

*The U.K. fig market has grown by more than 60% since 2011 and is now worth £7 million (US\$11.4 million). British consumers are getting used to seeing the sweet and juicy fruit available in-store virtually year-round and as a result figs are becoming a regular addition to the shopping baskets of consumers allured by its Mediterranean appeal. At [www.freshfruitportal.com](http://www.freshfruitportal.com) we take a look at the Black Bursa, a Turkish variety exported to Britain via worldwide fresh produce supplier Univeg.*

As the Turkish fig season gets underway, Univeg is preparing to receive around 50 truckloads of Black Bursa from Alara Agri Business, the largest fresh fig exporter in the world and the second largest cherry exporter in Europe. 

Accounting for more than 50% of figs sold in Britain, the Turkish season is hugely important supplying major retailers all over the country from late August through to November.

Although this season got off to a slower than usual start due to heavy rainfall during harvest, it has kicked off recently with an export schedule that is due to run for around another two months.

During that time Univeg is handling several shipments from Alara Agri's network of orchards and grower base of around 2,000 producers.

Alara's Black Bursas are sweet, large, dark purple and considered to be a durable fruit with a long shelf life. They are collected from growers and taken to a central packhouse in Bursa where they go through a vigorous selection, sizing and packing process.

Up to 100 metric tons (MT) are packed per day and shipping is organized daily according to various marketing programs.

Alongside the U.K. market, Alara exports to several other European countries thanks to Turkey's strategic location close to the Mediterranean and Baltic countries, as well as supplying the Far East, Canada, South Africa and Russia.

"Figs have a growing following in the U.K. and customers are getting used to seeing figs available virtually 52 weeks of the year and they are becoming a regular, rather than occasional purchase," a Univeg spokesman told [www.freshfruitportal.com](http://www.freshfruitportal.com).

"They are a Mediterranean cuisine and increased awareness of them and how they are used in recipes, other products and in yoghurts for example, has increased consumption. There is a strong demand and uptake for the new Turkish season fruit.

"The start of the season was as expected but it has been steady to build the volumes due to rain during the harvest. However, this may lead to a longer season overall, into November."

Outside of the Turkish season, Univeg sources figs from Israel, South Africa, Chile, Spain and Argentina to maintain a year-round supply to British retailers and as a vertically integrated company it supplies 80% of the retail total in the U.K.

[www.freshfruitportal.com](http://www.freshfruitportal.com)