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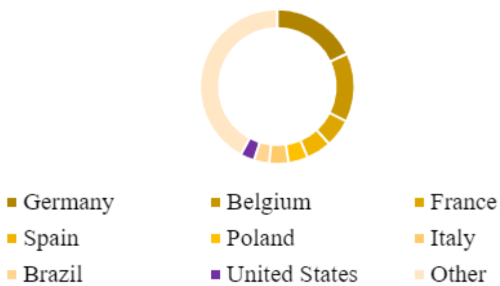
Report Highlights:

The exporter guide provides an economic and market overview, as well as demographic trends and practical tips for U.S. exporters on how to conduct business in the Netherlands. The report further describes three market sectors (food retail, food service, and food processing), the best market entry strategy, and the best high-value product prospects, and focuses exclusively on consumer-oriented products. Additional reports referenced herein can be found at the following website: https://gain.fas.usda.gov/#/search.

Market Fact Sheet: The Netherlands

Executive Summary:
Although the Netherlands is a small country geographically, it is the gateway for U.S. products into the European Union (EU). It is also the largest importing country within the EU and continues to be the second largest exporter of agricultural products in the world.

Imports of Consumer-Oriented Products:
Products from other EU Member States lead Dutch imports of consumer-oriented products. In 2021, the United States was the eighth largest supplier of these products to the Netherlands, with imports valued at almost $1.5 billion.



Source: Trade Data Monitor

Food Processing Industry:
Over 7,340 food companies in the Netherlands generated net sales of $88 billion in 2021. The industry accounts for 146,000 jobs in the Netherlands and the number of food companies continues to grow due to the growing number of small food companies (i.e., those with fewer than 10 employees).

Food Retail Industry:
The Dutch retail sector is consolidated, employs almost 300,000 people, and operates 4,500 stores. This industry profited from the closure of many HRI-Foodservice outlets and its turnover for 2021 is forecasted at $47.4 billion. Consumers demand variety, fresh, and convenient products at competitive prices. The market share of on-line shopping is estimated at 7 percent in 2021.

Foodservice – HRI Industry:
After a decline in turnover of 37 percent in 2020, the foodservice industry's 2021 turnover is forecasted to rebound to $13.9 billion (up by 37 percent). For much of 2020 and 2021, bars, cafés, and restaurants, had to temporarily close their doors to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus (with takeout and delivery keeping some restaurants afloat).

Quick Facts CY2021
Imports of Consumer-Oriented Products, total:
$50.3 billion

List of Top 10 Growth Products in the Netherlands (imported from the World):

1. Cocoa beans	6. Bananas
2. Food preparations	7. Baked goods
3. Fats and oils	8. Ethyl alcohol
4. Wines	9. Berries
5. Avocados	10. Coffee

Food Industry by Channels 2021, in $ billion:

Consumer-Oriented Products Imports	$50.3
Consumer-Oriented Products Exports	$94.6
Agricultural & Related Products Imports	$102.8
Agricultural & Related Products Exports	$140.6
Food Industry	$88.0
Food Retail	$47.4
Food Service	$13.9

Top 10 Food Retailers, Market Share:

1. Albert Heijn	35.9%	6. Dirk/Deka	5.1%
2. Jumbo	21.8%	7. Coop	3.9%
3. Lidl	10.7%	8. Hoogvliet	2.0%
4. Plus	6.5%	9. Deen	1.5%
5. Aldi	5.2%	10. SPAR	1.2%

GDP/Population:
Population: 17.5 million
GDP: $812 billion
GDP per capita: $46,411

Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Challenges

Strengths: U.S. producers are professional, offer great variety, and deliver products with a consistent quality. U.S. farmers have a good story to tell about sustainability, farm to table supply chains, and their heritage.

Weakness: Shipping time & costs, import tariffs, limited access to available containers make U.S. products more expensive. Some U.S. food products suffer from a negative perception among Dutch consumers due to misinformation.

Opportunities: There is a growing demand for food products with a special claim and sustainable production method and products that are healthy and nutritious.

Threats: There is fierce competition on price, quality, uniqueness, and innovation from other EU member states and from third countries that have negotiated lower tariff rates, such as Canada.

Data and Information Sources: Trade Data Monitor, industry experts, company websites
Contact: FAS The Hague, agthehague@fas.usda.gov

SECTION I. DETAILED MARKET OVERVIEW

The Netherlands in a Nutshell
The Netherlands is a small country in **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**, bordering **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.** to the east, **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.** to the south, and the **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.** to the northwest. The largest and most important cities in the Netherlands are **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**, **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**, **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**, and Utrecht, together referred to as the Randstad. Amsterdam is the **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**, while **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.** is home to the Dutch seat of **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.** and **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**. The Netherlands' name literally means "**Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**," influenced by its low land and flat geography, with only half of its land exceeding one meter **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**.

Overall Business Climate
The fundamental strengths of the Dutch economy continue to be the Netherlands' stable political climate, highly developed financial sector, strategic location, a well-educated and productive labor force, and high-quality physical and communications infrastructure. According to the latest economic outlook of the Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis (CPB), the Dutch economy has emerged strongly from the coronavirus crisis, but the momentum is now starting to swing the other way. Increasing numbers of households are feeling the negative financial impact of high inflation, which is expected to bring consumption growth to a grinding halt in the coming quarters. This is shown by the projections in the concept version of the Macro Economic Outlook (cMEV) published by CPB. CPB Director Pieter Hasekamps noted "{h}ouseholds are feeling the impact of high inflation, and this will have repercussions for the economy. There is a growing number of people already struggling to make ends meet and for whom the energy bill is threatening to become unaffordable." Additional information on the overall business climate in the Netherlands can be found on the website of the CPB at: **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**.

Population and Key Demographic Trends
At the end of 2022, the Dutch population is expected to total 17.8 million, and is forecast to continue to grow by over 100,000 people per year until 2030. Roughly a quarter of the population in 2030 will be 65 years and older. Not only is this group of consumers growing, but they are also expected to be more affluent, more active, and more experimental with food than ever before.

About half of the Dutch population currently lives in cities and the overall trend of moving to urban areas is expected to continue. Between this year and 2035, the Dutch population will grow by over 1 million people, of which three-quarters are expected to be born in cities. The population of Amsterdam alone will grow by 150,000 and is expected to have more than 1 million inhabitants in 2036. Currently the mean population density is 517 inhabitants per square kilometer, making the Netherlands the second most densely populated country, after Malta, in the European Union.

Between 2000 and 2022, the number of households in the Netherlands grew from 6.8 million to 8.1 million, over 19 percent. This growth is largely due to an increase in 'one-person households,' which grew by 40 percent, while the number of 'more than one-person households' only grew by 10 percent. 'One-person households' now account for 39 percent of all households. In Amsterdam, 55 percent of all households are already one-person households. The aging Dutch population is expected to want to live independently for as long as possible. At the same time, over half of the people who live alone have never been in a long-term relationship and are not planning on doing so. An older and more individual population that increasingly lives in urban areas is expected to lead to an increased demand for innovative products, smaller portions, healthy and nutritious food options, functional foods, and affordable convenience.

Dutch Traders are Key in Distributing U.S. Exports Throughout the EU

The Netherlands is the largest importing country within the European Union (EU) and continues to be the second largest exporter of agricultural products in the world, after the United States and before Germany. These exports include agricultural products produced in the Netherlands and imported products that are re-exported, often after sorting, repacking, or further processing. The port of Rotterdam is the world's 11th largest seaport and Amsterdam Schiphol is Europe's fourth largest airport. Two of Europe's largest rivers, the Maas and the Rive, run via the Netherlands to the North Sea. Moreover, the Netherlands has an excellent rail, river, and road infrastructure.

Table 1. Advantages and Challenges U.S. Exporters Face in the Netherlands

Advantages (U.S. supplier strengths and market opportunities)	**Challenges (U.S. supplier weaknesses and competitive threats)**
Local traders and food processors prefer to work with U.S. suppliers because they are professional and deliver products with a consistent quality. U.S. companies also have a great variety of products to offer.	Growing demand for single-portion packaged food products. U.S. companies tend to manufacture packaged food in larger packages. A standard U.S. label on food products fails to comply with EU labeling requirements
Growing demand for food products with a special claim, certification, and sustainable production methods. U.S. farmers have a good story to tell about sustainability, their supply chain (farm to table), and their State/regional heritage (provenance).	The Dutch are price-conscious consumers. Transatlantic transportation is costly. Some products from the United States are subject to import tariffs. Suppliers from other EU member states have a competitive advantage on tariffs and non-tariff trade barriers, transportation costs, and transportation time.
Growing demand for new products, innovative food concepts, and international cuisine. U.S. products are innovative, often trend setting, and known for their strong brands.	Some U.S. food products suffer from a negative perception among Dutch consumers due to misinformation (e.g., local and small-scale is better) or an image issue (e.g., U.S. foodstuffs are unhealthy).
The Netherlands is the most important gateway for U.S. products to the EU.	U.S. beef from hormone-treated cattle, poultry, live bivalve mollusks, and products containing GMO derived ingredients that are not EU approved cannot be exported to the Netherlands.
Growing demand for functional, fresh, and food products that contribute to a healthier lifestyle.	The EU has several Free Trade Agreements that may advantage other 3rd country competitors, including Canada and Mexico.
	Fierce competition on price, quality, uniqueness, and innovation.

SECTION II. EXPORTER BUSINESS TIPS

Local Business Customs and Trends

Most Dutch entrepreneurs speak and write in English and have a high level of education (Masters or Bachelors degree). They are straightforward, open-minded, and are experienced in traveling internationally. After a first introduction, they tend to communicate on a 'first name' basis.

The Dutch are business-minded and like to be well-informed about the company they are about to do business with the product in question, price, and future business opportunities. Doing business does not require 'wining & dining.' The Dutch preferably want to get the job done during regular business hours since a healthy 'work-life' balance is important to them.

Food retailers, foodservice companies, and wholesalers normally do not buy directly from suppliers in third country (non-EU) markets, such as the United States. Instead, they work with dedicated and highly specialized local traders. These traders are experienced in doing business with overseas producers, are informed about what documents need to accompany the goods, and know which products or ingredients are not approved to import into the EU. They look for long-term partnerships rather than a one-off business transaction.

General Consumer Tastes and Trends

General consumer trends that affect the Dutch food retail and foodservice market can be found in the reports the Dutch Food Retail Market – July 6, 2022 and the Dutch Foodservice Market – August 15, 2022. Other exporter assistance and market research reports can be downloaded from the following website: https://gain.fas.usda.gov/#/search.

Trade Shows

Please find below an overview of the trade shows that annually take place in the Netherlands.

Table 2. Trade Shows in the Netherlands

Name	**Target Audience**	**Dates**	**Website**
Horecava	Foodservice HRI industry buyers	January 9-12, 2023	http://horecava.nl/
PLMA (private labeling manufacturing association)	International buyers of private label products	May 23-24, 2023	https://www.plmainternational.com/
BBB & Folie Culinaire	Local high-end gastronomy	October 2023	https://www.bbbmaastricht.nl/folie-culinaire/
WBWE (world bulk wine expo)	International buyers of (private label) bulk wine	November, 2023	https://www.worldbulkwine.com/en/
FFFFE (free from functional food expo)	Buyers of innovative products with a free from, vegan, and organic claim	November, 2023	https://amsterdam.freefromfoodexpo.com/

SECTION III. IMPORT FOOD STANDARDS & REGULATIONS AND IMPORT PROCEDURES

Most Dutch food legislation is harmonized at the EU level. Where EU regulatory harmonization is not yet complete or absent, imported products must meet existing Dutch requirements. U.S. exporters should be aware that national measures still exist for enzymes, processing aids, packaging waste management, food contact materials, choice of language (Dutch is the official language in the Netherlands), use of stickers, samples, novel foods, fortified foods, gelatin capsules containing fish oil, irradiated foodstuffs, product registration, composite products, among others.

Information about customs clearance, required documentation for imported products, labeling requirements, tariff information and FTAs, and trademarks and patent market research can be found in the Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards (FAIRS) Country and Certificate Reports which can be downloaded from the following website: https://gain.fas.usda.gov/#/search.

SECTION IV. MARKET SECTOR STRUCTURE AND TRENDS

Key Developments in the Food Industry

Demand for Sustainable Food Products Is Still Up

Total consumer spending on foods certified as sustainable grew by an impressive 12 percent in 2021 to €9.5 billion (an estimated $10 billion). The share of sustainable food compared to total spending on food is estimated at 19 percent in 2021. Sustainable food continues to be the most important growth market in the Dutch food industry and consumption of these products is expected to continue to increase, albeit at a slower pace. A wider range of certified products and changing consumer preferences (paying more attention to sustainability and health) explained the growth in spending on these products. More information can be found in Monitor Duurzaam Voedsel 2021 (in Dutch).

Growing Interest in Authenticity

In addition to sustainability, consumers (often Millennials and Generation Z) seem to be willing to pay for authenticity. They want to hear or read about who produced a food product and what the story behind the product is. This desire for authenticity also applies to foodservice outlets. Hosts that have a story to tell about their restaurant, cafe, or bar appeal to today's consumers.

Growing Awareness of Health and Well-Being and Demand for Nutritious Food

Consumers seem to increasingly be rushed and are struggling to do many things in a regular day. Moreover, they are facing a dilemma: less time for buying food and preparing meals versus a growing awareness of and interest in health and nutrition. The demand for convenient healthy and nutritious food products (albeit at an affordable price) is growing more than ever before. Overall, consumers are more interested in food and beverages. Beyond traditional media outlets, influencers are rapidly gaining power. Consumers seem to trust what an influencer has to say about a product while retailers play a crucial role as well, as they market food products to create, anticipate, and meet consumer needs.

Price is gaining Importance

While sustainability, authenticity, health, and nutrition are important purchasing factors for Dutch consumers, a recent study by Dutch bank, ABN AMRO (study is in Dutch) showed that consumers are increasingly guided by price, which is a direct result of the increasing costs of living. Sales of (cheaper) private labeled products have increased at the expense of A-branded products. Moreover, consumers are no longer loyal to just one supermarket chain but are on the lookout for the best deal and special offers. They are also exchanging products between categories. For meat as an example, this means less meat (such as smaller portions), cheaper variants (such as minced meat or chicken or less organic meat), or more vegetables instead of meat.

The following sectors offer opportunities for new sales: tree nuts, pulses, food products with a special certification (organic, sustainable, free-from claim, etc.), healthy and nutritious food snacks, and innovative alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages.

Table 3. Leading Prospects for Consumer-Oriented Products

Commodity (HS-code)	Imports, million USD, 2021	Imports from U.S., million USD, 2021 (U.S.-market share)	Estimated average annual import growth
Processed vegetables (Product Group)	1,975	112 (6%)	3%
Non-alcoholic beverage (Product Group)	1,187	45 (4%)	4%
Odoriferous substances (HS330210)	559	105 (19%)	7%
Food preparations (HS210690)	2,205	372 (17%)	15%
Bread, pastry, cakes (HS190590)	1,181	28 (2%)	17%
Distilled spirits (Product Group)	1,192	80 (7%)	25%
Condiments and sauces (Product Group)	669	21 (3%)	30%

Source: www.tradedatamonitor.com

Information on retailer-specific information and expected growth rates for each sector, as well as a qualitive assessment of the market opportunities for consumer-oriented products in the food retail, foodservice, and food processing sectors, can be found in the following reports: the Dutch Food Retail Market – July 6, 2022, the Dutch Food Processing Ingredients Market – April 4, 2022, and the Dutch Foodservice Market – August 15, 2022.

Competitive Situation for Selected U.S. Consumer-Oriented Products

Table 4. Netherlands' Imports of Consumer Oriented Products, 2021 figures

Product Category (Product Code) Imports in Millions of USD	Main Suppliers, By Percentage		Strengths of Key Supply Countries	Advantages and Disadvantages of Local Suppliers
Craft beer (HS2203) Total imports: $595 From USA: $6	1. Belgium 2. Germany 3. The U.K. 4. Poland **10. USA**	56 11 7 7 **1**	Competition from neighboring countries, dominated by Belgium and Germany.	Strong demand for cans, new flavors, funky labels, and innovative tastes.
Sweet potatoes (HS071420) Total imports: $179 From USA: $84	**1. USA** 2. Egypt 3. Belgium 4. The U.K. 5. S. Africa 6. Spain	**47** 18 6 4 4 3	Competition from Egypt, South Africa, Spain, China, and Honduras. The U.K. and Belgium only re-export sweet potatoes.	Supermarkets are increasingly selling fresh and processed sweet potatoes. There is demand for variety and quality.
Wine (HS2204) Total Imports: $1,703 From USA: $25	1. France 2. Italy 3. Germany 4. Spain 5. Chile 6. S. Africa **11. USA**	30 17 16 10 6 4 **1**	France, Italy, Germany, and Spain have well known, good quality wines at competitive prices and are popular holiday destinations.	Limited availability of domestically produced wine.

Distilled spirits (Product group) Total imports: $1,192 From USA: $80	1. The U.K. 2. Belgium 3. Germany **4. USA** 5. France	23 18 15 **7** 6	All, except the USA, are geographically close to the market and offer good quality products.	Demand for branded, good quality, tasty, and unique products that have a story to tell.
Seafood products (Product group) Total imports: $5,126 From USA: $103	1. Iceland 2. Norway 3. Germany 4. Belgium Denmark **17. USA**	14 9 8 6 6 **2**	Iceland is the leading supplier of cod while Germany dominates Dutch imports of pelagic fish. The USA dominates the supply of Alaska Pollack, scallops, and Sockeye salmon. For shrimp & prawns, cod, and lobster, the USA competes with other non-EU exporters.	The Netherlands is an international trader in seafood products, serving foodservice markets and retail throughout Europe. The Dutch depend on imports for Alaska Pollack, scallops, Sockeye salmon, shrimp & prawns, cod, and lobster.
Beef and beef products (Product group) Total imports: $2,279 From USA: $137	1. Germany 2. Belgium 3. Ireland 4. Argentina **8. USA**	17 13 10 7 **6**	Germany and Belgium sell lower quality and price competitive beef. The USA exports high quality and grain fed beef, known for its consistency and taste, to the high-end foodservice industry and retail outlets.	There is not enough Dutch beef of high quality available. Ireland, Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, and the USA all profit from this deficit.
Condiments and sauces (Product group) Total imports: $669 From USA: $21	1. Germany 2. Belgium 3. The U.K. 4. Poland 5. Italy **11. USA**	18 14 9 8 8 **3**	First five suppliers benefit from proximity to the Dutch market.	Demand for good quality and unique products as well as comfort food has grown during COVID-19 pandemic and has stayed strong since.
Walnuts (HS080231) Total imports: $13 From USA: $5	1. Chile 2. USA 3. Germany 4. France 5. Italy	45 36 7 6 3	Competition from Chile and France. Germany does not produce but re-exports walnuts.	Growing demand from the snack industry. Walnuts benefit from their healthy reputation.
Ice cream (HS210500) Total imports: $257 From USA: $1	1. Belgium 2. Germany 3. France 4. The U.K. 5. Italy **12. USA**	38 21 10 9 7 **0.4**	First five suppliers are close to the market and offer good quality products.	Demand for good quality and unique products.
Non-Alcoholic beverages (Product group) Total imports: $1,187 From USA: $45	1. Germany 2. Belgium 3. Austria 4. France **6. USA**	31 22 13 10 **4**	All, except the USA, are close to the market and offer good quality products.	Demand for branded, good quality, and unique products that have a story to tell.
Food Preparations (HS210690) Total Imports: $2,205 From USA: $372	1. Germany **2. USA** 3. Belgium 4. U.K. 5. France	18 **17** 13 8 7	Due to proximity, neighboring countries are leading suppliers of flavored or colored sugar, isoglucose,	Food preparations are produced and used throughout the EU.

			lactose, and glucose and maltodextrine syrups.	
Odoriferous Substances (HS330210) Total Imports: $559 From USA: $105	1. Ireland **2. USA** 3. Germany 4. The U.K.	36 **19** 18 8	Odoriferous Substances are compounds (natural and synthetic) with odors used in the manufacture of various non-food and food products and are locally available.	U.S. suppliers are often at a price disadvantage compared to EU suppliers mainly due to time, shipping costs, and taxes.
Peptones and Derivatives (HS350400) Total Imports: $481 From USA: $97	**1. USA** 2. Belgium 3. Germany 4. France	**20** 17 14 10	Peptones are used by producers of food supplements and are locally available.	U.S. suppliers are often at a price disadvantage compared to EU suppliers, mainly due to time, shipping costs, and taxes.
Cranberries (HS200893) Total Imports: $107 From USA: $48	**1. USA** 2. Canada 3. Chile	**44** 32 17	Main supplier of cranberries is the USA followed by Canada and Chile.	No local availability. The use of cranberries continues to grow and are used in all kinds of food and drink products.

Source: **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**

SECTION V. AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD IMPORTS

Agricultural & Food Import Statistics
Dutch imports of U.S. agricultural and food products can be downloaded from the following website https://apps.fas.usda.gov/gats/BicoReport.aspx?type=country. Please make the following selection: Product Type: exports; Market Year: calendar year; Report Type: year-to-date; Country: Netherlands; Product: agricultural & related products and Download: word.

Table 3 in this report provides an overview of the best high value consumer-oriented products prospects.

SECTION VI. KEY CONTACTS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

If you are a U.S. interested party and have questions or comments regarding this report, need assistance exporting to the Netherlands, a list of Dutch wholesalers and distributors, or you are looking for the Foreign Buyers Lists (FBL) of various consumer-oriented products and seafood products, please contact the Foreign Agricultural Service in The Hague, the Netherlands:

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This FAS office also covers the countries in the Nordic markets and has Exporter Guides for the following countries: Iceland, Norward, Sweden, Finland, and Denmark. These Exporter Guides can be found on their respective country pages on the following website: https://gain.fas.usda.gov/#/search. Additional information about promotional events taking place in Europe, U.S. trade associations active in this market, delicious recipes with U.S. ingredients, articles highlighting U.S. food and agricultural products, and other information can be found on https://fas-europe.org/.

Attachments:

No Attachments