

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

Date: March 17, 2025

Report Number: TW2025-0009

Report Name: Unveiling Taiwanese Appetite for Tree Nut Delights

Country: Taiwan

Post: Taipei ATO

Report Category: Tree Nuts

Prepared By: Katherine Lee

Approved By: Wang Yao

Report Highlights:

The United States holds 66 percent of Taiwan’s tree nut market, with 2024 imports rising 19 percent to nearly 13,000 metric tons, valued at USD 76 million. Lower 2023 crop costs led to upfront stockpiling, attracting new importers who expanded product variety and premium offerings to differentiate in the market. The core consumer base (ages 45-74) is health-conscious and willing to pay for high-quality tree nut. Taiwan’s aging population, officially becoming an “elderly society” in 2025, is expected to further drive demand.

Overall Market Overview

Table 1. Taiwan’s Imports of Tree Nuts by Country of Origin
(Unit: Ton, Source: Trade Data Monitor)

<u>Country</u>	<u>CY 2023</u>	<u>CY 2024</u>	<u>Market Share</u>	<u>Growth%</u>
United States	10,690	12,717	66%	19%
Vietnam	3,909	3,928	20%	0%
South Africa	440	1,009	5%	129%
Australia	586	462	2%	-21%
China	84	411	2%	389%
Turkey	273	390	2%	43%
Others	311	354	2%	14%
Total	16,293	19,271	100%	18%

The United States remains the dominant supplier of tree nuts¹ to Taiwan, holding 66 percent of the market. In 2024, Taiwan imported nearly 13,000 metric tons of U.S. tree nuts, a 19 percent increase from 2023, reaching USD 76 million (Appendix). This growth is primarily attributed to upfront stockpiling in response to the lower ingredient costs of the 2023 U.S. crop.

The price advantage encouraged new importers to enter the market, some investing in roasting facilities and launching branded tree nut snacks. This influx of competition expanded product variety, introduced premium product specifications, and widened consumption occasions, aiming to attract younger consumers.

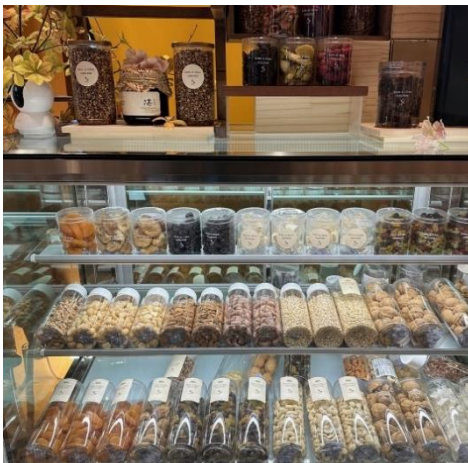


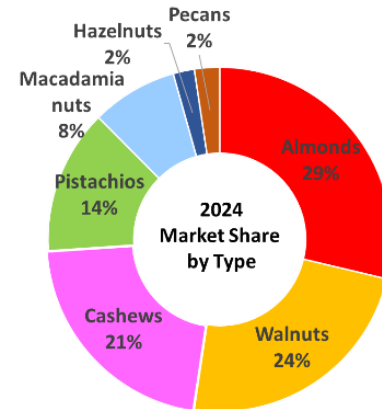
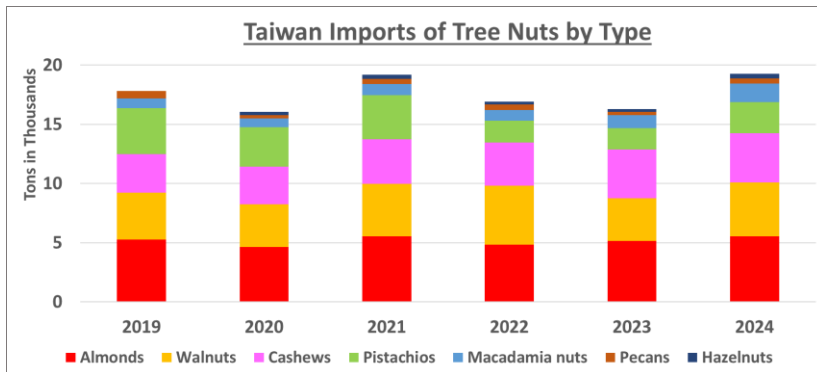
Photo: YU NAI CHUAN store at Mitsukoshi Diamond Tower

Taiwan’s tree nut market is becoming increasingly competitive and fragmented, with new players entering the industry. Some importers are also manufacturers and retail operators, differentiating themselves to offer higher-grade products and command premium pricing.

¹ Types of tree nuts include almonds, walnuts, cashews, pistachios, macadamia nuts, pecans, and hazelnuts.

Product Breakdown (Appendix)

Almonds and walnuts are the most prevalent tree nuts in Taiwan, together accounting for over half of total imports. Over 95 percent of tree nuts imported into Taiwan are shelled.



Source: Trade Data Monitor

- Almonds: Market Leader**
 Almonds are the most commonly consumed tree nut, leading both import volume and value. The dominant varieties include nonpareil and carmel, available in diverse forms such as whole kernels, slivers, slices, diced, and almond powder. The United States is the only supplier of almonds.
- Pistachios: Fast Growing Category**
 Pistachio imports surged 44 percent in 2024, reaching 2,617 metric tons, fueled by the competitive pricing of the 2023 U.S. crop. Ninety-nine percent of pistachio is imported in shell. The primary demand driver is snack food manufacturing. In Taiwan, pistachios are commonly marketed as festive gifts due to their Chinese name meaning “open your heart,” symbolizing happiness and good fortune during Chinese New Year. The United States is the dominant supplier of pistachios; less than one percent of market share goes to Iran.
- Macadamia Nuts: Premium & Expanding**
 Macadamia nut imports hit a record high of 1,562 metric tons in 2024. Despite their high unit cost, they are perceived as a luxury snack, often featured in high-end treats.
 - South Africa dominates the market (65 percent), followed by Australia (28 percent).
 - No U.S. macadamia imports have been recorded since 2020.
- Walnuts: Competitive Pressure from China**
 Taiwan imported approximately 4,600 metric tons of U.S. walnuts in 2024, valued at \$22 million, with demand fueled by low-cost, high-quality 2023 U.S. crops. The preferred variety and

specification are chandler, light-colored halves. China has started aggressively exporting walnuts in 2024, capturing nine percent market share. While California walnuts remain the benchmark for quality, increasing prices in 2024 may shift price-sensitive buyers toward Chinese alternatives.

- **Cashews: Most Versatile Across Culinary Applications**

Cashew imports hit record high in 2024, reaching 4,156 tons. Popular as a snack, cashews are also widely used in both Asian and Western cuisines. Vietnam remains the dominant supplier, accounting for over 90 percent of the market, while other suppliers include Cambodia, Indonesia, and Myanmar.

- **Pecans: Rapid Growth but Low Market Awareness**

Pecan imports soared 91 percent year-over-year, reaching 457 metric tons in 2024.

- The United States is the only supplier of pecans. Pecans are primarily consumed as a snack. Common varieties and specifications include fancy mammoth and junior mammoth.
- Despite growing recognition of pecans as a nutrient-rich superfood, consumer awareness of their distinct flavor and culinary uses remains low. Even the Chinese translation for pecans is often confused with walnuts.

- **Hazelnuts: Niche Market with Moderate Growth Potential**

Hazelnuts are mainly used in snack nut mixes and bakery applications, especially as a chocolate complement. Imports grew 42 percent in 2024, but the total volume remains small, under 400 metric tons. Turkey is the only supplier of hazelnuts for the import record of 2024.

Distribution Channels

Sixty percent of imported tree nuts are used for snack processing, while 40 percent are utilized in bakeries, where they enhance texture, flavor, and decoration. Consumers purchase tree nuts in various forms, including:

- Bulk roasted shelled and in-shell nuts (open-air markets, grocery stores)
- Pocket-sized snack packs
- Premium gift boxes

However, rising bakery ingredient costs and a weaker bakery industry have led to reduced tree nut usage in baking, except in seasonal and festive items.

Consumption Trends

Since 2018, Taiwan's Ministry of Health and Welfare has promoted tree nuts as part of a balanced diet via [MyPlate](#). As a result, food manufacturers have successfully positioned tree nuts as a healthy snack. The core consumer base (45-74 years old) is health-conscious and willing to pay for premium tree nuts.

Taiwan’s aging population (officially entering an “elderly society²” in 2025) is expected to drive continued demand.

In the health-conscious Taiwanese market, there is a preference for lightly roasted tree nuts with less salt, emphasizing pure natural flavors for snack consumption. However, given the competitive healthy snack market, manufacturers are exploring new niches to expand product offerings and elevate product value. Some focus on nutrition, some experiment with novel flavors, while some position their products as luxurious, targeting gift-giving consumers. Post observes some emerging product innovations that presents opportunities for the U.S. tree nuts as value-added ingredients:



Nutrient-Packed Wellness Fusion:

Brown Rice Walnut Drinks. The Green and Safe retail chain offers a locally inspired brown rice milk, enriched with grains and walnuts for added nutrition and flavor.

(Photo Credit: Green and Safe Website)



Gourmet Fusion Indulgence for Gift-giving:

Date-wrapping Macadamia Nut Treats. [SHANG SHIN SELECT](#) promotes macadamia nuts as a luxury ingredient in premium gift-giving packaging.

(Photo credit: Shang Shin Select Website)

² According to statistics from the Ministry of the Interior, Taiwan’s aging population issue is becoming increasingly severe. As of January 2025, the number of people aged 65 and above has reached 4,508,419, accounting for 19.27 percent of the total population.



Novel Flavors:

Whisky-infused Walnuts and Pecans. New player [Flambe](#) appeal to younger, urban demographics seeking sophisticated snack options.
(Photo credit: Flambe Website)



Innovative Nut-Based Dips & Spreads:

[Hippidippi](#) caters to Taiwan's growing vegetarian/flexitarian population and health-conscious market by offering a diverse range of plant-based dips and spreads, some enriched with walnuts and pistachios for enhanced flavor and texture.
(Photo credit: Hippidippi Website)

Suggestions for U.S. Suppliers

The growth of U.S. tree nut demand depends on expanding their application beyond snacking and aligning with Taiwan's shifting demographics, particularly its aging and health-conscious consumers. To drive demand, ATO Taipei suggests the U.S. suppliers:

- **Educate the Trade on Versatility:** Promote tree nuts for food and beverage manufacturing, not just snacks and baking. Showcase successful U.S. products to inspire local adaptation.
- **Capitalize on Bakery & Seasonal Promotions:** Establish consistent marketing around a product that highlights U.S. tree nuts, making a lasting industry impact. For example, some importers have successfully marketed Galette des Rois (King's Cake), boosting demand for almonds and butter.
- **Expand into the Plant-Based Beverage Sector:** With Taiwan's vegetarian/flexitarian population and aging consumers driving demand, nut-based beverages offer an alternative to soymilk, a market valued at USD 120 million. Suppliers should emphasize nutritional advantages over soy and provide ready-to-use recipes to encourage adoption.

Regulatory Updates

Starting July 2024, Taiwan's FDA enforces a maximum cadmium level of 0.2 mg/kg for tree nuts. Suppliers should ensure compliance to avoid import disruptions.

Tariffs and Inspection Requirements

[Taiwan's Tariff Database Search System](#)

Other Information

[Taiwan: FAIRS Country Report Annual](#)

[Taiwan: New Consumers Embrace Plant-based Trends in Taiwan](#)

Contact Agricultural Trade Office Taipei

Office Hours: 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Telephone: (011-886-2)2705-6536

Fax: (011-886-2)2754-4031

Email-FAS: atotapei@usda.gov

Appendix

Exhibit 1. Taiwan Imports Volume of U.S. Tree Nuts (Calendar Year 2019-2024)

Unit: Ton, Source: Trade Data Monitor Data

Product	<u>Y2019</u>	<u>Y2020</u>	<u>Y2021</u>	<u>Y2022</u>	<u>Y2023</u>	<u>Y2024</u>	<u>'24 vs. '23 Change %</u>
Almonds	5,162	4,568	5,536	4,796	5,152	5,511	7%
Walnuts	3,774	3,407	4,087	4,705	3,496	4,175	19%
Cashews	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A
Pistachios	1,549	819	1,681	1,707	1,803	2,573	43%
Macadamia nuts	16	0	0	0	0	0	N/A
Hazelnuts	3	5	2	0	0	0	N/A
Pecans	403	269	456	479	239	457	91%
Total	10,907	9,068	11,762	11,687	10,690	12,716	19%

Exhibit 2. Taiwan Imports Value of U.S. Tree Nuts (Calendar Year 2019-2024)

Unit: USD Million, Source: Trade Data Monitor Data

Product	<u>Y2019</u>	<u>Y2020</u>	<u>Y2021</u>	<u>Y2022</u>	<u>Y2023</u>	<u>Y2024</u>	<u>'24 vs. '23 Change %</u>
Almonds	36.88	28.66	32.35	28.31	25.59	30.12	18%
Walnuts	22.99	22.63	23.63	28.86	15.17	20.59	36%
Cashews	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	N/A
Pistachios	14.37	7.52	14.36	14.69	14.64	20.88	43%
Macadamia nuts	0.03	0.04	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	N/A
Hazelnuts	0.35	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	N/A
Pecans	4.75	3.15	5.05	6.20	2.73	4.89	79%
Total	79.36	62.01	75.39	78.06	58.13	76.48	32%

Exhibit 3. Taiwan Imports Volume of Overall Tree Nuts (Calendar Year 2019-2024)*Unit: Ton, Source: Trade Data Monitor Data*

Product	<u>Y2019</u>	<u>Y2020</u>	<u>Y2021</u>	<u>Y2022</u>	<u>Y2023</u>	<u>Y2024</u>	<u>'24 vs. '23 Change %</u>
Almonds	5,275	4,622	5,538	4,833	5,155	5,530	7%
Walnuts	3,933	3,619	4,445	4,959	3,603	4,564	27%
Cashews	3,255	3,172	3,752	3,667	4,100	4,156	1%
Pistachios	3,897	3,327	3,708	1,830	1,821	2,617	44%
Macadamia nuts	838	762	948	914	1,102	1,562	42%
Hazelnuts	204	268	352	241	272	385	42%
Pecans	403	269	456	479	239	457	91%
Total	17,805	16,039	19,199	16,923	16,292	19,271	18%

Exhibit 4. Taiwan Imports Value of Overall Tree Nuts (Calendar Year 2019-2024)*Unit: USD Million, Source: Trade Data Monitor Data*

Product	<u>Y2019</u>	<u>Y2020</u>	<u>Y2021</u>	<u>Y2022</u>	<u>Y2023</u>	<u>Y2024</u>	<u>'24 vs. '23 Change %</u>
Almonds	37.71	29.07	32.37	28.59	25.63	30.22	18%
Walnuts	23.94	23.96	26.47	31.17	16.12	22.13	37%
Cashews	25.80	23.44	28.20	26.08	27.72	29.23	5%
Pistachios	17.75	11.58	18.93	15.94	14.90	21.64	45%
Macadamia nuts	15.37	13.91	16.46	12.79	9.76	16.02	64%
Hazelnuts	1.58	2.32	2.92	1.75	2.25	3.90	73%
Pecans	4.75	3.31	5.05	6.21	2.73	4.89	79%
Total	126.89	107.58	130.40	122.53	99.10	128.03	29%

Attachments:

No Attachments.