

Non-Traditional Crops

Pineapple
Mungbeans
Sorghum
Kapok
Groundnuts
Soyabeans
Cotton
Sesame
Oil Palm
Sunflower
Strawberries

Coconut
Chilli Peppers
Shallot/Onions
Garlic
Tomatoes
Cucumbers
Mustard
Cabbage
Long Beans
Cashews

Demand

Thailand's production potential for domestic and foreign demand is very important. Since local consumption consists primarily of fresh or semi-processed produce, the future of agro-industries is in the export market.

As Thailand's per capita income growth begins to expand, food consumption patterns will begin to change, from cereals to meat, fish and dairy products. These changes are reflected in the country's exports, which are changing from the traditional to the non-traditional commodities. As Thai tastes and incomes change, other food processing possibilities will arise creating more value added-goods.

In view of the limited domestic market for processed food due to the country's abundant supply of fresh produce, any significant expansion will take place by export growth rather than import substitution.

TRADITIONAL CROPS

Rice

Rice is the staple food of Thailand, thus playing a vital role in the economy. Thailand is traditionally recognized as a major rice producing nation. Rice covers 60% of the total cultivated land, predominantly situated in the Central region. Until the early 1980s it was the country's largest export item when it was overtaken by manufactured products.

Today, paddy production is the fifth top foreign currency earner. Thailand is currently ranked the world's fifth largest rice producer after China, India, Indonesia and Bangladesh. In 1989, the production of the rice crop is forecast to be 18 million tons compared to 1988's banner year of 17.6 million tons.