

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: South Korea Beer Market Report

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Report Category: Beverages

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Report Highlights:

Korea's beer imports reached \$218 million in 2023, up 11.8 percent from \$195 million in 2022, but still 30 percent down from the record high of \$310 million in 2018. Although Korea's beer imports have been decreasing since the pandemic, the United States increased exports of beer to Korea in 2023, reaching \$17.9 million, up 43% from \$12.5 million in 2022. The United States is the fourth-largest supplier followed by Japan, Netherlands, and China. While American beer faces elevated competition in Korea against export-oriented competitors, increased demand for premium quality craft beer among the opinion-leading beer consumer groups should expand export opportunities for American beer to Korea in the coming years. ATO Seoul, in collaboration with Brewers Association, has been organizing 'Great American Craft Beer Showcase' at the Korea International Beer Expo since 2019 to introduce a variety of American craft beer to Korean buyers, importers and consumers.

SECTION I. MARKET OVERVIEW

According to Korea Trade Information Service, South Korea's beer imports showed continued growth until 2018 when the imports totaled a record high of \$310 million. Korea's beer imports had continued outstanding growth due to increased consumer demand for products with diversified flavors and higher quality. However, due to series of events such as 'No Japan' boycott¹ and COVID-19, imports of beer have been trending downwards since 2019.

Beer exports from the United States to Korea recorded \$17.9 million in 2023 which is 50.9 percent lower than in 2019. However, exports have recovered compared to \$12.5 million in 2022 and the United States became the fourth largest supplier of imported beer to Korea following Japan, Netherlands, and China.

Beer, along with soju, is the most consumed alcohol in Korea. Beer is likely to remain the leading alcohol beverage product in Korea in the coming years due to increased value consumption under the downturn of the local economy, elevated consumer health concerns that favors products with less alcohol content, and diversified consumer taste.

Top six domestic products reported 2.67 trillion won of sales in 2023. It is notable that three large-scale local breweries (OB, Hite, and Lotte) have accounted for a majority of the domestic beer distributed in Korea as high entry barriers set by the Korean government limited establishment of additional large-scale local breweries. The limited competition environment led the large-scale local Korean breweries to maintain a conservative product portfolio over the years that focused on a limited assortment of low price, low flavor products.

The Korean government has introduced a series of regulatory reforms in recent years to lower entry barriers and allow small-scale breweries to emerge and meet increased consumer demand for diversity and quality. According to the Korean Craft Brewers Association, there are over 180 microbreweries in operation in Korea, and they distributed 22 million liters of craft beer, which accounted for 1.31 percent of the beer market sales, down from 2.01 percent in 2022. Sales of the microbreweries are decreasing due to new drinking trends such as rise in cocktails and high balls, and less people eating out.

The beer market in Korea is slow but there is still opportunity for American beer. Further introductions of large-scale American beer brands into the market should strengthen the value proposition of American beer to the general Korean consumer. In addition, emerging demand for premium quality beer among the opinion-leading beer consumer groups should expand the market for American craft beer in Korea. The import duty on American beer phased out to zero percent on January 1, 2018, under the Korea-United States Free Trade Agreement (KORUS FTA). Also, Korean government applies volume-based liquor tax system to beer which allows opportunity for premium beers.

¹ In 2019, 'No Japan' boycott started when Japanese government imposed trade restriction towards Korean goods

Table 1. Opportunities & Challenges in the Korean Beer Market

Opportunities	Challenges
<p>Beer remains the most consumed alcoholic beverage in Korea. Elevated consumer health concerns favor products with lower alcohol content, including beer.</p>	<p>Large-scale Korean breweries maintain a dominant market share with mass-produced, popular brands that are offered at low prices.</p>
<p>The Korean beer market has been driven by a small number of large-scale local breweries. These mass breweries continue to focus on producing large-volume, low-quality beers.</p>	<p>Majority of the Korean consumers have yet to understand the value, quality, and diversity that U.S. beer has to offer.</p>
<p>There is growing demand for diverse, quality beer, particularly among young professionals and affluent seniors. Many of these opinion-leading consumers view the United States as a leading producer of premium craft beer.</p>	<p>The number of craft breweries in Korea will likely increase as demand for quality beer develops. U.S. craft breweries in general have limited resources to divert to export business.</p>
<p>The KORUS Free Trade Agreement (2012) and transition to a volume-based liquor tax (2020) make U.S. beer more price competitive.</p>	<p>U.S. beer faces aggressive competition from other exporting countries in the imported beer market in Korea.</p>

SECTION II. MARKET ANALYSIS

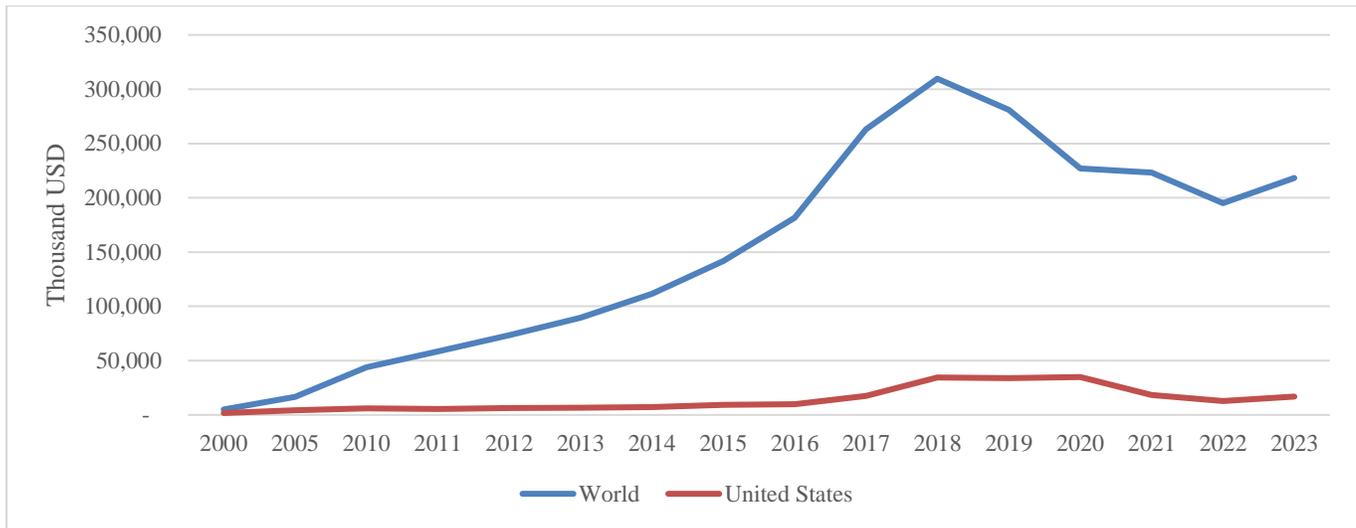
1. Competition²

Imported Beer

Beer imports recorded \$218 million in 2023, up 11.8% from \$195 million in 2022 but still 30% low from the record high of \$310 million in 2018. Beer imports showed robust growth until 2018, increasing sevenfold from 2010. However, imports decreased in 2018 due to a series of unexpected events such as the ‘No Japan’ boycott in 2019 and COVID-19 and have since been in a downward trend. Similar to other parts of the world, Korea is still suffering from inflation and slow economy since the pandemic. Restaurants and alcoholic beverage sectors are some of the industries that have been affected the most. Beer imports, along with these sectors, are having a hard time recovering back to the 2018 figures. Yet, Korean consumers have high demand for diversified flavor and taste, so there is an opportunity for high quality products.

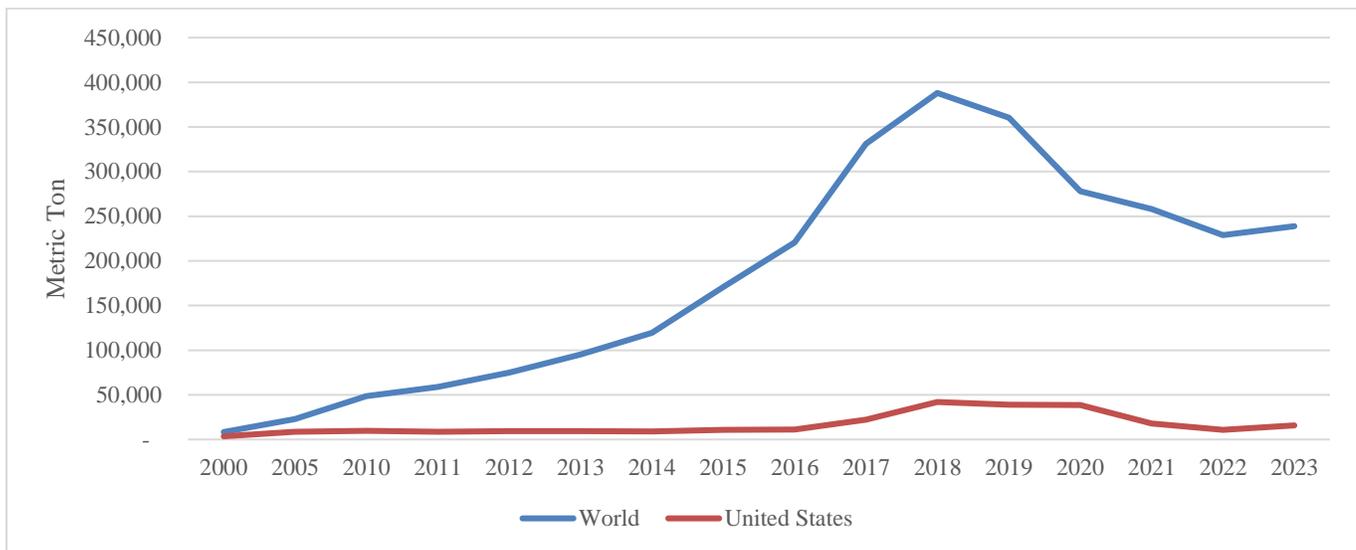
² This section uses Korean import data from Korea Trade Information Service (KOTIS) to have data consistency when comparing beer imports from various countries. Therefore, there may be discrepancy from the U.S. export data from Global Agricultural Trade System (GATS) when specifically looking at the U.S. trade.

Figure 1. Korea’s Beer Imports (CIF Value³, Thousand USD)



Source: Korea Trade Information Service (KOTIS) Database

Figure 2. Korea’s Beer Imports (Volume, Metric Ton)



Source: Korea Trade Information Service (KOTIS) Database

Japan is the leading supplier of beer to Korea, exporting \$56 million in 2023. Japan had been the all-time leader in the beer import market, but the ‘No Japan’ movement that started in July 2019 caused Japanese beer imports to drop to \$39 million and \$5.7 million in 2019 and 2020 respectively, down significantly from \$78 million in 2018. It has slowly recovered since, and in 2023 Japan once again became the number one exporting country of beer to Korea. It is notable that Asahi recorded 400% increase in sales in 2023. Many of the leading Japanese breweries have developed direct business

³ CIF is the export price upon arrival in a port in Korea inclusive of insurance and freight cost

partnerships with leading Korean alcohol beverage companies for efficient marketing and distribution in Korea. Marketers also point out that, given Korean breweries' nearly exclusive focus on lager-style beer over the years, Korean consumers are very familiar with its flavor profile. Japanese breweries also mainly focus on lagers, so this has been one of the key factors for Japanese beer's early success in Korea. Japan is one of the few countries that has yet to establish a free trade agreement with Korea and as a result, Japanese beer is still disadvantaged by the import duty upon entry into Korea. Nevertheless, Japan's logistics advantage for shipping to Korea, as well as its aggressive pricing and consumer promotion strategy, has enabled Japanese breweries to maintain the leading market share in Korea's imported beer market.

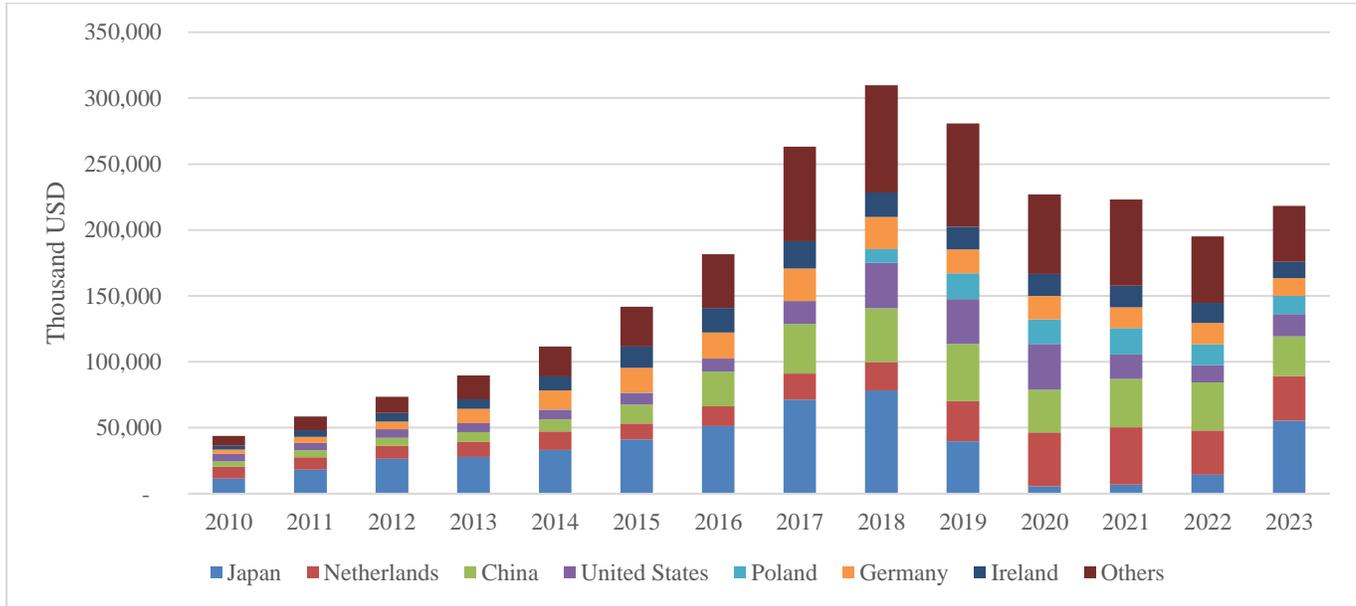
China has rapidly emerged as one of the leading exporters of beer to Korea partly due to the rapid increase of Chinese tourists traveling to Korea as well as non-immigrant Chinese residents living in Korea under working visas. In addition, some of multi-national beer companies bring products from their Chinese breweries into Korea for lower cost. In 2019, when Korean consumers turned away from Japanese beers, China was the number one beer exporting country to Korea, but since then, imports of Chinese beer have decreased. In October 2023, the viral video from Tsingtao Brewery provoked negative image towards Chinese beer in overall. As a result, Chinese beer imports from January to October 2024 have decreased 46% compared to the same period of 2023. The 30 percent import tariff on Chinese beer is scheduled to phase out over a twenty-year period under the China-South Korea Free Trade Agreement implemented in December 2015.

Many Korean consumers harbor the traditional idea that Europe is the leading origin for quality beer around the world. As a result, many European countries, including the Netherlands, Germany, and Ireland, have established strong market shares in Korea's imported beer market. Korea's beer imports from key European suppliers in 2024 amounted to \$59 million - \$34 million from the Netherlands, \$14 million from Germany, and \$12 million from Ireland. Imported beer from European Union (EU) countries enters Korea duty free under the Korea-EU Free Trade Agreement implemented on July 1, 2011.

Korea imported \$16.9 million of beer from the United States in 2023, down more than half compared to the U.S. imports in 2019 and 2020. U.S. beer has been suffering since the pandemic mainly due to competition. Despite elevated competition, Korea has an opportunity for high quality American beer. Some major American beer brands, including Budweiser, Miller and Coors, have relaunched in Korea under partnerships with leading Korean alcohol beverage companies recently. Further introductions and marketing of large-scale American beer brands should expand the demand for overall American beer in Korea by strengthening the value proposition of American beer to general Korean beer consumers. At the same time, emerging demand for premium quality beer among opinion-leading beer consumer groups should expand the export opportunity for American craft beer to Korea. Many of these opinion-leading beer consumers are young professionals who are well traveled and recognize the United States as a leading origin of premium quality craft beer in the world. According to Brewers Association, the United States exported \$55.2 million craft beer to the world, and exports to Korea accounted for 2.7

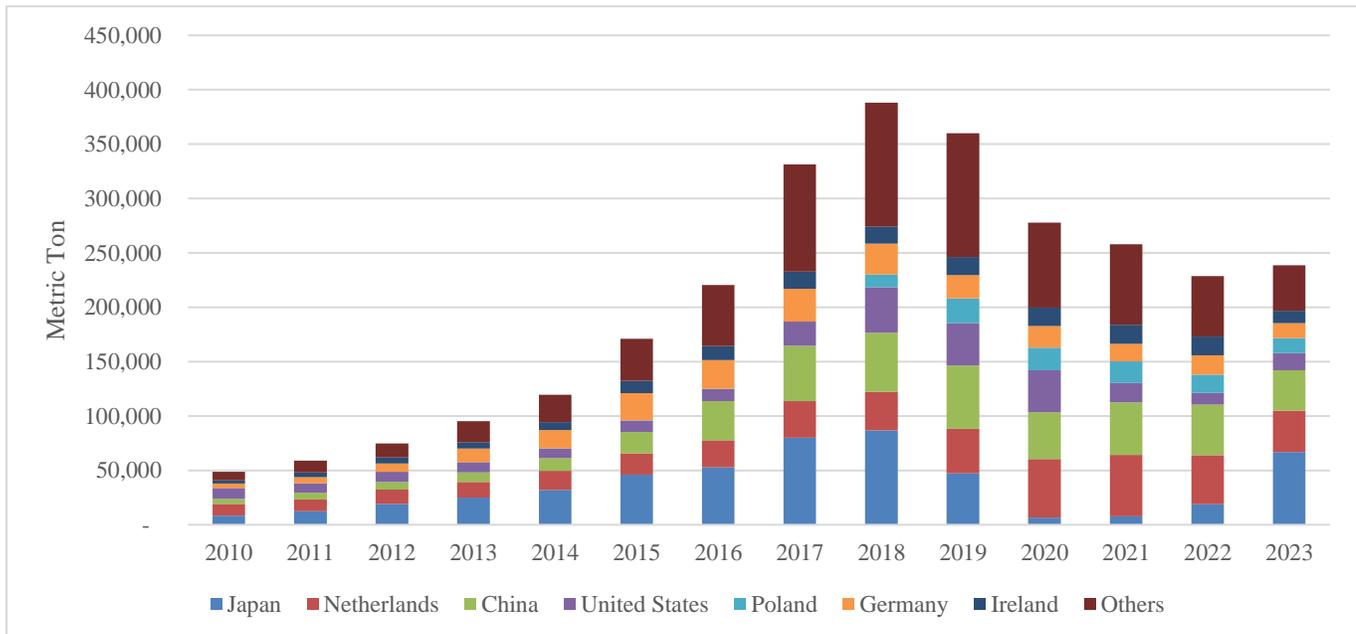
percent in 2023. Korea was one of the top three export markets in the Asia Pacific region along with China (7.7%) and Japan (4.3%).

Figure 3. Breakdown of Korea’s Beer Imports – Market Share by Country (Value, Thousand USD)



Source: Korea Trade Information Service (KOTIS) Database

Figure 4. Breakdown of Korea’s Beer Imports – Market Share by Country (Volume, Metric Ton)



Source: Korea Trade Information Service (KOTIS) Database

Table 2. Import Duty for Beer in 2024

Country	Import Duty ⁴
United States	0%
Japan	25.5%
China	15%
European Union	0%

Source: Korea Customs Service

Domestic Beer

The top six products produced domestic generated 2.67 trillion won of sales in 2023.⁵ As shown in Table 3, the Korean beer market is dominated by three large-scale local breweries, Oriental Brewery Company Co., Ltd. (OB), Hite-Jinro Co. (Hite) and Lotte Chilsung. According to the Korea Beer Culture Association, OB and Hite accounted for more than 50 percent and 20 percent of overall beer market sales in 2023 respectively. Lotte Chilsung entered the industry by launching the ‘Kloud’ brand in 2014. Sales of the large-scale breweries have been stagnant in the recent years, but profit has decreased significantly in 2023. Main reasons for the decline are increase in cost due to the pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine War and aggressive marketing for new products.

Table 3. Sales of Top 10 Beer Products in 2023

	Product	Company	Sales (Won)	Production
1	Cass	OB	1.52 trillion	Domestic
2	Terra	Hite Jinro	470 billion	Domestic
3	FiLite	Hite Jinro	240 billion	Domestic
4	Asahi	Lotte Asahi	198 billion	Import
5	Kelly	Hite Jinro	176 billion	Domestic
6	Kloud	Lotte	167 billion	Domestic
7	Tsingtao	Beer Korea	113 billion	Import
8	Heineken	Heineken Korea	109 billion	Import
9	Hite	Hite Jinro	93 billion	Domestic
10	Budweiser	OB	92 billion	Import

Source: Company Data

It is notable that OB was acquired by Anheuser-Busch (AB) InBev in 2014. As a result, OB currently brews and bottles some of AB InBev's portfolio, including Hoegaarden and Budweiser (bottles) and Stella Artois (draft), in Korea for local distribution. In addition, OB imports and distributes many AB InBev brands into Korea, including Budweiser (cans), Corona, Stella Artois (cans), Beck's, Leffe and Löwenbräu. Hite-Jinro and Lotte Chilsung have also established import distribution partnerships with

⁴ Import duty for Japan and China will decrease by 1.5% each year

⁵ Company data

some of leading international beer companies to capitalize on increased market demand for imported beer.

Table 4. Overview of Leading Breweries in Korea

	Oriental Brewery Company (OB)	Hite-Jinro Co. (Hite)	Lotte Chilsung Co. (Lotte)
Major Brands	Cass, OB, Cafri	Hite, Kelly, Max, Stout, FiLite	Kloud, Fitz
Imported Brands	Budweiser, Hoegaarden, Corona, Beck's, Stella Artois, Leffe, Löwenbräu, Suntory	Carlsberg, Kirin, Singha, Kronenbourg, Tooheys Brothers	Coors, Asahi
Revenue	1.55 trillion won	2.25 trillion won (Beer sector: 820 billion won)	3.22 trillion won (Beer sector: 89 billion won)

Source: Company Data

Korean regulation stipulates a very low minimum malt inclusion threshold⁶ in brewing beer. As a result, the leading domestic breweries use a large amount of non-malt grains such as wheat and rice to reduce cost and soften flavors. They have also focused on lager-style beer over the years, reflecting general Korean consumers' preferences for dry and refreshing taste. However, the evolving taste of local consumers has pressured local breweries to newly launch or expand production of ale type beer as well as products with more malt and hops. Nevertheless, the key strategy of large local breweries is to offer a limited assortment of low-price, low flavor beer targeting mass distribution.

The Korean government maintains a high entry barrier for acquiring a large-scale brewery license. This license is required for distribution of the product to off-premise retail stores such as supermarkets and liquor shops, alcohol beverage wholesalers, and on-premise pubs and restaurants. A regular brewery license requires a minimum 250,000 liters of fermentation tank and 500,000 liters of holding tank capacity.

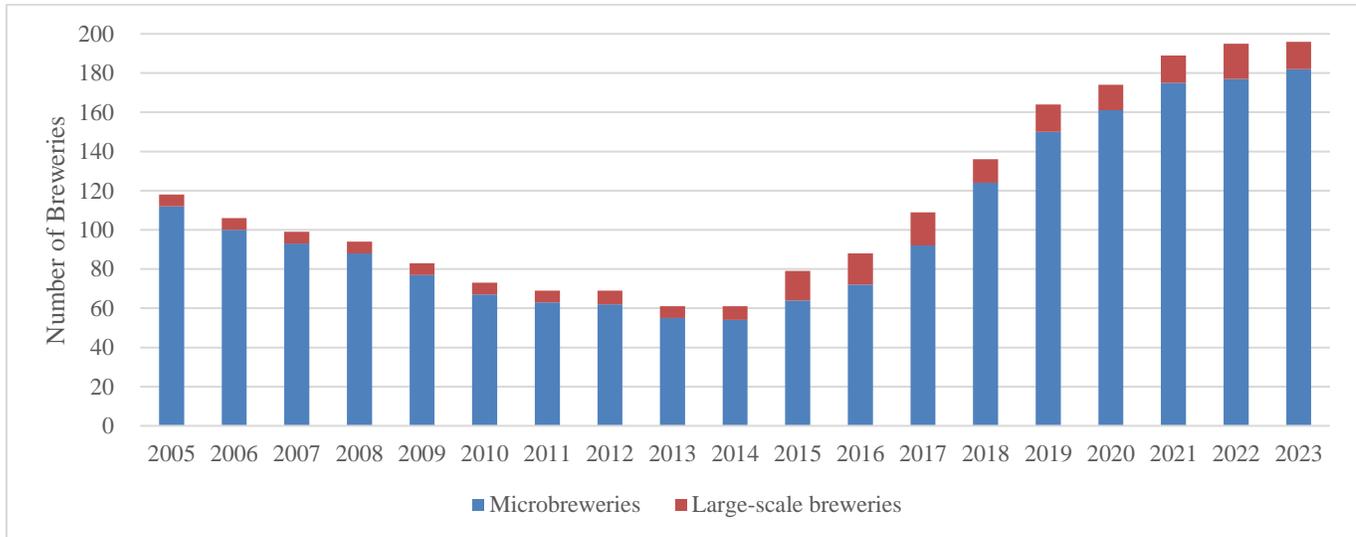
The Korean government introduced a series of regulatory reforms since 2002 to lower entry barriers and allow small-scale breweries⁷ to enter the market. The reform introduced in 2015 laid out a key milestone in the local microbrew industry as it allowed microbreweries to distribute products outside their premises to non-affiliated restaurants and pubs. Another key reform took effect in 2018, which further expanded microbreweries' distribution reach to grocery retail stores and wholesalers. The number of

⁶ Minimum of 10 percent of total starch ingredients should be malt

⁷ Korean government defines small-scale breweries as those with brew and fermentation tank of minimum 5,000 liters to maximum 120,000 liters. And filtration & sterilization process is required unless the product is distributed through temperature-controlled distribution chain.

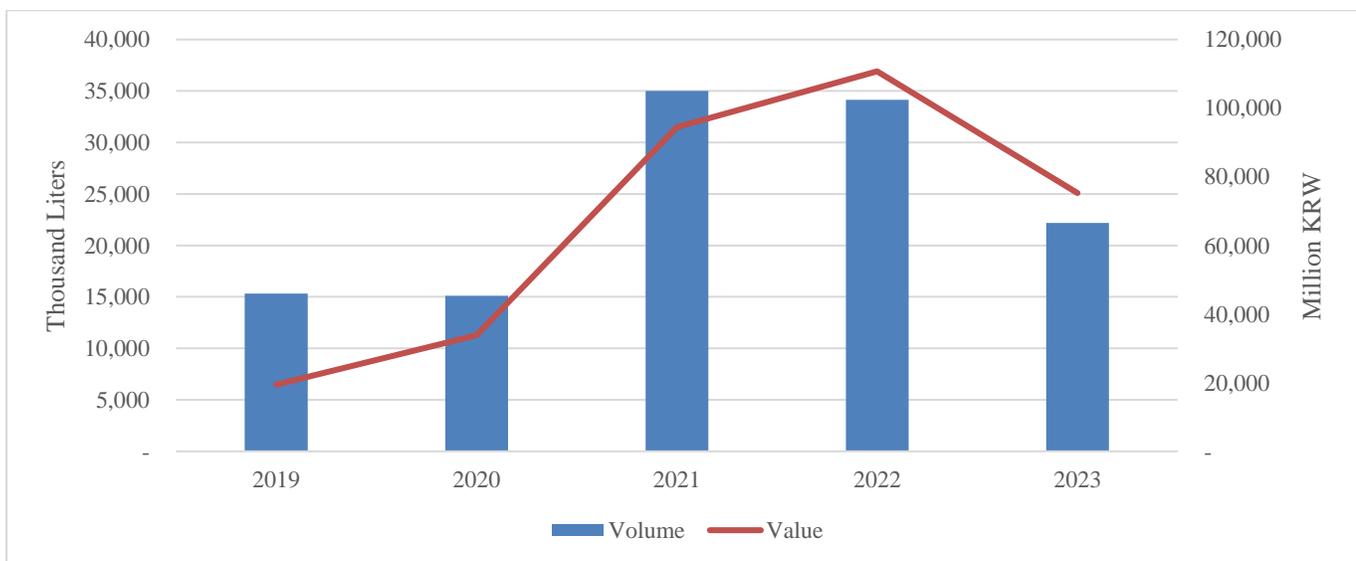
microbreweries in Korea has continuously increased to 182 breweries as of 2023. In 2023, local microbreweries distributed 22 million liters of craft beer, which accounted for 1.31% of the beer market sales, down from 2.01% in 2022. Sales of the microbreweries are decreasing due to new drinking trends such as rise in cocktails and high balls, and less people eating out. Many Korean microbreweries are influenced by or partnered with U.S. craft breweries. As a result, the styles of beer offered by Korean microbreweries are similar to U.S. craft beer.

Figure 5. Number of Breweries in Korea (2005-2023)



Source: Korea Craft Brewers Association

Figure 6. Craft Beer Sales Volume and Value⁸ (2019-2023, Thousand Liters, Million KRW)



Source: Korea Craft Brewers Association

⁸ Craft beer sales data from microbrewery licensed breweries

Other Alcoholic Beverages

The volume of alcoholic beverages shipped in Korea totaled 3.6 billion liters in 2023, down 0.5 percent from the previous year. The value of shipments totaled 10.1 trillion won, up 1.0 percent from the previous year. Domestic products accounted for 89 percent of shipments by volume. Beer and soju were the most consumed alcoholic beverages mainly due to low prices.

Table 5. Volume of Alcoholic Beverages Shipped to the Market in Korea (2019-2023, kL)

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Rice wine	370,500	379,976	363,132	342,517	338,876
Beer	1,715,995	1,566,914	1,538,968	1,697,823	1,687,101
Fruit wine	10,926	11,315	17,485	14,128	14,196
Distilled soju	1,714	1,929	2,480	4,905	4,877
Soju	915,596	874,537	825,848	861,540	844,250
Whiskey	72	56	74	234	64
Distilled spirits	1,683	1,559	1,585	2,491	1,785
Others	360,228	378,521	350,256	344,985	345,887
Imports	464,455	396,970	411,458	369,939	382,953
	3,841,169	3,611,777	3,511,286	3,638,562	3,619,989

Source: National Tax Service

Table 6. Value of Alcoholic Beverages Shipped to the Market in Korea (2019-2023, Million Won)

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Rice wine	442,967	470,579	509,815	518,974	522,632
Beer	3,688,267	3,497,418	3,626,057	4,148,585	4,186,592
Fruit wine	91,653	97,032	127,819	127,967	137,750
Distilled soju	38,382	44,805	64,628	141,206	132,972
Soju	3,738,247	3,703,775	3,545,010	3,984,178	3,993,772
Whiskey	5,098	4,039	5,841	19,240	7,824
Distilled spirits	12,643	10,916	11,804	16,175	18,632
Others	924,021	970,975	943,566	1,013,997	1,069,315
	8,941,278	8,799,539	8,834,540	9,970,322	10,069,489

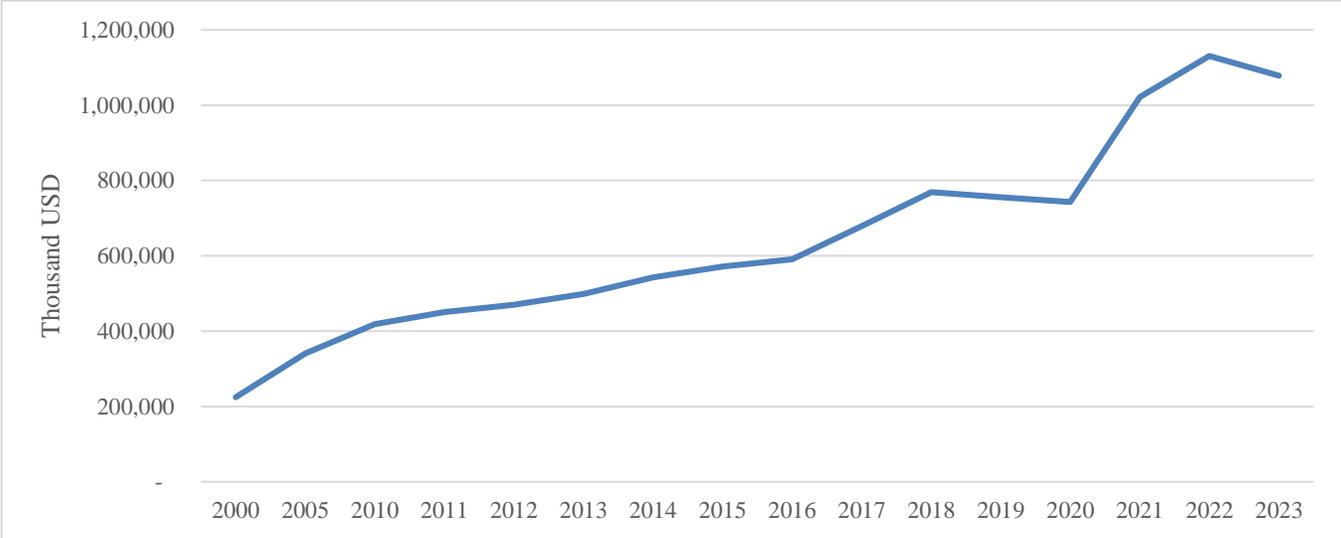
Source: National Tax Service

Korean imports of alcoholic beverages have more than doubled over the last 10 years to reach \$1.08 billion in 2023⁹. The United States supplied around 13 percent of Korea's alcoholic beverages imports in 2023 (8 percent for beer, 16 percent for wine, and 10 percent for distilled spirits). While local products dominate the market for beer and soju, imported products continue to lead the market for distilled spirits and fruit wine. Imports of wine and distilled spirits have surged during the pandemic. In 2021, wine imports were \$559.8 million, up 116 percent compared to the imports in 2019. However, as the

⁹ Korea Trade Information Service (KOTIS) Database

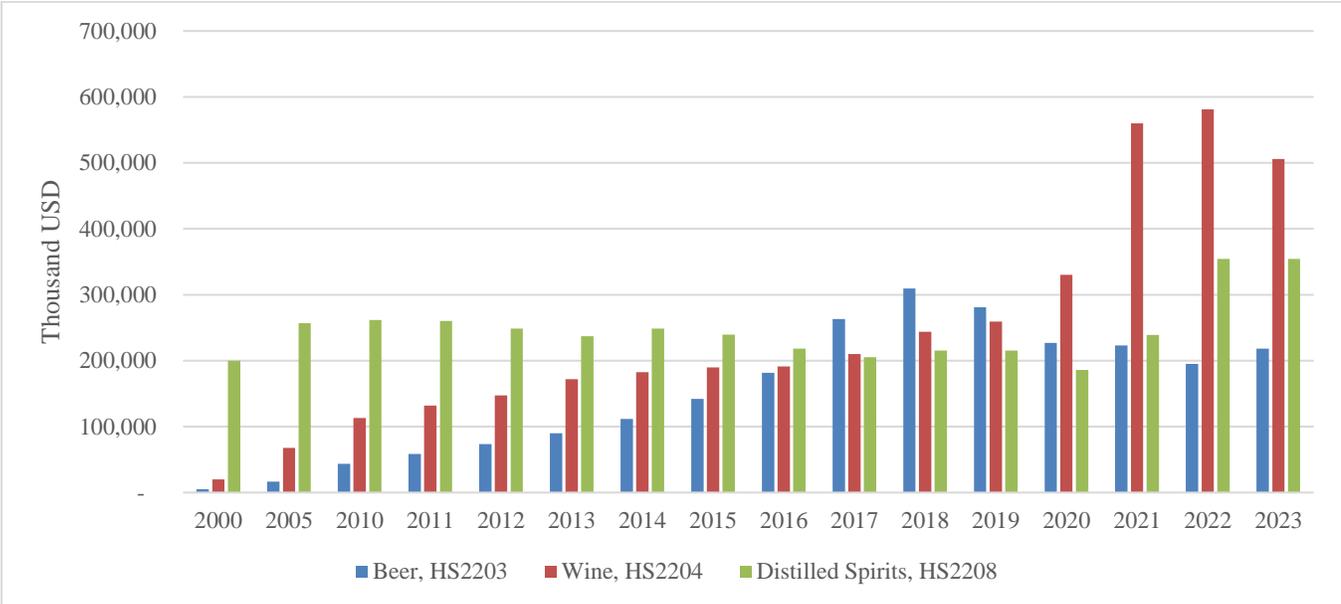
pandemic ended imports of wine are decreasing. In 2023, wine imports were \$506.0 million, down 13 percent from \$581.3 million in 2022. Distilled spirits imports have been constantly growing since 2020. In 2023, distilled spirits imports were \$354.3 million, up 90.6 percent from imports in 2020. During the pandemic, premium whiskies were popular. Nowadays, consumers look for lower alcohol, easy-to-drink products, such as high balls, so less expensive distilled spirits are trending. For more information about the wine market in Korea, please refer to the [South Korea Wine Market Report](#).

Figure 7. Korea's Alcohol Beverage Imports (Thousand USD)



Source: Korea Trade Information Service (KOTIS) Database

Figure 8. Breakdown of Korea's Alcohol Beverage Imports (Thousand USD)



Source: Korea Trade Information Service (KOTIS) Database

2. Consumer trend

Korea is one of the leading markets in the world for per-capita alcohol beverage consumption. Drinking is considered an important part of social life and is often encouraged at social and business occasions. However, the drinking trend is slowly changing among younger population.

During the pandemic, the “healthy pleasure” trend emerged, which consumers started to consume zero-sugar soju, non-alcohol beer, and low-calorie sparkling drinks. According to the survey conducted by Open Survey, 89.9 percent of the respondents answered that they are aware of zero-sugar soju and 48.7 percent of respondents have previously had the products. Of those polled, 45.6 percent of respondents said that they had zero-sugar soju because they were curious about the product, and 42.7 percent answered that they chose the product because they wanted to drink healthy.

Drinking in home, so called “home-sool” is still popular since the pandemic. According to the survey conducted by Open Survey, 84% of the respondents answered that they had drinks at home in the past month, and they drink 2.01 times per week. When they drink at home, 55 percent answered that they would get food delivered. Top five foods paired with beer were chicken, meat dishes, dried snacks, chips, fast food by order. There were many responses that answered that they would mix other drinks, fruits, ice or make high balls at home.

3. Market Entry Strategy

By law, only licensed alcohol beverage importers are allowed to import alcohol beverages, including beer. There is no ceiling for the number of licenses issued, so any qualified candidate can obtain a license. There are over 500 licensed importers, but marketers estimate that only about 50 of them currently maintain an active business. The top ten leading importers reportedly account for over 80 percent of total imports.

Due to the on-going economic downturn, Korean alcohol beverage importers in general maintain a very conservative stance when it comes to launching new products. The importers may not react to new product offers from foreign suppliers unless the product in question indicates strong market potential such as international acclaims, awards or critics’ favorable evaluations earned by the product, value-quality proposition in comparison to leading products in the target market segment, and promotional support offered by the supplier.

Korean traders highly value face-to-face contacts when developing business relationship with new foreign suppliers. Business trips to Korea allow new-to-market suppliers to gain contacts with Korean importers as well as hands-on knowledge about local market trends. For guidance on how to approach target buyers in Korea, please refer to the [South Korea: Exporter Guide Annual](#) published by the U.S. Agricultural Trade Office (ATO) in Seoul.

Trade shows are an efficient venue for new-to-market American suppliers to develop contacts with Korean buyers. American beer suppliers are encouraged to consider the following food and beverage trade shows in Korea:

- Seoul Food & Hotel is the leading food trade show held annually in Korea. This is the only show in Korea that is officially endorsed and sponsored by USDA. The upcoming show will be held June 10-13, 2025.
- The Korea International Beer Expo (KIBEX) is an important annual event dedicated to beer. The trade show will be held on April 10-12, 2025, at COEX. March 21-23. ATO Seoul and the Brewers Association will organize a ‘Great American Craft Beer Showcase Seoul’ booth in the show to present a variety of American craft beer.

SECTION III. MARKET ACCESS

1. Import Tariff and Tax

The Korean government implemented a transition from value-based liquor tax to volume-based liquor tax for beer and Korean rice wine on January 1, 2020¹⁰. Any beer, both local and imported regardless of their prices, is subject to the 885.7 won per liter in 2024¹¹. Korean government introduced an updated tax regulation in July 2024 which sets the volume-based tax for beer as 885.7 won per liter and the government will make changes within thirty percent when needed. The volume-based liquor tax used to be revised each year reflecting consumer prices during the previous year. Table 7 summarizes Korean tariff and taxes applied to imported U.S. beer as of 2021.

Table 7. Korean Import Tariff and Taxes on Imported U.S. Beer

	Import Tariff¹²	Liquor Tax	Education Tax	Value Added Tax
Value-based	0%	72%	30%	10%
Volume-based (applied to beer since 2020)	0%	885.7won/liter	30%	10%

Table 8 provides an example of how the tax change impacts a CIF \$1 twelve-ounce container of beer from the United States. Under this scenario, the cost of imported U.S. beer after tariffs and taxes declines by approximately a third.

¹⁰ For more information about the shift of tax system, please refer to [South Korea Adopts Volume-based Liquor Tax for Beer](#)

¹¹ 20 percent tax discount is applied to beer distributed to restaurants and bars in kegs of over 8 liters until 2026

¹² The import tariff on U.S. beer was eliminated under the Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

Table 8. Example of Import Tariff and Taxes on a CIF \$1 12-ounce (335 mL) U.S. Beer

	Value-based tax system	Volume-based tax system
A CIF Invoice Value	\$1.00	\$1.00
B Import Tariff	A x 0% -	A x 0% -
C Liquor Tax	(A+B) x 72% \$0.72	(A+B) x \$0.62/L x 0.335 ¹³ \$0.21
D Education Tax	C x 30% \$0.22	C x 30% \$0.06
E Subtotal	A+B+C+D \$1.94	A+B+C+D \$1.27
F Value Added Tax	E x 10% \$0.19	E x 10% \$0.13
Final Price after Tariff and Taxes	E+F \$2.13	E+F \$1.40

2. Inspection and Food Safety Standards

Imported foods and beverages, including alcohol beverages, are subject to documentation and food safety inspection to enter Korea. For more information about Korean regulations and standards on imported products, please refer to [South Korea: FAIRS Country Report Annual](#) published by the Agricultural Affairs Office of the U.S. Embassy Seoul. Table 9 summarizes the key Korean food safety standards for beer designated in the Korea Food Code and the National Tax Office Decree.

Table 9. Key Korean Food Safety Standards for Beer

Issue	Standards
Major ingredients	Malt (barley and wheat), hops, water, starch ingredients (including wheat, rice, barley, corn, potato, and starch) are allowed
Methanol	0.5 mg/ml or less
Alcohol content	(1) 25% (v/v) or less (2) Labeled alcohol content should be within 0.5% of the actual content measured
Additives allowed	Aspartame, stevioside, sorbitol, sucralose, lactose, acesulfame K, erythritol, xylitol, milk, milk powder, milk cream, casein, Arabic gum, pectin, carbon dioxide gas, sugars, caramel, tannic acid, all coloring and flavoring agents allowed in the Korea Food Additive Code

¹³ Calculated for a 355-milliliter volume container (12 oz) / Exchange rate \$1 = 1,432.90 won as of December 12, 2024

3. Labeling

Korean law requires a separate Korean language label on imported alcohol beverages. In most cases, additional label in Korean is attached to the back of the bottle manually by the importer in the duty-free warehouse before customs inspection. The label must contain the following information:

- Product name
- Country of origin
- Product type
- Product volume
- Importer's name and phone number
- Alcohol percentage
- Names of ingredients
- Names of food additives used
- Manufacturing date or bottling date (not required if a lot number is stated); (use by date or best before date for beer)
- Mandatory health warning clauses
- Mandatory warning clause against liquor sales to minors
- Name of designated distribution channel: Certain alcoholic beverages require their usage type to be displayed on the main or supplementary label. Home consumption use of diluted soju, beer, and alcoholic beverages such as whisky that require a radio frequency identification tag (so called RFID tag) should state "For home use" and "Not to be sold in restaurants and bars."

Fruit images or photos are not allowed on the label of food and beverage products if the product contains synthetic flavors only. A beer label can include the phrase "Light" only if the product contains less than 30 kcal per 100ml.

Korea and the United States have established an equivalency agreement for processed organic foods and beverages. As a result, U.S. organic beer certified in the United States under National Organic Program (NOP) may be labeled and marketed as organic in Korea without obtaining additional organic certification from the Korean authority.

SECTION IV. KEY CONTACTS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

<u>Agricultural Trade Office Seoul (ATO)</u>	<u>atoseoul@usda.gov</u>
Office of Agricultural Affairs Office Seoul (OAA)	<u>agseoul@usda.gov</u>
Animal and Plant and Health Inspection Service Seoul (APHIS)	<u>yunhee.kim@usda.gov</u>

Various regional and industry organizations in the United States offer export assistance programs to their member suppliers targeting foreign markets. General tools offered by the organizations include trade delegations to key foreign markets and international trade shows.

Brewers Association (BA)	<u>info@brewersassociation.org</u>
Food Export Association of the Midwest USA	<u>thamilton@foodexport.org</u>
Western United States Agricultural Trade Association (WUSATA)	<u>janet@wusata.org</u>
Food Export USA Northeast	<u>jcanono@foodexportusa.org</u>
Southern United States Agricultural Trade Association (SUSTA)	<u>jim@susta.org</u>

Please refer to the [South Korea: Exporter Guide Annual](#) for contact information for USDA cooperators, state offices, and industry organizations that offer export assistance. [ATO Seoul's website](#) provides up-to-date information about Korea's food and agricultural imports, including:

- [Korea's Agricultural Import Statistics](#): This spreadsheet, updated monthly, provides a summary of Korea's agricultural imports at the four-digit HS product code level.
- [Korea's Agricultural Import Trends Presentation](#): This presentation, published quarterly, provides a summary of competition between the U.S. and competitors for key products.

The [South Korea-Country Commercial Guide](#) published by U.S. Department of Commerce also contains useful information on the Korean market. Socio-economic data can be found in the [World Fact Book](#) published by Central Intelligence Agency.

Attachments:

No Attachments.