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India

Food Service - Hotel Restaurant Institutional

Dining Patterns Continue to Evolve Yet Remain Price Conscious

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Report Highlights:

India's foodservice sector continues to rise as the number of restaurant diners grows. The growth of household income fueled by the rise of dual-income households is making family vacations and dining out more accessible. Fast expansion of varied-format foodservice outlets are gaining popularity across major and emerging-market cities. Franchising remains the most popular growth model. Despite the trends, adoption of high-value imported ingredients, foods and beverages remains a challenge.

Post: New Delhi

Executive Summary: SECTION I: MARKET SUMMARY

General Economy and Policy Environment:

India has one of the world's fastest growing large economies and, by some estimates; India is projected to become the world's third largest economy by 2025. The Government of India (GOI) reports that the gross domestic product (GDP) is forecast to grow at 7-8 percent per annum over the next few years. However, the GDP rate for the first quarter of Indian Fiscal Year (April-March) 2017-18 was 5.7 percent. Which, although strong, was less than analysts expected and is attributed to India's demonetization of specific currency notes in November 2016 which led to a cash crunch and reduced purchasing which had ripple effects throughout the economy as factories slowed down, exports declined, and currency uncertainty persisted.

According to <u>World Bank's Doing Business 2017 report</u>, India was ranked 100th out of 190 countries. Despite efforts to improve business and trade, the GOI has not lowered tariffs or noticeably improved access for imported food and agricultural products over the past several years. On July 1, 2017, the GOI rolled out a nationwide Goods and Services Tax (GST), which replaced the existing state-by-state taxes and duties structure. In addition, the country's food safety authorities are looking at a move to more risk-based inspection of imported items. The "Make in India" program continues encouraging manufacturing development as a major goal.

India continues running a trade surplus in agricultural products. India's bulk, intermediate, consumeroriented, and agricultural related imports grew from \$23.1 billion in 2012 to \$26.9 billion in 2016. Imports of consumer-oriented foods, led by tree nuts, are among the fastest growing segment of imported agricultural products and reached \$4.2 billion in 2016. India's food and agricultural exports went from \$41.7 billion in 2012 to \$33.7 billion in 2016 owing largely to a decline in bulk and intermediate exports that dropped off owing to market conditions and weather-related issues that drove Indian agricultural product prices higher.

For an additional overview of the Indian agricultural market, read the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service International Agricultural Trade Report from October 2017: <u>Growing Opportunities for U.S.</u> <u>Agricultural Exports in India</u>.

Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional (HRI) Service Sector Overview:

India's HRI sector is benefiting from India's relatively strong economic growth, foreign investment, rise in dual income earning households, rising incomes, high aspiration levels, a young population, increasing tourism, and changing consumer consumption patterns. While opportunities for foreign food exporters to supply into the HRI sector are improving, the market for imported food products remains relatively small due to high tariffs, ongoing import restrictions, and strong competition from the domestic industry.

Table 1. India. Applicable 051, 1100	15
Hotels with Declared Tariff Lower than INR 1000	Nil
Hotels with Declared Tariff from INR 1000 to 2500	12 percent
Hotels with Declared Tariff from INR 2500 to 7500	18 percent
Hotels with Declared Tariff from INR 7500 and above	28 percent

Table 1: India: Applicable GST, Hotels

Non Air Conditioned restaurants without Liquor License	12 percent		
Air Conditioned (Heated) Restaurants with Liquor License	18 percent		
Air Conditioned Restaurants Located in 5-star and above Hotels 18 percent			
Small Restaurants with Turnover of INR 7.5 million can avail of 5 percent			
the composite scheme—with no in-put tax			
Banquets (Meetings/Social Functions/Conventions - where	18 percent		
substantial food is served)			

Table 2: India: Applicable GST, Restaurants

Source: GOI, Central Board of Excise and Customs and Federation of Hotels and Restaurant Association of India.

Hotels:

India has a vast hotel sector, but only a small percentage of hotels are considered three stars and above. The overwhelming majority of hotels are small, traditional outlets that provide inexpensive accommodations for travelers and source all of their food locally. According to the GOI, Ministry of Tourism, there are over 1903 hotels and resorts in India that constitute the "organized" or modern sector. Nevertheless, as foreign and domestic travel has increased in recent years, the number of modern hotels that carry at least small amounts of imported foods on their menus is on the rise. Furthermore, some hotels are able to obtain a special license that enables them to purchase food and beverage items (and other items such as equipment and furniture) duty-free subject to their foreign exchange earnings. Hotels tend to use the duty-free licenses to purchase items with the highest import tariffs and may not use the licenses to purchase food.

Restaurants:

Indians have tended to eat at home and the cuisine of choice has been traditional Indian foods. India appears to be in the early stages of a significant transformation in the restaurant sector and Indian consumers are dining out more frequently and shedding biases against international franchises and foreign foods. With an estimated 100,000 modern, organized restaurants (20 or more seats, wait staff, menus) in India, there is plenty of room for industry growth. As per the 2016 India food service report published by the National Restaurant Association of India (NRAI), the total food service market is valued at U.S. \$48.3 billion (INR 309,110 crores) and is expected to grow to U.S. \$77.8 billion (INR 498,130 crores) by 2021.

Institutional:

The institutional sector is geared in large part to serving public sector institutions such as the Indian railways and public office canteens. Corporate catering is a relatively new concept, but some large companies are providing meals to their employees at subsidized rates. Catering for parties and special events is a common and longstanding practice in India, but is dominated by traditional caterers providing local foods and cuisines. However, even traditional caterers have expanded their menus to

include live cooking stations, pasta bars and other non-Indian cuisines. Cost is a major factor in the institutional sector and the high cost of imported food products limits opportunities for exporters in this sector unless the product is perceived as exceptionally unique and affords the caterer a unique opportunity of product extension and application.

Factors Driving HRI Food Service Growth:

Foreign and Indian fast food and casual dining chains are increasing in number and existing chains are adding outlets. A significant weakening of the rupee over the past year and a half from INR 60 per dollar to in excess of INR 64 per dollar could prompt more Indians traveling within India (versus abroad) and encourage more foreign travelers to visit the country.

The following list outlines some factors expected to facilitate long-term growth:

- HRI chefs are keen to introduce new cuisines and culinary practices;
- Restaurants and hotels are "Indianizing" foods to better meet consumer preferences;
- The GOI safe food initiative (Surakshit Khadya Abhiyan) is intending to ensure quality food at all levels of the value chain;
- International hotel chains are penetrating the Indian market and bringing along new cuisine and dining experiences;
- The increasing number of shopping centers and shopping destinations make foodservice through retail a more preferred location;
- The growing trend for convenience in food courts and full-service restaurants in shopping centers;
- Dine-in locations expanding inside hypermarkets and supermarkets for easy access to attract consumers;
- Low-fare domestic airlines providing improved and more frequent travel service. Also, the airlines are offering in-flight menus with increasing opportunities for institutional operations;
- Rising numbers of dual earning households, increased urbanization, and a very young population are all expected to lead to lifestyle and eating pattern changes;
- Strong growth in casual dining and fast food sectors from both domestic and foreign chains which are introducing new dining options and foods;
- Increased competition is keeping costs "in check" and ensuring that firms are delivering value for money;
- Slowdown in global economy has led to an increase of domestic travelers opting for leisure destinations within India; and,
- Stable political scenario is expected to act as a catalyst in increased number of business and leisure travelers.

Tourism on the Rise

The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2016 published by the World Economic Forum ranked India 40 out of 136 countries. The World Travel and Tourism Council research forecasts India as one of the fastest growing destination for leisure travel spending between 2016 and 2026.

The number of Indian domestic tourist visits has increased dramatically since 1997, rising from less than 200 million to 1.6 billion in 2016. The rise reflects a variety of factors such as increased car

ownership; improved and less expensive domestic air travel; rising disposable incomes; improved accommodations; a strong rail network; high aspiration levels; increasing nuclear families; and, exposure to travel and tourism abroad. However; trade sources report that demonetization in November 2016 and implementation of the GST in July 2017 hurt the sector and will be visible when data is released for 2017.

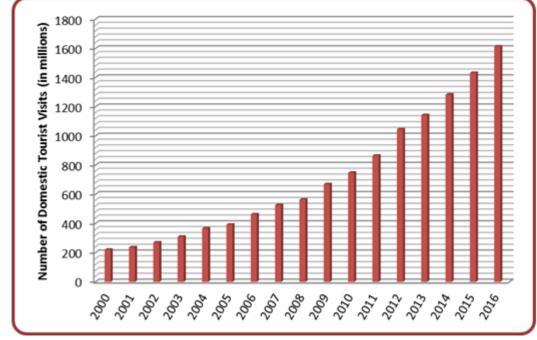
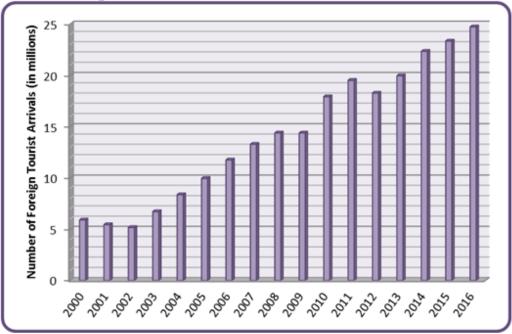


Figure 1: India: Number of Domestic Tourist Visits

Source: GOI, Ministry of Tourism

Foreign tourist and business arrivals have grown to 24.7 million in 2016, showing an annual growth of nearly 6 percent. The rapid growth and increased frequency of domestic air travel, ease of booking services via internet, increased number of travel service providers, and an improvement in the quality and number of hotels has fueled the rise and increased the number of travelers. India continues to market itself with the "Incredible India" promotion campaign (<u>www.incredibleindia.org</u>) and the "Atithi Devo Bhav" (Sanskrit for "the Guest is God") program which are designed to sensitize Indian stakeholders to the value of tourists and tourism.

Figure 2: India: Foreign Tourist Arrival



Source: GOI, Ministry of Tourism

ADVANTAGES	CHALLENGES			
• A growing tourism sector.	• Tariff and non- tariff restrictions.			
• Increasing urbanization and growing number of working women that has led to dual-income households.	Competition from countries with closer geographical proximity and freight advantage.			
• Expanding young population and increasing growth of fast food chains and casual dining restaurants.	• Developing food distribution infrastructure and a long and fragmented supply chain.			
• Growing popularity of American culture and foods. Many U.S. fast food franchisees are present in the market.	• Strong competition from the local suppliers including multinational food companies.			
• Eating out culture is growing among upper and upper middle class Indians along with a greater	• U.S. exporters' unwillingness to work with small volumes, consolidated shipments, and			

willingness to try new cuisines.	special labeling requirements.
• U.S. products generally have a good quality image among consumers.	 Specific labeling and clearing requirements and procedures.
• Strengthening economic ties between India and the United States.	Consumers' preference for traditional Indian food.
• The global economic downturn resulted in price sensitive domestic travelers opting for trips within India leading to increased demand for hotels.	• The Indian economy is challenged by year- long depreciation of rupee, stubborn inflation, and a looming fiscal deficit. Demonetization in November 2016 followed by recently implemented GST is also playing a role in poor attendance at the hotels and restaurants.

SECTION II: ROAD MAP FOR MARKET ENTRY

A. Entry Strategy:

- Determine if your product has market access.
- Make sure you understand India's varied food laws, particularly those pertaining to use of additives, labeling requirements, shelf life, and sanitary and phytosanitary regulations.
- Identify an Indian importer/distributor who services the HRI sector.
- Examine prospective candidates and thoroughly research the more promising ones. Check the potential agent's reputation through potential clients and bankers.
- Recognize that agents with fewer principals and a smaller set-up may be more adaptable and committed.
- Avoid conflicts of interest where a potential agent handles similar product lines from competing suppliers.
- Consider whether participating in an Indian trade show would be an effective means of identifying a distributor.
- Consider if partnering in USDA endorsed promotional activities would be an effective way to create market awareness.
- Survey other potential opportunities by reviewing FAS policy and market reports and consider engaging a market research firm to assist with opportunities and challenges.
- For products with a potentially longer shelf life and/or larger order volumes (e.g. from large hotel chains), consider whether operating through regional consolidators will allow your company to service the India market.

Ensuring payment is another important consideration when establishing a relationship with an importer. Until a successful working relationship is established, exporters may wish to consider vehicles such as an irrevocable Letter of Credit. Alternatively, Indian importers are accustomed to operating without credit and may be willing to pay prior to shipment. While FAS India receives a few notices concerning delinquent Indian importers, our offices do not have the authority to mediate contractual disputes or serve as a collection agent when differences over payment or other commercial issues arise. For information about local legal services, refer to <u>IN6155</u>, though most established trade members indicate these situations can be avoided with proper preparation and sale terms.

HRI Market for Imported Products:

The market for imported foods has grown slowly, though there is an increasing number of professional, brand-oriented importers that actively seek out customers in modern restaurant and hotel sectors. This suggests strong growth prospects, albeit from a small base. However, unique labeling requirements, ongoing non-tariff trade restrictions, a weaker rupee, and a slow-to-develop distribution infrastructure continue to complicate the import process.

Among modern hotels and restaurants, opportunities are typically for foods or ingredients that are not readily available in India. Even luxury hotels are very cost conscious and often seek to minimize food costs by using local ingredients. Among four and five-star hotels, imported products include wine, other alcoholic beverages, dairy products, meat, seafood, fruits, frozen French fries, sauces, seasonings, and condiments, drink mixes, and ingredients for foreign cuisines such as Italian, Thai, Japanese, Chinese, Peruvian, Mexican, and Spanish. Some specialty items and ingredients that cannot be sourced in India are imported and few imported food products are incorporated on menus.

Regional trading hubs such as Dubai and Singapore remain important suppliers to the Indian market. The import process continues to be complex and relatively costly. Consequently, hotels and restaurants typically source their products from local importers and distributors who have the expertise in clearing, storing, and transporting products. Most hotel chains purchase through centralized procurement offices on annual contracts with local importers, ordering small quantities of food products as needed and minimizing food storage at hotels. Restaurants also rely on local distributors for their needs and some require importers to become an approved supplier.

A. Market Structure:

Hotels and restaurants, depending on their procurement systems, generally buy imported food and beverage products from alternate distribution chains and dedicated importers based on the type of products and the volume of the consignment. Most hotel brands report that their focus is on their core competencies and prefer buying from importers and distributors rather than take on the challenge of navigating India's import system. With the rise of chain restaurants, modern companies specializing in the handling of food have emerged, also. These firms are equipped to comply with rigorous temperature and quality specifications on behalf of their clients and offer modern warehousing and transportation facilities. Some, too, may keep imported products in bond and then deliver on an as-needed or routine basis.

The following flow chart gives an overview of the distribution network for imported food for hotel and restaurant sector buyers.

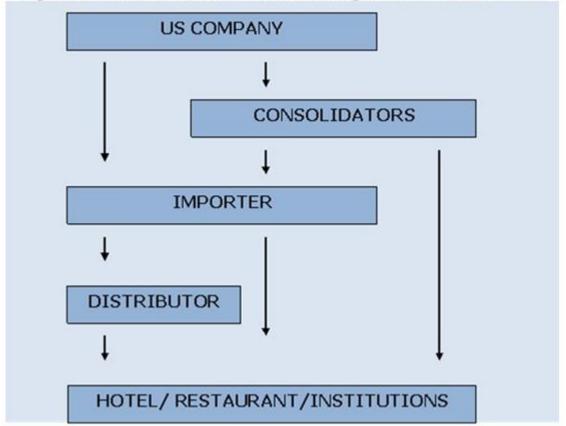


Figure 3. India: Flow Chart of Food and Beverage Food Service Distribution

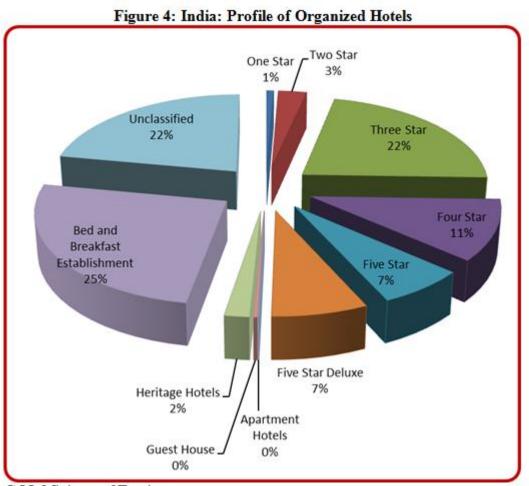
C. Sub – Sector Profiles

Hotels and Resorts:

According to GOI's Ministry of Tourism, there are around 1903 hotels and resorts in India that constitute the "organized" or modern sector. Most of these hotels are in larger cities and major tourist or business destinations. India has several world class domestic hotel chains and several international chains have established a presence through franchising or partnerships with Indian firms. These branded hotels are mostly in the premium segment (5 star/5 star deluxe/heritage) and mid-range segments (3 and 4 star), which cater to business and leisure travelers. With the rise in tourism (destination weddings, eco-tourism, etc.) and business travel, several international brands are exploring the possibility of expanding further in tier 2 and tier 3 cities.

The GOI is providing incentives to stimulate the construction of new hotels in order to match tourism sector growth. The incentives include a five-year tax holiday for 2-, 3- and 4-star category hotels located in UNESCO declared World Heritage sites (Except Mumbai and Delhi), 100 percent FDI control, and

credit at reduced interest rates. Most of the international hotel brands operating in India are not investing in the physical property, but following an operate-only model where brands bring in their resources, systems, processes and marketing.



Source: GOI, Ministry of Tourism

Imported food and alcoholic beverage products destined for the hotel sector are primarily sold to the luxury hotel segment (three star and above). The Indian wine industry estimates that half of all wine imports enter India via the hotel sector's duty-free exemption. The GOI has a special initiative termed the Service Exports from India Scheme (SEIS) under the Foreign Trade Policy 2015-20. Luxury hotels and service providers are entitled to a transferable duty credit, equivalent to 3 percent of their net foreign exchange earnings over the previous financial year, which may be used to import food items, alcoholic beverages, and capital goods.

Most hotels purchase imported food and beverages from Indian firms that import and distribute food products. However, some of the larger hotel chains procure via consolidators based in Dubai, Singapore, and Bangkok. Indian importers typically import mixed containers and offer a range of products. Hotels often deal with multiple importers in order to get the desired range of imported foods. Exporters seeking to access the Indian hotel market should identify an importer that specializes in

distributing to hotels and be prepared to offer small quantities of products or mixed containers.

Over the past five years, India has been touted as a wine market with tremendous potential which has attracted interest from wine suppliers from around the world. While the development of the industry has proceeded more slowly than forecast, many wine exporters are competing to supply the relatively small hotel market, making it difficult to establish a relationship with existing importers who already carry a range of foreign wines.

Restaurants:

A large percentage of the restaurant sector in India is "unorganized" where small restaurants and streetside stalls are common. According to information from the Federation of Hotels and Restaurant Associations of India, there are approximately 100,000 restaurants in the "organized" or modern sector, which is defined as restaurants with more than twenty seats and a restaurant menu. Indians tend to prefer multi-cuisine restaurants where a family or group can order a range of different cuisines, a typical multi-cuisine restaurant might serve Chinese, various regional Indian dishes, and European-style foods. That trend is changing as restaurants serving a single cuisine are becoming increasingly popular. International fast food and local multi-unit restaurant groups are driving the expansion in the restaurant industry. South India is emerging as a key region for growth of multi-unit chains that supply reasonably-priced ethnic food with a quick-service concept. While standalone locations dominate, higher rents and increasing costs are forcing food operators to venture into new avenues to drive sales.

Most foreign and local chains are doing well in major cities, and are expanding into mid-sized Indian cities referred to as tier-two and tier-three cities. Many of these fast food chains have developed a range of Indian styled products to suit local taste preferences. Although these chains procure most of their products locally, several products such as French fries, specialty cheeses, some meats and seafood, flavors, condiments/sauces, and other ingredients are often imported.

CDRs, QSRs, and Home Delivery Expanding their Footprint and Offering and Experience Refer to GAIN report IN7160 – Restaurant Sector Growing Back on Course

Cafés, Bars and Pubs Outlets Growing as Consumer Demand Increases

The growth of cafes is driven by many factors; including, favorable demographics, rising income levels, the development of mid-sized cities and the advent of international chains. A growing willingness, especially among the youth, to consume food and drink outside the home and increasing disposable incomes are helping to fuel further growth. Cafés are considered perfect places to socialize and hangout; hence, sales of this category are driven by the younger and working generation. The population segment aged 15 to 34 is the target demographic that visits cafés/bars frequently and the legal age for alcohol consumption in India is 25 years. Young people also prefer to drink on-site and socialize rather than take products away.

Bar and pub growth is associated with rising disposable incomes, a greater population of younger people reaching legal drinking age, growth of consumers in smaller towns, and widening exposure to pub culture. Bars and pubs make a major proportion of their revenue from drinks but most serve meals or snacks. Brew pubs featuring craft products are a new concept that is appearing across several big cities and slowly gaining popularity. Franchising continues to be one of the most popular ways of expanding amongst cafés/bars players.

Institutional:

The institutional food service sector includes catering services for the armed services, railways, ships, airlines, hospitals, schools, government meal programs, prisons, and government and corporate offices. The leading hotel chains and a few corporate caterers provide catering services to the airlines and for higher-end corporate and private events. Cost is a major consideration and catering companies procure most of their food and beverage requirements from domestic sources. To the extent that caterers utilize imported foods, they commonly source from local firms that import and distribute foreign foods and ingredients.

SECTION III: COMPETITION

India's domestic industry is the primary competitor for U.S. food ingredient providers. India, with its diverse climatic conditions, produces a variety of foods and ingredients at prices below most imported products or products made from imported ingredients. The quality is improving steadily, too. In addition, many third-country competitors enjoy a freight advantage and can supply at lower costs. Too, consolidators in markets like Dubai and Singapore offer quick delivery of small quantities; including for ingredients that originated from the United States. High import duties and restrictions on a number of imported raw materials pose additional challenges for direct U.S. exports to the market.

Product Category	Total Imports (In \$ Million) CY 2016	Major Supply Sources	Strengths of Key Supply Countries	Advantages (A) and Disadvantages (D) of Local Suppliers
Animal or Vegetable Oils, Fats and their products	10,514	Indonesia Malaysia Argentina Ukraine	Major production hubs and competitive prices	Local production is inadequate and more than 40 percent of total edible oil consumption is dependent on imports.(A)
Leguminous Vegetables, Dried Shelled/Pulses	4,014	Canada Myanmar Australia USA Tanzania	Price competitiveness, freight advantage and the ability to produce specific kinds of pulses demanded in India.	Local production is inadequate and more than 20% of total demand for pulses is met through imports.(A)
Edible Fruits and Nuts	2,808	USA Côte d'Ivoire Guinea- Bissau Tanzania Afghanistan	Growing market demand, preference for specific quality, popular at certain holidays	Domestic production of some of the major fruits and nuts is insignificant (A)
Sugars and sugar	1,013	Brazil	Price competitiveness	India is usually a net

confectionery		Germany USA Netherlands		exporter of sugar (D)
Coffee, Tea, Mate And Spices	760	Vietnam Indonesia Sri Lanka Nepal	Price competiveness and proximity	Most imports are for re- export (D)
Dairy; birds' eggs; natural honey; edible prod. of animal origin	42	France New Zealand Uganda Denmark	Price competiveness, sanitary requirements	Domestic production is not keeping pace with demand (A). The Indian import protocol is very stringent and effectively prohibits imports of many products from the United States. (D)

Source: Ministry of Commerce and Industries and FAS India analysis

SECTION IV: BEST PRODUCT PROSPECTS

Table 5: India: Products Present in the Market Which Have Good Sales Potential

Product Types	Import Value (\$ Million) CY 2016	Import Volume (Metric Tons) CY 2016	5–yr. Impor t growt h by value (in %)	Basic Import Tariff	Key Constraints	Market Attractivenes s For USA
Tree Nuts (mainly Almonds and walnuts)*	1,066	200,384	18	In shell Almond (Rs. 35/ Kg) Pistachi o (10%)	Competition from other suppliers exists but is not substantial	High demand and growing retail industry
Cocoa and Cocoa Preparations	205	53,715	10	30%	Strong competition from domestic and international suppliers	Strong quality and brand preference
Leguminous Vegetables, Dried Shelled/Pulse s	3,613	5,414,320	12	30% to 50%	Price competitiveness , freight advantage and the ability to produce	Local production is inadequate and more than 20% of total demand for

Applag Deere	236	215,676	10		specific kind of pulses demanded in India. Competition	pulses is met through imports. Seasonal
Apples, Pears and Quinces Fresh	230	213,070		Apples 50% Pears 30%	from domestic and foreign suppliers like Chile, and New Zealand	seasonal shortages and high prices, increasing interest in quality fruits and growth of organized retail
Grapes Fresh or Dried	66	202,259	21	30%	Competition from domestic and foreign suppliers	Seasonal shortages and high prices, increasing interest in quality fruits and growth of organized retail
Fruit Juices	33	20,542 liters	3	30%	Competition from domestic manufactures and foreign suppliers from neighboring countries	Increasing health awareness and shortage of quality products
Beverages, Spirits and Vinegar	569	392,140,30 2 liters	16	150%	High import duty	Growing consumption and lack of domestic production

*Includes almonds, walnuts, pistachios, hazelnuts, chestnuts etc. Source: Ministry of Commerce and Industry, GOI and Post analysis

Products Not Present Because They Face Significant Barriers

Currently, there are several trade restrictions that limit market access for U.S. food products. Imports of most animal and livestock-derived food products are effectively banned due to established Indian import requirements. This includes certain sub-categories in the Harmonized Tariff Schedule under Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 16 and 21 (e.g., milk and dairy products, poultry meat, certain seafood, sheep and goat products, as well as pork products and pet food). Furthermore, imports of beef are banned due to religious concerns. If allowed, some of these products (e.g., cheeses and poultry) may have good sales potential for the food processing and retail sectors and may also have potential strong market potential in the HRI sector.

Effective July 8, 2006, the Government of India's (GOI) Foreign Trade Policy (2004-2009) specified that all imports containing products of modern biotechnology must have prior approval from the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC), Ministry of Environment and Forests. The policy also made a biotech declaration mandatory. Soybean oil and canola oil derived from select events are the only biotech food/agricultural product currently approved for import. For more information on India's biotech import policy, please see –IN7135 Agricultural Biotechnology Annual 2017.

SECTION V. POST CONTACT AND FURTHER INFORMATION

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The following reports may be of interest to U.S. exporters. These, and related reports, can be accessed via the FAS Home Page: <u>www.fas.usda.gov</u> by clicking on "Data & Analysis" and then selecting GAIN reports and choosing the "search reports" function.

Report Number	Subject
IN 7155	Exporter Guide- 2017
IN 7150	Food Processing Ingredients 2017
IN 7151	Retail Foods 2017
IN 7152	Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards – Narrative
IN 7135	Agricultural Biotechnology Annual 2017
IN 7153	India Food and Agricultural Trade Show Calendar 2017
IN 7160	Restaurant Sector Growing Back on Course