

Dairy, Kiwifruit, and Apples lead NZ's April 2025 trade surplus surge

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New Zealand recorded a rare and significant monthly goods trade surplus of \$1.4 billion in April 2025 – only the fourth time in the country's history that the monthly surplus has exceeded \$1 billion, according to the latest data from Stats NZ.

“The overlap of the dairy and fruit industry seasons contributed to this high,” said international accounts spokesperson Viki Ward, highlighting that two of these record surpluses occurred in April, aligning with peak agricultural export months.

In April 2025, New Zealand exported \$7.8 billion of goods while importing \$6.4 billion. The boost was largely due to increased exports of key primary products, including dairy, fruit, meat, and forestry goods, which collectively accounted for 63 per cent of total goods exports, up from 58 per cent in April 2024.

Dairy exports, specifically milk powder, butter, and cheese, rose by \$601 million to reach \$2.2 billion in April alone. Milk powder was the standout contributor, with exports climbing to \$1.0 billion – a 32 per cent jump (\$247 million) compared to the same month last year.

Fruit Exports See Record Surge

Fruit exports also experienced a strong performance, climbing by \$265 million to \$1.2 billion in April 2025. On an annual basis, fruit exports soared by 36 per cent, up \$1.4 billion compared to the year ended April 2024, totalling approximately \$5.4 billion.

China, the European Union, Japan, and Taiwan emerged as the top four markets, collectively accounting for 65 per cent (\$3.5 billion) of the total fruit export value. Demand was led by high-value crops such as kiwifruit, apples, and cherries. Gold kiwifruit exports to China alone reached \$1.0 billion, while apples also had strong traction across all four key markets.

Fruit Type	China	EU	Japan	Taiwan
Green Kiwifruit	\$56M	\$423M	\$168M	\$39M
Gold Kiwifruit	\$1B	\$525M	\$439M	\$153M
Apples	\$343M	\$49M	\$35M	\$139M
Cherries	\$19M	â??	\$2M	\$61M

Fruit export volumes also increased substantially, reaching 1.2 million tonnes in the year ended April 2025, up from 910,000 tonnes the previous year â?? a 32 per cent increase.

Other Primary Sector Gains

Meat and edible offal exports grew by \$269 million to \$1.1 billion in April 2025.

Logs, wood, and wood articles increased by \$141 million, totalling \$481 million.

These gains underscore the resilience and performance of New Zealandâ??s primary industries, particularly in the agricultural sector. Despite challenges such as falling livestock numbers and shifting land use, the countryâ??s core exports continue to deliver strong global demand and economic returns.

As global markets recover and seasonal cycles align, New Zealandâ??s export engine â?? especially in dairy and horticulture â?? is once again proving its critical role in supporting the nationâ??s trade balance.