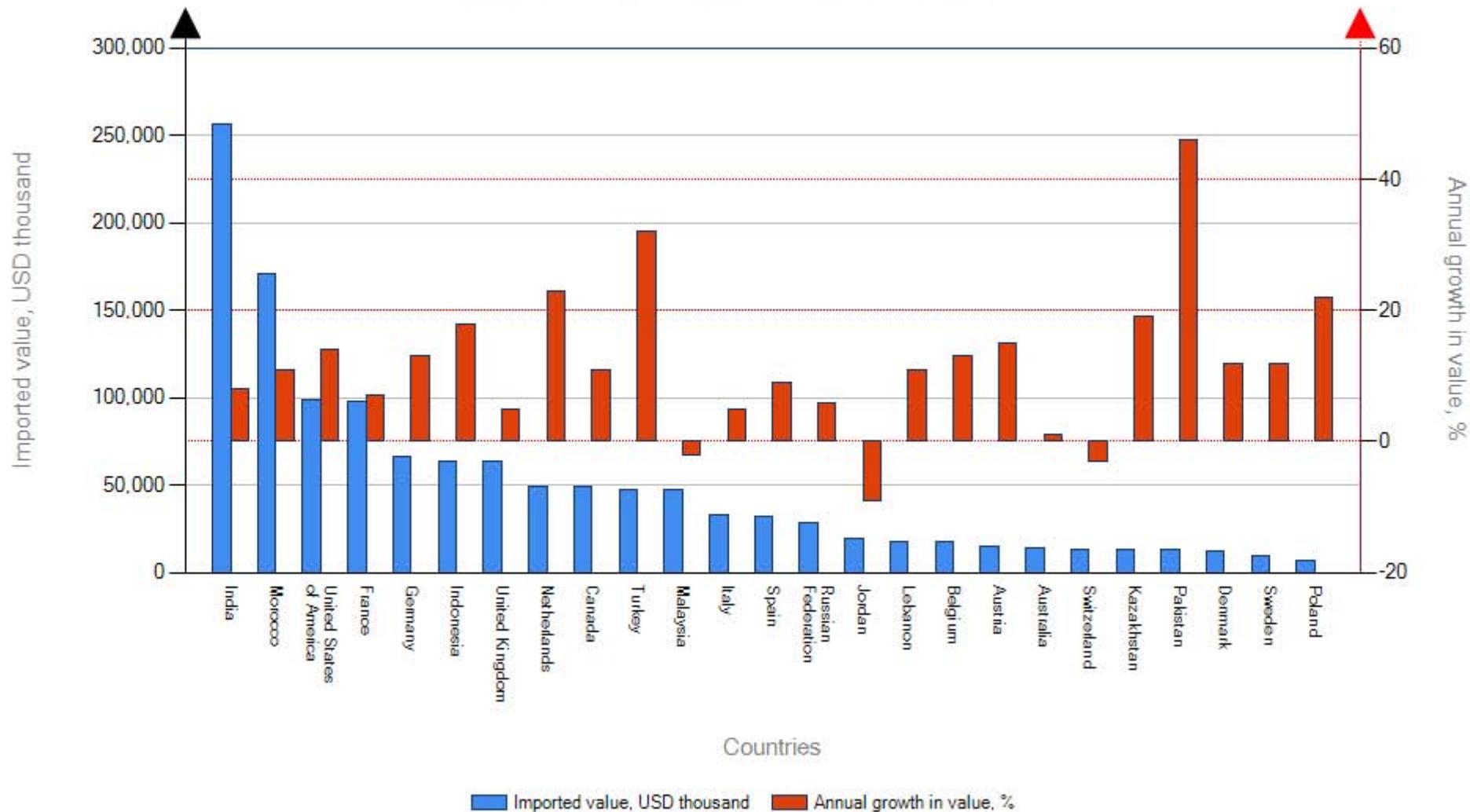
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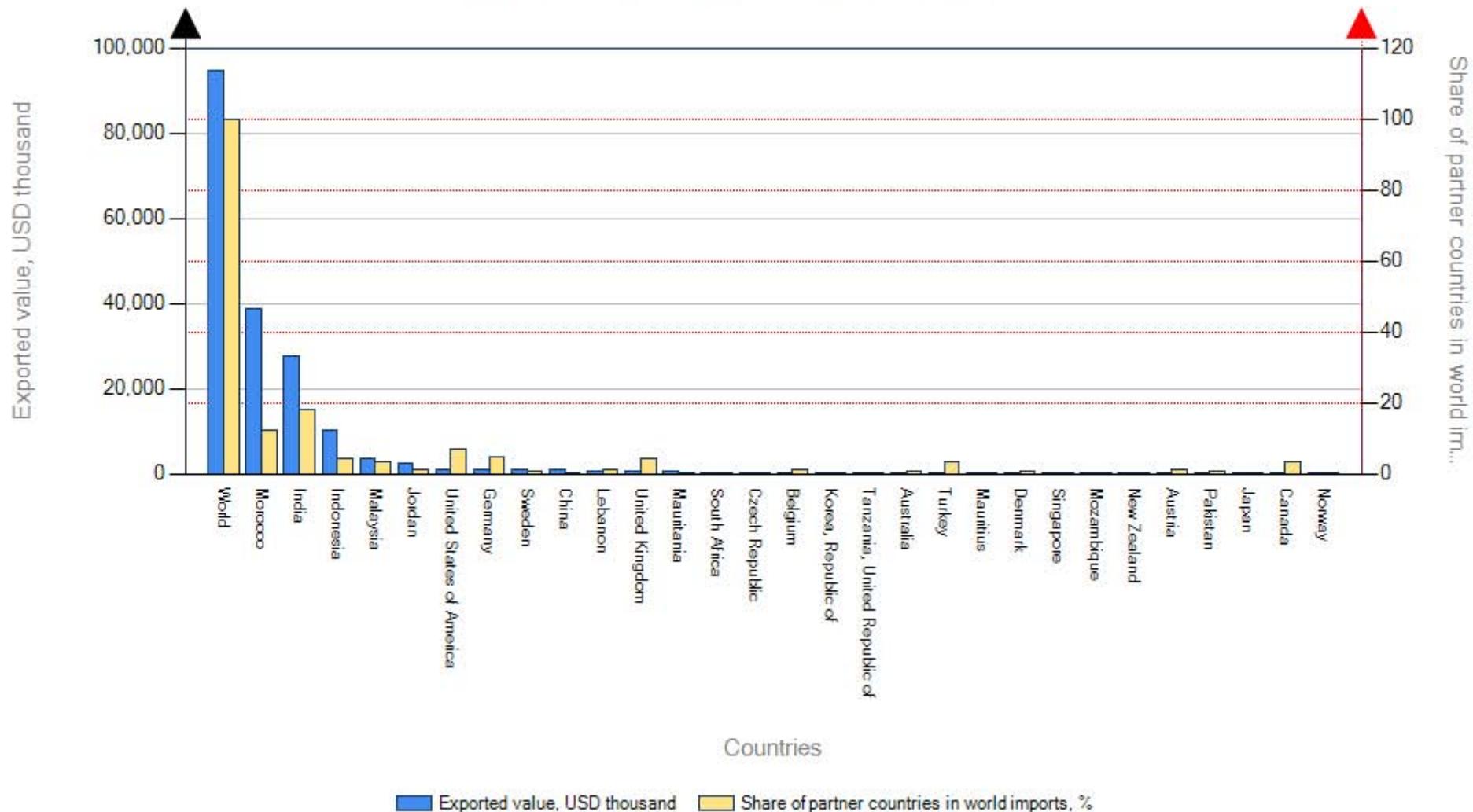
List of importers for the selected product in 2018

Product : 080410 Fresh or dried dates



List of importing markets for a product exported by United Arab Emirates in 2018

Product : 080410 Fresh or dried dates



Markets with potential of Dates, fresh or dried

Legend

- Export potential
- Actual exports
- Potential to actual exports gap

- South Asia
- EU & West Europe
- Middle East
- North Africa
- ASEAN
- North America
- East Europe & Central Asia
- Pacific
- East Africa

