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## Introduction

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This is the fifth in a series of practical handbooks published by the Export Market Development Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat. It has been prepared in response to requests from exporters and exporting countries for detailed information about opportunities in the fresh produce markets in the Scandinavian, or more correctly Nordic, countries - Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland.

Although small in terms of population, the Nordic countries are wealthy and are importing increasing quantities of tropical and off-season fresh fruit and vegetables. On the other hand the markets are not too easy to enter. Quality standards are high and importing is dominated by the central buying organisations of large import/wholesale/retail groups and also Nordic purchasing organisations which all insist on strict specifications. This handbook aims to provide, in an 'easy to read' format, practical information on how to research and make contacts in the respective national markets and to develop or expand fresh produce exports to them. The handbook is directed at existing producers and exporters of fresh produce in Commonwealth developing countries, particularly potential new exporters, seeking to answer the questions: WHAT, HOW, WHERE and WHEN.

The handbook provides the exporter with basic information on each Nordic country market and indicates sources of more detailed information. It then sets out key information about the selected products and gives guidance on market opportunities. The tropical and off-season fruit and vegetables (generally termed 'exotic produce' throughout the handbook) selected are:

| <b>Fruit</b>    | <b>Vegetables</b> |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| Avocados        | Asparagus         |
| Carambola       | Aubergine         |
| Mangoes         | Cherry Tomato     |
| Pawpaw/Papaya   | Beans             |
| Passion Fruit   | Mangetout         |
| Peach/Nectarine |                   |
| Persimmon       |                   |
| Pineapple       |                   |
| Sweet Melon     |                   |

The choice of products was based on the following criteria:

- they are grown in a number of Commonwealth countries;
- they are suitable for supply by small and medium sized exporters (either directly or through a marketing board);
- there is an established market, even if small, and reasonable prospects for growth from overall increases in demand or to fill supply gaps; and
- there is scope for new entrants.

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The handbook falls into three parts. The **first section** provides an overview of the Nordic and individual country markets covering the nature of the market, the structure of the distributive trades that deal in fresh produce, means of servicing the markets and trends in produce sales.

The **second section** contains profiles of the selected products covering varieties, appearance and characteristics, harvest and post-harvest treatment, quality requirements and grading, packaging, sources of supply, prices, import tariffs and a brief summary of the market situation.

The **third section** presents, in appendices, additional information on tariffs, import regulations and procedures, relevant aspects of food legislation on transportation and packaging, addresses of organisations and commercial businesses relevant to exporters and an illustrative calculation of costs and returns from exporting fresh produce.