

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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United Arab Emirates

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Record 2011 U.S. Food Exports to the GCC-5 Countries

Report Categories:

Market Development Reports

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Report Highlights:

In 2011, the combined U.S. food exports to the GCC-5 countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the UAE) reached a record level, growing from \$86 million in 1986 to \$ 1.43 billion.

General Information:

U.S. Food and Agricultural Exports to the GCC-5 (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the UAE) countries covered by OAA Dubai reached a milestone in 2011. Over the past 25 years, U.S. food and agricultural exports to the GCC-5 grew exponentially from \$86 million in 1986 to \$ 1.43 billion in 2011.

The UAE has been the largest market for U.S. food exports among the GCC-5. In 2011 U.S. agricultural exports to the UAE reached unprecedented level of \$ 1 billion, compared to only \$ 32 million in 1986. While the export growth was relatively slow during the eighties and nineties, it surged during the past decade to reach the current record level.

Consumer ready products (CRP) representing more than 50 percent of the total exports, recorded the highest growth. Unparalleled quality, innovation, growing popularity and trusted food safety were the driving tools behind the growth. Moreover, the introduction of U.S. consolidators into the market and their willingness to accommodate small orders of food importing companies encouraged UAE small retailers and food distributors to enter into business relationships with U.S. export houses. The latest UAE import trade statistics show that the U.S. is currently the largest CRP exporter, as well as one of the top 5 food exporters to the UAE.

Intermediate products came second as a growing demand. While U.S. food exports to the GCC are surging, they face intense competition from similar products from Canada, Australia, India and several other countries. However, if the prevailing macro and micro economics conditions remain unchanged, OAA Dubai expects U.S. food exports to the GCC to continue to grow in the coming years.