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Costa Rica

Market Development Reports

Meal Solutions' Brief

2007

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Report Highlights:

Some Costa Rica supermarket chains are developing the meal solution section oriented to workers who visit them in search of food for breakfast and lunch during their working hours as well as to individuals who live alone or couples who both work outside their homes.

Includes PSD Changes: No
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Unscheduled Report
San Jose [CS1]
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This year 2007, two of the Costa Rica's supermarket chains, Auto Mercado and Wal-Mart will expand their supply of meal solutions due to the growth of this food product category. This sector has an excellent demand because of consumers' lack of time to prepare food at home.

Other grocery chains that apply this format are Price Smart, Fresh Market and A.M./P.M. convenience stores. They carry a variety of meal solutions such as meats, rice, salads, sandwiches, sushi, desserts, and some side dishes to make a nice typical breakfast.

The meal solutions market is oriented to individuals who live alone or couples who both work outside their homes. This sector also includes professionals and workers from the suburbs who visit supermarkets in search of food for breakfast and lunch during their working hours.

During 2006, Auto Mercado estimates in US\$ 2.0 million its sales of its meal solutions' brand: "Auto-Deli". Auto Mercado cooks 400 kilos of rice monthly and this is a similar situation with other products. The Auto Mercado strategy for 2007 is to open more cafeterias inside their supermarkets to continue distributing this kind of product.

In November 2006, Wal-Mart Costa Rica began a pilot plan in one of its stores looking to strengthen the meal solutions' food line. They have been measuring the food rotation, menu designs and the necessary logistics linked to this operation. Demand for this category has increased between 25-30% in the last two years. Their annual sales of meal solutions represented 4% of its total food sales in 2005 compared to 7% in 2006 and they expect a 10% growth for 2007.