

Required Report: Required - Public Distribution

Date: October 07, 2026

Report Number: DR2026-0010

Report Name: Retail Foods Annual

Country: Dominican Republic

Post: Santo Domingo

Report Category: Retail Foods

Prepared By: Iris Montilla

Approved By: Rachel Bickford

Report Highlights:

For six consecutive years, the Dominican Republic (DR) has ranked as the third-largest export market by value for U.S. consumer-oriented products in the Western Hemisphere. In 2025, U.S. exports of these products to the DR totaled approximately \$1.3 billion, up 10 percent year-on-year, driven by continued robust demand from the tourism and retail sectors. From January through July 2026, U.S. consumer-oriented exports to the DR increased 22 percent compared to the same period in 2025. As this trade category continues to expand, the United States remains the DR's leading supplier of consumer-oriented products, accounting for 46 percent of the local import market in 2025.

Market Fact Sheet: Dominican Republic

The Dominican Republic (DR) is an upper middle-income country characterized by low and stable inflation. In 2025, the country experienced year-on-year inflation of 4.95 percent, on par with the rate of inflation for Latin America. The DR is one of the largest economies in the Caribbean, and the third-largest country in terms of population, after Cuba and Haiti. The composition of the DR’s exports has shifted away from traditional products such as raw sugar, green coffee, and cacao. Instead, exports of products including gold, tobacco, medical instruments, electrical circuit breakers, jewelry, and ferronickel have increased. The country’s major agricultural imports consist primarily of consumer-oriented products and livestock feed, with the United States serving as the leading supplier.

Consumer-Oriented Agricultural Imports

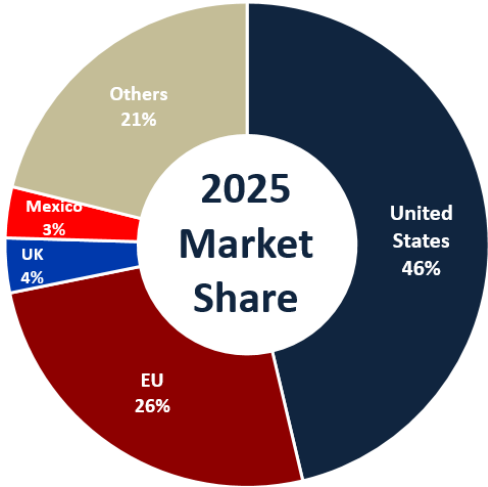


Chart 1: Top Exporting Countries to the Dominican Republic
Source: Trade Data Monitor (TDM).

Food Processing Industry

The Central Bank of the Dominican Republic (BCDR) reported the food processing industry grew by 1.2 percent for 2025. Within the broader food industry, the category covering processed beverages and other products increased by 1 percent. Key sectors include meat, wheat milling, bakery, and dairy. The U.S. remains a major supplier of essential ingredients like meat, oils, and dairy.

Food Retail Industry

The Dominican modern retail sector features a variety of U.S. products and is rapidly growing, primarily through locally owned companies. Despite the rise in supermarkets, they only account for 20-25 percent of retail sales, with most transactions occurring in traditional channels like *colmados* (i.e.

neighborhood mom-and-pop-style stores) and warehouses, which focus on locally produced goods.

Quick Facts Calendar Year 2025	
Imports of Consumer-Oriented Products (US\$ million)	
World Total: \$3.1	
List of Top 10 Growth Products	
1) Dairy Products	6) Poultry Meat & Prods. (ex. eggs)
2) Pork & Pork Products	7) Beef & Beef Products
3) Soup & Other Food Preparations	8) Processed Vegetables
4) Distilled Spirits	9) Non-Alcoholic Bev. (ex. juices, coffee, tea)
5) Bakery Goods, Cereals, & Pasta	10) Wine & Related Products
Food Industry by Channels (U.S. billion)	
Food Service-HRI	\$11.02
Food Processing	\$4.30
Food and Agriculture Exports	\$3.30
Top 10 DR Retailers*	
1) Sirena	6) Jumbo
2) Bravo	7) Sirena Market
3) Hypermercados Olé	8) Plaza Lama
4) Nacional Supermarkets	9) PriceSmart
5) Aprezio	10) Carrefour City
GDP/Population	
Population:	11.6million
GDP:	US\$132 billion
GDP per capita:	US\$11,750

Sources: Table 1. Source: Global Agricultural Trade System (GATS), TDM; World Bank; IMF. *Ordered by quantity of establishments.

Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats

Strengths	Weaknesses
Implementation of CAFTA-DR, which has lowered or eliminated duties on nearly 100 percent of products.	Higher cost of some U.S. products compared to competitors.
Proximity to the United States and strong demand for U.S. products.	Import sensitivity of several products.
Opportunities	Threats
Trade liberalization due to the full implementation of CAFTA-DR starting January 1, 2025.	Competition from other CAFTA-DR members and DR’s other free trade agreement partners.
Growth potential for U.S. consumer-oriented products, livestock feed, and ingredients for the food	Limited cold chain capacity.

processing industry.	
----------------------	--

Contact: Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) Santo Domingo
agsantodomingo@usda.gov | +1 809-368-7654

Section 1: Market Summary

The Dominican Republic continues to be a significant and stable economic player in Latin America and the Caribbean. In 2024, U.S. consumer-oriented exports to the Dominican Republic surpassed \$1.2 billion, solidifying its position as the third-largest market for these products and the fourth-largest for U.S. agricultural and related products in the Western Hemisphere. For understanding the market dynamics and import requirements, the 2025 [Exporter Guide](#)¹ and the [Food and Agriculture Import Regulations and Standards](#)² (FAIRS) narrative report provide comprehensive insights.

The retail landscape in the Dominican Republic is characterized by a clear division between modern and traditional channels. The modern retail sector, which includes supermarket chains, independent supermarkets, and convenience stores, represents about 20 to 25 percent of total retail sales. Supermarket chains, which have doubled in number over the past two decades, are primarily concentrated in urban areas, such as Santo Domingo, Santiago, and other major cities. Independent supermarkets, mostly found in Santo Domingo, are part of the National Union of Low-Cost Supermarkets (UNASE). Convenience stores, predominantly located in gas stations, focus on ready-to-eat and pre-packaged foods and beverages. In contrast, the traditional retail sector, encompassing neighborhood stores ("colmados"), walk-in food warehouses ("almacenes"), and public markets ("mercados"), accounts for approximately 70 to 80 percent of retail food sales, highlighting its continued dominance in the market.

Advantages and Challenges

Advantages	Challenges
• The implementation of CAFTA-DR, which has lowered or eliminated duties on virtually all products • An increasingly modern retail sector, which seeks new, high-quality products • A growing number of consumers demanding higher quality and healthier products • Proximity between the DR and United States and strong commercial and cultural ties • Efficient food distribution channels	• Competition from other CAFTA-DR signees and the DR's other trading partners • Delays for import permits and sanitary registration, which can affect the availability of imported ingredients • Cold chain limitations • 18 percent valued-added tax (VAT) and high logistical costs

Retail Sales by Channels

¹https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Exporter%20Guide%20Annual_Santo%20Domingo_Dominican%20Republic_DR2026-0007

²https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=FAIRS%20Export%20Certificate%20Report%20Annual_Santo%20Domingo_Dominican%20Republic_DR2026-0006

RETAIL MARKET BY CHANNEL 2025 (USD MILLION)

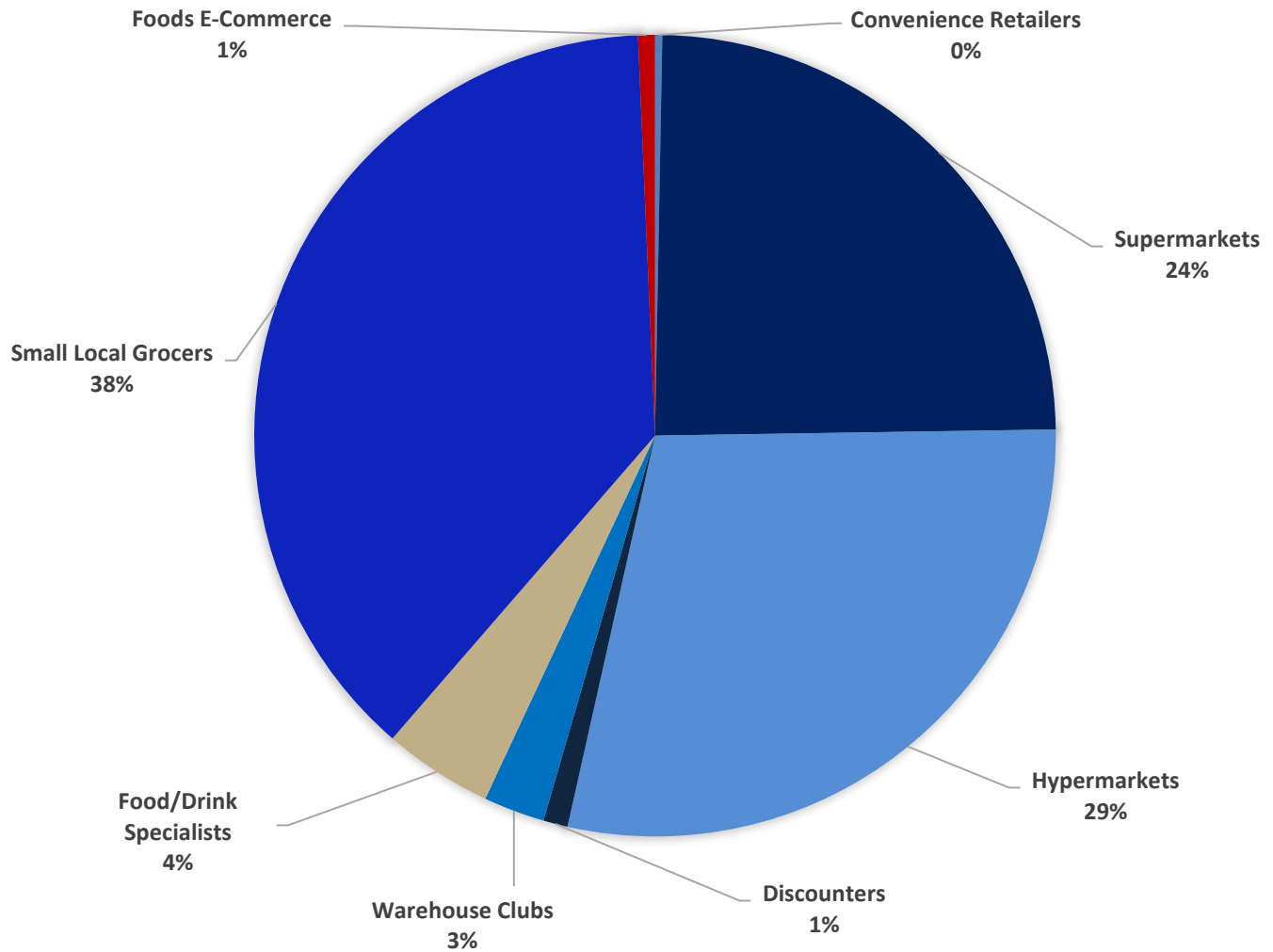


Chart 2: Retail Market by Channel 2025. Source: Euromonitor

Section 2: Road Map for Market Entry

Entry Strategy

To enter the Dominican market, the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), which is in the Office of Agricultural Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in Santo Domingo, recommends starting with a review of the FAIRS report for the latest import regulations and market information. FAS Santo Domingo can facilitate connections with relevant authorities and assist stakeholders in navigating regulatory requirements.

Once market research is completed, FAS can help connect stakeholders with local retailers and importers. Many U.S. agriculture-related trade associations also have representatives in the Dominican Republic, who can provide insights into market trends and opportunities. FAS Santo Domingo advises conducting an in-country visit, participating in a trade mission from the United States, or attending trade shows, such as the Americas Food and Beverage Show in Miami, which attracts Dominican buyers. Building personal relationships is crucial for successfully conducting business in the Dominican market.

Market Structure

Over the last three decades, the Dominican retail sector has undergone significant changes in response to sustained economic growth. During that time, supermarkets developed from average store sizes of 200-500 square meters (in the early 1990s) up to sizes of 10,000 square meters in the early 2000s. This growth in size was due to a focus on serving the expanding urban middle- and upper-middle classes, which have experienced rapid increases in income. This expansion in store size and the number of outlets also meant a greater selection of products for consumers.

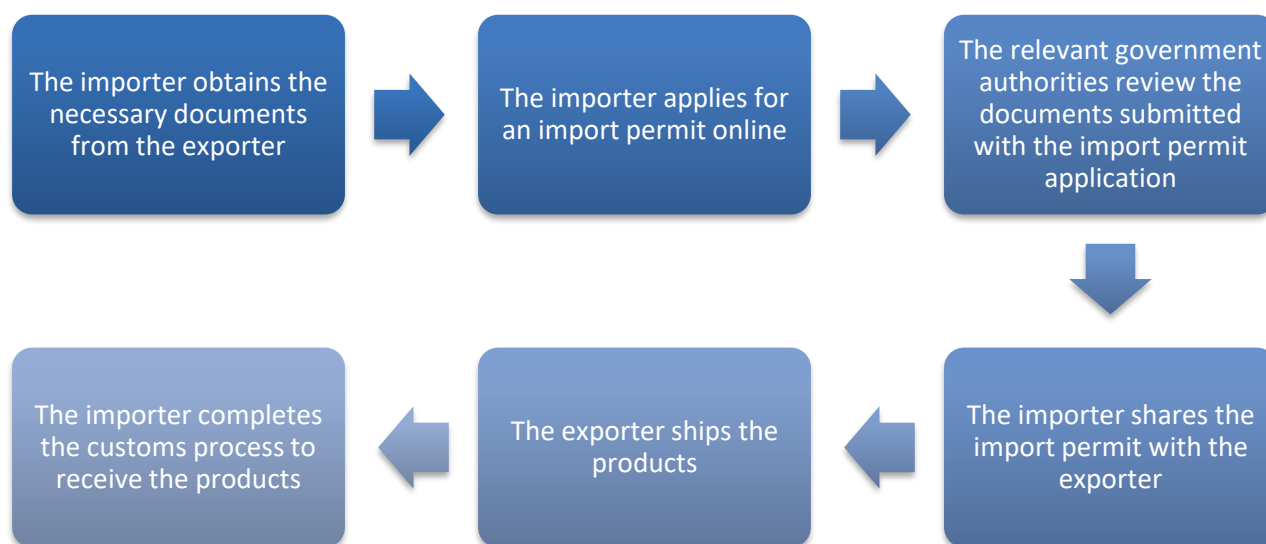
This expansion and shifting consumer behavior have contributed to the continued growth of retail e-commerce. In major cities, with broad internet access, such as Santo Domingo and Santiago, where consumers increasingly prefer online shopping, leading major retailers to invest in their own platforms, apps, and delivery systems, especially for groceries, due to added convenience.

Supermarkets have increased product selections from 30,000 products in the 1990s up to 85,000 (during the high season) in recent years. There has also been an expansion in the availability of non-grocery goods and services for supermarket clients to facilitate “one stop shopping”. Goods and services, such as banking, household appliances, fast food, telecommunications, and pharmacies are now commonly co-located with supermarkets.

Company Profiles & Top Host Country Retailers

Retailer	Web Page
Grupo Ramos: <i>Sirena</i> <i>Aprezio</i>	https://sirena.do/
	https://www.instagram.com/aprezio.do/?hl=en
Centro Cuesta Nacional: <i>Supermercados Nacional</i> <i>Jumbo</i>	https://supermercadosnacional.com/
	https://jumbo.com.do/
Plaza Lama	https://plazalama.com.do/
Hipermercado Olé	https://www.hiperole.com.do/
PriceSmart Inc	https://shop.pricesmart.com/dr/sp
Supermercados Bravo	http://superbravo.com.do/
Almacenes Iberia	https://hipermercadosiberia.com/
Carrefour	https://www.carrefour.do/

Import Procedures



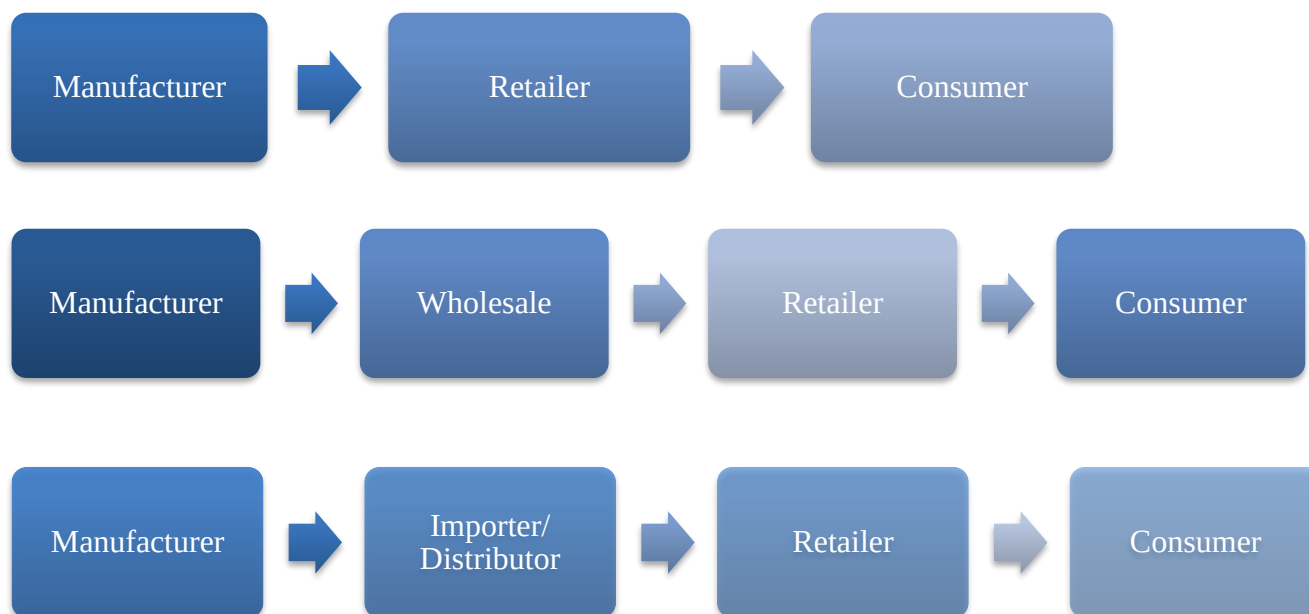
For comprehensive details on the import process, please refer to the [Exporter Guide](#)³ report.

Distribution Channels

Given the dynamic nature of the Dominican retail sector and the wide range of domestically-produced and imported products, there are numerous pathways for market entry. Large, modern retail chains often source some products directly. However, due to low purchase volumes for some specialty items, the involvement of multiple intermediaries, including importers and freight consolidators, is common. The

³https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Exporter%20Guide%20Annual_Santo%20Domingo_Dominican%20Republic_DR2026-0007

choice of product entry model will depend on the retailer and product, often involving various intermediaries to ensure effective market placement. A common model is as follows:



Sector Trends

Supermarket chains in the Dominican Republic are increasingly offering products under their own private labels, which has led to special promotions and competitive pricing to attract customers. Many of these supermarkets continue to incorporate U.S. products into their private label ranges, presenting opportunities for private label manufacturers to enter the market. In recent years, these chains have also focused on lower-income demographics by establishing smaller stores, around 3,000 square meters in size, that primarily stock perishable foods and household essentials. Additionally, there has been a notable expansion in smaller retail operations, such as "colmados" and "colmadones" (larger neighborhood stores), which have increased both in number and in the range of products offered.

Section 3: Competition

Overall, the United States remains the leading supplier of consumer-oriented products to the Dominican Republic, accounting for 46 percent market share in 2026.

U.S. beef and beef products hold approximately 94 percent of the import market, with sales reaching \$131 million, a 10 percent increase year over year. U.S. beef benefits from geographic proximity, high-quality cuts, and the popularity of Certified Angus Beef (CAB) in both the food service and retail sectors.

U.S. exports of pork and pork products to the Dominican Republic totaled \$289 million in 2025, accounting for approximately 84 percent of the Dominican import market. In the dairy sector,

domestically produced cheese sales fell short compared to imported varieties due to selection, quality, and sanitary standards.

U.S. cheese accounted for 39 percent of the import market, an increase of 23 percent year over year, while the European Union held a 58 percent share.

U.S. fresh fruit also maintains a strong presence in the Dominican market. In 2025, U.S. apples held a dominant 98 percent market share and maintained a strong presence in the local market. U.S. pears achieved a 54 percent market share, while U.S. grapes secured 33 percent. Overall, U.S. fresh fruit sales grew 11 percent year on year and captured 58 percent of the market, other competitors in this category are Peru, Chile and Colombia.

Section 4: Best Products Prospects

Top Consumer-Oriented Products Imported from the United States

January - December U.S. Exports to the DR (millions)					
Product	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Consumer Oriented Agricultural Total	898	1,067	1,102	1,208	1,330
Pork & Pork Products	151	234	276	277	290
Dairy Products	116	158	133	135	162
Other Consumer Oriented	102	98	102	118	156
Poultry Meat & Prods. (excl. eggs)	96	81	100	128	136
Beef & Beef Products	79	98	107	120	132
Fresh Fruit	39	44	46	55	61
Bakery Goods, Cereals, & Pasta	37	42	46	51	48
Food Preparations	33	37	39	49	48
Condiments & Sauces	27	31	35	40	41
Distilled Spirits	31	48	38	32	33
Fruit & Vegetable Juices	49	51	29	35	32
Processed Vegetables	27	21	20	20	29
Wine & Related Products	20	21	23	27	26
Fresh Vegetables	14	17	15	18	23
Non-Alcoholic Bev. (excl. juice)	14	11	14	16	23
Chocolate & Cocoa Products	14	17	19	21	20
Meat Products NESOI	6	8	8	15	18
Tree Nuts	9	13	14	12	16
Beer	11	11	10	11	11
Processed Fruit	10	9	11	11	9
Dog & Cat Food	6	10	9	8	7
Confectionery	5	5	6	6	6
Nursery Products & Cut Flowers	2	2	2	2	2
Eggs & Products	3	-	-	-	2

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau Trade Data

Products Present in the Market with Strong Sales Potential

Industry sources indicate that the best product prospects in the Dominican retail sector include U.S. dairy products (e.g., cheese, yogurt, and powdered milk), although they continue to face onerous and time-consuming import regulations. Other top categories are poultry, beef and beef products, flour and other baking ingredients, spices, candies, fresh fruit, processed vegetables, prepared foods, condiments and sauces, snacks, fruit and vegetable juices. There is also growth potential for existing and new alcoholic beverage products within the distilled spirits, wine, craft beer and ready-to-drink cocktails categories.

Products Not Present in Market with Good Sales Potential

Retailers report that consumer-oriented products listed above that can be offered under private labels possess strong sales potential. Retailers see opportunities to target low-income consumers with lower-priced products.

Section 5: Key Contacts and Further Information

Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS/USDA)

United States Embassy in the Dominican Republic
Ave. República de Colombia # 57, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
Telephone: 809-368-7654
E-mail: agsantodomingo@usda.gov
Website: www.fas.usda.gov

Please do not hesitate to contact this office for more detailed information about the Dominican food market, lists of importers, major players in the sector, and any other related questions.

Industry and Commerce Ministry of the Dominican Republic (MICM)

Torre MICM, Av. 27 de Febrero No. 306, Bella Vista. Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.
Telephone: 809- 685-5171 | E-mail: info@micm.gob.do
Website: <https://www.micm.gob.do/>

Ministry of Health

General Directorate of Medicines, Food and Health Products – DIGEMAPS- (Sanitary Registration)
Av. Dr. Héctor Homero Hernández esq. Av. Tiradentes, Ensanche La Fe.
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.
Tel: 809-541-3121; Email: infoministeriodesalud@gob.do
Websites: <https://digemaps.msp.gob.do/menu/>;
<https://msp.gob.do/web/>

Commercial Enterprises National Organization (ONEC)

Torre Biltmore, Suite 401, Ave. Abraham Lincoln No. 1003, D.N.
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
Telephone: 809-683-7229 | E-mail: info@onec.org.do
Website: <http://www.onec.org.do/>

National Union of Economic Supermarkets (UNASE)

Calle Rodrigo Pérez No. 6, El Almirante. Santo Domingo Este, Dominican Republic
Telephone: 809-236-0534 | E-mail: cooperativaunase@gmail.com

National Federation of Retailers and Food Merchants (FENACODEP)

Prolongación Independencia No. 390, KM 81/2, Urbanización Miramar, Apartado Postal 6D. Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
Telephone: 809-532-2240 and 809-532-0888 | E-mail: fenacodep01@hotmail.com
Website: <https://fenacodep.org/>

Dominican Institute for Quality Standards (INDOCAL)

C/ Olof Palme esq. Núñez de Cáceres, San Gerónimo, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
Telephone: 809-686-2205 Ext.310 | E-mail: servicioalcliente@indocal.gob.do
Website: <http://www.indocal.gob.do>

National Institute for the Consumer Rights Protection (ProConsumidor)

Av. Charles Summer #33, Los Prados, D.N, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
Telephone: 809-472-2731 | E-mail: info@proconsumidor.gob.do
Website: <http://proconsumidor.gob.do>

Foreign Agricultural Service Santo Domingo

Phone: 809-368-7638

Address: República de Colombia Av. #57, Arroyo Hondo,
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.
U.S. Embassy in Santo Domingo, DR.

Email: agsantodomingo@usda.gov

<http://www.fas.usda.gov>

Comment: Please contact this office for more detailed information about the Dominican food market, lists of importers, major players in the sector, questions, etc.

Attachments:

No Attachments