



Big Picture Report: April 2021
Bernadette Wiltz-Lang, SUSTA

Good News for Agriculture Exports **The Data Speaks Volumes**

Yes, you read that right. The latest export data from the USDA and the Census Bureau offers some welcome news: demand for U.S. food and ag products is starting to recover from the disruption of COVID. It's time to get active again.

The past year certainly has been an unprecedented challenge for export marketing. Travel restrictions, cancelled events, disrupted supply chains and economic uncertainty. But, by the end of 2020, global demand started to pick back up, led by agricultural commodities. As USDA has noted, global trade in agriculture and food has remained more resilient than non-agricultural related trade.

So far, in the first two months of 2021, exports of U.S. processed food products are up 24 percent in value over the first two months of 2020. Notably, that 2020 benchmark was before the COVID pandemic set in. In short, there is still business to be done and we at SUSTA are working hard to provide you with the platform to market your products in 2021.

A few reassuring statistics; exports of condiments and sauces, which comprise a key product category for SUSTA companies, are up 4 percent this year over last, and the export value is up 14 percent to Latin America and 32 percent to the Middle East, both key target market in SUSTA's Global Events program.

For bakery and snack products, another important category for SUSTA companies, the export value is up more than 4 percent to Central America, including 18 percent to El Salvador. SUSTA has an [outbound trade mission](#) planned for El Salvador and Guatemala this October. Those same product sales are up 20 percent in Korea, where SUSTA will participate in the [Seoul Food and Hotel](#) show in late July.

The long-term trend is positive. COVID was a temporary setback. Consider, the global trade in prepared foods has nearly doubled in the last decade, and the demand is already experiencing a strong recovery.

As you know, we ask all of our companies to complete a survey and evaluation after each Global Event activity as well as a six-month follow-up. Companies in 50% CostShare also are asked to complete a year-end review. First, thank you everyone who gave us critical feedback from your marketing activities last year. Second, if you haven't completed those surveys, please do soon.

We are in the process of poring over all of your comments, suggestions and insights. This feedback is always critically important, but responses and data we receive from you regarding 2020 are particularly vital to get and keep 2021 back on track. Thanks for your cooperation in completing these surveys.

As always, check in on your MySUSTA account, see what activities are coming up, access our market information resources, and tap into the expertise of our in-country market representatives through the virtual consultation offerings. Make sure that your company benefits from the rebound in global demand for U.S. food products.