

U.S. fruit imports fell by 2 percent year-on-year in January, while vegetable imports rose by the same level, USDA data shows.

The drop in fruit imports to \$1.95 billion was led by avocados, which fell by 18 percent to \$212 million and table grapes which saw a 19 percent decline to \$226 million.

This total decline in the fruit category was partially offset by cherries which almost doubled to \$19 million, strawberries which increased by 14 percent to \$189 million, as well as raspberries and organic blueberries.

Total fruit imports in January this year were their second-highest ever, following the January 2020 record of \$1.99 billion. Prior to that, they had risen significantly from \$1.55 billion in 2016.

In terms of supplying countries, in January 2021 the U.S. imported 2 percent more fruit from Mexico, 17 percent less from Peru, 1 percent less from Chile, and 10 percent less from Guatemala.

Meanwhile, the uptick in vegetable imports to \$1.6 billion was driven by fresh bell peppers rising by 21 percent to \$60 million, and increases in the frozen vegetable category, which increased by 7 percent to \$231 million.

The increase was partially offset by greenhouse tomatoes which fell by 4 percent to \$183 million and cucumbers, which dropped by 18 percent to \$81 million.

Total vegetable imports in January 2021 set a new record, having risen at a similar pack to fruit imports since 2016 when \$1.29 billion of vegetables were imported.

Imports from Mexico were flat, while from Canada they rose 7 percent, from Peru they dropped 3 percent, and from China they fell 10 percent.