

FOOD INDUSTRY

Spain increases its purchase of food waste from Morocco fivefold during the Sánchez era.



Pedro Sánchez, President of the Government.

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Spain has increased its purchase of Moroccan food by-products fivefold during the **Sánchez era**. Specifically, imports of so-called food industry waste—flour, powder, or *pellets*—arriving from **Morocco have increased from 5.4 million kilos** in 2019 to 29.5 million in 2023. Regarding the total, the government has paid the African country more than **€ 43 million**, **an increase of 746%** compared to 2019, when spending was just over €5 million. This increase in price is higher than the actual quantity.

Compared to the previous year, Spain doubled its imports by two, with a total of 15.9 million kilos and expenditures of €22.8 million. This represents an increase of more than 90%, according to the statistical database of the **Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Tourism**.

Food by-products can include a variety of products such as **fruit and vegetable waste**, pulps, peels and other materials that, although not directly used for human consumption, may have applications in the **animal feed industry**, composting, or as **raw materials** for other industrial processes.



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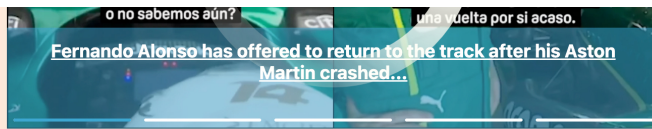
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In this sense, food waste has a wide range of applications in different sectors. For example, in **animal feed** —one of the main destinations for this food waste. Waste such as peels, pulp, and fruit and vegetable scraps are used to produce **feed for livestock**, poultry, and other animals.

Some byproducts contain valuable compounds that can be extracted and used as food additives, **natural colorants**, antioxidants, and other ingredients in the food industry. They can also serve as raw materials for the production of high-value chemical products, such as organic acids, enzymes, and biopolymers. It is worth noting that Spain has seen its grain imports from that country affected during the war in Ukraine, which normally feeds animals.

Furthermore, food waste is an excellent raw material for the production of *compost*, which is used as an **organic fertilizer** in agriculture—it helps improve soil quality and promotes sustainable agricultural practices. In the case of carbohydrate-rich waste, such as fruit pulp and peels, it can be fermented to produce **bioethanol**, which is used as a biofuel.

Similarly, organic byproducts can be used in biogas production through anaerobic digestion—a process in which microorganisms break down biodegradable material in the absence of oxygen. **Biogas** can also be used as a renewable energy source.

In sectors such as the pharmaceutical industry, by-products may contain nutrients and bioactive compounds that are used in the manufacture of **creams**, vitamin supplements, **medicines** or for the manufacture of **cosmetic** products.

Some fibers and cellulose from the aforementioned by-products can be reused in **paper** and **cardboard**, and in the manufacture of biodegradable packaging—offering a **sustainable alternative** to traditional plastics. At first glance, importing this type of product may seem strange, but reusing food by-products reduces waste and production costs and contributes to sustainability and efficient resource management—or, in other words, to promoting the **circular economy**.

It was Sánchez

When **Pedro Sánchez** took office, Morocco's agricultural economy was just beginning to develop. Specifically, between 2008 and 2018, the agricultural sector's share of GDP fluctuated between 12% and 14%, with an average of 12.8%. This sector's contribution grew significantly, rising from 7.3% to nearly 17.3%, according to data from the **Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Food**.

Today, the Moroccan agri-food sector as a whole contributes around **19% of total GDP** —including, in addition to the primary sectors, the food industry—according to data from **ICEX Spain**. Nationally, the agricultural sector is the leading source of employment, followed by other economic sectors. Food and beverage imports in Morocco **have grown at a much faster rate than exports**, **doubling their value** in just five years.

As a result, 2022 was the first year with a trade deficit, largely due to the adverse weather conditions of 2021. Moroccan imports from Spain saw increases of more than 200% in a large number of **TARIC groups**, such as dairy products, coffee and infusions, flour, animal fats and oils, meat and fish preparations, and cereal-based preparations, among others.

In the last five years, **26.24%** of Moroccan food exports went to **Spain**, led by three food groups: fish, fruits, and vegetables. Therefore, it is not surprising that in many of the groups analyzed, Spain is Morocco's first or second largest trading partner.



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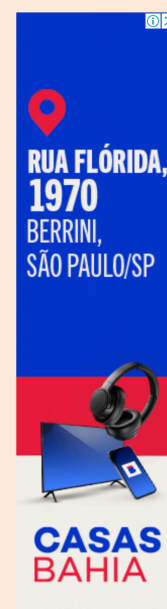
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Spanish farmers

For their part, **Spanish farmers** have expressed their distrust of the Prime Minister in recent months and believe that both they and consumers should be present during inspections of food imported from abroad, especially those originating "from North Africa" (Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia). The agricultural sector believes that border controls should be "shared responsibility to reassure both consumers and producers."

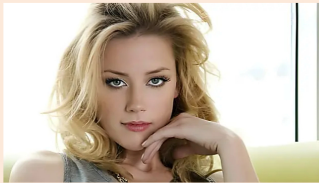
Increasing Moroccan border controls is one of the demands farmers are championing in the **protests**. The sector demands that imported products meet **the same requirements** as EU products, but also warns that the lack of inspections is causing food to enter the country with **pesticide levels** exceeding the limits established by European regulations.

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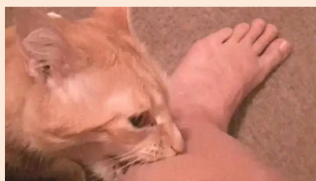


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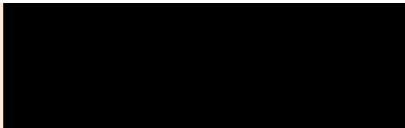
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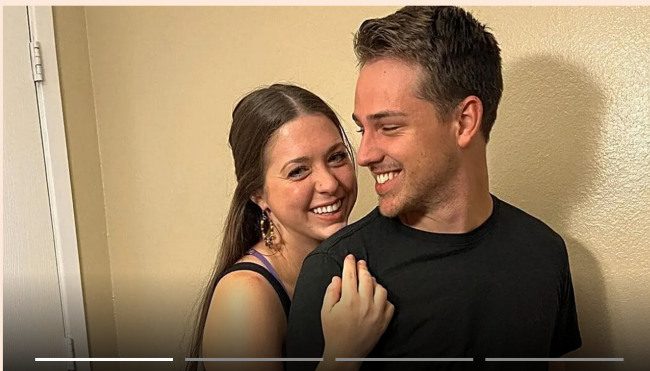
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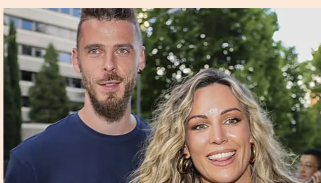
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