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Indonesiaâ??s shrimp exports recover in September, but year-to-date shipments remain under pressure

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A 5 per cent year-on-year increase in September export volumes offers a modest recovery for Indonesiaâ??s shrimp industry. However, cumulative shipments through the first nine months of 2026 remain 6 per cent lower, with weakness in raw vannamei, processed shrimp and key European markets offsetting stronger demand from China and Malaysia



Indonesia’s shrimp export industry recorded a modest improvement in September 2026, with shipments rising 5 per cent year on year to 18,318 metric tonnes (MT). The recovery, however, has yet to reverse the broader slowdown in the country’s export performance. Total shipments during January–September stood at 152,030 MT, down 6 per cent from the corresponding period last year, according to data published by Shrimp Insights.

Export earnings presented a slightly better picture in September, although they remained marginally below the previous year. Indonesia generated $153 million from shrimp exports during the month, a 1 per cent year-on-year decline. For the first nine months of 2026, export value reached $1.315 billion, down 2 per cent. The difference between the decline in export volume

and the relatively smaller fall in export value suggests some resilience in average export realisations. Nevertheless, the figures point to a sector still navigating uneven demand, product-level pressures and significant differences in the performance of individual destination markets.

The September improvement follows a difficult first half of the year, when monthly shipments were lower than the corresponding months of 2025 in January, February and March. April registered a 7 per cent increase, but May shipments fell 27 per cent. June was down 3 per cent before exports returned to growth in July and August, rising 8 per cent and 21 per cent, respectively. The latest figures therefore indicate that Indonesia's export momentum has strengthened over the past three months. Yet the cumulative deficit remains substantial, and the final quarter will be important in determining whether the industry can close the gap with 2025.

Volume recovery remains uneven across shrimp categories

Raw Litopenaeus vannamei, Indonesia's largest shrimp export category, continued to weigh on overall performance. Shipments of raw vannamei reached 8,761 MT in September, up 2 per cent year on year. However, January–September exports totalled 73,691 MT, a 10 per cent decline from the previous year. The category's performance is particularly important because raw vannamei accounted for nearly half of Indonesia's total shrimp export volume during the first nine months of 2026. Its persistent weakness indicates that the industry's overall recovery remains constrained by its largest product segment.

Cooked and marinated shrimp also recorded a monthly improvement. September shipments rose 5 per cent to 4,944 MT, taking cumulative exports to 41,319 MT. Despite the latest increase, the category remained 8 per cent below its year-earlier level.

Raw Penaeus monodon, or black tiger shrimp, registered exports of 756 MT in September, down 1 per cent year on year. Its January–September volume reached 5,995 MT, a 4 per cent decline. Breaded shrimp was a relative bright spot in September. Shipments increased 44 per cent to 686 MT, following a 55 per cent rise in August. However, the stronger monthly performance has not yet translated into year-to-date growth. Exports during January–September stood at 6,077 MT, down 10 per cent.

The figures suggest that Indonesia's export weakness is not confined to one product category. Raw vannamei and cooked or marinated shrimp remain under pressure, while black tiger and breaded shrimp have also recorded cumulative declines. The recent improvement in monthly shipments will need to persist across categories to produce a more durable recovery.

The US remains Indonesia's dominant shrimp destination

The United States continued to anchor Indonesia's shrimp export trade, absorbing 93,264 MT during January–September 2026. This represented a 7 per cent decline from the same period in 2025. September shipments to the US, however, rose 12 per cent year on year to 11,154 MT, suggesting a recovery in monthly demand.

The US accounted for approximately 61 per cent of Indonesia's total shrimp export volume during the first nine months of the year. Its performance therefore remains a decisive factor in the direction of the country's overall export trade. The September increase is encouraging, but the cumulative decline indicates that the market has yet to regain its previous year's momentum.

Japan, the second-largest destination, imported 22,634 MT during January–September, down 6 per cent year on year. September shipments increased 9 per cent to 2,900 MT. The improvement points to a better monthly performance, although the market's cumulative imports remain below 2025 levels.

China offered a stronger growth story. Indonesia's shrimp exports to the market increased 29 per cent year on year to 11,571 MT during the first nine months of 2026. September shipments rose 3 per cent to 1,423 MT. The cumulative increase makes China one of the stronger-performing major destinations, although monthly volumes have fluctuated considerably. April shipments, for instance, surged 623 per cent year on year, while June recorded a 66 per cent decline.

Malaysia also continued to expand its importance as a destination. Shipments rose 23 per cent to 6,956 MT during January–September, with September exports increasing 7 per cent to 792 MT. This follows a strong performance in 2025, when Indonesia's annual shipments to Malaysia increased 118 per cent to 9,002 MT.

Europe, by contrast, remained a weak spot. Exports to the EU-27 fell 38 per cent year on year to 5,087 MT during the first nine months of 2026. September shipments declined 35 per cent to 660 MT. The sustained contraction suggests that the European market continues to present a significant challenge for Indonesian exporters.

Taken together, the five leading destinations — the US, Japan, China, Malaysia and the EU-27 — accounted for approximately 92 per cent of Indonesia's shrimp export volume during January–September. The divergence between their performances underlines the importance of market diversification, but also shows that growth in China and Malaysia has not been sufficient to offset weakness in the larger US and Japanese markets and the steep decline in Europe.

Export earnings hold up better than volumes

Indonesia's export-value performance has been comparatively resilient. While cumulative shipments fell 6 per cent during January–September, export earnings declined by only 2 per cent. The figures indicate that the value generated per unit of exported shrimp has, in aggregate, held up better than physical volumes.

In September, the country exported 18,318 MT worth $153 million. This translates into an indicative average export value of approximately $8.35 per kg. For January–September, the corresponding average was approximately $8.65 per kg, based on total exports of 152,030 MT valued at $1.315 billion.

These averages are calculated from the aggregate volume and value figures. They should not be interpreted as like-for-like market prices, since the overall mix includes different shrimp species, product forms, processing levels and destination markets.

The historical average-value comparison for raw vannamei exports to the US and Japan is particularly relevant in this context. Differences between the two markets can offer insights into the pricing dynamics facing Indonesian suppliers. However, the underlying monthly price series is not included in the supplied data, so a reliable assessment of price movements or the widening or narrowing of market differentials would require the original chart or dataset.

A stronger finish to 2026 will be critical

Indonesia's shrimp exports entered 2026 after a relatively positive 2025, when annual shipments reached 212,470 MT, up 2 per cent year on year. Export earnings increased 11 per cent to $1.797 billion, indicating that value growth had outpaced volume expansion.

The current year's performance has been less consistent. Although July, August and September have all recorded year-on-year volume growth, the January–September total remains below the previous year's level. The recovery in recent months will need to continue if Indonesia is to narrow the gap before the end of the year.

The market picture is also changing. The US remains the industry's largest export destination, but its cumulative decline leaves Indonesia exposed to demand fluctuations in a market that accounts for more than three-fifths of its shipments. China and Malaysia are expanding, while Europe has become a source of sustained weakness. Product diversification has yet to deliver across-the-board growth, with all four major product categories in the supplied data showing lower cumulative volumes.