

Food & Beverage August 2013

With a politically and economically stable environment, Malaysia is becoming a fast-growing market for United States food products. Over 28 million people call Malaysia home, and the country is one of the most developed nations in Southeast Asia. Recently, Malaysians have begun to purchase more of their food from supermarkets and hypermarkets, which puts imported food products in their view.

Malaysia's economy is expected to continue to progressively grow in the coming years. Currently, 61% of the Malaysian population falls in the middle to upper income group. This allows consumers to purchase more high-end and imported products. Western foods are rising in popularity as well, as more Malaysians are traveling abroad and experiencing new foods. As awareness and incomes continue to rise, opportunities for Nebraska food companies will increase.

MALAYSIAN FOOD & BEVERAGE INDUSTRY

Malaysia consists of three major racial groups: Malays, Chinese, and Indians. Each of these groups has a distinctively different religion, with differing customs and rules for food consumption. Some do not eat pork, another group does not eat beef, some prefer hot and spicy food, while others eat stir-fry. Understanding your product and the corresponding target market in Malaysia is essential for success. Malaysians are willing and ready to work with foreign businesses, so if Nebraska food companies take time to understand the market they will succeed.

The following products are in high demand in Malaysia:

Infant food

Dried fruits

Fruit juices

Edible nuts

Fresh/frozen vegetables

Dog & cat food



PROUD TO BUY
NEBRASKA



Here are tips for exporting to Malaysia:

ANALYZE MARKET POTENTIAL:

The USDA Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) has a program called Food Export. Food Export provides food companies resources to help export their food overseas. Analyzing market potential is vital to exporting successfully, and Food Export offers Food Export Helpline and Market Builder for companies who want to export. Go to www.foodexportalliance.org/eweb to find out more information on both of these programs.

APPOINT A REPRESENTATIVE, AGENT, OR IMPORTER:

Once you have found the market for your product, the next step is to find a way to get the product into that market. Food Export Helpline can aid you in finding those distributors. Contact the Nebraska Agricultural Trade Office for details.

USE A PERSONALIZED APPROACH:

Developing a relationship with importers can make the process easier. While Malaysians are open to doing business with foreign businesses, developing relationships is still essential. Visiting Malaysia will enhance the business relationship and help sales. A great way to meet potential buyers is through Food Export Buyer's Missions and Focused Trade Missions. Food Export has Buyer's Missions and Focused Trade Missions which allow you to meet face-to-face with potential buyers.

KNOW EXPORT REQUIREMENTS:

Exporting regulations differ depending on the product and country. Nebraska Agricultural Trade Office staff can provide information regarding regulations and documentation. Also, Food Export provides webinars covering topics such as export documentation and the three "P's" of exporting.

LABELING REQUIREMENTS:

You need to be aware of what the local importer requires as far as languages or nutritional information on labels. While labeling requirements in Malaysia are fairly liberal, most labels need to be in either English or Bahasa Malaysia. Because of this, you may need to revise and change your labels or promotional materials. Food Export provides the Branded Program, which is a reimbursement program. The Branded Program allows companies to be reimbursed for marketing endeavors, which includes printed materials. Keep this in mind as you learn more about your importers' expectations and needs for your products.

EXPORT ASSISTANCE:

Nebraska Agricultural Trade Office staff can provide information and assistance for your company in regards to your exporting endeavors. Food Export also has programs specifically designed to help food companies find markets and contacts, learn more about exporting, and become successful in international settings.



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