

# The European market potential for beeswax

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Beeswax is one of the oldest cosmetic ingredients. It is still widely used in the industry for its skincare benefits. Europe's large cosmetic industry has a high demand for beeswax that local production cannot meet. This creates opportunities for non-European suppliers. France, Germany, Spain, Italy, the UK and Belgium are key markets for exporters. European cosmetics manufacturers and traders place strong emphasis on sustainability, ethical sourcing and traceability. This means beeswax suppliers need to document their supply chains and demonstrate their commitment to sustainable practices.

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## 1. Product description

Beeswax (Cera Alba) is a natural wax obtained from the honeycomb of bees, specifically *Apis mellifera*. The wax is produced as a [natural secretion from wax-producing glands in the abdomen of worker bees](#). Beeswax is considered a substance of animal origin. It is mainly composed of esters of fatty acids and long-chain alcohols. However, this varies in composition depending on the bees' location, diet, and environmental factors. In its natural state, beeswax is typically white, but it turns yellow after contact with honey and pollen.

Beeswax plays an important role in the cosmetics industry. Approximately [40% of the world's trade in beeswax is used for the cosmetics](#) industry. Beeswax, like other waxes, is ideal for cosmetics as it can be melted and poured into moulds and blended with other ingredients. Beeswax for cosmetics is available in different forms.

- Yellow beeswax: This is the raw form directly obtained from the honeycomb.
- White beeswax: A processed form of yellow beeswax, [often bleached](#) or filtered to remove impurities.

Figure 1: Example of Koster Keunen beeswax on display at a trade fair in Europe



Source: ProFound, 2024

Beeswax is an asset for every formulator. It is a mainstay ingredient in cosmetics for its ability to [provide texture, stability, emollient and skin-softening properties](#). Beeswax is often used as a natural emulsifier or surfactant, binding oils and water, and as a [non-gelling natural thickener and viscosity enhancer](#). Its ability to form a protective barrier on the skin makes it beneficial for keeping in moisture and preventing it from drying out. It is also [anti-inflammatory, antioxidant and antibacterial](#). These properties make beeswax a highly stable base ingredient.

To prepare beeswax, honey is first removed from the combs. The wax is then melted, and impurities are separated using solar, electric or steam-based extraction. The processed beeswax, which can be either yellow or white, is used as a base in a wide range of cosmetic products, including the following products.

- Lip balms and lipsticks: Beeswax adds structure, shine and durability to lip products while providing hydration.
- Moisturisers and lotions: These help to soften and protect the skin, enhance elasticity and reduce signs of ageing.
- Mascara and foundations: Beeswax improves the application and longevity of these products, giving them a smooth finish.

As an animal-derived wax, beeswax is more similar to the wax component of our own skin's sebum than plant waxes, which can be brittle and inflexible. This makes beeswax very biocompatible, protecting the skin while allowing it to breathe.

Figure 2: Examples of products that contain beeswax on the European cosmetics market



Source: EWG's Skin Deep, Bee Cosmetics, Therapi (Organic certified by Soil Association), Fenty Beauty, L'Oréal & Paris Uriage, 2024

Table 1 lists the classification names and codes for beeswax. These codes and ingredient names are used as product identifications in documentation (as listed in COSING and with the Chemical Abstracts Service number) and in trade (Harmonised System codes).

Table 1: Classification of beeswax

Source	Classification
International Nomenclature Cosmetic Ingredient (INCI) names, according to COSING (European Commission database with information on cosmetic substances and ingredients)	COSING lists two ingredients known as or derived from beeswax: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cera alba</li> <li>• Beeswax</li> </ul>
Chemical Abstract Service (CAS) number	8012-89-3/8006-40-4
EINECS	232-383-7
Harmonised system (HS) codes	152190 (Beeswax, other insect waxes and spermaceti, whether or not refined or coloured)

Source: ProFound, 2024

## 2. What makes Europe an interesting market for bees' wax?

There is strong demand for beeswax in the main European markets. Half of Europe's beeswax supply comes from developing countries, and this trend is expected to continue. Given the predominance of tropical countries in beeswax production, this creates stable demand and market access opportunities for beeswax suppliers.

### Europe has a large and growing market for cosmetics

Europe is the world's third largest cosmetics market, [worth €96 billion in 2023](#). In the same year, the European cosmetics market dominated at least 24% of the global cosmetics market, which was [valued at over €525 billion](#). The United States (US) leads the global market by annual revenue, however, the European market stands out in terms of per capita spending. [Europeans spent an estimated €169 per person on personal care products in 2023](#). European per capita spending has been increasing steadily since 2021, at an average annual rate of 8.3%.

Source: [L'Oréal 2023 Annual Report](#)

The cosmetics market is recording continuous and significant growth in both Eastern and Western Europe. Over the past five years, the European market has grown on average by 4.7% per year in value terms. In 2022 and 2023, the European market for cosmetics grew at an average rate of 7.5% and 9.1%, respectively, outpacing the [global market growth](#) in both years. Annual growth is now in fact higher than it was in the years before the pandemic. This indicates a healthy industry and suggests that the value of the market will continue to grow. In fact, the European market is expected to keep [growing at an average annual rate of 2.1%](#) between 2023 and 2027.

Source: [CBI, 2024](#)

Europe's position as the world's third largest cosmetics market creates significant opportunities for beeswax. These opportunities are particularly apparent as retail sales are growing steadily each year. As demand for cosmetic products increases, so does the need for ingredients like beeswax. Its properties and applications make it an increasingly valuable ingredient.

### Europe is the world's largest importer of beeswax

Europe has consistently been the largest importer of beeswax in the world, accounting for over half of global imports in recent years. This indicates a strong demand and interest in beeswax throughout the region.

[Europe produces a minimal amount of the world's beeswax](#). As a result, it relies heavily on imports to meet its industries' needs. In 2023, European imports of beeswax, other insect waxes and spermaceti amounted to 14,700 thousand tonnes (€56 million), representing 51% of global imports. Although trade data for beeswax is grouped with other insect-produced waxes, beeswax dominates this category. Other waxes only play a minor role in the market. It can therefore be assumed that data for HS 152190 is almost entirely about beeswax.

A number of European countries are major importers of beeswax. France is the largest importer in terms of volume, followed by Germany. Spain, Poland, Greece and Italy are also some on the top ten global importers. In terms of value, Germany is the largest European Union (EU) importer.

Between 2019 and 2023, the volume of European imports of beeswax varied considerably. In general, imports remained above 19,000 tonnes, except in 2021 and 2023, when they decreased. The largest decrease was in 2023 when the volume of imports fell by -23%. This was due to high imports in 2022. These may have led to stockpiling in some of the largest European importing markets, and lower imports of beeswax from China. Overall, imports showed an average annual decrease of -6.4% in volume and -5% in value. Nevertheless, the

nature of imports and historical data suggest that European imports will remain relatively stable in the coming years.

Source: ITC Trade Map, 2024

## **Almost half of European beeswax imports are sourced from developing market economies**

Over the past few years, nearly half of Europe's beeswax imports have been sourced from developing countries. In 2023, Europe imported beeswax worth €25.6 million from these regions. This represents a 45% share of the total European import value. This share has remained relatively stable since 2019, averaging around 48%. Europe's reliance on developing countries for beeswax imports creates significant opportunities for beeswax producers in these regions.

Between 2019 and 2021, the value of European imports of beeswax from developing countries decreased steadily at an average annual rate of -2.8% from €33.7 million to €31.9 million. In 2022, import values increased significantly by 39%, reaching €44.3 million. However, they then decreased by -42% in 2023, following the general behaviour of overall European imports. The consistent share of imports from these countries suggests that, despite fluctuations, Europe is still dependent on developing countries for its beeswax supply and is likely to remain so in the future.

Germany stands out as the largest importer of beeswax directly from developing market economies. In 2023, Germany imported €12 million of beeswax from these economies. This accounted for 47% of the total European import value from these sources. The main suppliers of beeswax to Europe are China and Africa. Tropical countries lead global production and export due to local beekeeping practices that allow for the harvesting of both honey and beeswax. China is the top supplier, contributing 63% of Europe's beeswax import value, followed by Vietnam (12%) and Tanzania (5%).

Source: ITC Trade Map, 2024

### Tips:

See [our study on the demand for natural cosmetic ingredients in Europe](#) for more on relevant markets, sales, imports and potential products in the natural cosmetics segment.

Stay informed about the latest developments in the European cosmetics industry. For instance, read industry media like [Cosmetics Design Europe](#).

Check online sources for more statistics, such as the [ITC Trade Map](#) and the [EU Access2Markets](#).

## **3. Which European countries offer the most opportunities for beeswax?**

Western European countries offer the most opportunities for beeswax. France is the largest importer in terms of volume, while Germany leads in market value. Spain, Italy, the UK and Belgium show continued demand for natural ingredients in their cosmetics markets. They are also home to many small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). SMEs play a crucial role in driving innovation and economic growth in the cosmetics industries. Poland

and Greece are also relatively large importers of beeswax. However, their cosmetics industries and consumer markets are smaller, which is why they have been excluded from this analysis.

Source: ITC Trade Map

Source: Cosmetics Europe & Euromonitor International, 2024

## France is the world's largest importer of beeswax by volume

France is the world's leading importer of beeswax by volume, accounting for 38% of all European imports. It is also one of the three largest importers of beeswax in the world in terms of value. In 2023, France imported 5,641 tonnes of beeswax with a value of €11.1 million. In the same year, French imports of beeswax from emerging countries amounted to €3.1 million, representing 29% of total imports. French imports of beeswax have decreased significantly over the last five years, at an average annual rate of -15% in volume and -8.4% in value. However, imports increased in 2022, particularly in terms of value.

Little data is available on the beeswax market in France. It is estimated that [the amount of wax produced in France is around 1.5% of the amount of honey produced](#). In 2022, French beekeepers produced about 20,000 tonnes of honey, which would correspond to about 300 tonnes of wax. With domestic production covering only a fraction of demand, France relies heavily on imports. These imports are mainly from other EU countries, such as Germany and Belgium, as well as China and some African countries, such as Madagascar. This ensures a continued strong market for beeswax.

Beeswax imports play a crucial role in the French cosmetics market. It is the second-largest cosmetics and personal care market in Europe. In 2023, it had a market value of €13.7 billion, representing 14% of the European market. France is also one of the ten largest countries in terms of per capita consumption, with each French person estimated to consume €202 in 2023.

The French beauty and personal care market grew by 6.3% between 2022 and 2023. This is below the European average. The French market is forecasted to continue to grow at over 2% per year, increasing its value by nearly €1.7 billion by 2028. French demand for natural ingredients is driven by the skincare (31% market share), toiletries (25%) and perfumery (22%) segments. The continued growth of the French cosmetics market, particularly in high-demand segments such as skincare, makes France one of the most attractive European markets for beeswax suppliers.

France also has a [growing market for organic and natural cosmetics](#). In 2023, the value of the natural cosmetics market in France was €313 million, representing an average annual growth of 4.9% since 2018. The sector is [expected to continue to grow, reaching a value of €394 million in 2028](#). Several companies sell organic-certified beeswax on the French market, specifically as an ingredient for homemade cosmetics. Examples are [Terrapis](#), [Bioflore](#) and [Abiessence](#).

## Germany is the largest national market for cosmetics and personal care products in Europe

Germany's dominance in the European cosmetics market creates significant opportunities for beeswax suppliers. As the second largest EU importer of beeswax by volume, Germany accounted for 34% of total EU imports in 2023. The same year, it imported 4,969 tonnes of beeswax, with a value of €17.8 million. This value positions Germany as the country with the highest import value for beeswax in Europe. This indicates a market that is willing to pay more for quality ingredients. In 2023, German imports of beeswax from emerging countries amounted to €12 million, representing 68% of total imports. The main non-EU suppliers to Germany were China, Vietnam, Tanzania and the Central African Republic.

Over the last five years, German imports of beeswax have grown at an average annual rate of 6.7% in volume. This highlights its growing demand for this natural ingredient. Although there was a slight decline in imports in 2022-2023, the overall trend points to growth.

Germany is the largest national market for cosmetics and personal care products in Europe, with a market value of €15.9 billion in 2023. It dominates 17% of the European cosmetics market and is one of the largest countries in terms of SME cosmetics manufacturers, with 611 companies in 2023. These SMEs drive demand for natural, organic and sustainable products. Germany is also one of the ten largest countries in terms of per capita consumption of cosmetics, with each German consuming an estimated €187 in 2023.

Germany's beauty and personal care market saw significant growth of 11% between 2022 and 2023, outperforming the European average and placing Germany in the top ten countries for market expansion. This growth is expected to continue, with the market forecast to increase by €1.8 billion by 2028. The largest segments of the German market – toiletries (31%), hair care (23%) and skincare (21%) – drive demand for beeswax, particularly as they continue to grow, with skincare and hair care showing significant increases of 8.6% and 9.9% in 2022 and 2023, respectively.

Germany is a hub for [European natural and organic cosmetics](#). The country's natural and organic cosmetics market has moved from niche to mainstream. In 2022, [52% of German consumers reported using natural and/or organic](#) personal and beauty care products. This provides opportunities for exporters of organic certified beeswax. Kahl is a leading manufacturer of natural waxes, headquartered in Germany. It offers a wide range of COSMOS and NATRUE-certified waxes, including beeswax.

## **The expanding Spanish cosmetics market offers opportunities for beeswax suppliers**

Spain has a highly professionalised beekeeping sector; 80% of registered hives belonged to professional beekeepers in 2022, the highest percentage in the EU. [Wax production in Spain has remained stable](#) in recent years, reaching 1,854 tonnes in 2021. This is a high level of beeswax production compared to other Western European countries. Despite its domestic production, Spain is the third largest importer of beeswax in the EU, accounting for 4.3% of European imports.

In 2023, it imported 629 tonnes of beeswax with a value of €3.6 million. In the same year, Spanish imports of beeswax from emerging countries amounted to €1.7 million. This represents 48% of the total import value. The main non-EU suppliers are China and Cameroon, with China accounting for 64% of all Spanish beeswax imports. Although Spanish beeswax imports have fallen slightly over the last five years, at an average annual rate of -1.3%, the overall trend still indicates potential for future growth.

Spain is the fifth largest market for cosmetics and personal care products in Europe, with a market value of €10.4 billion in 2023. This represents 11% of the European market. Spain also had the third highest per capita consumption in Europe in 2023, with an estimated €216 per person. The Spanish beauty and personal care sector experienced robust growth of 12% in 2023, outpacing the regional average and positioning Spain as one of the top ten most interesting countries in terms of market expansion. The market is forecast to grow by an average of 1-2% per year for the next five years, growing to €1.3 billion by 2028. The Spanish cosmetics market offers significant opportunities for beeswax suppliers.

The largest segments of the Spanish cosmetics market are skincare (33% market share), toiletries (21%) and fragrances (19%). They drive the demand for natural ingredients like beeswax. The skincare segment saw impressive growth of 14.3% between 2022 and 2023, highlighting the growing demand for products that benefit from beeswax's unique properties.

## **Italy is the third-largest market for cosmetics, with a large skincare segment**

Italy is the fifth largest importer of beeswax in Europe in terms of volume and third largest in value terms. The high import value suggests that Italy is willing to pay more for high-quality beeswax, particularly for its

expansive skincare market. Italian beeswax imports have fluctuated over the past five years, with an average annual decrease of -11%. Still, Italy presents opportunities for beeswax suppliers.

In 2023, Italy imported 535 tonnes of beeswax (€4.7 million), accounting for 3.6% of European imports. In the same year, Italian imports of beeswax from emerging economies amounted to €1.1 million. This only represents 23% of total imports. The main beeswax supplier is China, which dominates 23% of all Italian imports.

Italy is the third largest market in Europe for cosmetics and personal care products. Valued at €12.5 billion in 2023, it accounted for 13% of the European market. The Italian beauty and personal care sector grew by 9.4% in 2023, outperforming the regional average. Despite this recent growth, the market is expected to undergo a slight decline over the next five years, with a projected decrease in value of approximately €200 million by 2028.

Italy's prominence in the European cosmetics market is further underscored by its position as the second largest country in terms of SMEs. It was home to 952 companies in 2023, representing 11% of Europe's total. The skincare segment dominates the Italian market, making up 36% of the sector. It saw a growth of 8.8% between 2022 and 2023. Hair care also experienced growth, increasing by 5.5% during the same period. With a per capita consumption of €212, Italy ranks fourth in Europe, highlighting the demand for personal care products.

## **The growing cosmetics and skincare markets create opportunities for beeswax in the UK**

The UK has one of the largest cosmetics and personal care markets in Europe. This country is a key market for beeswax suppliers due to the consistent growth of the skincare segment and its need for natural ingredients like beeswax.

The UK is the fourth largest market in Europe for cosmetics and personal care products, valued at €11 billion in 2023, with an 11% share of the European market. The UK beauty and personal care sector grew by 9.7% in 2023, outperforming the regional average. Growth is expected to continue at an annual average rate of 3.5% over the next five years. This growth will increase the market's value by nearly €2.4 billion by 2028.

The UK is also a significant player in the European SME landscape. It ranked third with 880 SMEs in 2023, which accounts for 9.8% of all SMEs in Europe. The largest segments in the UK market are toiletries (28%), skincare (25%) and fragrances (21%). Skincare is the fastest-growing segment. It saw an impressive 11.8% increase between 2022 and 2023, while hair care grew by 7.3%. With a per capita consumption of €162 in 2023, the UK market reflects strong consumer interest in high-quality personal care products.

In 2023, the UK imported 372 tonnes of beeswax, valued at €2.7 million. This represents 2.5% of European imports. In the same year, the UK imports of beeswax from emerging markets were €1.2 million. This represents 45% of total imports. The main supplier is China

Although UK beeswax imports have decreased at an average annual rate of -11% over the past five years, the consistent demand for natural ingredients creates opportunities for beeswax suppliers. As the UK market continues to grow, the need for premium beeswax is likely to rise, offering potential for growth in this market.

The UK organic health and beauty market has [grown by an average of 9.5% per year](#) over the past five years, rising from €103 million in 2018 to €162 million in 2023. British Wax, a major importer of beeswax in the UK, has organic certified beeswax in its portfolio. Their registered beekeepers follow organic practices and receive a premium for supplying organic beeswax.

## **Belgium is a key trade hub for cosmetic ingredients from developing countries**

Belgium is a key distribution hub for several cosmetic ingredients, including beeswax. Belgium supplies the



largest cosmetics markets in Europe, benefiting from its central location in the EU market. Beeswax suppliers can take advantage of Belgium's expertise in and demand for natural ingredients from non-EU countries to expand their presence in the European market.

In 2023, Belgium imported 140 tonnes of beeswax (€1.1 million), representing 1% of the volume imported into Europe and 2% of import value. Almost the same amount of beeswax was re-exported to other EU countries. Belgian imports of beeswax have increased moderately over the last five years, with an average annual growth rate of 1.3% in volume. Unlike other countries, Belgian imports peaked in 2021 but fluctuate around 137 tonnes overall.

In 2023, Belgian imports of beeswax from emerging countries amounted to 515,000 tonnes, representing 46% of total imports. Belgium has several global beeswax suppliers, and its imports are evenly distributed between EU and non-EU countries. Over the last three years, Togo has positioned itself as the main supplier of beeswax to Belgium, overtaking imports from France and Germany. Other important non-EU suppliers are China and Madagascar. This shows potential for beeswax suppliers from developing countries.

Belgium is also considered an attractive market for beeswax and natural ingredients due to its strong position in the European cosmetics and personal care sector. Belgium is one of the ten largest cosmetics and personal care markets in Europe. In 2023, it will have a market value of €2.3 billion, representing 2.4% of the European market. Belgium also has a high per capita consumption of cosmetics, with each Belgian estimated to have consumed €186 worth of cosmetics in 2023. This is higher than the EU average.

The Belgian beauty and personal care market grew by 6.7% between 2022 and 2023, and it is expected to continue to grow in the coming years. Belgian demand for natural ingredients is driven by its role as a trading hub and the skincare segment, which accounts for 30% of the domestic market.

#### Tips:

Focus on Western European countries, as they import high volumes of beeswax. These countries also have the largest cosmetics markets and robust manufacturing sectors.

Refer to the [CBI study on finding buyers](#), which provides information about various trade fairs and lists of potential customers in all of the countries discussed above.

Before engaging in an organic certification scheme, check with your potential buyers whether certification is required and whether it will offer you a competitive advantage over other suppliers.

Inform European buyers about the certification you have obtained and display certification you may have on your company website and marketing materials. This will likely increase your chances of entering the European market.

## 4. Which trends offer opportunities or pose threats in the European beeswax market?

The European market for beeswax offers opportunities thanks to the growing dermo-cosmetics sector, which values beeswax for its skin-healing properties. The industry's shift from synthetic to natural waxes also aligns with beeswax's eco-friendly nature. However, the rising demand for vegan cosmetics poses a threat as consumers seek plant-based alternatives.



## Growing dermo-cosmetics market unlocks opportunities for beeswax

Dermo-cosmetics focus on products that combine skincare with dermatological benefits. They are increasingly in demand. Beeswax is recognised as a natural way to maintain skin hydration and reduce inflammatory symptoms associated with skin conditions. As such, the expansion of the dermo-cosmetics market is expected to further drive demand for beeswax, creating opportunities for suppliers to meet this growing market's increasing needs.

Beeswax has several skin benefits that align with dermo cosmetics. This ingredient acts as an occlusive moisturiser and emollient. However and more importantly, beeswax is known for its healing properties. It has been shown to [effectively protect the skin barrier, control psoriasis and treat dermatitis and burns](#). Beeswax is particularly beneficial for people with sensitive skin as [it is unlikely to cause skin irritation](#). This is partly due to propolis, one of the most beneficial components of beeswax. It is a recognised antioxidant, antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory. Beeswax is also able to reduce the overgrowth of natural skin microbes and can help heal burns by renewing the skin.

The dermo-cosmetics market is experiencing expansion, [driven by consumer concerns about health and safety and the increasing prevalence of skin conditions](#). Deep skin concerns and changes in appearance due to burn scars or similar conditions can [cause people emotional distress](#). This is where beauty and dermo-cosmetics can have a huge impact on the wellbeing of people with skin problems. Dermo-cosmetics are becoming more popular thanks to prescriptions from dermatologists who see them as a solution to specific skin problems, such as sensitive skin, eczema and acne.

The dermo-cosmetics segment has grown significantly in recent years, consistently outperforming the overall cosmetics market. In 2023, the dermo-cosmetics market grew by 13%. Even during the pandemic, this segment proved to be widespread and resilient to adverse effects. This suggests a very positive outlook for the future of dermo-cosmetics.

Source: [L'Oréal](#), 2023

## The European cosmetics industry is switching from synthetic to natural waxes

The [rise of clean beauty](#) has led consumers to seek out more natural products that respect both the environment and their health. As a result, the cosmetics industry is [gradually switching from synthetic waxes to natural alternatives](#). Natural waxes are becoming more popular because they are biodegradable and environmentally friendly as they are derived from renewable sources. This makes natural waxes more sustainable, and they benefit both the planet and consumers.

Beeswax is an ideal fit for this trend thanks to its biodegradable and environmentally friendly properties. Unlike synthetic waxes, beeswax is a natural by-product of beekeeping. It breaks down naturally, leaving no harmful residues, which is in line with the industry's push towards sustainability. Beeswax is also non-toxic and hypoallergenic. This makes it safe for the environment and consumers.

Beeswax is [often preferred to synthetic waxes](#) in cosmetic products. Research has shown that [it provides a better barrier than mineral products](#), such as petroleum jelly. Beeswax suppliers can capitalise on this trend by highlighting its natural origin and sustainability. In addition, investing in certifications, such as organic, can further improve the appeal of beeswax to buyers and consumers.

## Ethical sourcing is increasingly important on the European market

[The Directive on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence](#) entered into force halfway through July 2024. It aims to encourage sustainable and responsible business practices that positively affect human rights and the environment. It sets out rules for companies to address adverse effects on human rights and environmental

sustainability in their operations, those of their subsidiaries and throughout their value chains.

This also affects the beeswax trade. Since corporate due diligence must cover the entire supply chain, European companies need assurance from their suppliers that they comply with their due diligence policies. Exporters are generally required to implement policies and practices to identify, prevent, address or reduce human rights violations and environmental impacts related to their operations. This often means they need to sign a supplier code of conduct. One example of this is the [Supplier Code of Conduct from Norevo](#), a German importer of beeswax.

Partnerships and trust are increasingly important between suppliers and buyers to assure good business practice. An example of a strong partnership in the beeswax sector is [The East Africa Wax Company](#). This company is a partnership between [BeeCare Apiaries](#) in Kenya and [British Wax](#), the UK's leading beeswax refiner. BeeCare Apiaries works directly with registered farmers and beekeepers in Africa to source high-quality beeswax and honey. Meanwhile, British Wax focuses on sourcing, refining and blending beeswax from Africa for various industries. Through this partnership, The East Africa Wax Company supplies fully traceable, ethical and sustainably sourced beeswax. They work fairly with farmers and help communities thrive through trade. They also provide local employment in their purpose-built Kenyan production facility.

Figure 10: Europe's new law: the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD)



Source: [amfori](#), 2024

## Rising demand for vegan products creates more competition for beeswax

Consumers are increasingly turning to non-animal ingredients and avoiding products that require animal testing. In response, formulators are actively seeking alternatives to meet the demand for vegan products. Europe is at the forefront of this movement. It dominates the global vegan cosmetics market, with a [revenue share of over 34% by 2022](#). The vegan cosmetics industry in Europe is growing rapidly and is forecast to be worth \$2.2 billion (USD) by 2028, driven by a [significant increase in the number of vegans in the EU](#) over the next decade.

Recent supply issues and the [perception of beeswax extraction as exploitative](#) and cruel to bees have fuelled the need for alternatives. Plant-based waxes are a better option for many consumers. In response to these trends, there have been several launches and innovations in vegan alternatives to beeswax, such as [Natura-Tec Bees-N-Love](#). This plant-based alternative mimics the properties of traditional beeswax and is marketed as protecting biodiversity.

To prevent negative fallout from this trend, beeswax suppliers should emphasise the ethical and sustainable practices involved in beeswax production. The most important element is to promote beekeeping as an ethical practice with ethical animal handling practices. You should take great care there is no mishandling of bees or wing-clipping. It is also important to make clear that re-combing is an important part of colony health.

Collaboration with buyers and brands that work with beeswax and vegan ingredients can also help bridge the gap between the traditional and vegan markets.

### Tips:

Refer to [our study about trends for natural ingredients for cosmetics](#) for more market trends and information.

Promote the sustainable and ethical aspects of your production process. Buyers will ask you to support your claims with certificates or documentation on your sourcing practices and/or your

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practices. Be prepared to back anything you claim with documentation.

Focus on establishing long-term relationships with buyers. Larger buyers set up partnerships with beekeepers and exporters. Be open to buyers visiting your facilities on a regular basis.

[ProFound - Advisers In Development](#) carried out this study in partnership with [Fair Venture Consulting](#) on behalf of CBI.

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