THE TOMATO PROCESSING INDUSTRY IN GREECE

PLANTING	JAN	FEB	MAR	**APR**	**MAY**	**JUN**	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
HARVESTING	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	**JUL**	**AUG**	**SEP**	OCT	NOV	DEC

Production	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**
Volume of tomatoes processed (in metric tonnes)	425 000	570 000	500 000
Surface planted (in hectares)			6 00
Average field yield (in t/ha)			83
Average tomato price (for tomato paste in €/t field gate)	78	80	83
Number of growers			
Number of processors	14	14	14
Trade balance			
Tomato paste (HS 200290 in metric tonnes)	35 270	45 710	46 753
Canned tomatoes (HS 200210 in metric tonnes)	21 841	32 347	28 159
Tomato sauces (HS 2103 in metric tonnes)	-2 598	-4 147	-2 837

Greece accounts for about 6% of the tonnage processed in AMITOM countries, with 420 000 tonnes processed on average over the last five years.

Currently, most of the growing and processing is carried out in three geographical areas:
- The Central region (Thessalia and Beotia), with about 75% of the production;
- The Peloponnese which accounts for about 20% of the production.
- The Northern Region (Macedonia-Thrace), with about 5% of the production.

Greece is a very mountainous country and agricultural acreage only covers a little more of 10% of the total surface of the country. Processing tomatoes are mainly grown in plains close to rivers and lakes or in regions surrounded by mountains. Drip irrigation iis generalised and accounts for more than 95% of the surfaces.

Soils are medium type with variable predominance of clay and sand rich in organic matter and well drained. Fields are varying from area to area, with the more traditional areas around 10 hectares and the newest areas around 25 hectares.

Seeds utilized are almost 100 % hybrids with main suppliers being Heinz seeds, ISI, Esasem and HMClause. Direct seeding is around 5%, while transplants now dominate especially in areas looking for an earlier harvest and account for about 95 % of the surfaces. Machine harvesting has grown at a fast rate and more than 95 % of the tomatoes are now mechanically harvested.

Thanks to the intensive work carried out by both factories and local growers organizations, the yields and fruit quality are steadily increasing.

There are currently about fifteen tomato processing factories in Greece, with the four largest handling 75 % of the total volume.

The price of raw material was the last couple of years, around 80 Euros per metric tonnes, a good average European price.

The Greek production is predominantly export oriented (about 80 %). The majority is high quality industrially packed tomato products, like paste, diced, sauces etc. in aseptic / bulk packaging. Major export markets are E.U., Japan and Gulf countries. A significant part is also packed in retail sizes destined both to domestic market as well as to exports.

The economic crisis the country is facing lately has caused the temporary drop down of the production during the last couple of years. However, this has led to the restructuring of the Greek industry which now is concentrated in fewer but stronger industries and in highly productive areas, promising efficient, low cost production with high quality diversified products.

WPTC member (through AMITOM): PEK
The Greek industry is represented within the AMITOM by PEK, the Greek Canners Association. Established in 1945, it is a founding member of AMITOM. Its members' companies account for about 90 % of the total Greek production.