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Report Highlights:

Thailand offers strong potential for U.S. agricultural exports, which reached \$1.4 billion in 2024. The United States ranked as Thailand's 9th largest supplier of consumer-oriented products, with \$429 million in exports. This report provides practical tips for U.S. agricultural exporters on how to conduct business in Thailand, including information on market overview, export opportunities, local business practices, a review of consumer preferences, and market sector structure and trends.

Market Fact Sheet: Thailand

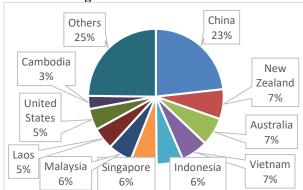
Executive Summary

Thailand, the second-largest economy in ASEAN, offers strong trade and investment potential, driven by a growing middle class and consumer market. In 2024, it exported \$5 billion in agricultural goods to the United States and imported \$1.4 billion, making it the 23rd largest U.S. export market and 15th largest supplier. With 53.5% of the population living in urban areas in 2025, up slightly from 2023, urbanization is projected to reach 58.4% by 2030, signaling continued opportunities in infrastructure, services, and consumer markets.

Imports of Consumer-Oriented Agricultural Products

The United States was the 9th largest supplier of consumer-oriented agricultural products to Thailand in 2024 with exports valued at \$429 million. Thailand's total 2024 import value of consumer-oriented products was \$8.4 billion, a 10 percent increase from 2023.

Thailand's Imports of Consumer-Oriented Food and **Agricultural Products in 2024**



Top 10 Exporting Countries to Thailand

Food Retail Industry

In 2024, Thailand's food retail sales reached \$7.9 billion. accounting for 6% of the country's \$132 billion in total retail sales—a 6% year-over-year increase. Despite economic challenges, including rising living costs and household debt, consumers are shifting toward essential goods and value-driven purchases, increasingly adopting multi-channel shopping to maximize savings.

Food Processing Industry:

Thailand is a leading food and agricultural exporter with a well-developed food processing sector. With rising global demand for processed foods. Thai food processors need to import large quantities of raw materials not available domestically. Thailand exported \$28 billion in processed food products in 2024 and imported \$8.6 billion. including \$357 million worth from the United States, an 8 percent increase from 2023.

Quick Facts: CY 2024

Imports of Consumer-Oriented Products: \$8.43 billion List of Top 10 Growth Products in Thailand 1) Dairy Products 2) Food Preparation 3) Fresh Fruits 4) Tree Nuts 5) Processed Vegetable 6) Chocolate & Cocoa 7) Wine & Related Products8) Processed Fruits 9) Beef & Beef products 10) Dog & Cat Food Food Industry by Channels (\$ billion) Retail Food Industry \$7.90 Food Service-HRI \$32.8 Food Processing \$36.0 Food and Agriculture Exports \$50.90 **Top 10 Retailers in Thailand** Hypermarkets Supermarkets 1) Central Food Retail 1) Lotus's 2) Gourmet Market 2) Big C 3) Villa Market Convenience Stores 5) Foodland 1) 7-Eleven 6) MaxValu 2) Lawson 108 7) CJ Supermarket 3) CJ Express Cash and Carry 1) Makro 2) Go Wholesale **GDP/Population** Population: 65.95 million GDP: \$551 billion (as of May 18, 2025) GDP per capita: \$7,830 (as of May 18, 2025) Sources: Trade Data Monitor, Euromonitor, Office of the

National Economic and Social Development Board, Krungsri Research, Statista, Reuter, Bangkok Post, Scottish International

Food Service Industry:

Foodservice value sales grew by 7 percent in current terms in 2024 to \$5.1 billion. The market size for foodservice is estimated at \$32.8 billion in 2024. Fullservice restaurants in Thailand faced significant challenges, primarily due to the high cost of living and intense competition among both established players and new entrants in the broader foodservice industry

Strengths/ Weaknesses/Opportunities/ Chanenges			
Strengths	Weakness		
Well-established market	Trade barriers on		
with modern distribution	imported food &		
channels	beverages to protect		
	domestic producers.		
Opportunity	Challenge		
Growing urban	Higher tariffs on U.S.		
population and many	products compared with		
international tourists	countries with free trade		
	agreements with		
	Thailand.		

Section I: Market Overview

Economy

According to the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC), Thailand's economy is projected to grow between 2.3 and 3.3 percent in 2025. This growth will be driven by increased government spending, a rebound in private consumption and investment, a continued recovery in the tourism sector, and steady export performance. Headline inflation is anticipated to remain within the range of 0.5 to 1.5 percent, with a current account surplus of approximately 2.5 percent of GDP. In 2024, Thailand's gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 2.5 percent, up from 2.0 percent in 2023. Private consumption expenditure increased by 4.4 percent, and government consumption rose by 2.5 percent. Public investment posted a solid gain of 4.8 percent, while private investment declined by 1.6 percent. Thailand's total export value in 2024 registered a strong growth of 5.4 percent from previous year, reaching \$300.5 billion, according to the Thai Ministry of Commerce.

Thailand Food Industry

Agricultural Trade

In 2024, Thailand ranked as the world's 8th largest exporter of agricultural and food products, with an export value of \$50.9 billion, reflecting a 4 percent increase compared to 2023. Agricultural and food exports accounted for 17 percent of Thailand's total exports, reinforcing the country's position as a major global player in the sector. Key export categories included rubber, poultry products, seafood, and fruits. However, exports of traditional commodities such as rice and sugar experienced a decline. Export growth was driven primarily by strong performance in key markets, with notable increases in demand from the United States, China, Japan, and the European Union, which collectively saw a 12 percent rise. The United Kingdom also emerged as a particularly promising market for Thai agricultural exporters. ASEAN markets showed a slight contraction, and exports to Australia declined by 15.5 percent, according to the Thai Ministry of Commerce.

In 2024, Thailand exported approximately \$5 billion worth of agricultural and related products to the United States, while importing \$1.4 billion in U.S. agricultural and related goods. These trade flows underscore Thailand's strategic role in U.S. agricultural trade, ranking as the 23rd largest export market for U.S. agricultural products and the 15th largest agricultural supplier to the United States.

Thailand's total import value of agricultural and related products from other countries reached \$22.7 billion in 2024. The United States was the third-largest supplier of agricultural products to Thailand, with exports valued at \$1.42 billion, following China (\$3.35 billion) and Brazil (\$3.22 billion). The United States accounted for 6 percent of Thailand's total agricultural imports.

The value of U.S. consumer-oriented products exported to Thailand was \$412 million, while the total U.S. import value of consumer-oriented products from Thailand was approximately \$2.52 billion in 2024. Thailand's top five imported U.S. consumer-oriented products were food preparation, dairy products, tree nuts, fresh fruits, and chocolate & cocoa products.

Table 1. U.S.-Thailand Trade in Consumer-Oriented Ag Products in 2020-2024in Calendar Year (\$ million)

Calendar Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
U.S. Exports to Thailand	398.5	396.4	453.3	383.5	411.9
U.S. Imports from Thailand	1,828.4	2,080.1	2,600.0	2,098.0	2,515.3
Trade Balance	-1,429.9	-1,683.7	-2,146.7	-1,714.5	-2,103.4

Source: Global Agricultural Trade System (GATS).

Market Outlook

According to Statista Market Insights, revenue in Thailand's food market is projected to reach \$73.50 billion in 2025. The market is expected to expand at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 4.99 percent between 2025 and 2030, reflecting steady and sustainable growth. This positive trajectory underscores Thailand's strategic progress toward its broader ambition of becoming a global food hub by 2026. The anticipated growth is driven by a combination of rising domestic consumption, increased export demand, and continued investment in food innovation and infrastructure.

In contrast, the Thai Ministry of Tourism and Sports has recently revised its 2025 tourism revenue forecast downward to \$88.2 billion from \$100 billion, citing a combination of domestic and international factors likely to affect sector performance. These include shifting global travel trends and evolving economic conditions that may temper growth in the near term. Thailand's food industry remains resilient and poised for continued growth, supported by strong domestic consumption, rising global demand, and strategic public-private initiatives. The sector continues to be a key pillar of the national economy.

<u>PCMI</u> projects the food e-commerce segment to expand rapidly, and online food delivery to reach \$5.25 billion in 2025, hitting \$7.16 billion by 2029 at an 8.07% annual rate, while grocery delivery is expected to hit \$2.97 billion in 2025, with a 14% growth forecast for 2026. Online channels are set to make up 5.9% of total food market revenue, with 65% of online food and grocery orders made via mobile apps, according to Statista.

Thailand's Free Trade Agreements

Thailand is currently negotiating 6 new free trade agreements (FTA), as well as updating 5 existing FTAs. Thailand's new FTA negotiations involve Pakistan, Turkey, Canada, European Free Trade Association (EFTA), Thailand-EU, and UAE.

According to the Department of Trade Negotiations in the Thai Ministry of Commerce, Thailand currently has successfully negotiated and implemented a total of 15 FTAs with trading partners from 18 countries or territories (Table 2).

Recent Developments in 2025

- Thailand–European Free Trade Association (EFTA): On January 23, 2025, Thailand signed an FTA with the EFTA, comprising Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland, during the World Economic Forum in Davos (EFTA and Thailand Sign Free Trade Agreement). The agreement is comprehensive, covering trade in goods and services, investment, intellectual property rights, competition, government procurement, and sustainable development. The FTA will undergo public hearings, parliamentary approval, and regulatory updates, with ratification anticipated within one year (Thailand-EFTA (KPMG Thailand)). It's also a stepping-stone toward an EU–Thailand FTA currently under negotiation—which, once finalized, is expected to significantly boost Thailand–EU trade.
- Thailand–EU FTA negotiations are ongoing and Thai Ministry of Commerce expects them to conclude by the end of 2025. This follows the resumption of talks that had been stalled since 2014 (<u>The Nation</u>).

Country	Effective Date
ASEAN-China	October 1, 2003
Thailand-India	September 1, 2004
Thailand-Australia	January 1, 2005
Thailand-New Zealand	July 1, 2005
Thailand-Japan	November 1, 2007
Thailand-Peru	December 31, 2011
ASEAN-South Korea	January 1, 2010
ASEAN-India	January 1, 2010
ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand	March 12, 2010
ASEAN-Japan	June 1, 2009
Thailand-Chile	November 5, 2015
ASEAN-Hong Kong, China Free Trade Agreement (AHKFTA)	June 11, 2019
Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)	January 1, 2022
Thailand- Sri Lanka	February 3, 2024

Table 2. Thailand's Free Trade Agreements

Thailand's duties on imported U.S. consumer-oriented food products range between 30 and 60 percent. Tariffs on meats, fresh fruits and vegetables, and processed foods are particularly high, despite no or very limited domestic production of some of these products. For example, dairy ingredients from the United States and EU are significantly more expensive, exceeding prices from FTA partner countries. Similarly, Thailand has a 10 percent tariff on U.S. apples, while grapes and cherries face duties of 30 and 40 percent, respectively.

Advantages	Challenges
Consumer Expenditure	<u>Tariffs</u>
Food and non-alcoholic beverages are projected	Imports of some U.S. food products are subject to
to become the dominant consumer spending	high import tariffs, rigid food import procedures, and

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category in Thailand over the coming years.	burdensome documentation requirements.
While expenditure on hotels and catering is also	
expected to grow rapidly, reflecting the ongoing	
recovery in tourism and hospitality.	
Westernized Lifestyles	FTAs
27 percent of Thailand's population are between	Thailand has 15 FTAs in place with 18 countries or
the ages of 15 and 34, and eager to try new	territories currently. The free trade agreements have
products to fit their westernized lifestyles.	resulted in U.S. products being less competitive,
	especially for high-value consumer products such as
	meats, processed meats, spirits, beer, fresh fruits,
	frozen potatoes, and cheeses.
Cross-Border Trade	Local Production
There is an opportunity for U.S. exporters to	Local production is increasingly substituting imported
export products to Thailand's bordering countries	food items. Locally produced snack foods, salad
such as Laos, Burma, and Cambodia.	dressings, sauces, jams, and other processed foods are
	relatively inexpensive.
Other growing purchasing power areas	Concentration of Demand in Specific Locations
Increasing the purchasing power of consumers in	Market penetration for imported products is mostly
rural areas leads to more discretionary spending	concentrated in Bangkok and major tourist-destination
on non-traditional agricultural products.	areas. The Bangkok region is set to register the most
	rapid expansion across the country's major consumer
	markets over 2022-2027, accounting for 36.7 percent
	of total consumer expenditure (Euromonitor).
Sustainability and Healthy Ingredients	Channels
The Thai food processing industry is looking for	The oligopolistic nature of hypermarkets exerts some
new ingredients, particularly with healthy and/or	control over prices, while convenience stores prefer to
functional ingredients.	source their products locally or regionally.
Premiumization	Market Access
Restaurants are increasingly offering more niche	Strong government protection of domestically
and premium products to appeal to consumers	produced products, such as poultry, pork, and offal,
with higher incomes.	greatly complicate market access for imported
	products.
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Section II. Exporter Business Tips

Market Research:

- It is essential to visit the market to conduct market research, especially for product tasting, price comparisons, gauging competitors, and understanding consumer preferences.
- U.S. exporters should identify the best distribution channel (e.g., local importers, distributors, retailers, and food service) and establish a good relationship with their representatives. This can help U.S. exporters in facilitating and promoting exports of U.S. consumer-ready foods to Thailand.
- FAS Bangkok publishes its analysis of Thailand's key policy and market sector developments with likely impact on U.S. agricultural trade at https://gain.fas.USDA.gov.

Business Partners:

- U.S. exporters should work with a representative or agent who has established strong local connections with their target customers (i.e., retailers, hotels, restaurants, and food processors), and has a good understanding of Thai food, agriculture regulations, and food import procedures.
- Networking with government officials and/or appropriate authorities can be key for doing business successfully in Thailand.
- FAS Bangkok advises new-to-market U.S. exporters to participate in activities and events that
 introduce them to the Thai market, such as trade missions organized by state and regional trade
 associations (e.g., Food Export USA, the Western United States Agricultural Trade Association, the
 Southern United States Trade Association, California Wine Institute, American Brewer
 Association). These organizations work closely with FAS in Thailand and can provide reliable
 importer contacts and market opportunity updates.

Local Business Customs and Trends:

- Localize your products: adjust the product to local tastes, identify consumer preferences, and set a competitive price.
- Trade show participation is another key to raising awareness of your product(s) and meeting with
 prospective importers, retailers, and distributors. The three USDA-endorsed trade shows in Thailand
 are <u>THAIFEX</u> Anuga Asia, May 26-30, 2026 targeting food products for retail and food service
 sectors), <u>Food Ingredients Asia</u>, September 17-19, 2025 targeting products for food processing, and
 <u>VIV Asia</u>, March 10-12, 2027 targeting animal feed products).
- Successful U.S. exporters must ensure reliable product availability, consistent quality, technical support, and respond to inquiries within 24 hours.
- When launching new products in Thailand, it is essential to prioritize quality, as middle to uppermiddle-income consumers value premium offerings and recognizable brands. Products that feature high quality, appealing packaging, targeted promotions, and competitive pricing are well-positioned to attract attention and compete with established brands.
- U.S. exporters can request a list of importers from FAS Bangkok (agbangkok@state.gov).

General Customer Tastes and Trends:

- The rise in small households is fueling demand for smaller package sizes and convenient, ready-toeat or easy-to-prepare foods.
- Restaurants and retailers are increasingly developing products and services aligned with the growing consumer focus on health and wellness. For further information, please see <u>Thailand: Food</u> <u>Processing Ingredients Annual 2024</u>. For further information on market trends, please see <u>Food</u> <u>Service- Hotel Restaurant Institutional Annual 2024</u>, <u>Thailand- Retail Foods Annual 2024</u>
- Thailand's beef market offers strong growth potential for U.S. exporters, particularly in the frozen beef segment. U.S. exports of frozen boneless beef to Thailand by volume recorded a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 8.21 percent from 2018 to 2024 (see <u>American Beef Opportunities in Thailand</u>). This growth is supported by rising household incomes, increasing urbanization, and growing consumer demand for high-quality, premium meat products. Beef consumption in Thailand is projected to rise by 8 percent by 2025, creating further opportunities for U.S. suppliers. Despite the current 50 percent import tariff, strategic market entry through targeted promotions and partnerships—especially in the foodservice and tourism sectors—can help overcome trade barriers and expand market share.

- Ongoing urbanization continues to shape Thai consumer behavior, driving demand for convenient and time-saving food options such as ready-to-eat and ready-to-cook meals. At the same time, consumers are increasingly turning to digital channels - such as online searches, social media, food bloggers, and influencers - for information on food brands, nutrition, dining trends, and restaurant recommendations.

Section III. Import Food Standards & Regulations/Import Procedure

<u>Thailand: FAIRS Country Report Annual 2024</u> contains information on food laws, labeling requirements, regulations on food additives, pesticides, contaminants, import procedures, and other standards. Please contact the FAS Bangkok office at <u>agbangkok@state.gov</u> with specific product-related inquiries.

Section IV. Market Sector Structure & Trends

Thailand's consumer market is relatively mature but holds strong potential for continued growth, driven by a growing economy, ongoing urbanization, and an expanding middle and upper-middle income segment. Over the past decade, household incomes have risen significantly, particularly in urban areas, contributing to increased consumer purchasing power. Rising disposable incomes have led to greater spending on food and beverage products. In 2024, Thai consumer expenditures on food reached approximately \$73 billion, marking a 2 percent increase from the previous year. Food and non-alcoholic beverages continue to represent a substantial share of household spending, accounting for nearly onethird of total consumer expenditure. (Table 3).

Table 3. Thai Consumers' Expenditures on Food (2020-2024)

Unit	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
\$ billion	60.20	62.10	67.40	71.17	73.00

Source: Euromonitor International

Retail Sector and Trends

Thailand's retail industry continued to evolve and improve, driven by increasing consumer demand for convenience. Food and beverage sales are a key component of the country's retail industry. Urbanization, rising disposable incomes, changing consumer preferences, an increasing focus on health and sustainability are important influences in Thailand's food retail sector (see <u>Thailand: Retail Foods Annual</u>).

HRI Food Service Sector and Trends

Thailand's foodservice is expected to grow by 7 percent this year with the market size of \$32.85 billion, supported by store expansion and recovery in tourism. However, there are factors that are expected to impact the business resulting in higher costs since the food service business relies heavily on minimum wage labor. Since January 1, 2025, Thailand has introduced a new province-based minimum wage structure to address cost-of-living gaps and promote economic equity. While aimed at improving worker welfare and sustaining investment appeal, the policy poses both challenges and opportunities for businesses, especially in high-cost areas, with potential effects on consumer spending and export

sectors. Additionally, the food service business faces increasingly intense competition from new entrants. Further information on this market sector is available in the <u>Food Service- Hotel Restaurant</u> <u>Institutional Annual</u>.

Food Processing Sector and Trends

Thailand's food and beverage industry plays a vital role in the national economy. The country aims to become one of the world's top ten processed food exporters by 2027 and position itself as a leading player in the global "Future Food" market. Further information on this market sector is available in <u>Thailand: Food Processing Ingredients Annual</u>.

Alcoholic Drinks and Trends

There is a high proportion of out-of-home consumption of alcoholic drinks, such as ready-to-drink beverages, beers, and cocktail mixers. Thailand's largest alcoholic drink category is beer, dominated by local brewers.

In 2023 (the latest year with available data as of June 2025), Thailand's total volume of alcoholic drink sales reached 2.96 million liters, a 7 percent increase compared to 2022. Thailand's consumer expenditure on alcoholic drinks in 2023 was \$5.42 billion, an 11 percent growth compared to the previous year. Off-trade sales by volume in 2023 accounted for approximately 74 percent of total sales volume in the country, according to Euromonitor International.

Table 4. Consumer Expenditure on Alcoholic Drinks (2020-2024)

Unit	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
\$ billion	5.07	5.00	5.23	5.52	5.74

Source: Euromonitor International

Thailand's alcoholic drinks market has experienced a steady rise in volume sales in recent years, driven by a combination of tourism recovery and evolving consumer preferences. Beer and imported spirits performed particularly well, while wine imports increased and cider/perry remained a niche segment. The resurgence of international tourism, especially in major destinations like Bangkok, Phuket, and Pattaya, significantly boosted demand in nightlife and entertainment venues.

Health and wellness trends also played a growing role in shaping the market. Consumers are increasingly seeking beverages with lower alcohol content and reduced calories, prompting producers to focus on product innovation in these areas. While the beer segment continues to be dominated by a few established players, new entrants such as Carabao Group (CBG) have begun to enter the market, intensifying competition.

Thailand Eliminated Tariffs and Reduces Excise Taxes on Wine

Thailand's Cabinet approved reductions on wine tariffs and excise tax on January 2, 2024 (<u>Thailand eliminates tariffs and reduces excise taxes for wine</u>). The measures went into effect on February 23, 2024, in an effort to promote Thailand as a tourism hub. The Excise Department expects increased wine consumption to generate an additional 401 million baht (approximately \$11 million) in annual tax revenue.

Section V. Agricultural and Food Imports

In 2024, according to Trade Data Monitor, the United States ranked as the ninth-largest supplier of consumer-oriented agricultural products to Thailand, with exports valued at \$429 million, accounting for 5 percent of the market share. Leading the market was China, representing a 23 percent share, followed by New Zealand and Australia, each with 7 percent. Vietnam, Indonesia, Singapore, and Malaysia each held a 6 percent share, placing ahead of the United States in overall market position.

Product Category	2024 Thailand Total Food Import Value (USD in millions)	1st Supplier (Market Share)	2nd Supplier (Market Share)	U.S. Ranking (Market Share)
Dairy Products	\$1,229	New Zealand (39 percent)	Australia (11 percent)	4 (14 percent)
Fresh Fruits	\$918	China (69 percent)	Australia (7 percent)	4 (3 percent)
Soups and Food Preparations	\$973	Singapore (35 percent)	United States (14 percent)	2 (14 percent)
Tree nuts	\$387	Vietnam (30 percent)	Indonesia (28 percent)	3 (16 percent)
Chocolate and Cocoa products	\$313	Malaysia (36 percent)	China (12 percent)	5 (5 percent)
Beef and Beef Products	\$295	Australia (73 percent)	Japan (10 percent)	5 (3 percent)
Wine and Related Products	\$144	France (34 percent)	Australia (27 percent)	4 (8 percent)

Source: Trade Data Monitor

Best High-value, Consumer-Oriented Product Prospects Categories: Soups and food preparations, dairy products, tree nuts, fresh fruits, beef & related products, chocolate and cocoa products, processed-vegetables, non-alcoholic beverages, processed fruit, dog & cat food, wine & related products, health and functional food and beverages.

Section VI. Key Contacts & Further Information

Government Regulatory Agency Contacts

- Food and Drug Administration, Ministry of Public Health Website: <u>https://en.fda.moph.go.th/home-contact-us/</u>, Tel: +66 (0) 2590 7000, Email: saraban@fda.moph.go.th
- Department of Livestock Development, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives Website: <u>https://dld.go.th/th/index.php/th/</u> Tel: +66 (0) 2653 4444, Email: saraban@dld.go.th
- Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives Website: <u>https://www4.fisheries.go.th/dof_en/view_message/369</u> Tel: +66 (0) 2562 0600, Email: support@fisheries.go.th
- Department of Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives Website: <u>https://www.doa.go.th/en/</u> Tel: +66 (0) 2579 0121 to 27, Email: saraban@doa.mail.go.th

For further information on government regulatory agency contacts, please see <u>Thailand: FAIRS</u> <u>Country Report Annual</u>

The Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) office in Bangkok maintains up-to-date information on food and agricultural import opportunities in Thailand and welcomes inquiries from U.S. suppliers to assist in accessing Thailand's market. Questions or comments regarding this report should be directed to:

Office of Agricultural Affairs U.S. Embassy Bangkok Thailand 10330 Tel: + 662 205-5106 Fax: +662 255-2907 Email: <u>agbangkok@state.gov</u>

Attachments: Import Tariff Table_Thailand (As of June 2025).pdf

BICO Report.doc