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Report Highlights:

Tianjin is a key port city and logistics hub in northern China, with strong cold-chain infrastructure supporting large-scale imports of meat, seafood, dairy, and packaged foods. In 2025, its per capita disposable income ranked among the highest in China, and food service and retail sectors continued to grow steadily. Consumers are highly price-sensitive but show rising demand for high-quality proteins and convenient packaged foods. Imported products mainly enter through membership stores and premium channels, with Southeast Asian and regional brands comprising a large share of imports due to price advantages. U.S. agricultural products have opportunities in processed meat ingredients, frozen seafood, and small-packaged foods, but need strong price competitiveness and localization.

City Overview

Tianjin is one of the most important municipalities in northern China and plays a key role in the coordinated development strategy of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region. Tianjin serves as an important gateway connecting inland markets with international trade routes. Supported by Port of Tianjin, one of the major comprehensive ports in northern China, the city plays an important role in trade, logistics, and industrial supply chains, especially in imported food, cold chain logistics, and bulk commodity distribution. In 2025, Tianjin's gross domestic product (GDP) reached approximately \$257.86 billion, with GDP per capita around \$18,912, reflecting its strong industrial base and trade-oriented economy.



Tianjin has a permanent population of around 13.63 million. In 2025, per capita disposable income reached \$7,778, ranking fifth nationwide and increasing by 4.4 percent year-on-year. Consumer spending power continues to improve, and food consumption is shifting toward higher-quality, healthier, and more diverse products. The growth of younger and middle-income consumers is also supporting the expansion of the restaurant, retail, and e-commerce sectors.

Tianjin is an important industrial and manufacturing city in northern China, with a strong foundation in advanced manufacturing and heavy industry. The aerospace industry has well-developed research, manufacturing, and assembly capabilities, with strengths in aircraft production and high-end equipment

Tianjin City at a Glance 2025 (USD calculated at 7.19 exchange rate)	
Population	13.63 million
Land Area	11,966.45 km ²
Gross Domestic Product (GDP)	\$257.86 billion
GDP per capita	\$18,912
Per capita disposable income	\$7,778
Growth in per capita disposable income	4.4 percent
Total Imports	\$56.32 billion
Total Exports	\$59.96 billion
<i>Source: Tianjin Economic and Social Development Report 2025</i>	

exports. The automotive sector also remains important and is gradually shifting toward new electric vehicles. In addition, the biopharmaceutical industry is growing rapidly, covering innovative medicines and medical devices.

For trade, Tianjin's total imports and exports in 2025 reached approximately \$56.32 billion and \$59.96 billion respectively. Imports of food and consumer products continue to increase, reflecting ongoing consumer upgrading trends. Supported by the cold chain infrastructure and customs efficiency of the Port of Tianjin, products such as meat, seafood, dairy products, and alcoholic products continue entering the north China market and are gradually expanding nationwide.

Tianjin also has a well-developed transportation system, including the Port of Tianjin, Tianjin Binhai International Airport, high-speed rail networks, and urban metro systems, giving the city strong advantages in regional logistics and mobility. In tourism, Tianjin attracts domestic and international visitors with its historic districts, Haihe River scenery, and European-style architecture, while tourism-related spending continues to support the local restaurant and retail markets.

Market for Imported Products

Tianjin is one of the most important port cities and international trade gateways in northern China. The city has played an important role in the circulation of imported goods. Supported by the logistics network of Port of Tianjin and free trade zone policies, Tianjin has developed an import distribution system covering food and beverages, alcoholic products, meat, dairy products, and snack foods.

At present, the imported food market in Tianjin shows clear channel segmentation. Traditional wholesale markets mainly focus on imported foods from Southeast Asia, which often have lower prices and shorter shipping times. Imported products from Europe and the United States have a smaller presence in traditional wholesale channels and are mainly sold through membership warehouse stores and high-end imported retail channels. Premium imported food, alcoholic products, fruit, and condiments are mainly sold through stores such as Sam's Club, Hema, Gran Vida, and Ole'. In recent years, Sam's Club and Hema have continued expanding, further reducing the market space for traditional imported food retailers. Many small imported food stores have nearly disappeared.

Consumers in Tianjin still maintain demand for imported food, but overall spending power remains relatively limited, and consumers are highly price sensitive. Compared with first-tier cities such as Beijing and Shanghai, the Tianjin market places greater attention on value for money, while acceptance of highly premium imported products remains relatively low. As a result, lower-priced Southeast Asian snack foods occupy a large share of imported supermarkets. Imported snacks, dairy products, alcoholic products, fruit, and frozen seafood continue to see stable demand, while premium condiments, functional foods, and high-priced beverages show more limited sales performance.

High-end imported retail channels in Tianjin are mainly concentrated in upscale shopping centers such as MixC Tianjin and Hisense Plaza. Representative retailers include Ole' and Gran Vida. Their main customer groups are middle- and high-income families and younger consumers. Products mainly include imported fruit, alcoholic products, snack foods, meat products, and frozen seafood.



Imported fruit currently sold in the market mainly comes from New Zealand, Australia, and Southeast Asia. Premium candies mainly come from Europe, Japan, and South Korea, while snack foods are mainly sourced from Southeast Asia, Japan, South Korea, and Europe. Alcoholic products are primarily wines and spirits from Australia, Europe, and the United States. Meat products mainly come from Australia and Japan, while frozen seafood products are mainly sourced from France and South America.

Overall, U.S. agricultural products currently hold a relatively small share in Tianjin's high-end imported supermarket sector. Although U.S. fruit, alcoholic products, and snack foods are still available in the market, their shelf presence is lower than products from Europe, Southeast Asia, Japan, and South Korea. Imported foods from Southeast Asia, Japan, and South Korea remain more competitive in retail channels because of their lower prices and faster product turnover.

Retail Sector

Tianjin is one of the major economic centers in northern China, with a large consumer base and stable economic size. In 2025, Tianjin's GDP reached approximately \$257.86 billion, with a permanent population of about 13.64 million. Per capita disposable income increased to around \$7,778, while annual tourist visits exceeded 272 million, providing stable support for the retail consumption market.

Tianjin's main retail market is concentrated in key commercial districts, cultural center areas, and the old city area around the ancient culture street. Most high-end retail, premium shopping centers, and major customer traffic are in these core districts, while commercial development in outer districts remains relatively weak.

In recent years, Tianjin's retail industry has been rapidly shifting from traditional supermarkets toward membership warehouse stores and new retail models, with market concentration continuing to increase. Sam's Club and Hema have been among the fastest-growing retail channels. Sam's Club, in particular, has attracted many consumers from both Tianjin and nearby Hebei Province through its membership model and regional influence. Tianjin currently has 1 Sam's Club store, with 2 additional stores under construction and expected to open before the end of 2026.

At the same time, traditional supermarkets are facing increasing competition. Aeon has completely exited the Tianjin market, while local retailers such as Wumart are expanding quickly through digital operations, online-to-offline integration, and rapid delivery services.

Tianjin consumers are generally price-sensitive. Demand for imported food products still exists, but acceptance of highly premium-priced products remains limited. Products with stable supply, standardized quality, and family-size packaging are more suitable for the market. At present, the most effective way for imported food products to enter the Tianjin market is through retail channels such as Sam's Club, Hema, and premium imported grocery stores.

In addition, Tianjin's retail market still faces several challenges, including similarity among commercial projects, limited experiential consumption, outflow of high-end spending, and insufficient convenience

services. However, consumer demand for experiential shopping, differentiated retail concepts, and higher-quality services continues to grow, which is expected to become an important direction for the future upgrade of Tianjin’s retail industry.

Key Retail Chain	Store Type	Number of Outlets	Targeted Consumers
CR Vanguard	Supermarket	32	Mainstream shoppers
Wumart	Supermarket	14	Mainstream shoppers
Yonghui	Supermarket	4	Mainstream shoppers
Sam’s Club	Membership Store	3*	Middle-and high-income consumers
Hema Fresh	Membership Store	3	Upper-middle-income consumers
Ole	Supermarket	2	Affluent shoppers
D-Mark	Supermarket	1	Middle-and high-income consumers

Major Retail Channels Selling Imported Food Products in Tianjin

**Projected stores by the end of 2026*

Food Service

In the first quarter of 2026, Tianjin’s accommodation and food service industry grew by 5.5 percent year-on-year, higher than the national average. Tianjin’s food service market is mainly driven by local snacks and mass-market dining, and consumers are highly price sensitive. The market generally places strong attention on value for money. Traditional local foods such as jianbing, guobacai, steamed buns, and fried rice cakes are consumed frequently. According to industry research, even under economic pressure, consumer spending on dining in Tianjin has continued to grow, showing that local residents maintain strong demand for food service consumption.

In recent years, affordable restaurant chains, community-based restaurants, fast food, and snack businesses have grown quickly, while restaurants with an average spending level above RMB 200 (about \$27.80) per person have faced increasing operating pressure. Some high-end dining consumption has shifted to Beijing. As a coastal city, seafood represents a relatively large share of both household and restaurant consumption in Tianjin. Pork consumption remains stable, with pork belly and pork leg meat being the most consumed cuts. Demand for braised meat products is relatively high, and sausage products are widely used in food service channels. In recent years, demand for higher-quality proteins such as beef and seafood has continued to increase. Coffee shops, beverage stores, and light dining concepts have also expanded rapidly, driven by younger consumers seeking coffee, desserts, and fusion-style dining experiences.

For U.S. agricultural products, Tianjin consumers show relatively strong demand for pork products such as sausages, pork fillings for steamed buns, and braised meat products, which suggests continued market opportunities for pork and pork variety meats. In comparison, because Tianjin’s high-end dining market

remains relatively limited and some premium consumption has shifted to Beijing, there is less room for expansion of higher-priced U.S. beef, seafood, and dairy products. For U.S. exporters interested in Tianjin, products with competitive pricing and strong value-for-money positioning may be more suitable.

Cold Chain Logistics and Imported Meat Supply Chain

Tianjin Port is one of the most important cold chain logistics and imported frozen food distribution hubs in northern China and plays a key role in China's meat import supply chain. In 2025, total food imports through Tianjin customs reached \$8.08 billion, covering products such as meat, seafood, edible oils, dairy products, alcoholic products, beverages, and bakery products. At the same time, Tianjin Port handled 590 million metric tons of cargo, ranking ninth globally and continuing to serve as a major international trade hub. In the imported frozen food sector, including meat and seafood, Tianjin imported about 2.73 million metric tons in 2025, accounting for roughly one-quarter of China's total imports and remaining among the largest import ports in the country.

Within the meat import structure, beef and pork are the main categories imported through Tianjin. Beef represents the largest share at about 58 percent, mainly sourced from Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Australia, and New Zealand. Pork accounts for about 35 percent, with major suppliers including Spain, the United States, and Brazil. Supported by stable supply sources and large import volumes, Tianjin has become one of the most important meat distribution centers in northern China.

Tianjin's main advantage is not only its port capacity, but also its well-developed cold chain logistics system. Supported by the port, bonded zones, and the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei regional market, Tianjin has built a complete supply chain covering customs clearance, cold storage, refrigerated transportation, meat cutting and processing, and nationwide distribution. Large volumes of imported beef, pork, poultry, and frozen seafood enter China through Tianjin Port and are quickly distributed to Beijing, Hebei, Shandong, and northeastern China. Based on this system, Tianjin has gradually developed into one of China's most important centers for meat cutting, processing, and prepared food ingredient supply. Imported meat products are processed in Tianjin and nearby areas before being widely used in prepared meals, processed foods, and chain restaurant supply systems. In particular, pork variety meats, beef, and poultry by-products have become important raw materials for China's prepared food industry, with many related processing companies located in Tianjin and neighboring Hebei Province.

Market Entry

For U.S. agricultural exporters, the most promising products in the Tianjin market are primarily meat products suitable for cold-chain distribution and processed food production, frozen seafood, and cost-effective packaged foods. Tianjin is one of the cities in China with the highest per capita disposable income in 2025. In the first quarter of 2026, the accommodation and catering sector grew by 5.5 percent year-on-year, higher than the national average.

Consumers in Tianjin have long preferred traditional Chinese cuisine and local snacks. At the same time, demand for high-quality protein is growing, especially beef, seafood, and related processed products.

With the support of Tianjin Port's well-developed cold-chain logistics system and nationwide distribution network, large volumes of imported beef, pork, poultry, and frozen seafood enter north China and northeast China through Tianjin. These products are further used in prepared meals, institutional catering, and restaurant supply chains. U.S. pork and pork by-products, as well as poultry, still have demand in food processing and prepared food sectors. They are especially suitable as raw materials for ready-to-eat meals and processed foods. In addition, packaged food for household consumption also matches the needs of the local retail market.

Although Tianjin consumers continue to show stable demand for imported food, they are generally price-sensitive and have limited acceptance of high-priced imported products. They prefer products with better value for money. Therefore, when entering or expanding in the Tianjin market, U.S. exporters should focus more on price competitiveness and consider local consumption habits. They should offer products that are moderately priced, in small packages, suitable for household use, with differentiated flavors and a better eating experience. Compared with high-end positioning, products that balance quality and price are more likely to be accepted in the Tianjin market.

Key Contacts and Further Information

For more detailed information on the products and market conditions discussed in this report, please refer to the following recommended USDA GAIN reports.

[Exporter Guide Annual](#)

[Food Processing Ingredients Annual](#)

[Retail Foods Annual](#)

[China: USA Dairy Pork and Poultry Registrations Renewed while Beef Remains Overdue](#)

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