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AGRONOMIC BOARD**

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A world class regulator of vibrant, diversified and sustainable crop industry



MARKET INTELLIGENCE REPORT

ONION

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1. INTRODUCTION

Onion (*Allium cepa* L.) species are found across a wide range of latitudes and altitudes in Europe, Asia, N. America, and Africa. The ideal soil temperature for onion germination is 11 – 25 °C and the ideal temperature for growth is 22 – 28 °C (Griffiths *et al.*, 2002). The onion belongs to the *Allium* section of the *cepa* species, which consists of a wide range of species, most of which are used as a vegetable, as spices, or as medicinal plants. Unlike many other vegetable species, the consumption of onion is not limited to a particular season.

World onion production has increased by at least 25% over the past 10 years with current production being around 44 million tonnes annually, making it the second most important horticultural crop after tomatoes. Because of their storage characteristics and durability for shipping, onions have always been traded more widely than most vegetables. Onions are versatile and they are often used as an ingredient in many dishes, and they are accepted by almost all traditions and cultures including Namibia. Onion is the second most consumed vegetable in Namibia after the potato. Onion consumption is increasing significantly, and this is partly because of heavy promotion that is linked to healthy eating habits. Onions are rich in two chemical groups that have perceived benefits to human health, and these are flavonoids and the alk(en)yl cysteine sulfoxides (Griffiths *et al.*, 2002).

Vegetables provide a variety of nutrients which are essential for human development, maintenance, and repair such as vitamins, minerals, dietary fibre, protein, and fat. The consumption of vegetables and fruits plays a positive role in the prevention of obesity, heart diseases, stroke, cancer, and other chronic diseases. Most of the vegetable species that are used by rural households play not only a nutritive role, but also play a role in income generation and subsistence (Hanci, 2018).

This Market Intelligence Report prepared by the Namibian Agronomic Board (NAB) focuses on onion (HS 0703, onions, shallots, other alliaceous vegetables - fresh and chilled) production trends, consumer demand, market, and Namibia's participation in the onion global market chain on both the domestic and export markets. The information reveals to Namibian farmers, policymakers, and managers the challenges and opportunities linked with the production and marketing of this commodity as well as the need for public, private, and farmer investments to increase production for both domestic, regional, and international export markets.



2. GLOBAL OVERVIEW

This section covers the onion global overview by providing information on the performance of onions in most recent years on production, market (export and import), and consumption.

PRODUCTION: Worldwide, 93,226,400 tonnes of onions are produced per year (FAOSTAT, 2021), making onions the 2nd most consumed vegetable globally after potatoes (Hanci, 2018). One of the main recent challenges for onion-producing countries across the globe is maintaining onion production while dealing with the effects of climate change.

China, the largest producer of onions (produced 23.9 metric tons in 2020), is experiencing declining acreage due to weather conditions, and it is becoming more expensive for local Chinese growers, thus resulting in a slight price increase from the previous 4-year lows.

The Netherlands is seen as one of the fastest-growing onion producers globally, with an 11% increase in 2020 (Hanci, 2018).

Figure 1 below shows the top onion-producing countries from 2015 to 2019 (average tonnage).

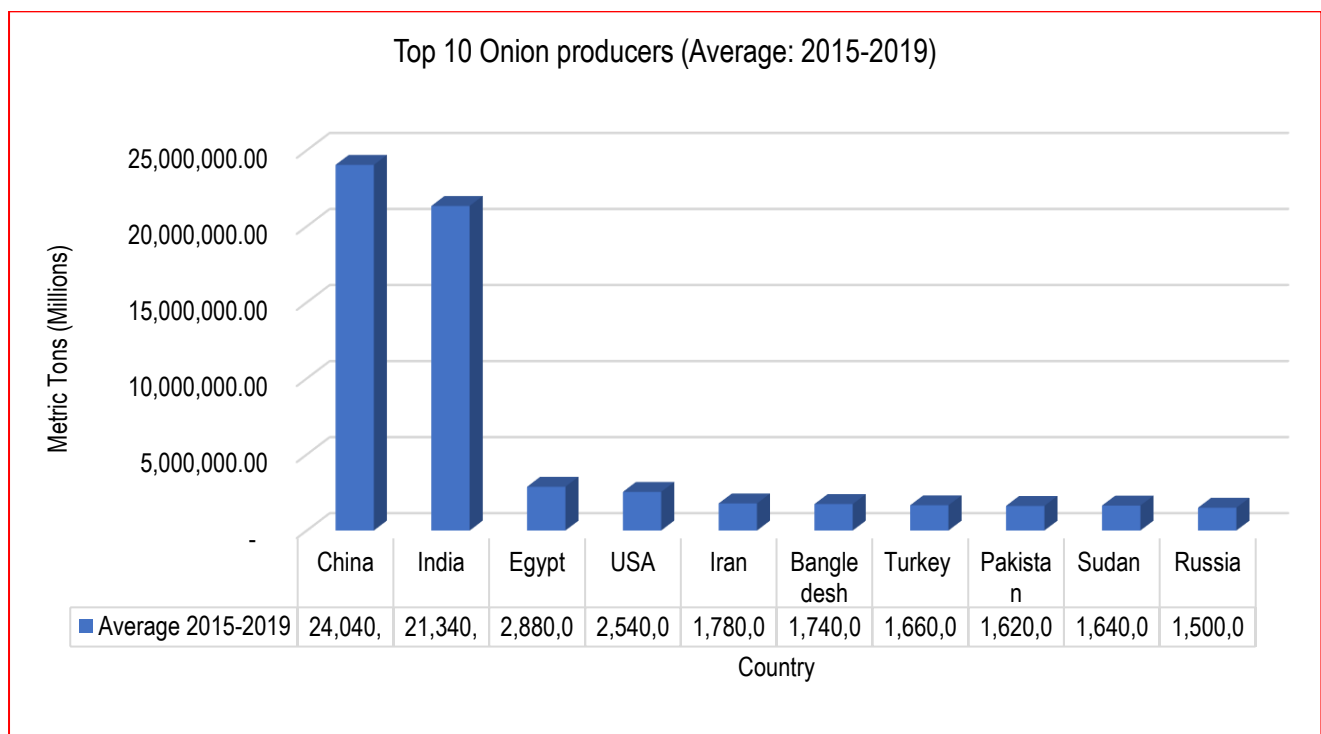


Figure 1: Top 10 onion producing countries in the world (FAOSTAT, 2021)

With the global total onion production of 93,226,400 tonnes produced per year, the above figure depicts that China is the largest onion producer in the world with 24,040,509 tonnes of production volume per year followed by India with 21,415,425 tonnes of yearly production (FAOSTAT, 2021).

GLOBAL CONSUMPTION TREND: Onion consumption is reported to be on the rise globally, with increasing trends in demand, as onions are a food essential in all continents and onions have a variety of uses in food preparation (Griffiths *et al.*, 2002).

The versatility of onions contributes to their popularity, as onions can be transformed and packed to suit consumers' needs. For example, can be segmented as powdered, frozen, pre-cut, and prepared. Growth in the onion market has room for exploration, and currently this is on the rise through new trending dishes that are using some forms of dehydrated onions instead of fresh onions. The table below displays onion consumption per capita in the top five selected countries.

Table 1: Onion consumption per capita in kg of top five onion consuming countries

Country	Onion consumption per capita in Kgs							
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Average (2012-2018)
1. Tajikistan	38	36	39	47	52	55	63	47
2. Niger	26	15	33	35	36	40	44	32
3. Uzbekistan	32	33	32	35	36	37	38	34
4. Sudan	24	21	22	28	29	32	34	27
5. Kyrgyzstan	24	21	22	28	29	31	32	26

(Source: FAOSTAT, 2021)

Based on the comparison of 151 countries in 2018, Tajikistan is ranked the highest in onion consumption per capita with 62.5 kg followed by Niger and Uzbekistan. On the other end of the scale was Laos with 0.010 kg, Cambodia with 0.010 kg, and Togo with 0.030 kg. The average onion consumption per capita reached 11.8 kg in 2018 in the world (FAOSTAT, 2021).

This is 0.94% less than in the previous year and 13.5% more than 10 years ago. Historically, the average onion consumption per capita reached an all-time peak of 11.9 kg in 2017 and an all-time low of 4.09 kg in 1964, while the average annual growth amounted to 1.81% since 1961 (FAOSTAT, 2021).

EXPORT MARKET: Despite some challenges, the onion market continues to experience growth, particularly in the Oceania region, mainly in New Zealand and Australia, which are looking towards increasing exports. Their onions are destined for Europe, the UK, and Asia.

The onion products in the global market are some of the largest vegetable products with the largest market. China, India, Egypt, the United States of America, and Iran as of 2020, are the largest suppliers of onions in the global market (Simoes & Hidalgo, 2020). The Netherlands has plans to infiltrate the

African market but it has been struggling due to some logistical challenges (longer distances), thus making onions from the Netherlands more expensive and difficult to compete with local prices.

Another country affected by recent weather conditions is the United Kingdom (UK), and thus the demand in the UK for imported onions is increasing (Fresh Plaza, 2021). On the other hand, Mexico has increased exports (20 - 30%) to the United States of America. Mexico's onion quality and yields have been reported to be HAVING good traits (Hanci, 2018). The global onion export is valued at N\$108 745 702, which is a five year average from 2016 to 2020 (FAOSTAT, 2021).

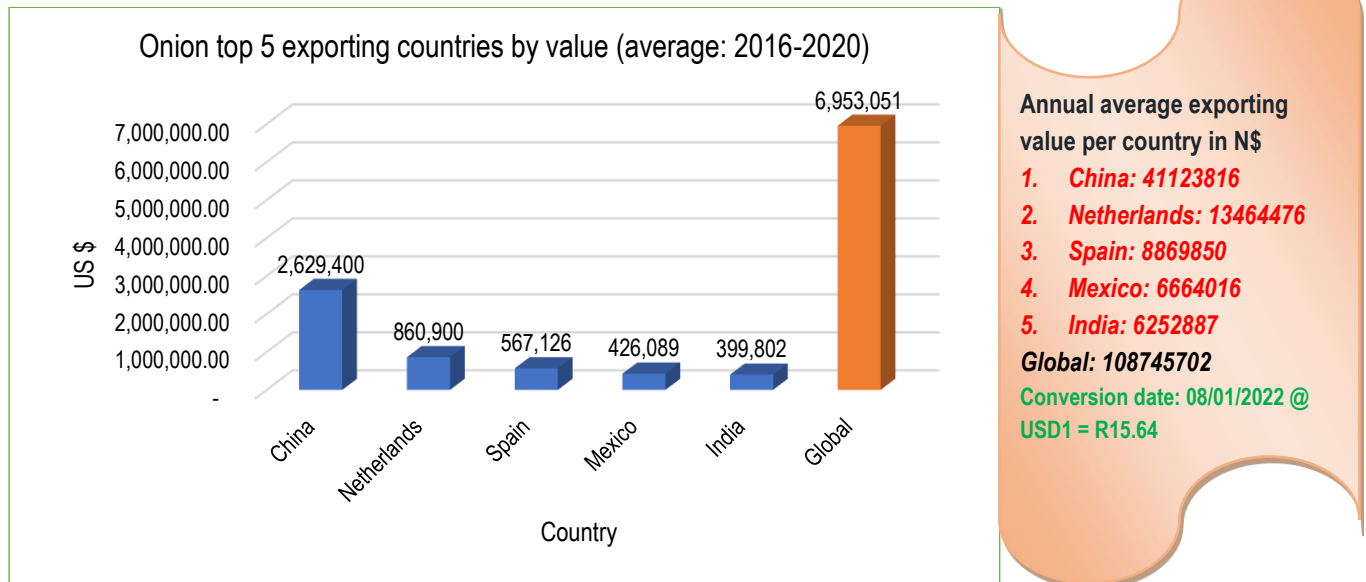


Figure 2: Onion top 5 exporting countries by value (Source: FAOSTAT, 2021)

In 2019/2020, China recorded the highest onion export value of US\$2.62 million (Figure 2). China exported 20 - 50% of the world's onions share in 2020, whereas America exported 5 - 10% share, and Brazil, Russian Federation, Australia, and South Africa exported 1 - 5% of the world's onions export share in 2020.

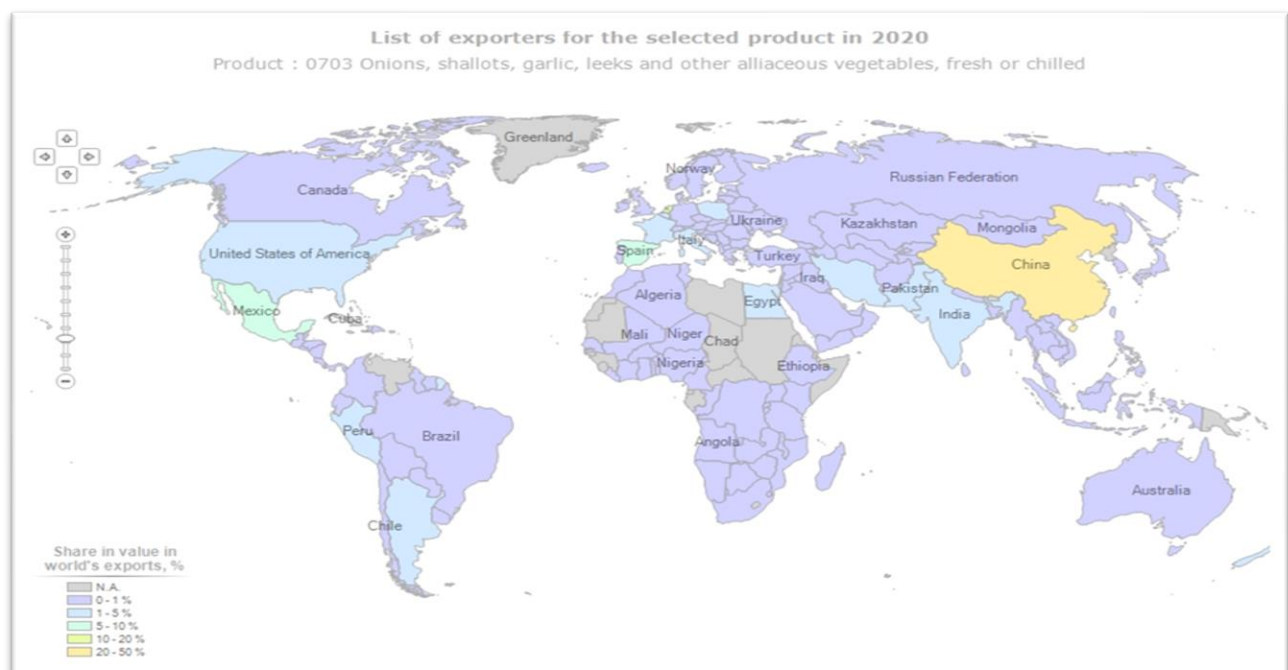


Figure 3: Share by value in world's onion exports (%) in 2020 (Intracen.org, Comtrade, 2020)

Table 2: Onion top 4 exporting countries by tonnage (from 2017-2020) (Intracen.org, Comtrade, 2020)

Onion top 4 exporting countries by tonnage	2017	2018	2019	2020	Average (2017-2020)
China	2,693,869	2,857,996	2,806,145	3,205,777	2,890,947
Netherlands	1,657,340	1,620,694	1,684,371	1,863,840	1,706,561
India	1,655,519	1,697,266	1,468,645	1,453,420	1,568,713
Spain	523,954	529,857	613,260	572,678	559,937

Table 2 above shows the top 4 onion exporting countries by tonnage for the past four years from 2017 to 2020, and the table indicates that China is the largest exporter of onions in the world (Intracen.org, Comtrade, 2020).

IMPORT MARKET: Table 3 below shows the top five onion importers by value expressed in USA dollars during the 2016 - 2020 period, converted to Namibian dollars (conversion date: 08/01/2022 @ 1USD to N\$15.64). The table (Table 3) shows that there was an increase in the import value from 2016 to 2020 on average, with a slight decline in 2018.

Table 3: Top 5 onion importers by value (Source; Comtrade, 2020)

Country	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Average (US\$)	The average import value per country (N\$)
USA	696,000	675,000	623,000	677,000	726,000	679,400	622,419.00
Indonesia	482,000	645,000	553,000	586,000	339,000	521,000	8,145,835.00
Germany	292,000	279,000	291,000	360,000	339,000	312,200	5,481,247.00
Malaysia	407,000	367,000	286,000	303,000	333,000	339,200	5,303,392.00
Brazil	386,000	302,000	206,000	277,000	317,000	297,600	4,652,976.00
Global	6,548,598	6,419,726	5,891,222	6,811,958	7,048,740	6,544,048	102,316,190

From 2016 to 2020, the average global onion import value was over N\$102 000 000. The United States of America, Indonesia, and Germany imported 10 - 20% share of the world's onions at an inclusive import value of approximately N\$23 000 000. North America, Brazil, Malaysia, the Russian Federation, Australia, and South Africa imported 5 - 10% share of the world's onions at an import value of approximately N\$11 000 000 (Comtrade, 2020; Table 3).

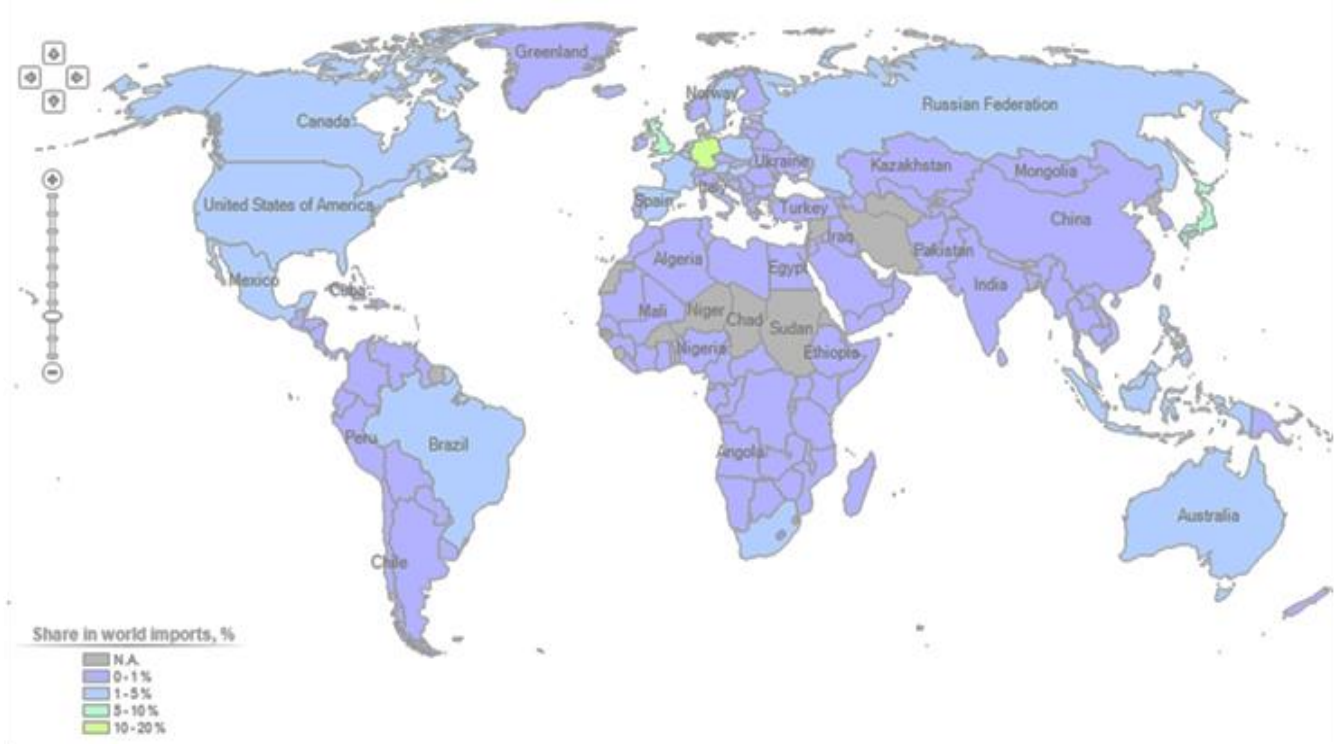


Figure 4: Countries' share by value in world's onion imports in 2020 (Intracen.org, Comtrade, 2020)

Figure 4 above displays countries' share by value in the world onion imports in the year 2020, showing that Germany and USA had more import share of 20%, while Africa recorded the lowest onion import share of less than 1% (Comtrade, 2020).

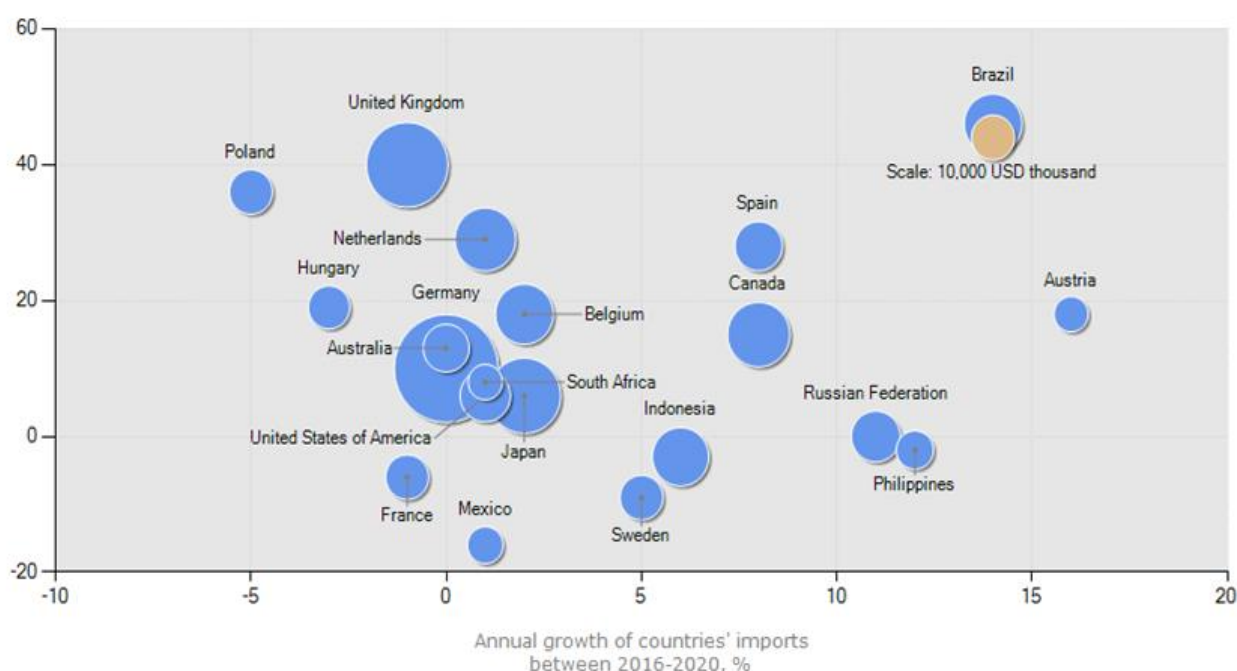


Figure 5: Largest growing onions importing countries (Intracen.org, Comtrade, 2020)

Figure 5 depicts the largest growing onion importing countries; Germany, the United Kingdom, and South Africa are among the top growing onion importing countries. Table 3 below shows onion prices for a few different countries over an average of five years.

Table 4: Onion top 5 importing countries by tonnage (from 2017-2020) (Intracen.org, Comtrade, 2020).

Countries	2017	2018	2019	2020	Average
Bangladesh	252,631	327,861	341,470	790,313	428,069
Indonesia	707,242	703,944	577,297	722,638	677,780
United States of America	649,785	665,877	649,911	673,397	659,743
Malaysia	741,414	700,859	618,164	600,586	665,256
United Arab Emirates	433,207	400,879	430,632	462,533	431,813

Table 4 above shows the top 5 onion importing countries by tonnage for the past four years from 2017 to 2020. The table shows that Bangladesh is the largest importer of onions in the world with an average of 428,069 tonnes per annum (Intracen.org, Comtrade, 2020).

Table 5: Onion prices per tonne in different countries

Countries	Onion price per tonne, five years average: 2016 - 2020	
	Price in US\$	Price in N\$
Japan	795	12,433.8
Ghana	645	10,087.8
China	552	8,633.28
United State	331	5,176.84
South Africa	243	3,800.52

(Source: FAOSTAT, 2021)

Different onion prices from different countries from 2016 to 2020 are displayed in Table 4 as averages, whereby the highest onion price was recorded in Japan at N\$12,433.8 per tonne, while South Africa recorded the lowest at N\$3,800 per tonne.

3. AFRICA AND SOUTHERN AFRICA OVERVIEW

This section provides information on onion production, market (import and export), and consumption, by providing an overview of Southern Africa and other African regions.

PRODUCTION: Overall, the Southern Africa region (SADC) horticultural production for 2019/2020 increased, whereby South Africa recorded an increase of 0,2% from the previous season, which can mainly be attributed to an increase in the production of vegetables and deciduous fruits.

According to a report by the South Africa Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development [DALRRD, 2021], regardless of the overall horticultural production increase recorded in the 2019/2020 cropping season, the average price of vegetables also increased slightly, with South Africa recording an increase of 0,8% which is attributed to the demand and consumption increases. Despite the recorded upward trend in onion production in SADC for the past five years, however, a slight decrease of 2.1% in onion production was reported between the 2018/2019 to 2019/2020 production seasons in South Africa (DALRRD, 2021).

According to FAOSTAT (2021), in 2018 and 2019, South Africa produced 726 841 and 707 242 tonnes of onion respectively, followed by Angola with 30 099 and 30 869 tonnes and Namibia with 23 721 and 33 844 tonnes, while Botswana recorded the lowest onion production of 6 888 and 9 007 tonnes in 2018 and 2019, respectively. Figure 7 shows onion production in Southern Africa from 2015 to 2019 (FAOSTAT, 2021).

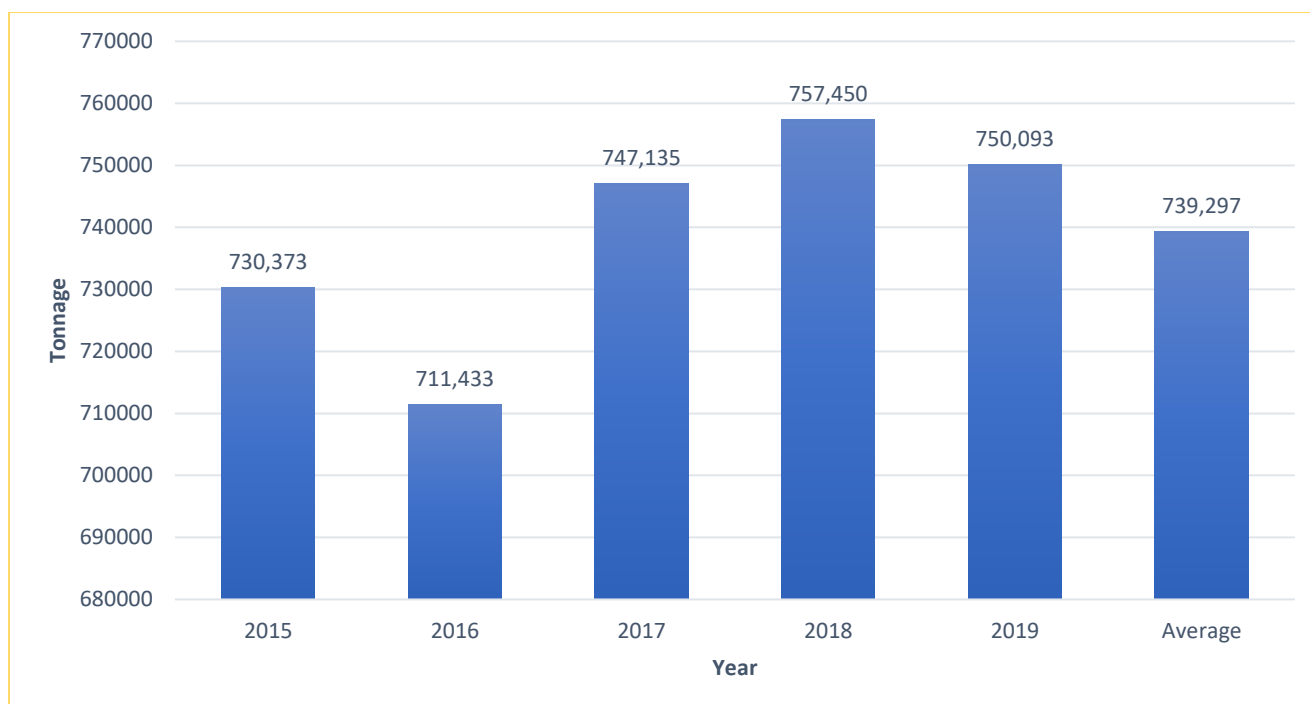


Figure 6: Onion production in Southern Africa (FAOSTAT, 2021)

Figure 6 above displays the increasing onion production from 2015 to 2019 in Southern Africa, with an average of 739,296 tonnes of onions per annum. The lowest onion production was observed in 2016 in the region, while the highest onion record was recorded in 2018.

Vulnerability and food insecurity in SADC have been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak, and the outbreak continues to evolve with rising cases and associated deaths. The pandemic has deepened and increased poverty and food insecurity in the region. Although food supply chains have remained functional in the region, delays at border posts with regards to the movement of food stock due to COVID-19 regulations and movement restrictions, reduced harvests, and household stocks in a few countries have led to price increases, even during the harvest periods (DALRRD, 2021).

According to a report by SADC's vulnerability assessment and analysis programme released in July 2020, an estimated 44,8 million people in 13 of the SADC Member States became food insecure. Significant increases in the number of food insecure people from 2019 to 2020 have been recorded in Malawi (140%), Eswatini (58%), Zimbabwe (40%), and both Mozambique and Namibia with 22% (DALRRD, 2021).

Table 6: Africa onion production and area harvested during 2016-2020 (FAOSTAT, 2021)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Average
Area harvested (HA)	12,059,811	12,809,555	13,249,958	13,838,897	14,102,525	13,212,149
Production	1,035,088	1,108,635	1,150,483	1,200,296	1,266,489	1,152,198

Table 6 displays that both onion production and area harvested in Africa from 2016 to 2020 have increased from 12,059,811 ha in 2016 to 14,102,525 ha in 2020 and from 1,035,088 tonnes in 2016 to

1,266,489 tonnes respectively. An average onion production of 1,152,198 tonnes, harvested from 13,212,149 ha, is being produced in Africa, annually.

Onions are among the most dynamic vegetable commodities in the regional sectors of West Africa. In Senegal, in the past ten years, its production has increased tenfold and it now reaches 400,000 tonnes. Nigeria and Niger are the two leaders in the region with 600,000 and 500,000 tonnes produced respectively (Fresh Plaza, 2021).

However, despite these large tonnages, these African countries remain, with a few exceptions, major importers. This means that Nigeria, the leading producer in West Africa, must, despite an annual harvest of 600,000 tonnes, still import onions. Senegal, where households consume 800 tonnes of onions every day, is also forced to import. In 2017, the West African country absorbed a third of onion exports from the Netherlands (Fresh Plaza, 2021).



CONSUMPTION TREND: An average of over 800,000 tonnes of onions are consumed in Southern Africa per annum (FAOSTAT, 2021). Over the five years (2015-2019) among a few selected SADC countries, South Africa showed the highest onion consumption among other SADC countries followed by Mozambique, Angola, and Botswana showing the lowest onion consumption per annum (Table 7).

Table 7: Onion consumption per country in tonnes in Southern Africa (FAOSTAT, 2021)

Country	Onion consumption per annum in tonnage					
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Average
South Africa	706,130.00	691,181.00	722,550.00	33,689.00	711,281.00	712,966.20
Angola	57,473.00	54,975.00	55,796.00	49,631.00	52,321.00	54,039.20
Botswana	12,657.00	8,213.00	12,098.00	10,916.00	13,415.00	11,459.80
Mozambique	156,715.00	211,100.00	249,335.00	86,384.00	374,020.00	255,510.80

Table 7 further depicts that there was an increase in onion consumption from 2015 to 2019 in most SADC countries, with a slight decrease observed between 2017 and 2018. On the other hand, within the African region, Niger recorded high onion consumption per capita of 44 kg, followed by Sudan with 34 kg per capita, whereas Senegal and Algeria recorded 31 kg each, with Egypt recording 26 kg in 2019 (FAOSTAT, 2021).

EXPORT MARKET: Figure 7 shows that Southern Africa exported over 114,401 tonnes of onions per annum on average over a five year period from 2015 to 2019.

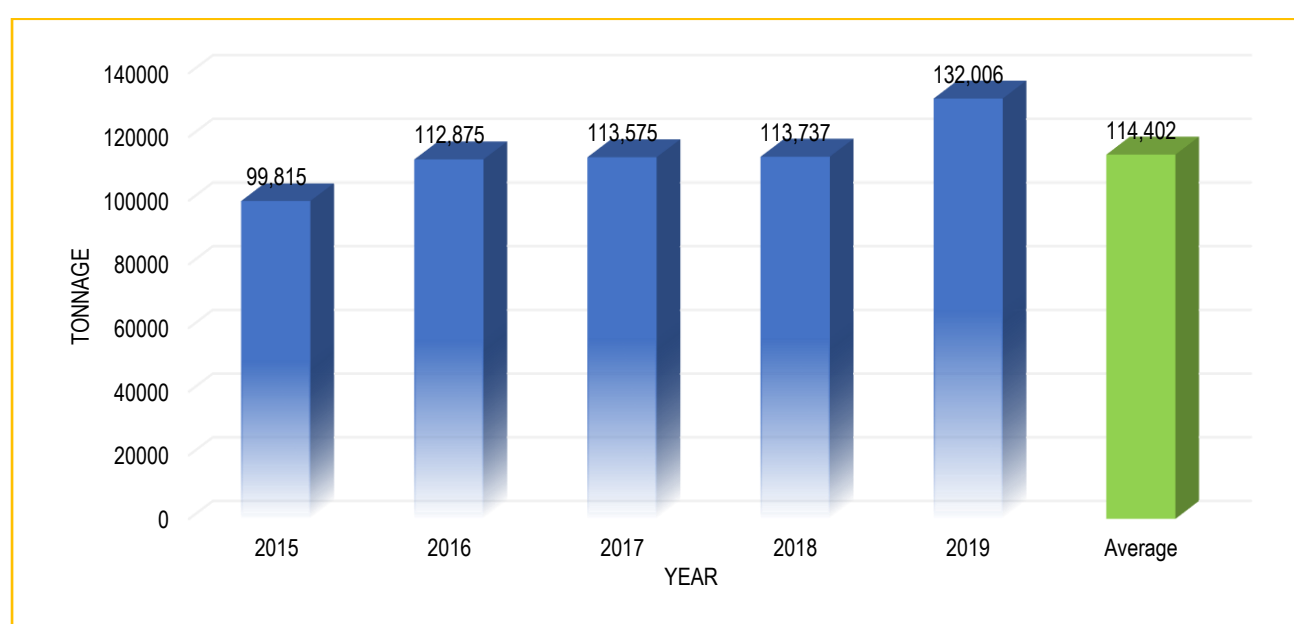


Figure 7: Onion export tonnages in Southern Africa during 2015 - 2019 (FAOSTAT, 2021)

South Africa is among the top onion exporting countries in SADC with an average of 110,788 tonnes per annum, followed by Namibia with an average of 4,525 tonnes per annum. Angola and Botswana have an insignificant export record of fewer than 2 tonnes per annum (FAOSTAT, 2021).

Table 6 below shows the yearly onion consumption, imports, and exports from 2016 to 2020 in Africa. From 2016 to 2019, on a yearly average, Africa imported 700,555 tonnes of onions and exported 668,464 tonnes, while consuming 1,831,180.50 tonnes.

Table 8: Africa's onion imports, exports, and consumption from 2016 - 2020 (FAOSTAT, 2021)

Africa's onion imports, exports, and consumption					
	2016	2017	2018	2019	Average
Imports	661,189.00	718,156.00	680,361.00	770,514.00	707,555.00
Exports	749,944.00	744,889.00	428,315.00	750,708.00	668,464.00
Consumption	1,696,277.00	1,826,791.00	1,830,844.00	1,970,810.00	1,831,180.50

Table 8 shows that there is a noticeable increase in onion imports, exports, and consumption from 2016 to 2019, with a projected future increase in onion consumption in Africa.

IMPORT MARKET: On average, for five years (2016 - 2020), Southern Africa imported 19,934 tonnes of onions per annum at an average value of US\$7,146 US (N\$111,763.44). Figure 8 below shows Southern Africa's onion imports from 2016 to 2020. The highest import tonnage (20 540 tonnes) was recorded in 2017 and the lowest (18 987 tonnes) was recorded in 2020.



Figure 8: Onion imports tonnage and value in Southern Africa during 2016 - 2020 (FAOSTAT, 2021)

Table 9 shows the imports tonnage of a few selected African countries over a five year period.

Table 9: Onion imports tonnage by a few selected SADC countries from 2016 to 2020 (FAOSTAT, 2021)

Country	Onion imports tonnage by a selected SADC countries from 2016 to 2020					
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
South Africa	-	5,576.00	6,349.00	6,848.00	4,039.00	5,153.00
Zimbabwe	-	1,138.00	-	-	217.00	445.00
Zambia	-	4,678.00	2,934.00	2,010.00	1,270.00	1,386.00
Namibia	-	4,090.00	3,906.00	4,138.00	4,577.00	2,750.00
Mozambique	-	49,100.00	54,035.00	58,377.00	140,722.00	82,284.00
Angola	-	5,100	2,600	2,400	2,900	2,100
Democratic Republic of Congo	14,229	13,947	14,034	15,822	10,025	-

A constant decreasing importation trend of onions into the Angolan market was observed since 2016. This might be linked to the increasing production of onions in Angola. The Democratic Republic of Congo and Mozambique recorded the highest importation of onions which might be a market opportunity for local producers. Congo and the Democratic Republic Congo onion imports are valued at approximately N\$57,533,000 per annum (FAOSTAT, 2021).

Table 10: Average price per tonne of a few different countries (FAOSTAT, 2021)

Average price per tonne of a few different exporting countries					
Exporters	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
	Imported unit value, N\$/Ton	Imported unit value, N\$/Ton	Imported unit value, N\$/Ton	Imported unit value, N\$/Ton	Imported unit value, N\$/Ton
Netherlands	3,377	4,845	2,859	3,554	6,897
Belgium	4,587	6,776	4,325	3,715	6,520
South Africa	4,997	10,050	3,975	5,503	4,601
Poland		2,617			9,021
China		4,232		1,362	6,701
France				6,627	
Morocco				1,755	
Namibia				6,270	
Zambia	7,805		12,023		
Angola	4,897	8,805	24,561	15,192	
Rwanda	4,228				
Egypt			6,208		
Tanzania	959	1,654	2,931	1,549	

Table 10 above shows that the average onion prices per tonne greatly vary among different exporting countries.

4. DOMESTIC OVERVIEW

This section covers the domestic production, market (import and export), and consumption for Namibia.

PRODUCTION: Namibia overall, has a sufficient level of onion production compared to its market size as shown by the surplus of onions produced for its local market seasonally. However, inadequate storage facilities inhibit consumers to benefit, thereby leading to increased imports during the off-seasons period (NAB, 2020).

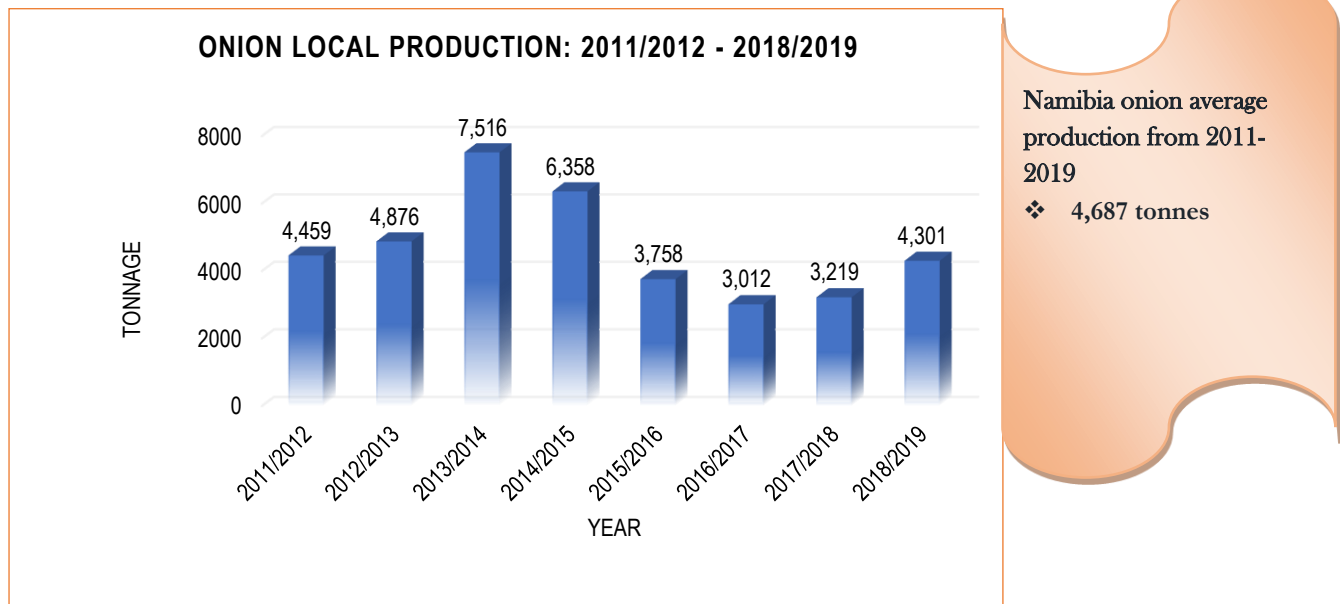


Figure 9: Namibia onion production (NAB, 2020)

Figure 9 displays that Namibia recorded high local onion production of 7 516 tonnes in 2013/14, while the lowest production was recorded in 2016/17 at 3 012 tonnes, with an increase being observed from 2011/12 to 2013/14 and a decline from 2014/15 to 2016/17.

Figures 10 and 11 below show Namibia's onion domestic market demand in tonnage.

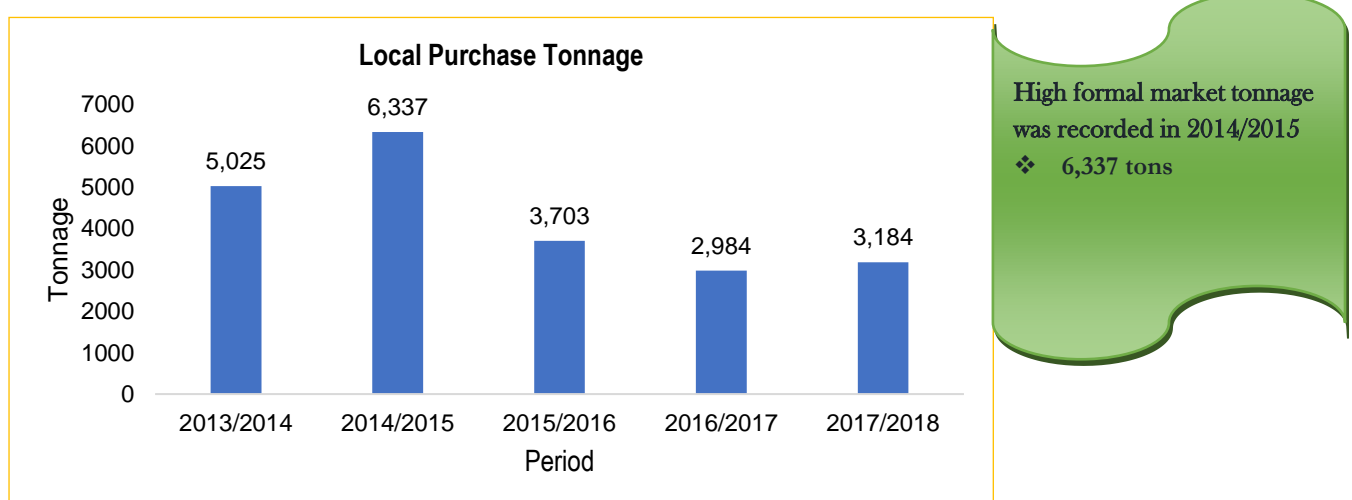


Figure 10: Domestic onion tonnage marketed on the formal market (NAB, 2020)

Namibia recorded the highest domestic onion production of 6 337 tonnes in 2014/15 and the lowest of 2 984 tonnes in 2016/17.

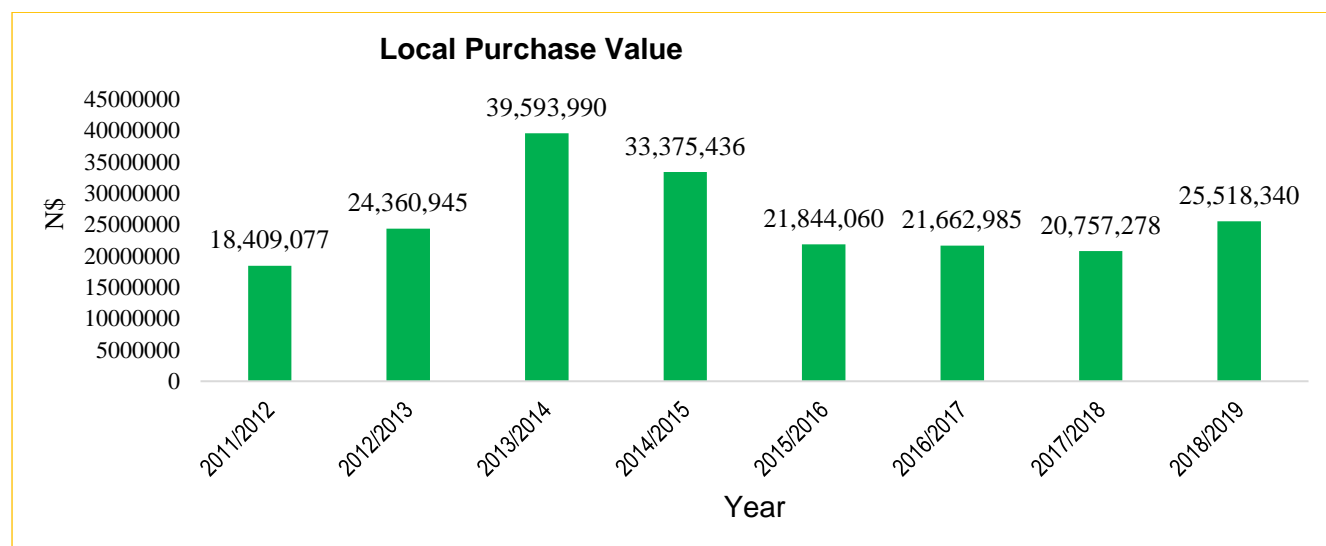


Figure 11: Domestic onion value marketed on the formal market (NAB, 2020)

Figure 11 shows that in 2013/2014, Namibia recorded the highest local onion production value of N\$39 593 990, while the lowest value of N\$20 757 278 was recorded in 2017/2018, with a slightly decreasing trend from 2013/2014 to 2018/2019.

CONSUMPTION TREND: On average, 4,246 tonnes of onions were locally marketed from 2013/2014 to 2017/2018 (NAB, 2020), while in 2018 and 2019, over 2,566 and 1,931 tonnes were consumed respectively (FAOSTAT, 2021).

EXPORT MARKET: In 2018 and 2019, Namibia exported 7,947 and 3,765 tonnes of onions respectively (FAOSTAT, 2021). On average, Namibia exported 8,442 tonnes of onions on an annual basis from 2013 to 2018 (NAB, 2020). Angola and South Africa are the major Namibian onion export and import trade partners. Namibia recorded the highest export tonnage of 9 106 tonnes in 2015/16 and the lowest of 7 537 tonnes in 2017/2018 (NAB, 2020).

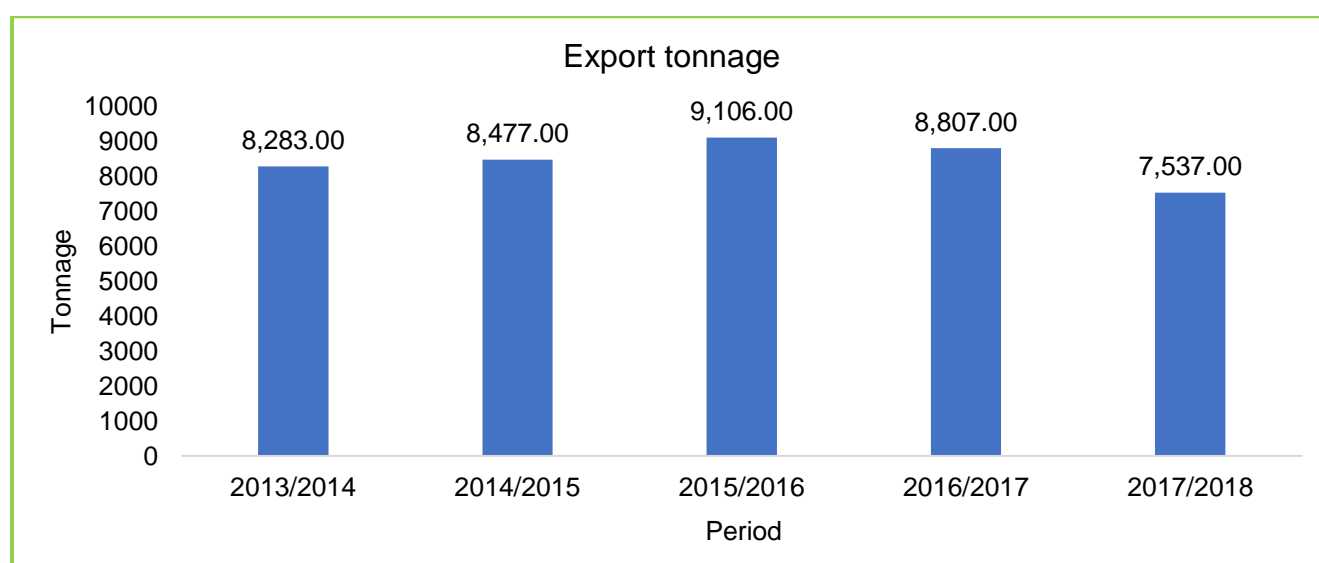


Figure 12: Namibia onions export tonnage (NAB, 2020)

In 2019/2020, Namibia exported onion tonnage of 3,502 at a value of N\$25,676,256 (NAB, 2020). South Africa and Angola represent the highest shares of exports from Namibia, but South Africa is the largest trading partner possessing a 64% share of all onion exports from Namibia (NAB, 2020). However, due to geographical advantages, Namibia could improve on accessing markets of other neighbouring countries so as to increase export value share.

IMPORT MARKET: Although there is a decreasing trend in onion imports reliance from 2013/2014 to 2018/2019, in 2013/2014 Namibia recorded the highest onion import of 4,547 tonnes and the lowest of 1,945 tonnes in 2017/2018 (NAB, 2020). Figure 13 below displays declining onion importation into the Namibian market from 2011/2012 to 2018/2019.

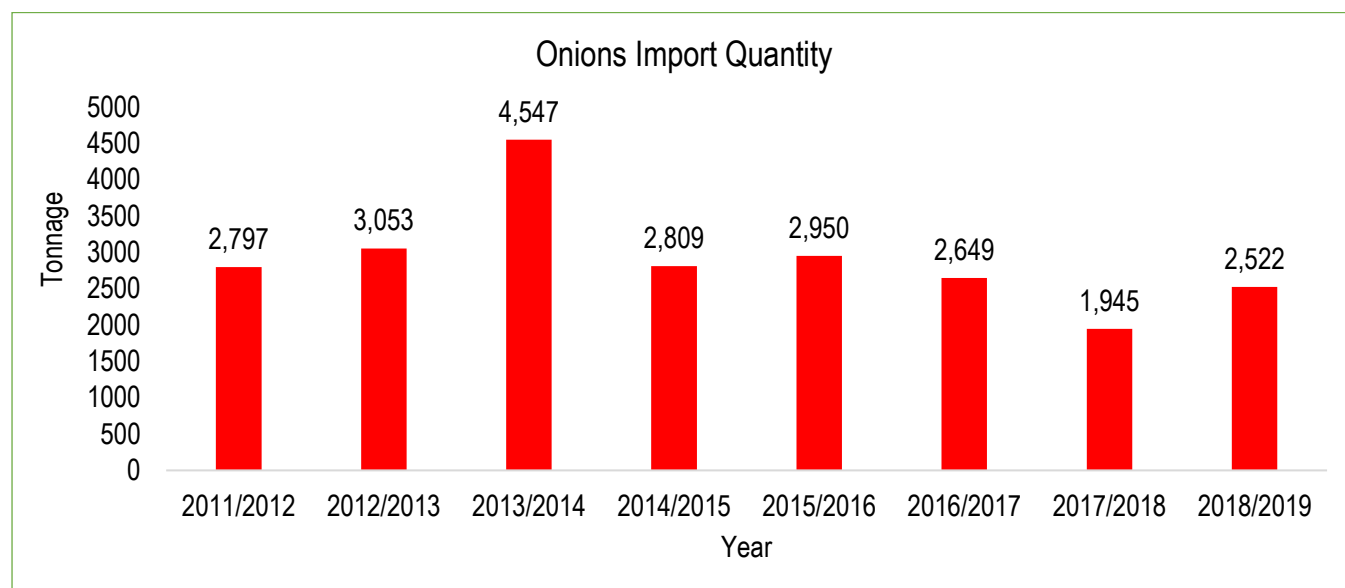


Figure 13: Onion import tonnage (NAB, 2020)

Figure 14 below shows that there is a decreasing trend observed with the onion import value, whereby, the highest import value was recorded in 2013/2014 at N\$24,790,741. Namibia on average imports onion tonnage of 2,908 at a value of N\$18,213,227 per annum and an average value of N\$6,263 per tonne (NAB, 2020).

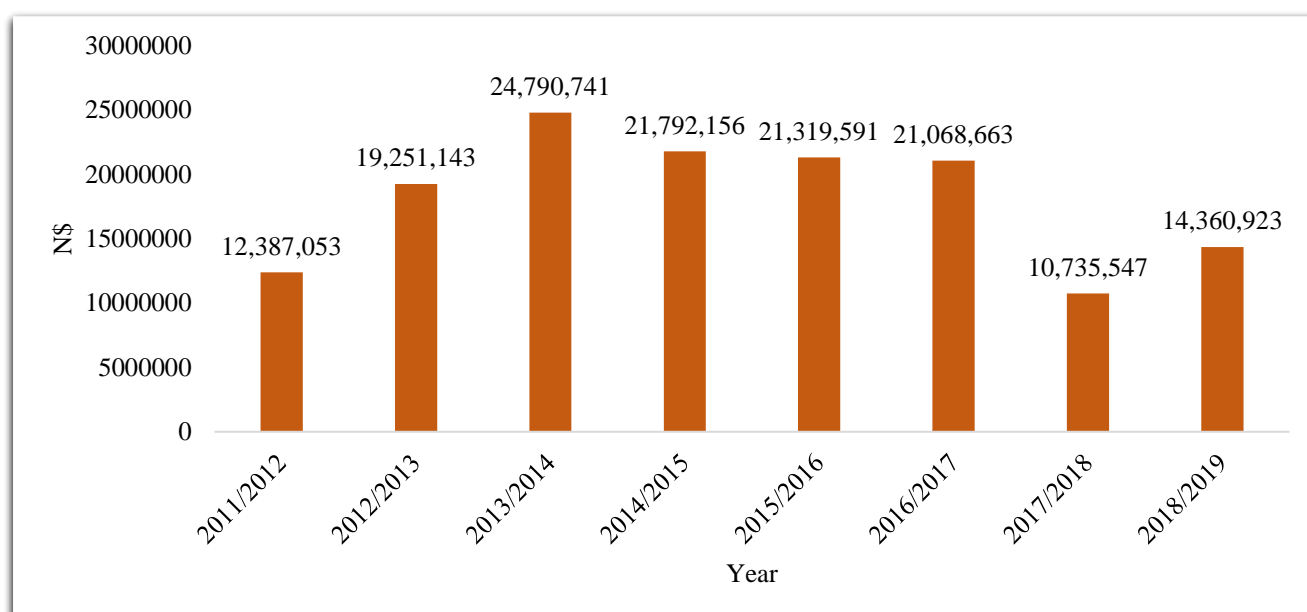


Figure 14: Onions imported value into Namibia from 2011 to 2019 (NAB, 2020)

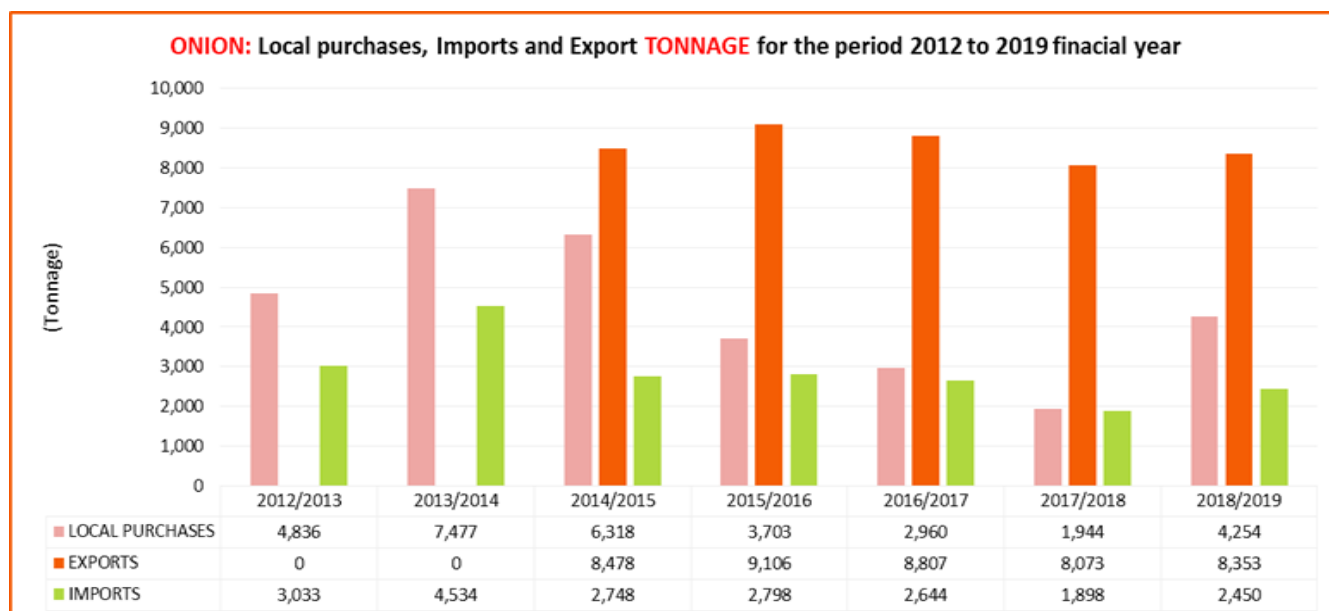


Figure 15: Tonnage of local purchases, imports, and export for the period of 2012 to 2019.

Figure 15 depicts that Namibia recorded the highest local purchases in 2013/2014 (7 477 tonnes) followed by 2014/2015 (6 318 tonnes) and the lowest in 2017/2018 (1 944 tonnes). For exports, Namibia only started exporting in the 2014/2015 financial year. The highest exports were recorded in 2015/2016 (9 106 tonnes), followed by 2016/2017 (8 807 tonnes) and the lowest was in 2017/2018 (8 073 tonnes). For imports, the highest imports were recorded in 2013/2014 (4 534 tonnes), followed by 2012/2013 (3 033 tonnes) and the lowest was in 2017/2018 (1 898 tonnes). However, Namibia's onion import has always been lower than local purchases and exports (Figure 15).

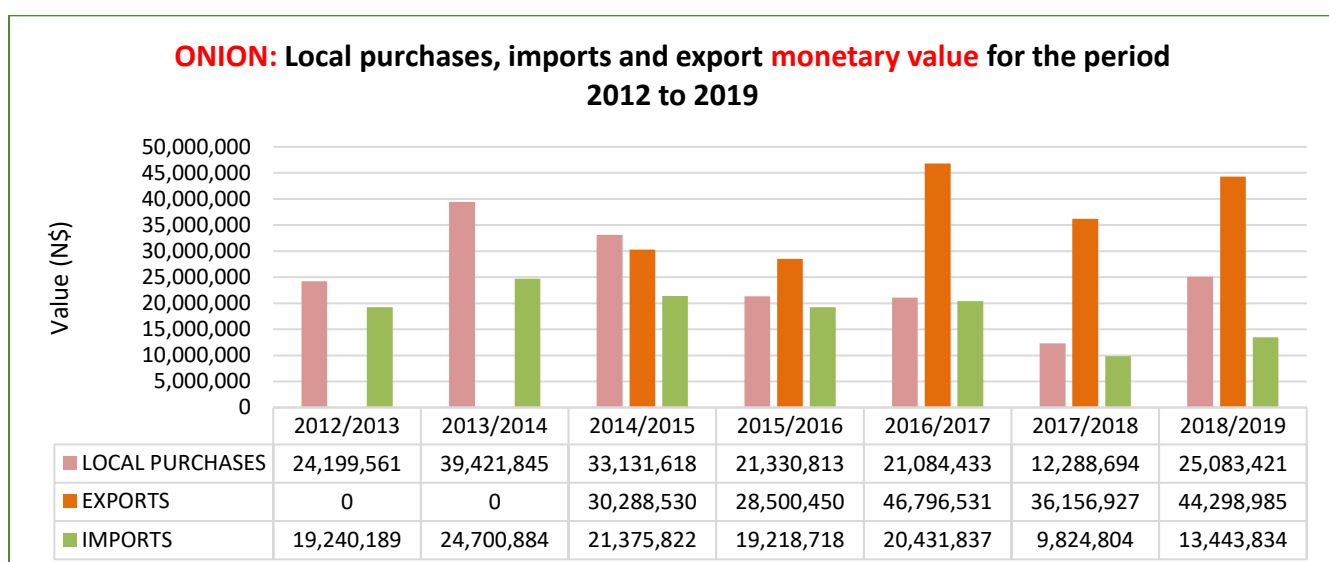


Figure 16: The value of local purchases, imports, and exports for the period 2012 to 2019

Figure 16 depicts that Namibia recorded the highest value from local purchases in 2013/2014 (N\$39 421 845) followed by 2014/2015 (N\$33 131 618) and the lowest was in 2017/2018 (N\$12 288 694). For exports, the highest export values were recorded in 2016/2017 (N\$46 796 531), followed by 2018/2019 (N\$44 298 985) and the lowest was in 2015/2016 (N\$28 500 450). For imports, the highest import values were recorded in 2013/2014 (N\$24 700 884), followed by 2014/2015 (N\$21 375 822), and the lowest

was in 2017/2018 (N\$9 824 804). On average, Namibia makes more monetary value from exports than local purchases (Figure 16). This can be an incentive for local onion producers to increase their production so as to cater to the export markets as well.

The table hereunder (Table 11) shows the average onion prices at the farm (producer), retail, and import in Namibia.

Table 11: Average onion prices in Namibia (NAB, 2020) (from 2013/2014 to 2017/2018)

Onion Prices in Namibia (N\$)			
	Ave. Farmgate (Producer) price	Ave. Retail price (Windhoek)	Ave. Import price
1kg	7.10	18.20	5.90
3kg	8.00	19.30	6.50
7kg med	7.10	8.60	4.40
10kg med	-	19.30	5.20

Figure 17 shows onion domestic value per tonne in comparison to the import value per tonne from 2013/2014 to 2017/2018. On average, the domestic/producer price per tonne has always been lower than the import price, except for the 2015/2016 and 2017/2018 financial years.

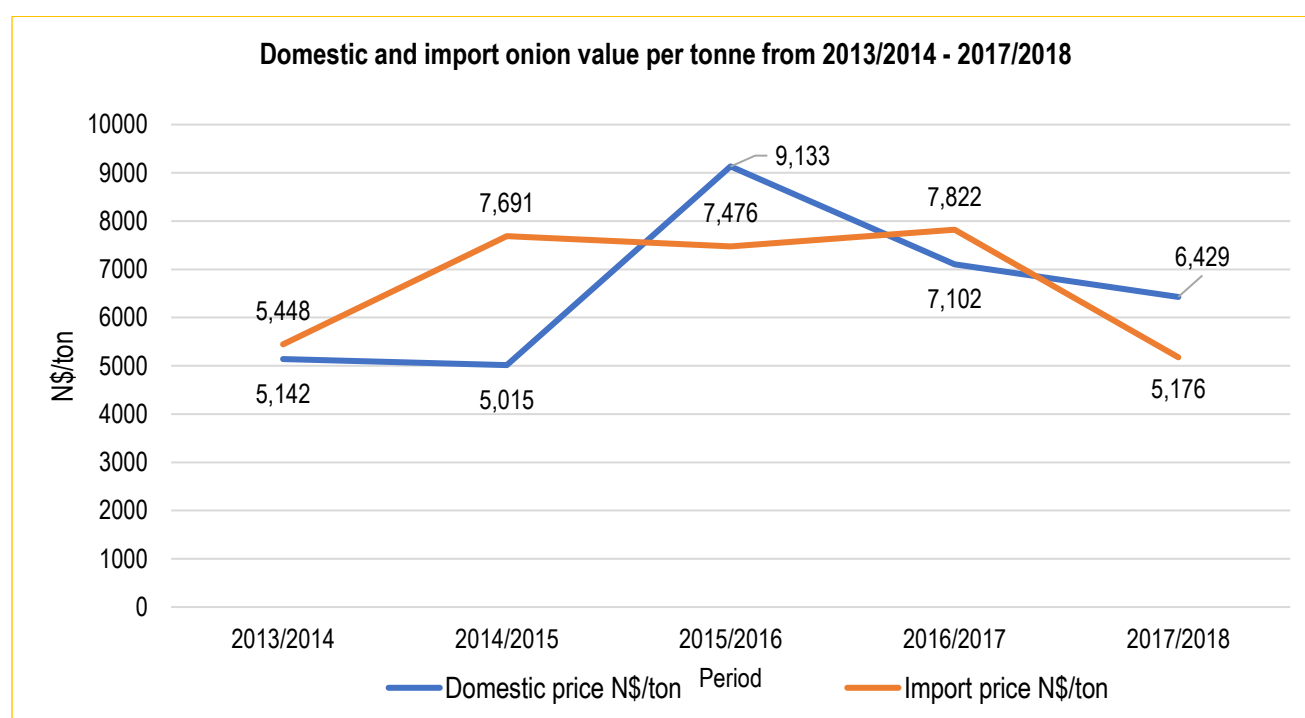


Figure 17: Onion domestic (producer price) and import value per tonne (NAB, 2020)

5. KEY POTENTIALS TO UNLOCK GROWTH IN ONION PRODUCTION AND MARKETING.

Based on the presented data herein, it can be deduced that there is an increasing onion consumption trend at both global and regional levels including in Namibia. Recent healthy eating habits have drastically prompted and promoted onion consumption over the globe in recent years. This is a feasible market opportunity for producers and traders to ensure a sufficient supply of onions as demand grows.

Namibia has been recording sufficient onion production with a seasonal surplus for the past years with an upward trend in production tonnage, however, lack of storage facilities and value addition deprive local traders of constantly supplying and meeting the demand all year round.

Thus, this is another business investment gesture to be explored, inclusive of value addition, and prolonged onion storage to ensure all-year-round availability. The high onion imports records displayed in many SADC countries are indicative of market opportunities, and taking advantage of the seasonality gap of global production should be considered. Local farmers should take advantage of the favourable market schemes which promote conducive local trading to expand on local market opportunities.

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