

# Guatemala

January  
2016

*Guatemala is one of the largest Central American markets for U.S. agricultural exports, with sales reaching a record \$1.1 billion in fiscal year 2014.*

## Foreign Trade

The expanding supermarket industry is contributing to strong prospects for sales of imported foods. The increase is due to strong growth in outlets, changing purchasing habits among consumers, and increased brand awareness. Guatemalan consumers are accustomed to U.S. products and they have grown up with them. Many Guatemalans have traveled to the U.S. and have been introduced to American food products. U.S. products are viewed by consumers as higher quality and are preferred to other imports. Culturally, Guatemalans have adopted much of the U.S. culture, such as music, sports, fashion and fast food.

Guatemala is the largest market for U.S. exports of agricultural products. Total U.S. food and agricultural exports to Guatemala increased 18% to just over US\$1.1 billion in 2014, a new record high. Consumer ready food product exports from the U.S. increased 16% to US\$369 million in 2014, reaching a new record high. Top processed food exports from the U.S. in 2013 included other processed foods; ingredients and beverage bases; baking inputs; mixes and dough; soybean oil; frozen french fries; cheese; glucose and syrup; chocolate; canned vegetables and pulses; dog and cat food; baked snack foods; and table condiments.

The best prospects for U.S. exporters in this sector include red meats; snack foods; poultry meats; fresh and processed fruits; processed vegetables; and snack foods. Presently, there are no banned products in the market. Guatemala is in full compliance with its commitments to food and agricultural products under the CAFTA-DR. Most fruits, nuts, processed foods, vegetables and feeds have been granted immediate duty-free access. The majority of other agricultural products were to have their duties eliminated in five or ten years.

*Typically, imported products are introduced into the country by a local importer, agent, or distributor. The three biggest supermarket chains have a regional office that imports/distributes products within their stores in Central America. Importers work directly with brokers and to lower the transportation costs and they typically prefer brokers located in Miami. In the past (before Wal-Mart was present in the country), supermarkets relied on local importers to display imported products. Now, supermarkets prefer to import directly but through their holding groups, especially during peak seasons.*

## ***We Are Here to Help***

*<http://www.foodexport.org>*

Exporting is an excellent way to increase sales. Without help, exporting is a complex business. Under the Food Export Association of the USA, a variety of programs and personal assistance with exporting is available. Everything is designed to help an interested company gain exporting knowledge and make it a smoother process. Thank you for expressing interest in exporting your Nebraska product.



### **Export Education**

Export Essentials Online: An educational introduction to the fundamentals and logistics of exporting. Through ten different modules, you will be guided through extensive information regarding your product and what exporting can do for your company.

### **Analyze Market Potential**

Market Builder: A customized package of services to help U.S. suppliers find the right market and buyer for their products through importer feedback on their products, competitive market research and importation analysis, distributor referrals and importer lists, and assistance with in-market meetings.

### **Export Assistance**

Food Export Helpline: A service which offers customized, one-on-one assistance on a wide variety of export-related topics. You'll speak with an industry expert who can help answer any questions such as, "Does my product have any potential in other countries?"

*"The representatives of Food Export-Midwest have always been a pleasure to work with and have been extremely helpful with any questions or claims that we have. Overall, this program has allowed us to expand our distribution coverage and increase sales over the past years." -Jennifer McDaniel of Premium Nutritional Products (August 2015)*

### **Enter New Markets**

Buyers Mission: Events that bring qualified, international buyers to the U.S. to meet face-to-face with U.S. producers. These events allow for potential business connections and feedback about a product's exporting future.

### **Trade Missions**

Food Show Plus: A tradeshow enhancement service that provides assistance to U.S. producers, aiding them in preparation for meetings with international buyers to create a more effective product presentation.

### **Increase Market Share**

The Branded Program: A program that helps your company, product, and brand gain exposure through international marketing. This program provides a 50% reimbursement of approved international marketing and promotion.

**For More Information Contact:**



**Stan Garbacz**

**Agricultural Trade Representative**

**Nebraska Department of Agriculture**

**(402) 471-2341 [stan.garbacz@nebraska.gov](mailto:stan.garbacz@nebraska.gov)**