

Market evolution: Soybean meal (CN 2304) — 2015–2025

Introduction

This report examines the European Union's trade in soybean meal (oilcake and other solid residues from the extraction of soya-bean oil, customs code CN 2304) with non-EU countries over the period 2015–2025. The data retrieval, drawn from the EU trade dashboard, was severely restricted by rate-limit errors that blocked all standard quantitative feeds—trade value, partner shares, concentration indices, and import reliance metrics. The only substantive signal that could be extracted from the available query results is the finding that no trade shocks were detected by the volatility module. Consequently, this report must forgo numerical trends and instead focus on interpreting the single observable dynamic—the absence of shocks—while contextualising the structural role of soybean meal in EU animal feed and the implications of the data gap itself.

Data Accessibility Constraints over the Study Period

Every quantitative trade endpoint for CN 2304 returned HTTP 429 rate-limit errors when queried for the 2015–2025 window.

The trade overview intended to supply import and export values for soybean meal could not be populated. The same technical failure affected the top partners by value tab, the list of top reporters, and the concentration HHI analysis. As a result, no figures on volumes, values, price movements, or supplier diversification are available for this report.

The only module that completed successfully was the volatility and shock detector, which returned a definitive finding: no trade shocks identified.

After a retry, the dashboard's volatility algorithm produced the result `shocks_detected: false` for the entire ten-year span. While the precise methodology of the shock-detection routine is not detailed in the returned metadata, the output is the sole empirical fact underpinning this market evolution assessment.

Interpreting the ‘No Shocks’ Signal in the Soya Meal Market

A negative shock detection across a full decade is a meaningful, albeit imprecise, indicator of market stability.

In the context of a high-frequency trade monitoring tool, a `shocks_detected: false` output over 2015–2025 implies that none of the monthly or annual trade data fluctuations (had they been accessible) crossed the algorithm’s threshold for an abnormal disruption. This suggests that EU soybean meal imports maintained a relatively smooth path, with no sudden collapses or explosive surges that would trigger statistical alarms.

Such stability is consistent with the structural nature of EU soybean meal demand and the global supply architecture.

Soybean meal (CN 2304) is the backbone of protein supply for the EU’s intensive livestock and dairy sectors. Its consumption is driven by stable feed compounder demand, and import needs are almost entirely met by a small group of large non-EU exporters—chiefly Brazil, Argentina, and the United States. The commodity’s bulk shipping, long-term procurement contracts, and deep futures markets tend to dampen short-term discontinuities in EU import volumes. The absence of detected shocks therefore aligns with an expected pattern of gradual, trend-based evolution, though the lack of data prevents verification of whether volumes grew, plateaued, or declined over the decade.

The result also suggests that external crises did not create lasting breaks in EU soya meal flows.

Events such as the COVID-19 pandemic (2020), logistical bottlenecks in South America, or the war in Ukraine (2022) might have been expected to disrupt agricultural commodity trade. The `shocks_detected: false` outcome indicates that any temporary disturbances were either too brief, too small, or too well compensated by alternative sourcing to register as structural breaks in the algorithm’s eyes. Whether this reflects genuine resilience or a limitation of the shock-detection design remains an open question.

Structural Implications of the EU’s Protein Import Dependence

CN 2304 has long been the EU’s primary imported protein ingredient, and its supply chain is inherently extra-EU.

The product code covers oilcake and solid residues from soya-bean oil extraction, used almost entirely for animal feed. Because the EU lacks the climatic conditions and acreage to produce enough soybeans domestically, it relies overwhelmingly on imports from the

Americas. This structural dependency makes the soybean meal trade a strategically sensitive channel, where any future supply disruption would immediately affect livestock production costs.

The unavailability of partner-concentration data leaves a critical blind spot.

The concentration HHI link was inaccessible, so it is impossible to assess whether the EU's sourcing became more or less diversified over the period. A high and rising concentration toward one or two suppliers would amplify vulnerability to harvest failures, export restrictions, or geopolitical tensions, whereas diversification would mitigate such risks. Without these data, policymakers cannot gauge whether the EU's protein import base is growing more resilient or more fragile.

The entire decade's market evolution remains opaque, underlining the need for open, real-time trade monitoring.

No information surfaced on trade values, unit prices, or share shifts between suppliers. Even the basic descriptive statistics requested—total imports, re-exports, intra-EU flows—were blocked. This report thus ends by highlighting a paradox: the EU's single most important protein feed ingredient, traded in tens of millions of tonnes annually, could not be quantitatively tracked through the dashboard for the 2015–2025 period. A minimal recommendation is that future market analyses demand fully unlocked, recurring access to customs data to properly inform decisions on the EU's protein strategy and feed-sector resilience.

Conclusion

The trade evolution of soybean meal (CN 2304) from 2015 to 2025 can be characterised, based solely on the data that was retrievable, by the absence of any identified trade shocks. This single signal points to a fundamentally stable import flow, in line with the steady demand from the EU feed sector and the reliability of major overseas suppliers. Yet, the systematic failure to obtain trade values, partner shares, or concentration metrics means that the underlying trajectory—whether of gentle growth, stagnation, or price escalation—is entirely hidden. As long as the EU remains structurally dependent on imported soya proteins, bridging this data gap is essential for anticipating vulnerabilities and shaping a credible protein autonomy policy.

Auto-generated report: it accelerates, and sometimes misleads, human analysis. It cannot replace it in full.

If you need advice on European trade policy, or representation for your interests in Brussels, feel free to contact me at support@tradedashboard.eu. You can find my CV at [this address](#).