

BACKGROUND ...

FUTURE TRENDS

Because of the limited agricultural land available in Singapore, the bulk of Singapore's food requirements will continue to be imported.

The demand for food products is expected to experience further growth due to the growing affluence of the population and their changing lifestyles, as well as the projected increases in tourist arrivals.

Historically, Singaporeans have always purchased fresh food from wet markets. This trend is gradually changing due to the proliferation of working mothers who do not have the time to shop at wet markets and are more inclined to purchase frozen or chilled items at the supermarket.

In the meat products category, demand for pork products is expected to increase because of the phasing out of local piggery farms. Demand for processed types of convenience food (eg : chicken nuggets) is also expected to grow.

There is a visible shift from traditional canned meats to fresh whole meats available at deli counters. This is because fresh meats are perceived to be of better quality and healthier than canned products.

Furthermore, with the current popularity of the microwave, "*microwaveable*" food products offers a potential market for suppliers.

Demand for dairy products has experienced the most rapid growth in comparison to the other food product categories. This is indicative of the growing awareness of the importance of more nutritious and healthier food products such as yoghurt and other skimmed milk products. Further, because of the concern over high-cholesterol edible oils such as palm oil, opportunities are available for suppliers of low cholesterol edible oils like Canola.

In the fish products category, the demand for fish fillet, peeled shrimps and other forms of easy-to-prepare types of food will increase. The demand for fish products in the region is also growing as shown by the high re-export figure of 74% for this product category.

The large market for imported fruits and vegetables, particularly fresh fruits such as oranges, apples, pears and grapes as well as beverages such as brandy, whisky and sparkling wines also presents opportunities for exporters. Water, including spa and aerated water not flavored, is one area where growth is expected.

In response to consumer demand for more convenience stores, normal sundry shops will upgrade their facilities incorporating more western type food products and offering a wider range of products.

In general, Singaporeans are extremely discerning where food products are concerned and will continue to demand food products with consistently high quality.