



Products of the U.S.A.

Monthly Report

Trade Servicing

April 2023



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MONTHLY TRADE SERVICING REPORT
April 2023
Submitted by Lieu Marketing Associates Pte Ltd

(i) Executive Summary

Despite strong post-COVID-19 growth in multiple food categories in South East Asia, concerns about food insecurity and rising inflationary costs persist. Factors include supply chain disruptions, climate change, and the pandemic's ongoing impact. Governments are taking measures to address these issues, such as increasing food production, improving supply chain logistics, and implementing food price controls.

(ii) Market Intelligence Update

Burma:

The Little Rice Company produces premium low-glycemic index wholegrain brown rice which is gaining popularity in Myanmar. It collaborates with local farmers to grow rice using its hybrid technology. The company intends to expand internationally, leveraging its Sustainable Rice Platform verification to enter the European market while promoting healthier rice options ([FoodNavigator-Asia](#), 11 April 2023)

Myanmar's rice exports for the first quarter of 2023 decreased to 361,213 tonnes from 398,745.39 tonnes in the same period in the previous year. Myanmar also exported 260,535 tonnes of broken rice, up from 218,777.5 tonnes last year. China was the top buyer of both types of rice, followed by other countries such as the Philippines, Bangladesh, and European Union countries, among others, mainly via sea routes due to its long coastline. Rice is the most cultivated crop in Myanmar, followed by beans and pulses. ([The Star](#), 19 April 2023)

Indonesia:

Indonesia's Bukit Tinggi Veterinary Center is testing pig samples from PT Indo Tirta Suaka farm after detecting African swine fever virus in some carcasses. The company exports pig carcasses accounting for 15% of Singapore's pork supply, which has halted live pig imports from the island. The Singapore Food Agency confirms that the virus does not transmit to humans. ([The Jakarta Post](#), 25 April 2023)

Indonesia is participating in the FHA Food & Beverage 2023 exhibition in Singapore to boost its food and beverage exports and support economic recovery. The exhibition provides access to the global market for

products such as tempeh snacks, cassava-based foods, and ready-to-drink jamu. The Indonesian food and beverage industry contributed 4.93% to the non-oil and gas processing industry's GDP in 2022. ([Antara News](#), 26 April 2023)

Indonesia's food regulator declared Indomie noodles safe for consumption, despite recalls in Malaysia and Taiwan over concerns about a possible carcinogenic ingredient. Indofood CBP, the brand's producer, declined to comment but said that the product meets regulator standards in all countries. Overseas sales of its products accounted for 29% of its total sales last year. ([Reuters](#), 27 April 2023)

Malaysia:

The Malaysian Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security has announced that it will be providing a one-off special financial assistance of RM200 to 240,000 paddy farmers and 38,500 fishermen. The assistance will only be given to eligible farmers and fishermen who are Malaysians and are involved in rice planting activities and actively carrying out fishing activities, respectively. The assistance was announced by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim on 30 March 2023 and will cost RM170 million. ([Malay Mail](#), 7 April 2023)

Malaysian consumers may turn to chicken meat as pork prices have doubled in the last 15 months, with further increases expected due to local farmers cutting production and higher animal feed prices worldwide. The African swine fever has also caused supply constraints. The government has allowed in more imports to mitigate rising prices and meet domestic demand. Pork makes up about 8.5% of all meat consumed in Malaysia, with poultry (chicken and ducks) being the most popular at 80%. ([The Straits Times](#), 15 April 2023)

To curb food waste during Ramadan, Malaysian volunteers collected unsold food from vendors and distributed it to low-income households. About 112,000 tonnes of food went to waste in 2022, and this year, a non-profit organization, GEMA collected 20 tonnes of leftovers from Kuala Lumpur bazaars to redistribute. Malaysia generates nearly 20 tonnes of daily food waste during Ramadan, with a 15% increase during the fasting month. ([Asia One](#), 21 April 2023)

Philippines:

Dole has successfully transported Golden Puyat Durians to Shanghai's HuiZhan market, marking the inaugural entry of Philippine durians into China. As China is expected to become the world's top durian consumer by 2030, Dole is dedicated to discovering new durian varieties that align with Chinese consumers' preferences, as a leading fruit and vegetable brand. ([Fresh Plaza](#), 7 April 2023)

Philippine economic, diplomatic, and security officials met with their American counterparts in Washington during the week of 10 April 2023 to strengthen their trade and defense alliances. Discussions focused on mutual concerns such as energy security, strategic trade and investment cooperation, emerging technologies, and infrastructure, supply chains, and other areas of mutual interest that would help both nations achieve economic prosperity. The dialogue session was meant to tackle regional security and determine courses of action to counter terrorism and other transnational crimes. The meeting is significant as it would set the long-term direction of the security and defense alliance between the US and the Philippines. ([Manila Times](#), 10 April 2023)

The National Food Authority has abandoned its plans to import 330,000 metric tons of rice to replenish the depleting rice buffer stock. Instead, the Department of Agriculture aims to source the needed amount of rice locally. While the country's rice supply is projected to be sufficient until June, there could be a shortage from July to September 2023. The low inventory is attributed to high fertilizer prices, which has discouraged farmers from planting. ([The Philippine Star](#), 18 April 2023)

Singapore:

Singapore has approved Indonesia as a new table egg exporter, diversifying the country's supply to 18 sources. The majority of Singapore's eggs are imported from Malaysia, while a third is domestically produced. The decision aims to strengthen the country's food security and mitigate the impact of potential supply disruptions due to global uncertainties, such as bird flu outbreaks. ([Yahoo Finance Singapore](#), 4 April 2023)

From the second half of 2023, the Singapore Food Agency will permit the sale of 16 insect species as food, including crickets, grasshoppers, and silkworms. The decision was made following a public consultation and scientific review to ensure that certain insects meet food safety requirements. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization has promoted insects as an eco-friendly, nutritious, and affordable food source. Companies are getting ready to launch insect-based products, with some opting to add insect proteins to familiar foods. ([The Star](#), 7 April 2023)

The High Court ruled that "parmesan" is a translation of the Italian term "Parmigiano Reggiano," and should only be used for cheese originating from a particular region in Italy. The ruling was made after hearing a dispute between Fonterra Cooperative Group and a consortium of Parmigiano Reggiano producers. The name "Parmigiano Reggiano" is legally protected in the European Union as a geographical indication that identifies a product as having originated from a particular place that has given the item its unique qualities or characteristics. ([The Straits Times](#), 9 April 2023)

Singrow, a Singapore-based agri-tech start-up, has created the world's first climate-resilient strawberries using agri-genomic technology and precision farming techniques. These strawberries can grow in higher temperatures and are more resilient to climate change. Singrow is expanding its operations and will provide crop varieties and farming techniques to reduce fertilizer and pesticide use in outdoor farms in Malaysia and Thailand. ([Channel News Asia](#), 12 April 2023)

Thailand:

Northern Thailand is experiencing severe air pollution due to crop burning and forest fires during the annual farming season. Chiang Mai, a major hub for tourism and transport, has been ranked the world's most polluted city for at least seven consecutive days. Over 1.7 million people have been affected, with over 12,000 seeking medical treatment for respiratory issues between January and March. ([Cable News Network](#), 5 April 2023)

Taokaenoi, a Thai seaweed snack company, attributes the growing popularity of seaweed snacks to the increasing trend of healthy snacking and the Korean Hallyu phenomenon. Seaweed snacks are considered a healthy, plant-based option and Taokaenoi offers a wide range of products that cater to different tastes and preferences, with added nutritious ingredients. The Korean Wave has had a strong influence on the

South East Asian market, including Thailand, where seaweed is a traditional staple of Korean cuisine. ([FoodNavigator-Asia](#), 19 April 2023)

Thailand is set to hold its general election on May 14th, which is shaping up as a clash between a coalition of incumbent ruling parties and more reformist, progressive opposition groups. The election is seen as a battle between the ruling parties, backed by the conservative military and royalist establishment, and more reformist, progressive opposition groups. Key electoral issues are the Covid-19 pandemic recovery, social development of the country, control and banning of marijuana use in public, and the use of lese majeste laws to curb freedom of speech. The youth vote will also be crucial in the election, as millennials and Gen Z voters represent around 41% of Thailand's 52 million voters. ([Today](#), 28 April 2023)

Vietnam:

Over 800 container trucks carrying agricultural produce are stuck at Vietnam's border with China, causing congestion at the Dong Dang International Border Gate. As the fruits are in season, exporters are rushing to deliver them to Chinese buyers. The Lang Son Department of Industry and Trade advised exporters to reduce the number of containers and suggested using other forms of transport. The Ministry of Industry and Trade plans to restrict unofficial trade to prevent congestion at land borders and include more goods in the tax net starting in 2025. ([VnExpress International](#), 31 March 2023)

Vietnamese garment enterprises are struggling due to a lack of orders, with some only having orders until April. The global textile and garment market is expected to decline this year, posing challenges for the industry. China, Vietnam's main competitor in the US market, is expected to reopen and pose a challenge. To stay afloat, some companies are accepting low-priced orders, reducing processes, and investing in modern technologies. Investment in raw material supply chains and FOB sales solutions is also necessary for sustainable growth. ([VnExpress International](#), 6 April 2023)

East West Brewery, a Vietnam-based company, is targeting the expanding craft beer market by combining traditional brewing techniques with innovative flavors to attract both local and international customers. With taprooms in Ho Chi Minh City and Danang, the brewery offers nine craft beers with a range of flavors and seasonal products. Currently exporting to Hong Kong and Taiwan, the company plans to expand its taproom presence across Vietnam and enter new markets, including Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand. ([FoodNavigator-Asia](#), 26 April 2023)