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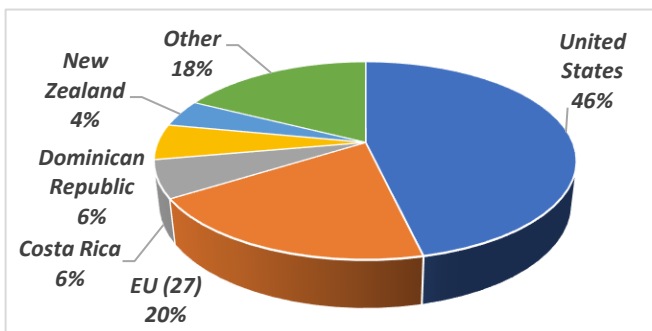
Report Highlights:

The hotel, restaurant, and institutional (HRI) sector in Jamaica continues to thrive, driven by a rapidly expanding tourism sector. In 2023, global agricultural exports to Jamaica slightly exceeded \$1 billion with the United States supplying \$606 million of that total. U.S. consumer-oriented products constituted the largest category of agricultural exports to the Caribbean Island, totaling \$282 million, or 46.5 percent market share. While opportunities exist for growth in consumer-oriented exports, particularly within the HRI sector, local government regulations continue to restrict some U.S. exports, such as pork and pork products.

Executive Summary

Jamaica is an upper middle-income country, with a gross domestic product (GDP) of US \$19 billion in 2023. Although Jamaica has seen strong macroeconomic management, the World Bank considers Jamaica to be one of the slowest-growing economies in Latin America and the Caribbean. Tourism and agriculture are important drivers of the country's economy, contributing approximately 30 percent and 8 percent respectively to GDP

The country's major agricultural products are sugarcane, bananas, coffee, citrus, cocoa, pimento, potatoes, onions, and vegetables. The United States is Jamaica's main trading partner, supplying consumer-oriented products as well as bulk and intermediate agricultural products.



Global Consumer-Oriented Exports to Jamaica

Figure 1: Top exporters of consumer-oriented products to Jamaica

Food Retail Industry

The Jamaican retail sector continues to modernize and expand, generating increasing sales of a wide range of U.S. food and beverages. Approximately 40 percent of total food imports flow through retail outlets such as supermarkets, convenience stores, and small "mom-and-pop" shops.

Food Processing Industry

Jamaica's food processing sector is relatively underdeveloped and most of the ingredients used in the food industry are imported directly by food processors. Approximately 30 percent of the raw materials and food ingredients used by local food processors are obtained from local suppliers and 70 percent from imports.

Food Service Industry

The food service industry consists of restaurants, shops, catering companies and fast-food establishments, which have flourished in recent years. Roughly 60 percent of imported food goes to this subsector. The Government's strong and consistent investments in the tourism sector have significantly propelled its growth.

Quick Facts CY 2023

Imports of Consumer-Oriented Products (US \$ 1,332 million)

List of Top 10 Growth Products

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Eggs and Products | 6. Beef & Beef Products |
| 2. Dairy Products | 7. Fruits & Vegetable Juices |
| 3. Bakery goods, cereal, pasta | 8. Distilled Spirits |
| 4. Food Preparations | 9. Condiments & Sauces |
| 5. Poultry Meats & Products | 10. Non-Alcoholic Bev. |

Food Industry by Channels (U.S. million)

Retail Food Industry	\$150
Food Service-HRI	\$270
Food Processing	\$190
Food and Agriculture Exports	\$ 298

Top 10 Retailers (by sales)

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Progressive Grocers | 6. Sampars Cash & Carry |
| 2. Hi-Lo Food Stores | 7. General Foods |
| 3. PriceSmart | 8. Master Mac Food Store |
| 4. Megamart | 9. Spanish Grain Store |
| 5. Everything Fresh | 10. Super Plus Food Stores |

GDP/Population

Population (millions):	\$2.826
GDP (billions USD):	\$19.42
GDP per capita (USD):	\$6,835

Sources: USDA/GATS; Trade Data Monitor; Statistical Institute of Jamaica; World Bank; Ministry of Tourism- Jamaica; Planning Institute of Jamaica; Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association; Jamaica Tourist Board

Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats

Strengths	Weaknesses
Proximity to the United States	Higher prices for some U.S products compared to competitors
Strong demand for U.S products	
Opportunities	Threats
Seasonality of domestic production	Competition from EU and CARICOM trade agreements
Growth in Jamaica's tourism sector	Overly strict import requirements that protect local industry

SECTION 1: Market Summary

Jamaica is one of the world's leading island travel destinations, boasting a thriving tourism sector and welcoming millions of visitors to the island nation each year. Ministry of Tourism official records indicate that more than four million tourists visited the country in 2023, representing a 25.5 percent year over year increase compared to 2022. Jamaica imported just over \$1 billion of food in 2023, with United States as the largest agricultural trade partner.

With plans afoot to expand the sector by over 20,000 rooms over the next five to ten years, the HRI sector continues to flourish. In fact, the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN) reports that the HRI industry grew by 7.6 percent, in 2023. In addition, Jamaica's proximity to the United States and the exposure of Jamaicans to U.S. culture encourages the over 2.8 million citizens to buy and consume U.S. agricultural products.

Jamaican importers and distributors have a longstanding trade relationship with the United States, which has a reputation for high-quality products coupled with superior quality. Table 1 highlights some of the primary advantages and challenges facing U.S. exporters in servicing the Jamaican market.

Table 1: Advantages and challenges for U.S. Exporters in the Jamaican Market

Advantages	Challenges
Geographical proximity increases the ease of transporting products to Jamaica.	The population is relatively small, therefore quantities for some products may be small and may not fill a shipping container.
Proximity of Jamaica to the United States and exposure to U.S. culture	Restriction on the imports of some products such as pork, poultry and produce
Seasonality of domestic food production coupled with inconsistent quality and quantity of local food products, creates opportunities for imports to fill these gaps	The lack of a vibrant economy limits the disposable income of the Jamaican consumer and hence the demand for U.S products
U.S. fast-food franchises make up 50% of Jamaica's fast-food subsector which continues to expand.	Trade agreement between the Caribbean and the EU, which has facilitated increased competition from Europe
Growth of Jamaica's tourism sector which fuels the expansion of the HRI industry.	
Most tourists who visit Jamaica are from the United States which creates a demand for U.S. food products.	Higher prices for U.S products (e.g. wines, beers, and frozen French fries) have resulted in U.S. products losing market share to cheaper products from the EU, Canada and Latin America.

SECTION II: Road Map for Market Entry

a) *Entry Strategy*

Post recommends that U.S. exporters who wish to enter the Jamaican market perform in-depth market research to identify potential niches and develop effective marketing plans. As part of

this approach, U.S. exporters should contact local importers and distributors who serve as principal intermediaries between exporters (suppliers) and local consumers (buyers). The local importers and distributors usually have wide access to the food and beverage markets, possess warehouses, and frequently manage a relatively large inventory.

The following tips should be noted:

- Jamaicans prefer exclusive distribution agreements; however, U.S. exporters can work with one or more importers provided the market segment for each importer is properly identified.
- Post recommends that U.S. exporters require payment of goods via letter of credit, especially for initial transactions. U.S. exporters may extend credit to importers after conducting a thorough background and credit investigation, and after payment habits have been proven.
- Some Jamaican importers maintain purchasing offices in the United States and consolidate shipments in Florida or Georgia.
- Jamaica's business community values trust and personal relationships. U.S. exporters should maintain close contact with Jamaican counterparts (or partners). Jamaican importers view regular market visits favorably and regard it as a show of support.
- Jamaican consumers generally prefer smaller package sizes.
- Jamaica follows international standards (e.g. Codex Alimentarius) and generally accepts U.S. standards for food and agricultural products.
- U.S. exporters should verify that their products are eligible for entry into Jamaica before shipping as some products are prohibited.
- Jamaican regulatory agencies must grant sanitary or phytosanitary certificates addressing the Government of Jamaica requirements. U.S regulatory authorities must also issue the relevant documents prior to products arriving at Jamaican ports.
- For additional information about requirements for exporting food to Jamaica, please review the [Jamaica FAIRS Country¹](#) and [Jamaica FAIRS Export Certificate²](#) reports.

b) *Market Structure*

Jamaica's HRI food service sector remains vibrant in light of growing foreign visitor tourism as well as locals' increased visits to restaurants, which include fast food chains. Approximately 60 percent of food imported goes directly to this sector, with the United States having a 45 percent market share. The HRI food service sector is also characterized by importers and distributors who procure goods based on demand from the sector. Based on the clientele, some importers and distributors may carry products, such as meats, peas, beans, fresh fruits and vegetables, fruit and vegetable juices, and alcoholic beverages. However, there are a few larger importers who stock an extensive range of products. The Government of Jamaica, through the Ministry of

¹ <https://fas.usda.gov/data/jamaica-fairs-country-report-annual>

² <https://fas.usda.gov/data/jamaica-fairs-export-certificate-report-annual>

Agriculture, Fisheries and Mining and agricultural societies, has encouraged the consumption of local food, through the [Eat Jamaican](#)³ campaign, which has been a longstanding promotion. As such, local foods are preferred, and importation is used to fill the gap when supplies are low or unavailable. Despite the struggling economy and challenges with SPS requirements and enforcement, many opportunities still exist for U.S. exports of food and beverages.

c) *Distribution*

Most Jamaican importers ship products to Jamaica. Generally, industry actors utilize ports in South Florida or Georgia, United States to consolidate purchases, which are shipped to warehouses in Kingston or Montego Bay. The frequency of shipping depends on the quantity and category of the product. Players within the HRI sector in Jamaica, generally purchase through an importer or distributor. There are however a few larger hotel and resort chains who complete group purchases for themselves. Importers and distributors in Jamaica also sell to wholesalers, retailers, and restaurants.

Distribution channel in HRI sector

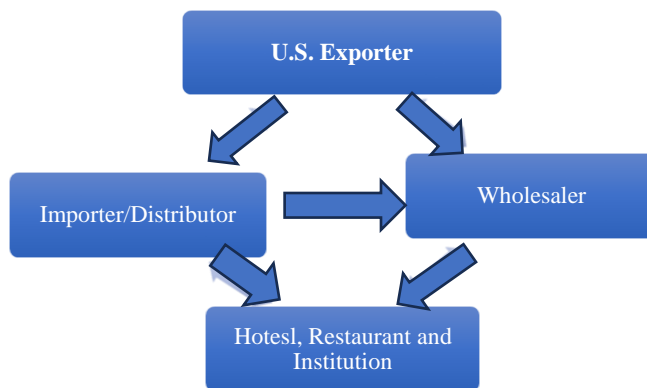


Figure 2: Chart showing the Distribution Channel in HRI sector.

d) *Sub-sector profiles.*

• *Hotels and Resorts:*

Hotels and resorts account for the largest share of food imports to Jamaica. This is due to the robust tourism industry that seeks to provide premium products for international visitors, who are primarily from the United States. The average room capacity grew by 4.7%, from 23,243 in 2022 to 24,346 rooms in 2023. The Government of Jamaica also plans to add roughly 20,000 rooms within the medium to long term. This planned expansion creates favorable conditions for food imports from the United States since more than 65 percent of visitors to Jamaica are Americans. Gross visitor expenditure in 2023 totaled approximately US\$4.3 billion, growing by 19.2 percent over the previous year.

³ https://jis.gov.jm/radio_programs/eat-jamaican-campaign/

- Restaurants:*
 Fast-food chains dominate the Jamaica restaurant subsector. Over the last five years, quick service restaurants have accounted for more than 50 percent of the subsector, with U.S. fast food franchises, such as KFC, Popeyes, Subway, Wendy’s and TGI Friday’s leading the way. Local restaurants are also expanding, competing with these U.S. food brands. Meanwhile, fine dining restaurants continue with a seat at the table, particularly in Kingston, Ocho Rios, and Montego Bay – two of which are major resort towns.
- Institutions:*
 This subsector, which includes schools, hospitals, government offices and business centers, does not account for a huge portion of food imports. Generally, domestic production satisfies the demand from this subsector.

SECTION III: Competition

Domestic production remains the chief competition to U.S. food and beverage products within the HRI sector. Many hotels and restaurants, including fast food franchises, buy beef, chicken, pork and fruits and vegetables locally. Certain imported items require permits and at times face stringent import restrictions.

Major exporters of consumer-oriented products to Jamaica-2023

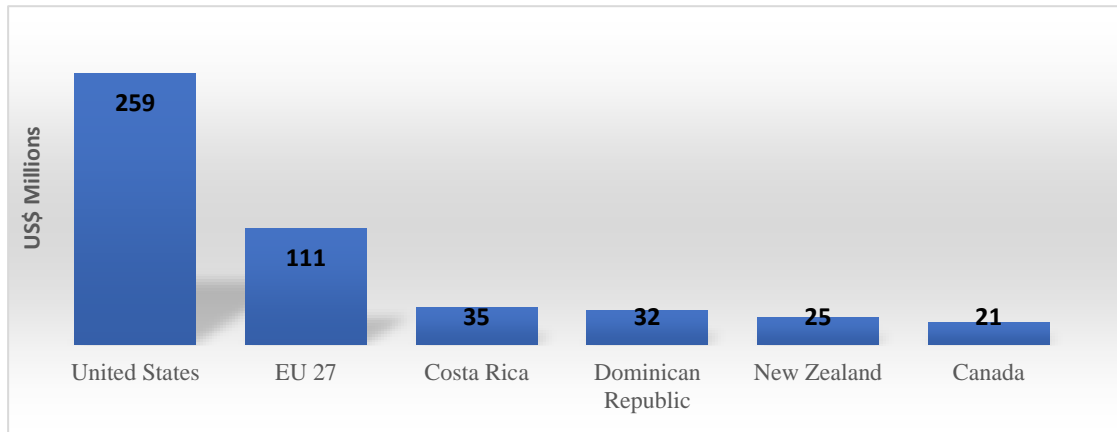


Figure 3: Chart showing major exporters of consumer-oriented products to Jamaica-2023
 Source: Trade Data Monitor

Pork: Currently the United States does not have market access to Jamaica for fresh and frozen pork cuts. Only hermetically sealed products are allowed from the United States; meanwhile, Canada and Ireland enjoy full market access, but recently have only been permitted to export certain cuts, such as bellies and tails. Although the country is self-sufficient in most pork cuts, industry sources report that pork demand outweighs supplies; in addition, quality and quantity are inconsistent. This reduces the use of pork on menus within the sector.

Poultry: Domestic production of poultry generally satisfies the demand within the HRI sector and local requirements. United States exports chicken backs and necks which are mainly for retail. Jamaica continues to restrict the imports of other poultry and poultry products.

Beef: Global exports of beef to Jamaica in 2023 topped \$56 million with the United States supplying \$20 million of total exports. U.S. competitors in beef to Jamaica are Australia, Costa Rica, and Brazil. Beef products, such as steak-house cuts and trimmings are important in the sector. According to industry players, local beef does not have consistent steakhouse quality. Furthermore, local authorities impose high tariffs on beef and beef product imports.

Seafood: Domestic production of seafood generally satisfies the Jamaican HRI market with some imports to fill gaps. In 2023, the top three trade partners of seafood to Jamaica were Norway, Canada and Chile exporting, \$23 million, \$16 million and \$11 million respectively. The United States only supplied \$6 million over the same period.

Cheese: Total cheese exports to Jamaica in 2023 valued \$30 million. Of those sales, the United States contributed 43 percent. New Zealand stood as the biggest exporter, supplying 47 percent to this market. Cheese is still a favorite in many dishes and on menus throughout the HRI sector, including quick-service restaurants, which are a growing subsector.

Potatoes: Jamaica is self-sufficient in the local production of fresh potatoes. However, products such as French fries are popular on menus, especially in quick service restaurants, and are generally supplied by imports. In 2023, the United States exported \$1.2 million of French fries. Shipments from other trade partners, such as the European Union (EU) and Canada totaled \$25.9 million and \$1.8 million respectively.

Wheat Products: The United States holds over 90 percent of the local market for wheat exports to Jamaica. Flour processed by local mills is used to produce staple goods, such as bread, crackers, cakes, and other bakery items. These products are sold throughout both retail and HRI sectors. U.S. wheat shipments to Jamaica in 2023 totaled roughly \$55.9 million, while baked goods, cereals, and pasta to Jamaica totaled \$31 million. Canada, the other main supplier in 2023, exported \$8.8 million worth of wheat to the country over the same period.

Wine and Other Alcoholic Beverages: In 2023, U.S. wine exports to Jamaica reached \$6.2 million, marking the highest recorded figure from the United States. The main U.S. competitors in the local wine market are the EU, Chile, Australia and the United Kingdom.

Other Products: There is a wide range of imported products used by the retail and HRI sectors in addition to local supplies. These include fruits and vegetables, such as apples, pears, plums and grapes, which are not cultivated locally due to tropical climate conditions. Fresh and processed vegetables are also important products, highly sought by the food service industry. The United States remains a leader in supplying these products locally in addition to other products, such as condiments, tree nuts, and confectionery.

SECTION IV: Best Product Prospects

Products present in the market with food sales potential.

As Jamaica continues to expand its tourism sector, it is likely that the HRI sector will also expand to meet growing demand. Products such as red meats (e.g. steak), eggs and egg products, dairy products (e.g. yogurts, cheeses, sour cream), bake goods, breakfast cereals, vegetables (frozen, French fries, corn), tree nuts (e.g. almond, hazelnut, cashew) remain key products used in the food service industry. These products have good market potential.

Table 2: Top U.S. Consumer-Oriented Product Exports to Jamaica 2021-2023

Products	Value in Millions		
	2021	2022	2023
Eggs and Products	29.3	41	43.6
Dairy Products	26.6	27	31.3
Bakery goods, cereal & pasta	22.4	31.7	31.5
Food Preparations	18.3	18.8	26.9
Poultry Meats & Products, (ex. eggs)	19	26.2	25.3
Beef & Beef Products	12.1	25	19.7
Fruit & Vegetable Juices	12	13.5	16.5
Distilled Spirits	7.1	17	15.8
Condiments and Sauces	7.6	10.9	12.8
Non-Alcoholic Beverages (ex. juice)	6.3	11.4	10

Source: USDA/GATS

Products not present in the market with good sales potential

Fresh and frozen pork products from the United States are currently not present in Jamaica due to significant government restrictions. However, these products are crucial to the local food service industry, especially in international hotel chains that feature standard brand menus. Specific items, such as pork cuts, prosciutto, pepperoni and bacon hold good sales potential in the Jamaica market.

SECTION V: Key Contacts and Further Information

Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS/USDA)

United States Embassy in Kingston

142 Old Hope Road

Kingston 6

Jamaica

Telephone: 876-702-6506

Email: agkingston@usda.gov

Website: <https://www.fas.usda.gov/>

Ministry of Tourism

64 Knutsford Boulevard

Kingston 5

Jamaica

Telephone: 876-920-4926

Website: <https://www.mot.gov.jm/>

Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN)

7 Cecelio Avenue

Kingston 10

Jamaica

Telephone: 876-630-1600

Website: <https://statinja.gov.jm/>

Planning Institute of Jamaica

6 Oxford Road

Kingston 5

Jamaica

Telephone: 876-960-9339

Website: <https://www.pioj.gov.jm/>

Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association

2 Ardene Road,

Kingston 10

Jamaica.

Website: <https://jhta.org/>

Jamaica Tourist Board

64 Knutsford Boulevard

Kingston 5

Jamaica

Telephone: 876-929-9200-19

Website: <https://www.visitjamaica.com/>

Attachments:

No Attachments