



BELGIUM
Europe Region

COUNTRY STATS

POPULATION (2023):

11.7 million (Urbanization 98.7%, Europe's highest)

POPULATION (2050):

12.5 million

GDP:

\$549 billion

AVG. ECONOMIC GROWTH (2023): 1.4%

PER CAPITA INCOME:

USD \$44,737

MARKET SNAPSHOT: BELGIUM

Belgium is a densely populated country in northwestern Europe. The capital, Brussels, is the headquarters for the European Union (EU) and NATO. The language divide between the Flemish speaking Flanders region in the west and the French speaking Wallonia region in the east/south led to Belgium setting the record for the longest period a country has gone without a government, from December 2020 to October 2022.

U.S. Soy has collaborated in Belgium for more than 50 years.

MARKET STATS

Soybean Use by Sector 2023

Animal Protein (total)	2.14 MMT	Aquaculture	0.48 MMT
Poultry	1.37 MMT		

MT=metric tons, MMT=million metric tons

MARKET STATS

Soybean Imports (1,000 MT)

	U.S.	Brazil	Argentina	Other*	U.S. Soy % Share
2020/2021	33.3 MT	66.7 MT	349.7 MT	449.7 MT	4%
2021/2022	5.2 MT	291.5 MT	315.0 MT	611.8 MT	5%
2022/2023	5.1 MT	65.6 MT	272.7 MT	343.4 MT	3%

Soybean Meal Imports (1,000 MT)

	U.S.	Brazil	Argentina	Other*	U.S. Soy % Share
2020/2021	53.3 MT	50.7 MT	137.6 MT	1229.4 MT	4%
2021/2022	66.9 MT	0 MT	159 MT	1101.6 MT	5%
2022/2023	34.1 MT	27.1 MT	160 MT	902.9 MT	3%

*other sources includes the Netherlands

MT=metric tons

STRENGTHS

- The quality of U.S. soybeans and soybean meal is well known to the Belgian feed industry.

OPPORTUNITIES

- At the end of 2023, a Belgian company imported 49,500 MT of U.S. soybean meal, proving that U.S. soybean meal can be competitive on the Belgian market.

CHALLENGES

- Due to port capacity and the lack of domestic crushing capability, few soybeans come directly into the country; most soybeans and soybean meal imports come from the Netherlands.
- Serving one of the most densely populated places in the world, Belgian livestock production faces numerous challenges, from tighter restrictions on water pollution to urbanization. The longer-term trend is lower production across the board.
- Like consumers in neighboring northern European countries, Belgian consumers are exploring plant proteins and overall “healthier” consumption patterns. However, there is a strong preference for local sources of protein.
- The biggest issue is implementation of the EU deforestation regulations in January 2025.

Sources:

- Oil World
- Belgian Feed Association

