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**Prepared By:** Ahmed Wally

**Approved By:** Christopher Riker

**Report Highlights:**

The exporter guide provides an economic and market overview, as well as demographic trends and practical tips for U.S. exporters on how to conduct business in Egypt. The report further describes three market sectors (food retail, food service, and food processing), recommendations for market entry, and recommendations for high-value product prospects - focusing on consumer-oriented products.

Additional reports referenced herein can be found online at the following website:

<https://gain.fas.usda.gov/#/search>.

## Market Fact Sheet: Egypt

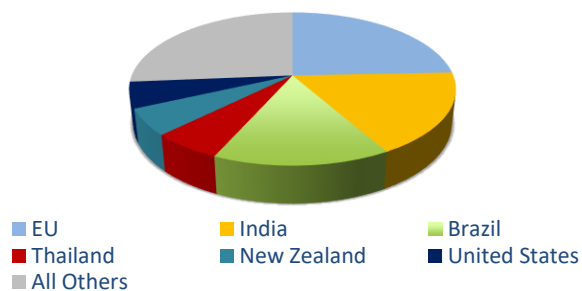
### Executive Summary

Egypt is facing significant balance of payment pressures as a blend of elevated external financing needs and a sharp slowdown in capital inflows have depleted domestic liquidity. Currency depreciation pressures remain, and shortages of foreign currency have disrupted business operations. The value of the Egyptian Pound has depreciated by more than 50 percent over the past year, and foreign currency demand continues to outstrip supply resulting in a slowdown in imported food and feed raw materials (such as soybeans). Egypt's imported agricultural commodities fell by 17.8 percent in the first nine months of 2023 when compared to the same period in 2022.

### Imports of Consumer-Oriented Products

Egypt imported roughly \$3.9 billion of consumer-oriented products in 2022. The United States was the fifth largest exporter to Egypt (by value) with approximately \$211 million in exports. However, U.S.-origin food exports to Egypt face competition from European, Middle Eastern, and increasingly African-origin exports. Free trade agreements, shipping proximity, and lower production costs for some regional competitors provide exporters in these countries an advantage over U.S. suppliers. Primary consumer-oriented products imported were beef and beef products, fruit (apples), dairy products, fish/seafood, spices, fresh fruits, tea, chocolate and cocoa products, tree nuts, soups and other food preparations, fresh vegetables, poultry meat and products (ex. eggs). The main suppliers of foreign consumer-oriented products were the European Union, India, Brazil, Thailand, New Zealand, and the United States.

**Egyptian Imports of Consumer-Oriented Products in 2022 (By Value)**



Source: Trade Data Monitor

### Food Retail Industry

Egypt's retail sector observed some success in 2022 as leading retailers continued to invest in digital technology and e-commerce. Continued urbanization helped give retailers a wider platform through which to reach a growing number of shoppers and sales were up, in part due to higher food costs. Online shopping also continued to evolve due to increased internet penetration. While many retailers are taking advantage of these opportunities, the Egyptian economy has been severely impacted by increased food prices and a myriad of economic challenges.

### Food Processing Sector

Because of shortages in foreign currency, Egypt's retail industry has faced challenges in importing products in 2022. Fewer imported brands are available in retail stores, providing the domestic food processing sector with some advantages (as lower-priced local brands have increasingly replaced imported goods, where possible).

### Population/GDP

Population: 109 million (2023 est.) – the most populated country in the Middle East.

GDP (USD): \$1.264 trillion (2021 est.), \$1.223 trillion (2020 est.)

GDP per capita (USD): \$11,600 (2021 est.)

### Top Growth Products in Egypt (USD) - 2022

\$1.11 billion	Beef & Beef products
\$936 million	Dairy Products
\$475 million	Fruit (Apples, Kiwi, etc.)
\$250 million	Tunas, Skipjack and Bonito
\$154 million	Tree Nuts (Almonds, etc.)
\$118 million	Food Preparations for Infants
\$97 million	Herring, Frozen
\$67 million	Fats/Oils Derived from Milk
\$46 million	Pepper, Black and White
\$42 million	Coffee Extracts

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## SECTION I: MARKET OVERVIEW

The economic situation in Egypt has been challenged by the impact of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, global inflationary pressures (particularly for food as Egypt is a major agricultural importer and the world’s largest wheat importer), and the withdrawal of foreign cash reserves.<sup>1</sup> Egypt’s inflation rate increased to 13.9 percent in calendar year 2022,<sup>2</sup> up from 5.5 percent the previous year, and peaked in August 2023 at 39.7 percent (with slow easing realized in subsequent months).<sup>3</sup> As of the end of October 2023, food and drink prices registered a 71.7 percent increase compared to October 2022.<sup>4</sup> The economic challenges in Egypt have also led to a foreign currency crunch, leading to a slowdown in imports and a backlog of commodities stuck at port.<sup>5</sup>

The World Bank forecasts “Egypt’s overall macroeconomic environment during FY2023/24 {July to June} is expected to be undermined by the concurrent global shocks and domestic macroeconomic imbalances, before starting to improve over the medium-term as the country continues to push ahead with stabilization and structural reforms.”<sup>6</sup>

*Table 1: Advantages and Challenges Facing U.S. Suppliers*

Advantages	Challenges
U.S. origin products continue to enjoy acceptance in the Egyptian market.	Egypt’s economic challenges have led to a considerable slowdown in imports as importers struggle to access foreign currency to make payments and consumers increasingly spend their monies on essentials.
U.S. products are associated with high quality.	U.S. exporters face competition from geographically advantaged European Union (EU) Member States. Egypt has a free trade agreement with the EU, which sometimes disadvantages U.S.-origin products.
Companies seek new ingredients, especially affordable unprocessed commodities.	Geographic proximity favors competing suppliers due higher shipping costs from the United States.
There is growing demand for high-value, highly processed ingredients.	Egypt often refers to EU standards, which do not coincide with U.S. or Codex standards.
Egyptian food processing is growing; it requires more imported food ingredients.	Importers often indicate a lack of U.S. supplier interest in or awareness of Egyptian market opportunities.
Egypt’s food processors and manufactures are exporting to the region. Within 500 kilometers, Egypt has access to 339 million consumers.	Import regulations are, at times, complex and non-transparent.

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., [Egypt 2023-0029: Economic Challenges Continue to Impact the Egyptian Market](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/1/11/egyptian-pound-has-lost-half-of-its-value-since-march) and <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/1/11/egyptian-pound-has-lost-half-of-its-value-since-march>

<sup>2</sup> <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/FP.CPI.TOTL.ZG?locations=EG>

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., <https://www.voanews.com/a/egypt-inflation-hits-record-high-of-nearly-40-/7262060.html>

<sup>4</sup> See, e.g., <https://en.amwalalghad.com/egypts-annual-headline-inflation-rate-reaches-35-8-in-october-capmas/>

<sup>5</sup> See, e.g., [Egypt’s Foreign Currency Crisis \(trade.gov\)](https://www.trade.gov/egypt-foreign-currency-crisis)

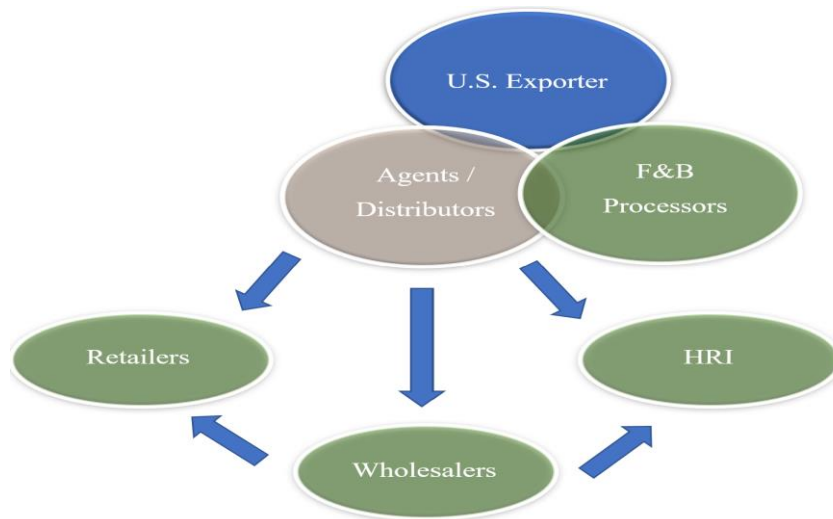
<sup>6</sup> <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/egypt/overview>

## SECTOIN II: EXPORTER BUSINESS TIPS

**Market Research:** U.S. exporters should identify an Egyptian importer or distributor, with whom they can build a relationship. Egyptian firms are best suited to navigate local regulations, understand distribution chains, and have relationships with retailers, food processors, hotels, restaurants and institutions (see, e.g., [GAIN EGYPT - Egypt Food Processing Ingredients 2021](#), [GAIN- Egypt Retail Foods Annual 2022](#), and [GAIN-EGYPT Food Service – Hotel Restaurant Institution Annual 2020](#)).

**Market Structure:** Egypt’s market structure is straightforward. Importers are food processors, manufacturers, and/or agents/distributors. Large companies will source food ingredients and products directly to lower prices, guarantee product flow, and ensure quality. Agents/distributors service the food processing and manufacturing sectors, comprised of numerous fragmented small- and medium-size companies. Smaller manufacturers purchase reduced quantities, do not import directly, pay in Egyptian pounds, and maintain small inventories.

*Chart 1: Market Structure*



**General Consumer Tastes and Trends:** The overall growth of consumption in local and imported consumer-oriented goods may be attributed to Egypt's time-pressed middle-class customers. Instant noodles and ready-to-eat frozen meals are popular time-saving dinner alternatives -- the ingredients for these items are imported. Packaged food products are becoming more widely available.

## SECTION III: IMPORT FOOD STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS AND IMPORT PROCEDURES

**Customs Clearance:** The Egyptian Parliament approved the [law number 1/2017](#) establishing the [National Food Safety Authority](#) (NFSA) in January 2017. The implementing regulation mandates that NFSA assumes full responsibility from other ministries, public institutions, government agencies, and municipalities for the regulation of foodstuffs. This law eliminates the previous patchwork of food-related regulation, which created confusion and inefficiencies for Egyptian exporters and importers. As of November 15, 2019; NFSA officially assumed responsibility for all ports’ inspections and

sampling/testing (see [GAIN EGYPT – FAIRS Egypt Country Annual 2023](#), and the [GAIN EGYPT – FAIRS Egypt Country Export Certificate 2023](#) reports).

Documents normally required for food imports include:

- Bill of lading
- Commercial invoice
- Certificate of origin (countersigned by the Chamber of Commerce and notarized by the Egyptian Embassy or Consulate in the country of origin)
- export/health certificate (FDA certificate of free sale, sanitary, phytosanitary)
- Packing List
- Certificate of Insurance
- Import Permit (issued to Egyptian importers)
- Payment guarantee (form 11) from a local bank advising payment transfer to the supplier

**Country Language Labeling Requirements:** The translation into Arabic of the foreign language label information is required. Inconsistency in the translation may result in a rejection. Arabic labeling can be printed on the package or be a permanent adhesive label. Products cannot show more than one date of manufacture or expiration. Label information cannot be erased, scratched, or altered in any way (see [GAIN EGYPT – FAIRS Egypt Country Annual 2023](#), and the [GAIN EGYPT – FAIRS Egypt Country Export Certificate 2023](#) reports).

**Tariffs and Free Trade Agreements (FTA):** Egypt provides information on tariff duty and VAT required to be paid on different commodities through the Egyptian Customs Authority. The website generates information according to the different codes of the commodity. The information includes trade agreements and arrangements with foreign governments that allow specific exemptions and tariff reduction. The website also provides information of trade agreements between Egypt and its trading partners. The website is available only in Arabic. Access to tariff information through the following portal address: <https://www.customs.gov.eg/Services/Inquiries/Tariff?searchquery>.

The United States does not have a free trade agreement (FTA) with Egypt. However, the 1999 U.S.-Egypt Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) serves as a forum for continuing dialogue for expanding fair and reciprocal trade and investment. Egypt has FTAs with the European Union, Turkey, the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA). Egypt is a member of the Greater Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA), composed of 18-member states. It is also a member of the Tripartite Free Trade Area; composed of member states and partners from COMESA, the East African Community, and the Southern African Development Community. In 2018, Egypt joined the African Continental Free Trade Area (AFCFTA), composed of 44 countries. The EU-Egypt FTA and other free trade agreements are eroding the competitiveness of some of U.S. products.

**Trademarks and Patents Market Research:** In June 2002, [Egypt passed the Intellectual Property Rights \(IPR\) Law 82/2002](#). The law describes copyright's legal rights and enforcement procedures, expedited trademark registration, and piracy protection (see [GAIN EGYPT – FAIRS Egypt Country Annual 2023](#)).

## SECTION IV: MARKET SECTOR STRUCTURE AND TRENDS

*Retail Food Sector:* The Egyptian food retail sector had mixed experiences over the course of 2022, with many experiencing supply chain disruptions during certain points of the year despite realizing sales growth (in part, because of higher prices for food products). Given the economic challenges in Egypt, more shelf space has been dedicated to local, lower cost goods. Euromonitor<sup>®</sup> International (Euromonitor<sup>®</sup>) reports Egyptian hypermarkets saw significant sales growth (24 percent) in 2022 as customers increasingly sought out economical, bulk purchases. Euromonitor<sup>®</sup> also reports convenience stores realized considerable (13 percent) growth in sales and look to continue their growth on the back of continued urbanization (including, the continued development of the New Administrative Capital in Egypt) and consumer preference for easy, quick shopping experiences. Online shopping is also expected to continue to grow as well, albeit slower than was initially seen after the peak of the coronavirus pandemic.

*Food Processing Sector:* After weathering the global coronavirus pandemic in 2020, the Egyptian food industry realized export growth in 2021. Given its price competitiveness, Egypt's exports of food increased by 0.5 percent (\$22 million) in 2022, totaling \$4.1 billion. Egypt's Arab neighbors were the leading export destinations, totaling \$2 billion, and representing 50 percent of Egypt's exports (with exports to Saudi Arabia showing the most growth).<sup>7</sup> Egyptian media extensively reported on the country establishing itself as a leading global exporter of frozen strawberries, dried onions, seeds, and oilseeds (e.g., palm), freshwater lobster, live yeasts, pickled/preserved olives, dates, preserved vegetables and fruits, processed cheese, and preserved tomatoes.<sup>8</sup>

*Hotels, Restaurants, Institutions Sectors:* According to Euromonitor<sup>®</sup>, full-service Egyptian food outlets grew by 10 percent in 2022 to total 3,836 outlets, while limited-service outlets grew by four percent to total 22,831 outlets. Euromonitor<sup>®</sup> adds full-service restaurants are facing increased competition from limited-service restaurants which can offer similarly diverse menus but with greater convenience and lower prices. Many Egyptian restaurants (particularly those located in or near lodging) are under pressure, both because of reduced consumer purchasing power and due to a decline in tourism -- which represents 15 percent of Egypt's GDP and is an important source of foreign exchange. Anecdotal reports indicate significant travel cancelations in the final quarter of 2023, after the start of the Israel-Hamas conflict.

Table 2: Egypt - Company Profiles and Top Retailers

Company	Activity	Remarks
<a href="#">Carrefour</a>	Supermarket/Hypermarket	Domestic & Imported Goods
<a href="#">Mansour Group</a>	Retail/Distribution	Domestic & Imported Goods
<a href="#">Seoudi</a>	Retail	Domestic & Imported Goods
<a href="#">On-the-Run</a>	Convenience Store	Domestic & Imported Goods
<a href="#">HyperOne</a>	Retail	Domestic & Imported Goods
<a href="#">Spinneys Egypt</a>	Retail	Domestic & Imported Goods
<a href="#">BIM</a>	Retail	Primarily Domestic Goods
<a href="#">Kazyon</a>	Retail	Primarily Domestic Goods

<sup>7</sup> See, e.g., [Egypt's exports of food industries rise to USD 4.12 billion in 2022-State Information Service \(sis.gov.eg\)](#)

<sup>8</sup> See, e.g., [الغد أموال | غذائية سلعة 13 تصدير في عالميا الأولى 9 المراكز تحتل مصر \(amwalalghad.com\)](#)

<a href="#">Gourmet Egypt</a>	Retail	Domestic & Imported Goods
<a href="#">Alfa Market</a>	Retail	Domestic & Imported Goods
<a href="#">Ayman Afandi</a>	Importer/Distributor	Marketing & Distribution
<a href="#">Al-Shaheen Co.</a>	Importer/Distributor	Marketing & Distribution
<a href="#">GMA</a>	Importer/Distributor	Marketing & Distribution
<a href="#">Amin Trading</a>	Importer/Distributor	Marketing & Distribution
<a href="#">Samo Trading</a>	Importer/ Distributor	Importer/Processor/Distributor

Source: FAS/Cairo Research & Euromonitor<sup>©</sup>

*Best High-Value Consumer-Oriented Product Prospects:* Beef products (including liver), condensed milk and cream, fats and oils derived from milk, tuna, coffee extracts, chocolate and other coca preparations, fresh grapes, fresh apples, meal preparations, shrimp, almonds, and herring are among the top consumer-oriented items imported from across the world. Beef liver, dairy products, and tree nuts are among the most popular consumer-oriented items imported from the United States. Sweets & snacks, healthy and nutritional meals, and pet foods are examples of U.S. items that are not widely available yet but have a high sales potential among Egypt's more wealthy consumers. Fresh apples (owing to high tariffs) and poultry parts (due to non-tariff obstacles) are examples of U.S. items that are not present because they encounter market access restrictions.

It is worth noting that the Egyptian government forbids the importation and/or use of food components and additives (oils, fats, and so on) originated from non-halal origins and/or those containing alcohol, as well as pork products and derivatives.

*Table 3. Comparison of the Value of Egyptian Imports of Agricultural Products in 2021 versus 2022, and the U.S. Share of Imports During These Periods*

HS	Product	Value in 2021			Value in 2022		
		World	U.S.	U.S. Share of Imports in 2021	World	U.S.	U.S. Share of Imports in 2022
	<b>Total - Agricultural and Related Products</b>	<b>\$17,516,075,469</b>	<b>\$2,081,117,151</b>	<b>11.88%</b>	<b>\$20,953,829,009</b>	<b>\$2,422,196,329</b>	<b>11.56%</b>
01	Live Animals	\$411,905,277	\$3,855,331	0.94%	\$738,360,018	\$2,189,502	0.30%
02	Meat And Edible Meat Offal	\$1,199,656,408	\$128,368,388	10.70%	\$1,440,213,039	\$136,655,075	9.49%
03	Fish And Crustaceans, Molluscs And Other Aquatic Invertebrates	\$550,175,525	\$95,323	0.02%	\$578,642,045	\$33,795	0.01%
04	Dairy Produce; Birds' Eggs; Natural Honey; Edible Products Of Animal Origin, Not Elsewhere specified or Included (Nesoi)	\$616,991,172	\$88,719,622	14.38%	\$775,549,159	\$60,677,048	7.82%
05	Products Of Animal Origin, Nesoi	\$9,157,473	\$1,156,639	12.63%	\$8,352,000	\$428,608	5.13%
06	Live Trees And Other Plants; Bulbs, Roots And The Like; Cut Flowers And Ornamental Foliage	\$11,409,633	\$108,675	0.95%	\$11,748,125	\$2,413	0.02%
07	Edible Vegetables And Certain Roots And Tubers	\$485,347,251	\$2,945,202	0.61%	\$605,237,221	\$1,382,819	0.23%
08	Edible Fruit And Nuts; Peel Of Citrus Fruit Or Melons	\$638,623,690	\$43,386,987	6.79%	\$676,641,412	\$42,732,555	6.32%
09	Coffee, Tea, Mate And Spices	\$528,554,841	\$360,609	0.07%	\$632,810,419	\$257,398	0.04%
10	Cereals	\$5,694,334,333	\$129,035,831	2.27%	\$7,036,992,611	\$37,097,007	0.53%
11	Milling Industry Products; Malt; Starches; Inulin; Wheat Gluten	\$37,483,455	\$97,557	0.26%	\$44,062,989	\$89,435	0.20%
12	Oil Seeds And Oleaginous Fruits; Miscellaneous Grains, Seeds And Fruits; Industrial Or Medicinal Plants; Straw And Fodder	\$2,434,123,021	\$1,458,443,962	59.92%	\$2,717,379,531	\$1,991,673,477	73.29%
13	Lac; Gums; Resins And Other Vegetable Saps And Extracts	\$18,205,259	\$396,931	2.18%	\$25,899,643	\$431,391	1.67%
14	Vegetable Plaiting Materials And Vegetable Products, Nesoi	\$1,252,867	\$0	0.00%	\$2,697,244	\$0	0.00%
15	Animal Or Vegetable Fats And Oils And Their Cleavage Products; Prepared Edible Fats; Animal Or Vegetable Waxes	\$1,327,179,161	\$43,545,315	3.28%	\$1,708,884,415	\$11,042,866	0.65%
16	Edible Preparations Of Meat, Fish, Crustaceans, Molluscs Or Other Aquatic Invertebrates	\$195,492,593	\$230	0.00%	\$275,854,325	\$4,926	0.00%
17	Sugars And Sugar Confectionary	\$227,030,975	\$2,098,669	0.92%	\$300,825,153	\$1,480,481	0.49%
18	Cocoa And Cocoa Preparations	\$152,787,967	\$372,424	0.24%	\$157,826,027	\$505,817	0.32%
19	Preparations Of Cereals, Flour, Starch Or Milk; Bakers' Wares	\$143,955,439	\$1,961,900	1.36%	\$190,387,643	\$1,803,569	0.95%
20	Preparations Of Vegetables, Fruit, Nuts, Or Other Parts Of Plants	\$82,411,394	\$7,282,127	8.84%	\$79,385,466	\$5,274,467	6.64%
21	Miscellaneous Edible Preparations	\$280,008,566	\$14,389,407	5.14%	\$330,562,577	\$14,410,808	4.36%
22	Beverages, Spirits And Vinegar	\$29,926,379	\$1,524,438	5.09%	\$60,183,610	\$1,668,902	2.77%
23	Residues And Waste From The Food Industries; Prepared Animal Feed	\$263,123,044	\$115,967,317	44.07%	\$319,033,445	\$75,462,956	23.65%

Source: Trade Data Monitor

## SECTION VI: KEY CONTACTS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

### **U.S. Embassy Cairo, Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) Office of Agricultural Affairs**

Mailing Address: 8 Kamal El Din Salah Street, Garden City, Cairo, Egypt  
Phone: +20-2-2797-2388 • Fax: +20-2-2796-3989 • [Agcairo@fas.usda.gov](mailto:Agcairo@fas.usda.gov)

### **Egyptian Hotel Association**

Mailing Address: 8, El Sad El Aly St. Dokki- Giza- Egypt  
Phone: +20-2-3748-8468 • Fax: +20-2-3748-5083  
Email: [eha@egyptianhotels.org](mailto:eha@egyptianhotels.org) • Website: <http://www.egyptianhotels.org/Default.aspx>

### **Egyptian Tourism Federation**

Mailing Address: 8, El Sad El Aly St. Dokki- Giza- Egypt  
Phone: +2 02 33378473 • Fax: +2 02 37490223 +2 02 33378450  
Email: [etaa@etaa-Egypt.org](mailto:etaa@etaa-Egypt.org) • Website: <http://www.etf.org.eg/>

### **Cairo Chamber of Commerce**

4 Falaki Square, Bab Ellok, Cairo Governorate  
Phone: +20-2-2795-8261 and +20-2-2795-8262 • Fax: +20-2-2796-3603 and +20-2-2794-4328  
Email: [info@cairochamber.org.eg](mailto:info@cairochamber.org.eg) • **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.** Website:  
[www.cairochamber.org.eg](http://www.cairochamber.org.eg)

### **General Organization for Export and Import Control**

Sheraton Al Matar, Heliopolis, Cairo  
Phone: +20-2-2266-9627  
Website: <http://www.goeic.gov.eg>

### **Egyptian Customs Authority**

Ministry of Finance Buildings, Tower 3, Ramsis Street Extension, Cairo Governorate  
Phone: +20-2-2342-2247  
Email: [info@customs.gov.eg](mailto:info@customs.gov.eg) • Website: <http://customs.gov.eg>

### **Chamber of Food Industries**

Mailing Address: 1195 Nile Corniche, Boulaq, Cairo Governorate  
Phone: +20-2-2574-8627 • Fax: +20-2-2574-8312 • Cellphone: +20-122-7825232 • +20-122-782-5233  
Email: [info@fei.org.eg](mailto:info@fei.org.eg) • Website: <http://www.mvegypt.com/egycfi/en>

### **Ministry of Agriculture**

Mailing Address: 9 El Gamaa Street, Giza, Egypt  
Phone: (+202) 3568-6373/ 1658 • Website: [www.agr-egypt.gov.eg/](http://www.agr-egypt.gov.eg/)

### **Ministry of Investment and International Cooperation**

Mailing Address: 3 Salah Salem Street, Cairo  
Mailing Address: 8 Adly Street – Downtown, Cairo  
Phone: +20-2-2405-5417 • +20-2-2391-0008 • +20-2-2390-8819 • +20-2-2393-5147  
Email: [ministeroffice@miic.gov.eg](mailto:ministeroffice@miic.gov.eg)



Data sources: [Euromonitor](#)<sup>®</sup>, [Trade Data Monitor](#), [USDA BICO](#), [USDA GATS](#), [CAPMAS](#), FAS/Cairo Market Research, etc.

**Attachments:**

No Attachments