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- Agri-Food Trade with Mexico, pg 2
- Export Market Assessment Report on Mexico (EMAR), pg 5
- Export-i, Market Summary Mexico in Brief, pg 5

From these countries, Mexico's imports of agriculture and agri-food consist mainly of products such as poultry, meat and beef, grains, vegetables and oilseeds as well as a range of processed products including powdered milk, chocolate based products, spirits, vegetable oil and many various prepared foods. The import market is concentrated in the major urban areas: Mexico City, Guadalajara (3.4 million inhabitants) and Monterrey (3.1 million), and in tourist centres such as Cancun and Acapulco.

AGRICULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS

Agriculture has been a very dynamic sector of the Mexican economy for many years. However, the contribution to GDP fell from around 16% in 1960 to 7.7% in 1990 and 6.2% in 1992. Mexico is the third largest producer of coarse grains in the OECD, behind the US and the EU, and has the fourth largest beef herd. Even so, the output of these products is insufficient to meet the country's growing consumption, and it is becoming an increasingly large net importer of these and other agricultural commodities.

The most important agricultural products within Mexico are beans, wheat, sorghum, sugar, corn, fruits and vegetables, eggs, cotton and coffee. The leading agricultural export products are coffee, cotton, sugar, fresh vegetables and fruit.

Mexico's agriculture can be classified in two different sectors: an import substituting sector producing basic grains and oilseeds; and an export-oriented sector producing products such as fruits, vegetables, sugar and coffee. In 1989 about 23% of total agricultural product was accounted for by corn and other basic grains. The production of corn accounts for the major share of employment in rural areas.

Despite all this, Mexico's agri-food sector cannot produce enough food to feed the country's population of 93 million. It employs 22% of the population, but agricultural production makes up only 5.4 percent of the GDP and is declining as the economy develops and diversifies.

The food production shortfall is attributed to outdated technology, insufficient infrastructure, and lack of access to financing. Over 70% of Mexican farms are subsistence or community farms lacking economies of scale. Mexico has 27 million productive hectares but the average farm area is 5 hectares and fewer than 7 million hectares have access to irrigation. Rough terrain and adherence to traditional labour-intensive cultivation impede mechanization and adoption of improved technologies.

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- EMAR, Mexico, pg 5-10
- Agri-Food Trade with Mexico
- Agri-Food Trade Service Online
- TradePort