

A photograph of two workers in a food processing facility. They are wearing white protective suits, blue hairnets, and blue face masks. They are also wearing blue gloves and are working on a conveyor belt, packaging food items into clear plastic bags. The background is slightly blurred, showing industrial equipment and bright lighting.

SECTOR GUIDE **FOOD AND BEVERGES** 2026

 Invest in
El Salvador



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INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

We invite you to participate in our transformation. Invest in a nation that not only embraces you wholeheartedly but also provides a strong ecosystem for growth.



El Salvador serves as a strategic nexus for enhancing agroindustrial ecosystems, enabling the implementation of high-impact investments with a global scope. With its favorable climatic conditions and consistently stable production, the country provides an optimal setting for the production and processing of value-added food and beverages.

El Salvador offers an ideal location for the production and processing of food and beverages, as well as for serving specific market niches that go beyond traditional industries. Furthermore, its proximity to high-consumption markets facilitates the export of these products.

Sector delineation

As for the data of representative companies in the sector, information was used for the following CIIU codes:

ISIC	DESCRIPTION
1104	Manufacture of non-alcoholic beverages; production of mineral waters and other bottled waters
1050	Production of dairy products
1030	Preparation and preservation of fruits, vegetables and legumes
1020	Preparation and preservation of fish, crustaceans, mollusks and other aquatic products

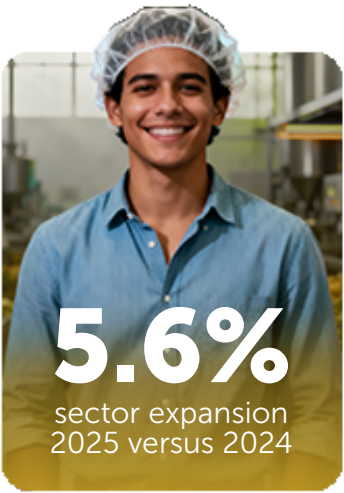


KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Food and Beverages
Sector Guide

FOOD

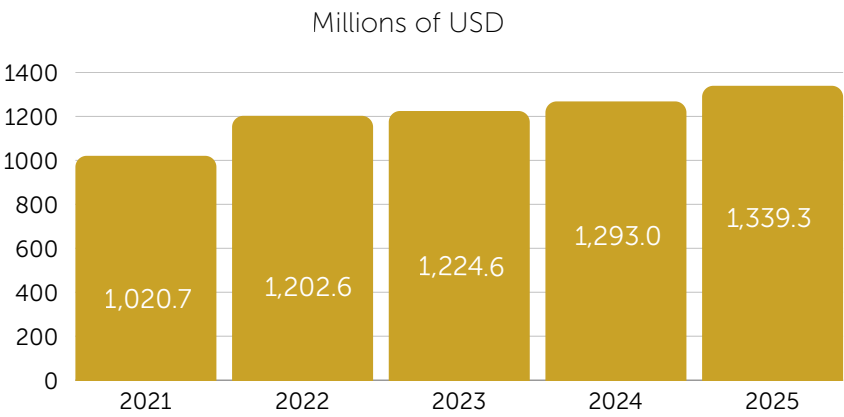
Key Performance Indicators 2025



In 2025, El Salvador's food sector exhibited robust performance, achieving exports amounting to \$1,339.3 million. This growth reflects the consolidation of the country as a key supplier in the region, driven by international demand and product diversification. Despite challenges such as rising production costs and global inflation, the industry has maintained its dynamism thanks to the modernization of processes, access to new markets, and the strengthening of the agroindustry. These factors have allowed the sector to continue being a key pillar for the Salvadoran economy.

Below are indicators of the sector's performance in El Salvador:

Food product exports in recent years



Source: BCR

Top exported products

- Coffee
- Sugar
- Canned tuna
- Bakery
- Food preparations

Primary trading partners

Millions of USD

USA	345.3
Guatemala	315.3
Honduras	184.2
Nicaragua	97.6
Costa Rica	59.3

Beverage

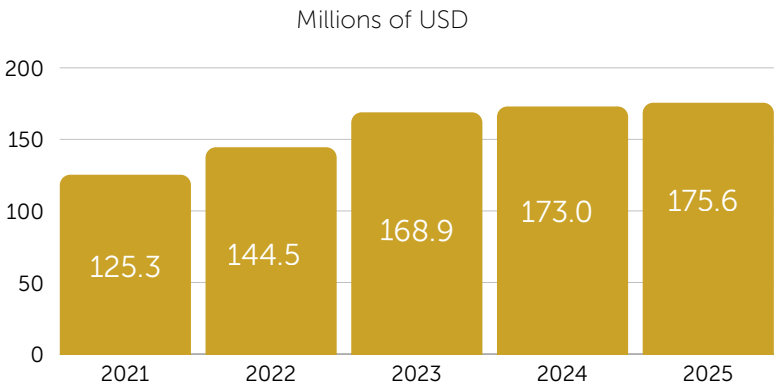
Key Performance Indicators 2025



In 2025, El Salvador's beverage sector reported exports amounting to \$175.6 million, indicative of persistent growth in international demand. This achievement has been propelled by product innovation, heightened production of non-alcoholic beverages, and expansion into pivotal regional markets. Despite facing challenges associated with input costs and global competition, the industry has enhanced its competitiveness through investments in technology and sustainability. Consequently, the beverage sector remains a strategic element of the nation's economic development.

The following indicators reflect the sector's performance in El Salvador:

Growth of the beverage manufacturing sector



Source: BCR

Top exported beverages

-  Mineral and bottled water
-  Malt beverages
-  Alcoholic beverages

Primary trading partners

Millions of USD	
Honduras	67.0
Guatemala	42.3
USA	24.5
Dominican Republic	16.8
Nicaragua	12.2

AVAILABILITY OF LABOR



The education system offers various careers related to the Agribusiness sector, which are related to Food and Beverages, including master's degrees, engineering degrees and specialized technicians.

Careers related to the Food and Beverage sector

Level	Career	Educational Institution
Engineering	Food Engineering	José Simeón Cañas University (UCA) José Matías Delgado University
Engineering	Agricultural Engineering	University of El Salvador, José Matías Delgado University, Catholic University of El Salvador
Technical	Agronomist	National School of Agriculture, Catholic University of El Salvador
Mastery	Master in Sustainable Tropical Agronomy with emphasis on Sustainable Agriculture	University of El Salvador
Mastery	Master in Sustainable Agronomy with emphasis on Plant Protection	University of El Salvador
Engineering	Agroindustrial Engineering	University of El Salvador, José Matías Delgado University
Engineering	Agricultural Engineering Plant Technician	University of El Salvador Evangelical University of El Salvador
Engineering	Agribusiness Engineering	José Matías Delgado University
Engineering	Agricultural and Zootechnical Engineering	Evangelical University of El Salvador

Ministry of Education - National Directorate for Higher Education

BUSINESS OVERVIEW

MOST REPRESENTATIVE COMPANIES IN THE SECTOR

Enterprise	Origin
CALVOCONSERVAS EL SALVADOR S.A. DE C.V.	Spain
DUMMEN ORANGE	Netherlands
LACTEOS DEL CORRAL, S.A. DE C.V.	El Salvador
PRODUCTOS ALIMENTICIOS DIANA S.A. DE C.V	El Salvador
LIVSMART AMERICAS S.A. DE C.V.	El Salvador
EMBOTELLADORA ELECTROPURA SA DE CV	El Salvador
COOP CHALCHUAPANECA PRODUCTORES	El Salvador
CAFE CUSCACHAPA DE R L	El Salvador
COMMERCIAL LARIN S.A. DE C.V.	El Salvador
MONTEALEGRE SA DE CV	El Salvador

Source: Own elaboration using ISSS data according to the number of jobs generated





OPPORTUNITIES AND ADVANTAGES FOR **INVESTING IN EL SALVADOR**

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INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES



1. Premium and Gourmet Confectionery

- Chocolates crafted from locally sourced cocoa, chocolates infused with tropical fruits, confections devoid of added sugar.
- Expansion of boutique gourmet confectionery establishments featuring truffles, macarons, and European confections tailored to the local taste.



2. Production of Healthy Snacks

- Development of baked cassava chips, energy bars featuring Salvadoran cocoa, and roasted seeds seasoned with natural spices.
- Development of functional snacks rich in protein or fiber, targeting fitness enthusiasts.



3. Growth of Specialty Coffee and Innovative Beverages

- Inauguration of boutique coffee shops in tourist destinations, featuring single-origin Salvadoran coffee.
- Development of functional and gourmet beverages that combine cold coffee infusions with tropical fruits.



4. Production and Export of Sauces and Condiments

- Marketing of hot sauces, dressings, and condiments featuring native Salvadoran ingredients such as loroco, mango, and tamarind.
- Development of low-sodium spice and seasoning blends that are free from artificial preservatives, emphasizing health and sustainability.



5. Dark Kitchens and Healthy Food Delivery

- Establishment of ghost kitchens focused on healthy, vegetarian, or keto cuisine.
- Expansion of subscription models for the provision of balanced and personalized meals.



6. Ready-to-Eat Foods

- Production of ready-to-eat and packaged meals for supermarkets and convenience stores.
- Development of gourmet and nutritious options for the corporate and student markets.



7. Natural Ingredient Substitutes

- Production of natural sweeteners, including honey, panela, and stevia, for the food and beverage sector.
- Preparation of alternative flours, including cassava, plantain, and almond, for use in baking and pastry creation.

NON-TRADITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES



Processing and Transformation

- Improved processing plants.
- Organized and standardized suppliers.



Research and development

- Research and development centers.
- Laboratories



Agroindustrial Technology

- Agtech and crop automation



Distribution and Logistics

- Equipped distribution and transportation centers
- Cooling systems.
- Centralized wholesale markets.



Production and Cultivation

- Agricultural machinery and advanced technology.
- Improvements in crop quality



Marketing and Commercialization

- Multinational marketing companies.

ADVANTAGES OF INVESTING IN EL SALVADOR

El Salvador offers:



- Suitable climatic conditions (temperature and altitude) and soils suitable for growing fruits and ornamental plants.
- Free trade agreements that provide favorable access conditions to a potential market of more than 1.2 billion consumers.
- Abundant supply of sugar for high consumption industries (beverages, sweets, etc.), with the possibility of negotiating fixed-price contracts for up to five years.
- Availability of water sources for sustainable aquaculture development.
- Excellent roads and port infrastructure.
- Tax incentives for companies engaged in the cultivation and extraction of marine species, cultivation of flora and vegetable species in greenhouses and laboratories, cultivation of amphibian and reptile species.
- Favorable climate for growing vegetables, ornamental plants and fishery production; which allows for the possibility of producing and marketing seasonal consumer products throughout the year.
- El Salvador is located in a tropical area with similar temperatures throughout the year and depending on the proximity to the coast and the altitude, different temperatures occur in each region:



INCENTIVES TO **INVEST IN EL SALVADOR**

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INCENTIVES



By investing in the food and beverage sector, foreign companies can tap into a largely untapped market, take advantage of the country's favorable trade agreements, strategic location, skilled workforce, and capitalize on the growing global demand for high-quality, sustainable agricultural products.

Furthermore, the government's commitment to promote investment and support the agro-industrial industry through incentives, infrastructure development and simplified regulations further enhances the attractiveness of the sector for foreign investors.

FREE TRADE ZONE LAW	LEGISLATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF INVESTMENT EXPANSION
The Free Trade Zone Law of El Salvador is a legislation that promotes the creation of delimited geographical areas, where companies can operate with tax and customs benefits, facilitating the attraction of foreign investment and the creation of employment in specific sectors of the economy.	It creates incentives to enhance investments in strategic sectors, applicable to companies with a minimum of 10 years of operation within the country. This includes a tax credit against Income Tax for a duration of up to 10 years and an exemption from the Real Estate Transfer Tax for expansion projects, contingent upon prior qualification and authorization by the Ministry of Economy.



FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS

Treaties and agreements have been crucial to strengthening El Salvador's trade relations with various countries and regions, opening opportunities for economic growth and sustainable development in the country. Each agreement has specific objectives, but together, they contribute to improving El Salvador's competitiveness and integration in international trade.

TREATY/AGREEMENT	DATE OF SIGNATURE	COUNTRIES INVOLVED
Reciprocal Trade Agreement with the United States	2026	El Salvador, United States
CAFTA-DR (Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement).	2004	El Salvador, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, United States
Free Trade Agreement between Central America and Mexico.	2011	El Salvador, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Mexico
Free Trade Agreement with the Republic of Korea.	2013	El Salvador, South Korea
Association Agreement with the European Union.	2012	El Salvador, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, European Union
Free Trade Agreement between Central America and Chile.	1999	El Salvador, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Chile
Trade Agreement with the United Kingdom.	2019	El Salvador, United Kingdom
Free Trade Agreement between El Salvador and Panama.	2003	El Salvador, Panama
Free Trade Agreement between El Salvador and Colombia.	2010	El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Colombia
Partial Scope Agreement with Ecuador	1998	El Salvador, Ecuador
Partial Scope Agreement with Bolivia	1998	El Salvador, Bolivia
Partial Scope Agreement with Cuba	2012	El Salvador, Cuba



SUCCESS STORIES AND **SUPPORT FOR INVESTORS**

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CORTE ARGENTINO

CARNE PREMIUM

Corte Argentino is a company that specializes in the import and distribution of premium beef, boasting a significant presence in Panama and experiencing rapid expansion in El Salvador.

Concentrating on Angus, Wagyu, and American cuts for restaurants, hotels, and residences, the company has positioned itself under the concept of a "comprehensive experience." It functions not only as a restaurant but also features a premium butcher shop infrastructure where certified raw cuts of meat are sold.

Grupo Calvo, a Spanish company dedicated to the production and marketing of high-quality canned fish.

It has been in operation for more than 10 years with an investment of USD \$160 million and has generated around 2,000 direct jobs.

It is one of the main exporting companies and continues to invest in the country.





- Hidroexpo currently produces chili (Bell Pepper), tomato (Bif), among others.
- It began operations in 2002 and has invested more than US\$23 million.
- The company places its product in local and foreign markets, particularly in the US and Canada.

INVESTOR SUPPORT SERVICES

contact us!

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INVEST in El Salvador, as an investment promotion agency, offers a wide range of services designed to facilitate the entry of capital into the country's tourism sector. Our work includes support and guidance regarding procedures, permits, provision of contacts and strategic information, and advice on tax benefits and government incentives available to investors to ensure a smooth, transparent and successful investment process.

Personalized assistance



We provide a service tailored to your needs with the aim of delivering valuable solutions.

Strategic information



Up-to-date information on the investment climate, sectors of interest and opportunities.

Facilitating contacts



Networking with government representatives, local businesses, chambers of commerce and business associations.

Consulting



Technical advice and evaluations of investment cases.

Tailor-made agendas



We offer a carefully selected programme of meetings and appointments tailored to your objectives.



All officials, employees, suppliers, business partners, and other stakeholders are encouraged to abstain from, decline to participate in, or actively or passively engage in any activities that may be perceived as bribery, thus fostering a transparent and corruption-free administration. They are invited to utilize the reporting channels available on the website: <https://investinelsalvador.gob.sv/es/>