AgroSpectrum Envisaging Future | Updating Present ASIA

Vietnam, UK boost agricultural trade ties

14 May 2025 | News

Facilitates agricultural cooperation and improve market access for key export products from both countries



Facilitates agricultural cooperation and improve market access for key export products from both countries

A roundtable discussion held in London on May 13 brought together government officials, industry leaders, and businesses from both Vietnam and the UK to explore the current state, demand, and growth potential of bilateral agricultural trade.

Around 40 agricultural producers, processors, logisticians, and traders attended the event, along with representatives from UK agricultural associations. Vietnam's poultry industry potential, consumer preferences, import-export regulations, and strategies for distributing Vietnamese food and produce in UK supermarket chains were discussed during the meetings.

Agri-food imports from the UK total $67 billion a year, making it a high-potential market. Vietnam's agri-export turnover to the UK reached nearly $883 million in 2024, up 15.4% from the previous year. A number of Vietnamese exports, such as seafood, wood products, coffee, cashews, fruits, pepper, and handicrafts, match UK import demand. In the meantime, Vietnam imports seafood, pesticides, feed ingredients, and rubber from the United Kingdom. With both markets complementing rather than competing, there is plenty of room for expansion.

Agricultural cooperation and market access for key export products from both countries were also recommended by participants.

Tran Thanh Nam, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Environment, highlighted the UK's market potential and called for regular business-matching events, the establishment of supply chain-linked business clusters, and enhanced trade promotion. Both

sides must ensure compliance with regulatory requirements in import-export activities, he said.

Phuong Hoang, President of the Vietnamese Business Association in the UK (VBUK), noted growing interest among UK firms in reliable, high-quality, and sustainable agricultural supply chains. He highlighted Vietnam's strengths in fruit, seafood, and processed food exports, which are increasingly popular in global and British markets.

Executive Director of the British Coffee Association Paul Rooke praised the quality of Vietnamese coffee, especially robusta, and said it holds strong potential in the UKâ??s diverse and high-demand market. He stressed the importance of understanding UK import requirements, not just in terms of quality, but also environmental standards, anti-deforestation rules, and fair trade practices.

Nguyen Thi Minh Phuong, Product Development Manager at Longdan Group, one of the UKâ??s largest importers of Vietnamese goods, shared insights on marketing strategies, such as retaining local product names for better brand recognition. She emphasised combining digital marketing with in-store sampling to introduce Vietnamese specialty fruits to British consumers.

Thai Tran, CEO of TT Meridian Ltd, a leading importer of Vietnamese fresh produce, said Vietnamese brands and products like pomelo, coconut, dragon fruit, and passion fruit are now featured in major UK supermarket chains, including Waitrose, M&S, and Tesco. He credited the UK-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement (UKVFTA) for giving Vietnamese agriculture a competitive edge but warned that this advantage could diminish as the UK signs more bilateral trade deals, such as the recent agreement with India.

To maintain market share, Thai advised Vietnamese exporters to ensure consistent quality, upgrade technology, and manage costs to keep prices competitive. He also encouraged a focus on sustainability, environmental responsibility, and brand development, factors increasingly valued in the UK.

Thai proposed that trade promotion agencies collaborate with major UK distributors to organise nationwide Vietnamese Product Weeks, extending from metropolitan hubs to rural areas, to enhance brand visibility and consumer familiarity.