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Report Highlights:

This report outlines the conditions facing Colombia's food and beverage industry, highlighting its 7 percent growth. Consumer habits and preferences continue to evolve, opening opportunities for healthy and sustainable food products. Food price inflation reached 28 percent in 2022, challenging Colombia's economic recovery. In 2022, the United States exported \$3.8 billion in agricultural products to Colombia, which secured its position as Colombia's top supplier of food and agricultural products.

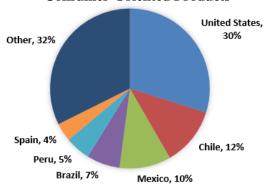
Market Fact Sheet: Colombia

Executive Summary: Colombia is the leading destination for U.S. agricultural exports in South America, followed by Chile and Peru. In 2022, U.S. agricultural exports to Colombia were valued at \$3.8 billion.

Imports of Consumer-Oriented Products:

In 2022, Colombian imports of consumer-oriented products from all suppliers increased 20 percent to \$2.8 billion due to economic growth. In 2022, Colombian imports from the United States grew 7.7 percent to \$849 million, followed by Chile (\$335 million) and Mexico (\$297 million). Consumer-oriented products account for 26 percent of U.S. food and agricultural exports to Colombia.

Top Sources of 2022 Colombian Imports of Consumer-Oriented Products



Source: Trade Data Monitor

Food Processing Industry: Colombia is a net importer of many food ingredients. There is growing domestic demand for healthier confectionary products. The Colombian fats and oils sector imports unrefined soybean oil and other oil seeds to meet industrial demand. The milling, bakery, and starches sectors have benefited from innovation in flavors and healthier ingredients.

Food Retail Industry: Although hard-discounters' market share decreased in 2022 (from 33 to 24 percent) due to the bankruptcy of Justo & Bueno, it is expected to recover due to new market entrants. E-commerce continues consolidating thanks to rapid digital adoption among Colombians. Retail Industry GAIN Report

Food Service Industry: In 2022, the sector benefited from tax exemptions and experienced a recovery after low sales in 2020 and 2021. However, these benefits ended, and higher taxes and inflation rates are expected to impact food service sales. Food Service Industry GAIN Report

Population: 51.6 million (2022) **GDP:** \$342.92 billion (2022) **GDP per capita:** \$6,644 (2022)

Top 10 Main Consumer-Oriented Products Imported by Colombia from the World (millions of dollars):

Description	2021	2022	Change
Dairy products	\$283	\$397	40%
Pork & pork products	\$301	\$314	4%
Soup & food preparations	\$257	\$302	18%
Distilled spirits	\$158	\$201	27%
Processed vegetables	\$140	\$198	42%
Fresh fruit	\$168	\$180	7%
Bakery goods, cereals, pasta	\$115	\$148	28%
Tobaco	\$106	\$121	13%
Dog & cat food	\$89	\$118	32%
Poultry meat and products (exc. Eggs)	\$122	\$110	-10%

Source: Trade Data Monitor

Strengths	Weaknesses
 Growing demand for 	• Deficient infrastructure
consumer-oriented	 Political and economic
products	uncertainty
 Diverse retail market 	-
Opportunities	Challenges
 Growing middle class 	 Technical food
 Decentralized country 	regulation compliance
• Four ports	Peso depreciation

Top 5 Food Manufacturers		
Grupo Nutresa	<u>Colanta</u>	
<u>Alpina</u>	<u>Colombina</u>	
Nestlé de Colombia		

Sources: Trade Data Monitor, World Bank, Global Agricultural Trade System, Euromonitor, DANE, IMF, various online sources. For additional information, contact agbogota@usda.gov

SECTION 1: MARKET SUMMARY

According to the <u>Colombian Department of Statistics (DANE)</u>, Colombia's gross domestic product (GDP) increased 7.5 percent in 2022. The <u>Colombian Central Bank (Banrep)</u> predicts that Colombia's economic recovery will slow to 0.2 percent GDP growth in 2023, figures that could continue being revised downward on lower private consumption levels, higher interest rates, growing inflation, and general uncertainty from the new Colombian administration's recent tax reform and upcoming changes in labor and pension systems.

Colombia is the third most populous country in Latin America with 51 million inhabitants. Eighty percent of the Colombian population resides in urban areas. Colombia is atypical of Latin America with decentralized urban centers and five cities with over one million residents: Bogota, Medellin, Cali, Barranquilla, and Cartagena. Urbanization is on an upward trajectory, stimulating changes in lifestyles and eating patterns.

In recent years, urban households in Colombia are becoming dual income, resulting in an increasing demand for processed food and shopping convenience. In Bogota, the average household was 3.1 members in 2019, and it is expected to be only 2.2 members by 2050. The population is aging as birth rates decrease, and life expectancy increases. Venezuelan immigration is another key demographic trend. The Colombian government estimates that over two million Venezuelans live in Colombia. They influence the consumption of main food staples such as beans, rice, and corn flour.

Main consumer trends can be summarized as follows:

- Higher brand food product price sensitivity leaves room for private labels. Favorite private label products are milk, vegetable oil, and rice.
- Rising health and environmental awareness translates into opportunities for healthy and sustainable food products.
- Growing interest in plant-based food products has opened a niche market that is on the rise. Although these products are perceived as expensive, 93 percent of Colombians are interested in trying plant-based food products, as they are considered healthier, more nutritious, and environmentally friendly.
- Preference for high-protein and calcium content products has encouraged demand for meat and dairy products.

The <u>Food Service GAIN Report</u> and the <u>Retail Food GAIN Report</u> provide data and analysis on Colombian food trends.

Table 1. Advantages and Challenges for U.S. Exporters

Tuble 1. Havantages and chancinges for e	S. Exporters
Advantages	Challenges
The U.SColombia Trade Promotion	Colombia has trade agreements with many other
Agreement (CTPA) provides preferential	countries, increasing competition with U.S.
product treatment for many agricultural goods.	products.
The United States holds a reputation for	Colombian per capita consumption for processed
producing high quality agricultural products.	and semi-processed products is low; for example,
	bread consumption is only 22 kg per year, low
	compared to other Latin American markets.
Increased acceptance of American style	Depreciation of the Colombian peso affects U.S.
restaurants provides an avenue for introducing	export competitiveness.
U.S. recipes and food ingredients into the	

Colombian diet.	
Growing tourism increases demand for raw	There is a cultural misperception that frozen
materials and ingredients to make products more	products are unhealthy and lack quality.
appealing to foreigners and domestic	
consumers.	
Growing urbanization of Colombian cities is	Internal transportation costs from ports of entry
stimulating new consumer trends and an	are high due to extremely poor infrastructure.
increase in processed foods.	
Market opportunities for health foods and	Cold chain is deficient and increases logistical
organic products are expanding given	costs.
government support for healthy living	
campaigns.	
U.S. food suppliers and manufacturers have a	The new administration campaigned on
positive reputation for food safety, availability,	renegotiating the CTPA to protect domestic
quality, and delivery.	agriculture and manufacturing.

SECTION 2: ROAD MAP FOR MARKET ENTRY Entry Strategy

Any U.S. exporter entering the Colombian market should understand customer needs and their purchasing requirements and specifications. Additionally, they must understand all Colombian standards and regulations to avoid clearance delays at ports of entry. Critical considerations for market entry include the following:

- Competition is based on quality, price, and service;
- Conduct market research to better understand competitors, consumer preferences, and the business environment;
- Build relationships with large importers and wholesalers/distributors;
- Highlight social responsibility in marketing techniques by using sales to generate funding for social programs;
- Develop ways to meet the needs of the Colombian market, ideally through personal visits, to have a greater understanding about the market and identify needs of buyers and developing trends;
- Consider consolidation when exporting small amounts of product;
- Develop business relationships with top executives (marketing directors, purchasing managers, etc.) and expose them to U.S. business practices;
- Participate in local trade and promotion shows, as well as food festivals, such as <u>Agroexpo</u>,
 <u>Alimentec</u>, <u>Expovinos</u>, <u>SaborBarranquilla</u>, and <u>Expo IAlimentos</u>, to learn about consumer trends;
- Participate in trade delegations;
- Attend trade events in the United States like the <u>National Restaurant Association Show</u>, the <u>Sweets and Snacks Expo</u>, or the <u>Americas Food and Beverage Show</u>, which provide opportunities to meet and educate Colombian importers;
- Develop Spanish marketing/communication materials:
- Work closely with local importers to comply with food import regulations to facilitate the registration and import of food products and minimize port of entry risks; and,
- Support the importer with promotional campaigns.

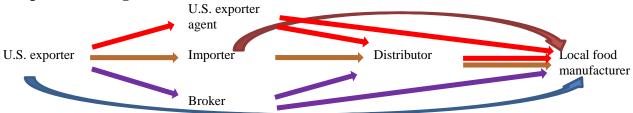
For more information on doing business in Colombia, see the Colombia Country Commercial Guide.

Import Procedure: The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism (MINCIT) and the National Tax and Customs Directorate (DIAN) are responsible for the administration of overall import-export operations and customs procedures, respectively. Colombian importers must be registered with MINCIT. All U.S. exporters should verify that the importer has obtained the legal authorization from MINCIT to import food and agricultural products and, depending on the type of product to be imported, other government authorities, including the Colombian Institute for Agriculture and Livestock (ICA) and the National Institute for the Surveillance of Food and Medicines (INVIMA).

ICA has the regulatory authority over production, manufacturing, and use of agricultural inputs, feed, feed ingredients and non-processed agricultural commodities. INVIMA is the regulatory authority responsible for regulating food safety and sanitary conditions of products sold, directly or indirectly, for human consumption. More information on Colombia's import procedure is available in the FAIRS report.

Distribution Channels: Depending on the Colombian food manufacturer's size and the product, U.S. food ingredients move from the exporter through an agent, importer, broker, and distributor, or go directly to the food producer.

Graph 1. Food Ingredient Distribution Channels

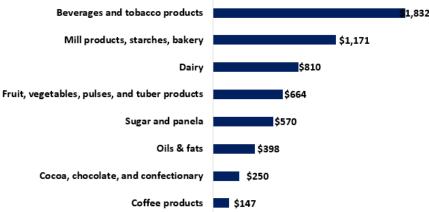


Market Structure: The Colombian food and beverage industry production represents 27 percent of the country's total manufacturing by value. According to DANE, the food industry grew 7 percent in 2022. The following sectors showed remarkable growth performance in 2021: cocoa, chocolate, and confectionary (16%), beverages and tobacco (12%), fruit, vegetable, pulses, and tuber products (11%), and mill products, starches, and bakery (10%). As seen in Chart 3, the beverages and tobacco and mill and bakery sectors represent the largest share in Colombian food industry production.

Food expenditures represented 39 percent of Colombian household incomes in 2022. Meat, dairy, and bakery products were the most consumed (a third of the total).

In recent years, the Colombian food industry has undergone unprecedented consolidation and structural change through mergers, acquisitions, divestitures, and the entrance of new foreign competitors in the market. Distribution channels have become more efficient with the increased presence of foreign competitors. COVID-19 challenged food manufacturers that adapted by developing channels to communicate directly with end consumers.

Graph 2. Colombian food sector production value (millions of dollars), 2022



Source: DANE

Company Profiles: Table 2 provides information about several large and medium-sized food manufacturing and processing companies in Colombia that are current or potential buyers of U.S. food and agricultural products.

Table 2. Colombian food manufacturing and processing companies

Company	Production	End-Use channels	Procurement
Grupo Nutresa	Cold cuts, snacks, cookies, crackers, confectionary products, coffee, pasta, and ice cream	Wholesaler and retailer	Direct
<u>Colanta</u>	Dairy products, refreshments, cold cuts, wine, bottled water	Wholesaler and retailer	Direct and brokers
<u>Alpina</u>	Dairy products, juices, almond milk	Wholesaler and retailer	Direct and brokers
<u>Colombina</u>	Confectionary products, juices, sauces, cookies and crackers, ice cream, coffee, olive oil, snacks	Wholesaler and retailer	Direct and brokers
<u>Nestlé de</u> <u>Colombia</u>	Cookies, crackers, confectionary products, coffee, baby formula, powder milk, breakfast cereal, tea, chicken base	Wholesaler, foodservice, and retailer	Direct
Pepsico Colombia	Snacks, soft drinks	Wholesaler and retailer	Direct
Harinera del Valle	Corn and wheat flours, crackers and cookies, pasta, sunflower, canola, olive and vegetable oils, brownies, cake and pancake mixes, sauces, wraps, balsamic and white vinegars, margarines	Wholesaler and retailer	Direct and brokers
Ingredion	Starches, flours, fruit and vegetable concentrates, extracts, sweeteners, proteins	Food industry, wholesaler, and retailer	Direct and brokers
Alimentos Polar	Soft drinks, flours, oils, margarine, pet food, and breakfast cereals	Wholesaler and retailer	Direct and brokers
Alianza Team	Vegetable oils and fats	Wholesaler, foodservice, and retailer	Direct
<u>Levapan</u>	Flour, raisins, prunes, almonds, peanuts, sesame seeds, fats, jams, starches, sauces, jelly, vinegar, baby food, canned vegetables, juices, baking soda, color additives, flavors	Food service	Direct and brokers

Sector Trends

- Drivers of consumer food purchasing decisions are necessity (37 percent), taste (17 percent), quality (14 percent), tradition (11 percent), price (9 percent), impulse (8 percent), and promotion (1 percent).
- Bogota represents 34 percent of the food market, followed by Medellin (11 percent), Cali (8 percent), and Barranquilla (5 percent).
- The upward trends in food and beverage prices will continue in 2023. According to DANE, the food and non-alcoholic beverages inflation rate reached 27.81 percent in 2022. Tubers (110 percent), onions (107 percent), and cassava (88 percent) were the products with the highest price growth. More information is available at 2022 Inflation Rate
- Preferred outlets to buy food depend on consumer age. Baby boomers favor mom-and-pops (44 percent), supermarkets (28 percent), and hard discounters (13 percent). Generation X prefers mom-and-pops (54 percent), supermarkets (21 percent), and hard discounters (14 percent). Millennials favor mom-and-pops (58 percent), supermarkets (19 percent), and hard discounters (14 percent). Centennials prefer mom-and-pops (71 percent), supermarkets (13 percent), and hard discounters (7 percent).

Sauces, Dressings and Condiments: There are two main trends in this sub-sector: brand penetration and innovation in products and product packaging. Consumers are buying more branded products based on uniform quality at reasonable prices. In general, Colombian consumers are loyal to traditional brands and demand healthier products, such as low fat sauces (canola and olive oil mayonnaise), sauces for Asian food preparations (soy and teriyaki sauce and BB-Q sauce for ribs), and sauces free of preservatives and artificial flavors/colorants. Although ketchup continues to be the preferred sauce, mayonnaise, mustard, ranch, and other sauces have gained presence in the market. Unilever is the leading company in this category, followed by Quala and Nestle.

Canned / Preserved Food: This category is increasing in popularity due to urbanization, income shifts, and convenience. For canned goods, Colombians are primarily consumers of canned tuna, but the market for other canned/preserved products, such as meat, beans, tomatoes, and soups is expanding. New competitors have arrived in the market, offering a wide variety of products according to price and packaging needs. Seatech International is the leading canned/preserved food company.

Frozen Processed Food: Although consumers perceive frozen food as unhealthy and over processed, urbanization and dual income households have expanded the market for frozen meals, meat, fruits, and vegetables. Frozen processed potatoes, frozen ready to eat meals, frozen pizza and frozen vegetables are the most preferred products. Market opportunities for these products are mostly for the institutional sector and target single-person households. <u>Grupo Nutresa</u> has a wide portfolio of frozen processed food products, including potatoes, pizza, chicken nuggets, and hamburgers.

Dairy: Colombian dairy imports are mostly cream, whey protein, milk powder and other product ingredients, such as casein. Domestic consumption of dairy products has increased due to promotional efforts that appeal to changes in consumption patterns because of urbanization and income shifts. Consumers prefer fresh cheese, which is available in modern retail and mostly in wet markets and mom & pop stores due to its artisanal production. Even though hard cheese is seen as expensive, retailers like PriceSmart, D1 and, Jumbo introduce different cheese varieties and are key for educating consumers about this product. Colombian milk production reached 7,821 million liters (2,066 million gallons) in 2021; however, this sector is mostly informal. The dairy manufacturing sector in Colombia

includes domestic and multinational companies, such as <u>Nestle</u>, <u>Parmalat</u> and <u>Danone</u>, and domestic brands include Colanta, Alpina, and Alqueria.

Bakery: Bread consumption per capita is still low at 22 kilograms (48 pounds), compared to other Latin American countries, such as Chile (98 kilograms/216 pounds), Argentina (82 kilograms/180 pounds) and Uruguay (55 kilograms/121 pounds). There is a perception among Colombians that bread is not nutritional and is related to weight-gain. In addition, there is a lack of innovation in the bakery sector, although high-end, gourmet bakeries have increased in popularity where most ingredients are sourced internationally. Typical bakeries are small, family businesses, which manufacture about 40 percent of bread production throughout the country. Although only 20 percent is sold by retailers that offer branded and private label products, their market share continues increasing due to product and packaging innovation.

These companies produce various types of bread products that differ from traditional bakeries and specialize in buns for hamburgers and hot dogs, in addition to sliced bread, toasts, cakes and brownies. They have launched new products such as artisanal bread and bread with grains and seeds to appeal to consumers looking for healthier products.

Chilled Processed Food: Chilled meat and poultry products are in high demand in urban areas. According to Euromonitor, most of the Colombian chilled processed food market is in processed meats or poultry, and a minor share for chilled ready-to-eat meals; however, preference for chilled processed food has always been higher than for frozen products. Mexican, Italian, and Chinese preparations are preferred by consumers when buying ready-to-eat-meals. Grupo Nutresa leads in this category with 60 percent market share.

Oils and Fats: Colombia is a major producer of palm oil. Olive oil and rapeseed oil have shown growth in sales due to increasing consumer preference for healthier oils. Private label is an interesting alternative to penetrate the market, not only for hard discounters, but also for retailers. Hard discounters have introduced cheaper olive oil brands, benefiting their market share; however, consumers associate this oil only with salads. <u>Alianza Team</u> leads the sector, offering soybean, sunflower, and olive oil, followed by <u>Grasco</u> with sunflower and corn oil, and margarine.

Confectionery: This industry is an economic engine in Colombia, generating more than 25,000 jobs with a strong history of production and exports. The sector regularly sources raw materials from foreign suppliers, including dairy products and glucose. Although the sector has made efforts to innovate and offers a greater variety of candies and chocolates for consumers looking for low sugar alternatives, competition from imports is strong. COVID-19 affected sales in two ways: 1) an increased concern in adopting healthier lifestyles, and 2) decreased opportunities to impulse buy, to street vendors and vendor machines. Two domestic firms, <u>Grupo Nutresa</u> and <u>Colombina</u>, lead the sector over multinationals, such as <u>Ferrero</u> and <u>Nestlé</u>.

Beverages: The beverage sector has expanded focusing on flavored water and teas. Innovation in packaging has been crucial for influencing soft drinks consumption, especially water. Per capita consumption of non-alcoholic beverages is 131.4 liters (34.71 gallons) per year, slightly lower than

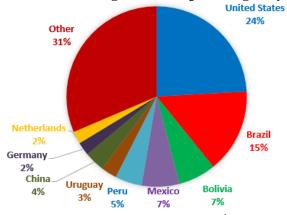
neighboring countries. The preferred beverages are sodas and bottled water. <u>Postobon</u> (domestic firm) and <u>Femsa</u> (Coca Cola) lead the sector.

Women are an important niche market for alcoholic beverages, demanding more sophisticated drinks and flavors. Beer is the most highly preferred alcoholic beverage. Per capita beer consumption has increased to 55 liters per year (14.5 gallons), due to new consumption occasions, making beer a daily beverage. Wine sales have grown in recent years due to income shifts and urbanization. The main wine suppliers remain Argentina and Chile. *Aguardiente* is the national liquor and is only produced by monopolistic public/private ventures in specific regions of the country. The primary source of whisky is the United Kingdom, although consumer interest in U.S. whiskeys and bourbons is growing.

SECTION 3: COMPETITION

- U.S. competitors for raw materials include MERCOSUR, Canada, and the European Union. These countries/markets also have free trade agreements with Colombia. The U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement (CTPA) entered into force in May 2012. This comprehensive trade agreement eliminated tariffs and other barriers to goods and services. Although over 80 percent of U.S. exports of consumer and industrial products to Colombia are classified as duty-free, the CTPA provides a duty-free tariff-rate-quota (TRQ) on certain goods that operate under a first come/first serve basis. Notable exceptions to the CTPA include rice and poultry, which are subject to auctions managed by Export Trading Companies (ETC). Additional information on these two exceptions is available at the links provided: Colombia Poultry Export Quota and Colombia Rice Export Quota.
- U.S. competitors for raw materials include MERCOSUR, Canada, and the European Union. These countries/markets also have free trade agreements with Colombia. For more information on Colombia's free trade agreements and current negotiations, please see FTAs Colombia
- Colombian consumers have become increasingly protectionist following the COVID-19 pandemic and recent demonstrations. This change encourages consumers to purchase products made domestically.

More information on Colombia's policy issues affecting U.S. product competitiveness is available at <u>FAIRS</u>.



Graph 3. Colombian food ingredient import origin by country, 2022

Source: Trade Data Monitor¹

¹ Products included: milk powder; thickener; protein concentrate; other processed food, ingredients, and beverage bases; flavoring; baking inputs, mixes, and doughs; sugars and sweeteners, dextrins, peptones, and proteins.

SECTION 4: BEST PRODUCT PROSPECTS

U.S. Agricultural Product Market Potential: Colombia is a fast-growing market for value-added food products. Surveyed retailers and food importers feel there is significant potential for new products in all food categories. Healthy food categories are especially new and fast growing. Organic food products are a growing trend, and retailers are searching for the best suppliers. Table 3 shows categories that represent some major export and emerging opportunities for food ingredients to Colombia, based on 2018-2022 Colombian import growth rates:

Table 3. Export opportunities for food ingredients to Colombia

Product	_	2018-2022 average annual import growth	Duty under CTPA	2022 Main supplier countries (share)
Cane sugar in solid form, raw	\$4,641,804	20833%	0%	• Mexico (100%)
Flours and meals of oils seeds or oleaginous fruits	\$335,963	2181%	0%	• United States (100%)
Flours of soybeans	\$34,458	1921%	0%	• Canada (100%)
Molasses	\$1,857	98%	0%	• Lebanon (100%)
Flour and meal of the dried leguminous vegetables	\$75,192	88%	0%	Italy (62%)France (29%)United States (6%)

Source: Trade Data Monitor

Products not present because they face significant barriers: The introduction of new U.S. processed meat products has been affected due to the decreasing number of U.S. states that can issue Certificates of Free Sale (COFS) for those products. Per Resolution 2674 of 2013, INVIMA (Colombian FDA equivalent), requires importers to submit a COFS when registering a new food product for sale in Colombia.

SECTION 5: KEY CONTACTS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

Related reports: For additional information about exporting to Colombia, see Exporter Guide.

Table 4. Post Contact Information

Office of Agricultural Affairs (OAA)	Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)
U.S. Embassy, Bogotá, Colombia	U.S. Embassy, Bogotá, Colombia
Telephone: (57) 601-275-4622	Phone: (57) 601-275-4572
e-mail: AgBogota@fas.usda.gov	e-mail: Roberto.Guzman@aphis.usda.gov

Table 7. Regulatory Agency Contacts

Phytosanitary and Zoosanitary	Food Product Registration and Health
Requirements	Permits
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	Ministry of Health and Social Protection
ICA (APHIS counterpart)	INVIMA
Edilberto Brito	(FDA counterpart)

Deputy Manager Animal Health Protection

Tel. +57-601-7563030 ext. 3201

e-mail: subgerencia.animal@ica.gov.co

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Deputy Manager Plant Health Protection Tel: +57-601-7563030 ext. 3101

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Phone: +57-601-7422121 Ext. 4001 e-mail: croblesc@invima.gov.co

Attachments:

No Attachments