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Report Highlights:

U.S. exporters enjoy a strong position in the Honduran market, in part thanks to the CAFTA-DR agreement. More than 95 percent of U.S. industrial and commercial goods can enter the country duty-free, with the remaining tariffs to be phased out from 2020 to 2025. The food processing industry, supermarkets, hotel, restaurant, and institutional (HRI) sector are developing rapidly and have further potential for using more imported U.S. products.

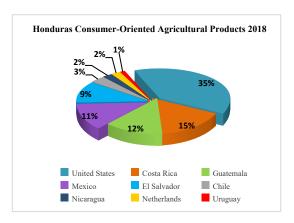
Market Fact Sheet: Honduras

Executive Summary

The United States is Honduras's main trading partner in total trade and in agricultural products. U.S. agricultural exports increased with the implementation of the Dominican Republic-Central America - Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR) in 2006. Most U.S. agricultural products have duty-free access to Honduras. In 2018, the total U.S. agricultural, fish, and forestry exports to Honduras was at \$716 million, a sixteen percent increase from 2017.

Imports of Consumer-Oriented Products

In 2018, Honduras imported about \$1 billion of consumer-oriented products from the world. The United States had a leading 35 percent (\$263 million) market share.



Food Processing Industry

The total market for food processing in Honduras has increased steadily over the past few years. The United States continues to be the largest supplier of food processing ingredients enjoying a high level of acceptance and reputation for high quality products for human and animal consumption.

Food Retail Industry

Honduras's retail food sector is by far the largest market for imported food. Retail sales of imported consumeroriented products are mostly in supermarkets, minimarkets and convenience stores. The two leading chains are La Colonia and Walmart.

Quick Facts CY 2018

Imports of Consumer-Oriented Products from U.S.: \$263 million.

List of Top 10 U.S. products in Honduras:

1) Soybean Meal 3) Wheat

2) Corn 4) Rice

5) Pork and Pork Products7) Prepared Food

6) Dairy Products 8) Wine & Beer

9) Poultry Meat & Prods.

10) Other Intermediate

Prod.

Top 6 Honduras Retailers:

1) El Corral 2) El Colonial 3) Junior 4) Los Andes 5) La Colonia 6) Walmart

- Honduras Agricultural Import from the U.S.: \$716 million
- Honduras Agricultural Imports from the world: \$2 billion
- Honduras Agricultural Exports to the world: \$3 billion

GDP/Population

Population (millions): 9.0 GDP per capita (USD): 2,662

Advantages	Challenges
CAFTA-DR eliminated most tariffs and other barriers to United States goods destined for the Central American market, protects U.S. investments and intellectual property, and creates more transparent rules and procedures for doing business.	Maintaining macro-economic stability and fostering an environment for investment.
products. U.S. products enjoy a	The current economic situation in the country limits purchasing power and customers are price sensitive.
Increases in infrastructure and facilities have permitted the	Occasionally restrictive sanitary and phytosanitary import requirements.

Data and Information Sources: BICO, Global Trade Atlas

SECTION I. MARKET OVERVIEW

The United States is the main trading partner with Honduras, both in terms of total trade and in agricultural products. The population of Honduras is 9 million people, of which 54% live in urban areas.

Honduras's economic activity is directly linked to the United States as follows:

- The United States accounted for 47 percent of total agricultural imports in 2018. Honduran agricultural exports to the United States were 38 percent of all Honduran exports in 2018. Exports have diversified from bananas and coffee to non-traditional products.
- Per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was \$2,662 in 2018, up 2.1 percent from 2017.
- Inflation was 4.3 percent in 2018, up 0.4 percent from 2017.
- Main economic sectors that contributed to GDP were: manufacturing (19 percent), financial activities (18.7 percent), agriculture (14.6 percent), and communications (10 percent).
- The agricultural sector was the largest employer of all sectors with 31 percent (1.3 million people) in 2018. Despite the recent economic diversification, there continues to be a large subsistence farmer population with few economic opportunities.
- The value of 2018 remittances was \$4.8 billion, up ten percent from 2017. Remittances accounted for 19.8 percent of GDP, more than coffee exports and tourism combined.
- U.S. foreign direct investment reached \$311 million in 2018.
- The United States is the largest investor in Honduras.
- The largest U.S. investments are in the garment assembly sector, tropical fruit production (bananas, melons, and pineapple), tourism, energy generation, shrimp farming, animal feed production, telecommunications, fuel distribution, cigar manufacturing, insurance, leasing, food processing, and furniture manufacturing.

U.S. exporters enjoy a strong position in the Honduran market thanks to the CAFTA-DR agreement. As of December 2018, U.S exports of agricultural and related products to Honduras had a 19.6 percent increase compared to December 2017.

U.S. agricultural exports are stable despite a 15 percent sales tax on all imports imposed by the local government in 2013. The top ten U.S. agricultural exports to Honduras are: soybean meal, corn, wheat, rice, pork and pork products, dairy products, prepared food, wine and beer, poultry meat and products, and other intermediate products.

Honduras's tariffs on most goods outside the Central American Common Market (CACM) are currently within the zero to 15 percent range. Under CAFTA-DR, more than 95 percent of U.S. industrial and commercial goods can enter the region duty-free, with the remaining tariffs to be phased out from 2020 to 2025. Pork and yellow corn will enter duty-free in 2020.

Under CAFTA-DR, Honduras recognizes the U.S. inspection services as equivalent. This equivalence eliminates the requirement of a certification by Honduras of the U.S. plant to export to the Honduran market.

The strengths, market opportunities, and challenges of U.S. suppliers are illustrated in the following table:

Advantages	Challenges
Close proximity to the United States allows	Direct competition from other Central
containerized cargo from gateway cities to be	American countries.
transported to Honduras in 2 to 3 days. With one of the	FTAs have been signed with the
lowest logistical costs in the region, Honduras also	Dominican Republic, Mexico, Chile,
serves as a distribution point for Central America.	Colombia, Panama, Canada,
	European Union and Taiwan.
CAFTA-DR eliminated most tariffs and other barriers	Maintaining macro-economic
to United States goods destined for the Central	stability and fostering an environment
American market, protects U.S. investments and	for investment.
intellectual property, and creates more transparent rules	
and procedures for doing business.	
Consumers have strong preferences for U.S.	The current economic situation in the
products. U.S. products enjoy a high-quality image	country limits purchasing power and
among Hondurans. Importers prefer trading with U.S.	customers are price sensitive.
exporters because of reliability.	
Among the leading sectors for U.S. exports and	Relative high duties on some
investment are: fast food outlets, casual dining	products that are not under the
restaurants, and the introduction of new U.S. hotel	CAFTA-DR agreement.
chains-including investment prime tourist areas-food	
processing and packaging equipment, processed foods,	
and general consumer goods.	
Increases in infrastructure and facilities have permitted	
the year-round availability of U.S. fruits such as apples,	phytosanitary import requirements.
grapes, and pears. Direct imports by warehouse outlets	
have diversified foods imports.	

SECTION II. EXPORTER BUSINESS TIPS

Local Business Customs and Trends

The Honduran government is generally open to foreign investment. Restrictions and performance requirements are limited. Relatively low labor costs, proximity to the U.S. market, and the Caribbean port (Puerto Cortés is the largest deep-water port in the region) make Honduras attractive to investors.

Under CAFTA-DR, U.S. investors enjoy, in most circumstances, the right to establish, acquire, and operate investments in Honduras on an equal footing with local investors. In the investment chapter of CAFTA-DR, Honduras committed to provide a higher level of protection for U.S. investors than under the 2001 Bilateral Investment Treaty. Exporters who offer attractive financing terms on sales have the best chance of gaining market share.

As in most Latin American countries, a good personal relationship with prospective customers is required in order to penetrate the market. While it may take a little longer to establish a business relationship than is customary in the United States, the investment in time can pay off in long-lasting and mutually profitable alliances. Although a U.S. firm may export directly to Honduran companies, U.S. suppliers are strongly recommended to have a local representative or a distributor who can personally travel to Honduras.

For further information please refer to the Honduras Country Commercial Guide: https://www.export.gov/article?series=a0pt0000000PAtwAAG&type=Country Commercial kay

Consumer Tastes and Trends

Honduran preference for U.S. products has increased steadily over the years. The number of U.S. franchises and subsidiaries or affiliates operating in Honduras has grown rapidly. About 215 U.S. firms now operate in Honduras; 34 of these firms are U.S. fast-food and casual restaurants with more than 345 establishments in the country. In addition, Honduran consumers traditionally prefer the quality, convenience, and value of U.S. products. Some companies are combining Honduran and American foods as an attractive tool in restaurants.

SECTION III.

IMPORT FOOD STANDARDS & REGULATIONS AND IMPORT PROCEDURES

The institutions responsible for food matters are the Secretariat of Agriculture and Livestock (SAG) and the Sanitary Regulatory Agency (ARSA). The National Plant, Animal Health and Food Safety Service (SENASA) is SAG's regulatory agency. SENASA establishes regulations, procedures, and oversees compliance regarding plant, animal health, and the food safety of agricultural products imported and exported. SENASA issues import permits for plant, animal, processed, and consumer ready food products and inputs used in food processing that enter Honduras. The Honduran Customs Authority (DARA) oversees fiscal and administrative harmonization of customs processes in Honduras. DARA collects customs taxes and looks for voluntary compliance of customs obligations, in order to reduce tax fraud through security controls.

In 2017, the Honduran Government created ARSA. ARSA issues product sanitary registration, licenses, and other sanitary authorizations for food and beverages, medicines, natural products, cosmetics, medical devices and hygiene products. ARSA oversees supervision, review, control surveillance and inspection of processed products that are sold to consumers at the retail and wholesale levels.

The standards and import regulations of the above mentioned institutions are found in the following GAIN reports for Honduras: Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards (FAIRS) Country Report Number HO1905, and FAIRS Export Certificate Number HO1906.

Customs Clearance

SENASA delegated the responsibility of all quarantine inspections and treatments of agricultural imports to the International Regional Organization for Plant and Animal Health (OIRSA). OIRSA's Plant and Animal Protection Service (SEPA) inspectors are located at the borders, ports, and airports. SEPA follows SENASA's instructions to enforce the import requirements of raw animal and plant products, processed and consumer ready foods, as well as inputs used in food processing.

SEPA and DARA inspectors are involved in conducting the customs clearance of imports of food and agricultural products at the port of entry by reviewing:

- Compliance of requirements indicated on the import permit approved by SENASA.
- Consistency of information across all original documents submitted in the Import Permit, Phyto or Zoosanitary Export Certificate, Certificate of Origin, Commercial Invoice, Bill of Lading and Packing List such as: names of importer, exporter, shipment's content, amounts, product description, and country of origin and point of shipping.
- Customs clearance is usually granted within a short period of time; however, depending on the work load at the port and whether or not all of SENASA's requirements are complete, the time period can range from a few hours to five days.

For further information, please see the Honduran GAIN reports: Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards (FAIRS) Country Report Number HO1905, and FAIRS Export Certificate Number HO1906 at www.fas.usda.gov or contact FAS Tegucigalpa at agtegucigalpa@usda.gov.

Documents Required for Imported Food

SENASA requires the following documents: Import permit, Phyto or Zoosanitary Export Certificate, Certificate of Origin and Commercial Invoice.

Import permit: The importer can obtain the application at the SENASA Office. The permit is applied to one shipment; which could include up to ten products. For further information please refer to www.senasa.gob.hn

Phyto or Zoosanitary Certificates: SENASA requires that the certificates be filled out completely with the name, date and signature of the official issuing the certificate and the Additional Declarations requested in the import permit.

Certificate of Origin: The certificate must clearly show that the product originated in the United States. Under CAFTA-DR, the certificate must be signed by the exporter, the importer or the producer;

and the signatory must clearly be a business located in a treaty country. This is a requirement to demonstrate eligibility for preferential tariff treatment.

For further information please see the Honduras GAIN Report: Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards (FAIRS) Export Certificate Number HO1906 at www.fas.usda.gov

Labeling Requirements:

Production, Expiration Date and Lot number: This information should appear in Spanish on the shipping carton(s). The dates must be provided in the Day/Month/Year format (DD/MM/YYYY). The compliance that the products have stamped the production and expiration dates is closely inspected at the ports of entry.

Tariffs and FTAs:

Honduras's tariffs on most goods outside the Central American Common Market (CACM) are currently within the zero to 15 percent range. Under CAFTA-DR, more than 95 percent of U.S. industrial and commercial goods can enter the region duty-free, with the remaining tariffs to be phased out from 2020 to 2025. Pork and yellow corn will enter duty-free in 2020. Enhanced by increased market access, U.S. agricultural exports over the past decade to Honduras have increased both in terms of value and market share.

Honduras recognizes the U.S. inspection services as equivalent. This equivalence eliminates the requirement of a certification by Honduras of the U.S. plant to export to the Honduran market, which facilitates trade.

Trademarks and Patents:

As member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), Honduras accepted the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) standard. Trademarks must be registered with the Economic Development Secretariat. Trademark registration are valid for 10 years starting from the registration date.

For further information please refer to the Honduras Country Commercial Guide: https://www.export.gov/article?series=a0pt0000000PAtwAAG&type=Country_Commercial_kav

SECTION IV. MARKET SECTOR STRUCTURE AND TRENDS

Entry Strategy

U.S. exporters should keep in mind the relatively small size of the Honduran market and the high elasticity of demand for consumer products when devising marketing strategies. Price is one of the most important elements for Hondurans. In many cases, purchasers buy from abroad if they feel that the cost of imports available in the local market is too high. U.S. exporters should carefully analyze both their cost and market approaches when making pricing decisions.

U.S. exporters who offer attractive financing terms on sales to Honduran traders have the best chances of gaining market share. This is particularly true for large-scale projects. It is important to emphasize,

however, that international firms must exercise due caution when granting credit to Honduran trading partners. U.S. firms should investigate the creditworthiness and reputation of potential partners before granting credit.

Under CAFTA-DR, tariffs on a wide range of consumer-oriented products for U.S. products were eliminated, and market demand for U.S. products in this sector looks promising. Consumer-oriented products have witnessed significant increases in the past few years.

Food Retail Market

Honduras's retail food sector is by far the largest market for imported food. Retail sales of imported consumer-oriented products are conducted mostly by supermarkets, mini-markets, and convenience stores. The supermarket retailing industry is growing rapidly. Supermarkets have opened stores in various medium and large urban locations and most populated cities in the country. Most of the regularly employed population takes advantage of promotions and buys their food at these supermarkets. Many supermarket chains are also expanding, remodeling, and modernizing.

Easter, besides being a religious holiday and "Semana Morazanica" a Honduras national holiday are also "vacation" time for the vast majority of Hondurans. These vacation periods begin well before and extends beyond the two-three days holidays. Christmas gifts baskets are also increasingly popular. In recent years, it has become common to include a high percentage of U.S. products in these baskets. Most commonly included are traditional favorites such as candy, nuts, whiskey, and wines. Easter, Semana Morazanica, Christmas, and Mother's Day are the main peaks for retail sales. By law, in June and December of every year, the government and private sector must provide a bonus to their employees. This bonus is equivalent to a month's salary. Many families make special purchases or buy high quality products at this time.

Various marketing approaches could be developed for the different sectors. It is always important to appoint a local distributor in Honduras who can provide a good market presence. However, many U.S. suppliers are discouraged by small initial volumes, and do not provide the needed support. U.S. exporters looking to establish and maintain a share of the market should be willing to go the extra mile in developing sales from the ground up and servicing their growing markets. They should work with their customers to satisfy local manufacturing and expiration date requirements and provide their customers with competitive pricing, credit alternatives, catalogs, and samples to test the market. They should also be willing to consider sharing advertising costs for launching new brands. Moreover, they should also be willing to provide technical and sales support, as well as training in various areas such as category management, merchandising, and product handling. There are franchises owned by the same company, which make it easier to approach a wide market.

For more information about Food Retail Report, please visit latest version: https://gain.fas.usda.gov/#/search

Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Sector

The tourism industry in Honduras has experienced substantial growth supported by the interest of the Government of Honduras (GOH) and the private sector in developing the industry. Whether for interest of cultural and historic attractions, sporting activities or just relaxation; tourism plays a significant role in nearly all of the Central American countries economies, something which has stimulated growth in the hotel and restaurant industries. U.S food products geared toward the hotel, restaurant, and institutional (HRI) sector are therefore increasing in demand for high quality products.

The hotel industry is rapidly expanding into urban and rural tourism. Among the new projects are those with bungalow-type resorts, ecological type hotels and resorts, apartment-hotels, cabins, hostels, and inns. Convention traffic is also increasing, and the restaurant industry is growing at an even faster rate. Many high-end restaurants, fast-food chains, and franchises are opening due to attractive incentives. Honduras has the largest number of U.S. fast food and casual dining franchises in Central America with more than 345 establishments in two mayor cities. The increase of modern shopping malls and commercial centers has prompted the establishment of an increasing number of restaurants as well. The U.S. franchises are in need of raw materials, and the local market cannot always fulfill their needs. Also, some of the franchise agreements require U.S. raw materials as part of the contract.

For more information about Hotel, Restaurant & Institutional Report, please visit latest version: https://gain.fas.usda.gov/#/search

Honduras is also carrying out projects to enhance tourism which will provide opportunities for U.S. food products in a high end resort sector. The Tela Bay project is a major priority in the country's tourism development strategy. The property covers 312 hectares of land with beach, forest, and lagoon access. The project already has an international hotel with an eighteen-hole championship golf course. The total area of the Tela Bay project is: 250 four-star rooms, 150 five-star rooms, and 437 residential units. Additional amenities include a retail village, an equestrian club, and private beach clubs. Areas have also been set aside for recreational activities, administration, and public services.

Food Processing Sector

The total market for food processing in Honduras has increased steadily over the past few years. The United States continues to be the largest supplier of food processing ingredients enjoying a high level of acceptance and reputation for high quality products for human and animal consumption.

Honduran exporters are pursuing expansion plans to increase production and improve the quality of their exports, particularly non-traditional agricultural products such as melons, watermelons, oriental vegetables, okra, winter vegetables, shrimp, jalapeno peppers, and flowers. With CAFTA-DR, producers are looking for opportunities to export new products to the U.S. market. More companies are offering processed products such as tortillas, processed wheat, soy or oats, dehydrated fruits and vegetables.

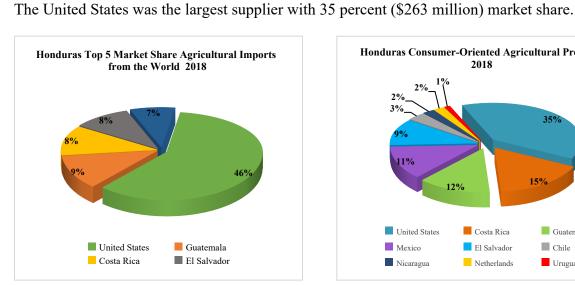
Central American Customs Union (CACU) members agreed that for products produced or processed in their countries, when a product obtains a Sanitary Registration Number (SRN) in a CACU country, it

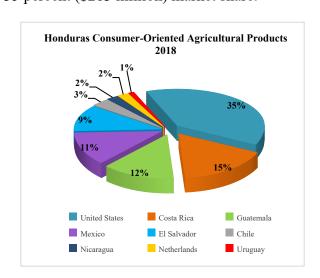
does not need to be registered in another. Products produced in the United States are not eligible for the registration exemption. However, it is important to note that the origin of the product is considered to be CACU if the product is processed in a CACU country, even if the raw material is not from a CACU member country.

For more information about Food Processing Report, please visit: https://gain.fas.usda.gov/#/search

Competitive Situation

The main trade competitors in agricultural products for the United States are Guatemala, Costa Rica, El Salvador and Mexico. The United States has a leading 46 percent market share. In 2018, Honduras imported about \$1 billion of consumer-oriented agricultural products from the world.





Sources: BICO, Global Trade Atlas

SECTION V. AGRICULTURAL and FOOD IMPORTS

Agricultural and Food Imports Statistics (in millions of dollars)

Product	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Consumer Oriented Total	205	215	222	235	264
Bulk Total	258	205	258	203	263
Intermediate Total	172	160	162	154	181
Agricultural Related Products	10	7	7	8	8
Grand Total	645	587	649	599	716

Sources: BICO, U.S. Census Bureau Trade Data, United Nations Commodity Trade Statistics

Five Best Consumer-Oriented Product Prospects Categories (in thousands of dollars)

Product Category	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Food Preparations	49,773	65,951	58,592	48,532	57,397
Processed/Prepared Dairy	20,137	17,790	12,536	21,637	38,168
Products					
Beer & Wine	4,738	6,248	8,390	14,239	25,882
Fats & Oils	7,061	13,420	14,780	17,153	16,028
Condiments and Sauces	11,499	12,100	12,565	12,010	12,885
Other Processed Food Total	54,089	54,290	60,851	57,195	51,654
Grand Total	147,297	169,799	167,715	170,766	202,014

Sources: BICO, U.S. Census Bureau Trade Data, United Nations Commodity Trade Statistics For detailed reports, please visit: www.fas.usda.gov/gats/BicoReport.aspx?type=country

SECTION VI. KEY CONTACTS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

Secretariat of Agriculture and Livestock (SAG):

National Plant, Animal Health and Food Safety Service (SENASA)

Name: Dr. Juan Ramón Velásquez

Title: General Director

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Sanitary Regulations Agency (ARSA):

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National Plant, Animal Health and Food Safety Service (SENASA)

Animal Health Sub-Directorate:

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Title: Animal Health Sub-Director

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Post Information

If you have any questions regarding this report or need assistance exporting to Honduras, please contact the USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) at the following addresses:

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service, U.S. Embassy

Avenida La Paz, Tegucigalpa, Honduras Phone: (504) 2236-9320, Ext. 4544, 4354

Fax: (504) 2236-8342

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Attachments:

No Attachments