

ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS IN CHINA

MARKET OVERVIEW



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Study providing an overview of the Chinese market for organic products – looks at the Chinese organic production, market size and its characteristics; outlines organic standards and regulations, import requirements, consumer profile and behaviour, and distribution channels; identifies potential market niches for key product categories such as dairy products, baby food, and food supplements; examines prospective market developments and the implications for LDC exporters; appendices include a list of major organic importers and speciality shops for organic products in China; summary of China's rules on importing organic products; list of organic food research and consulting organizations in China; and the country's organic certification bodies registered with Certification and Accreditation Administration of China (CNCA).

Descriptors: **Organic Food, China, Export Marketing, Market Surveys.**

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English

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Foreword

This publication has been prepared to provide guidance to exporters of developing countries – mainly from Africa – on accessing new and emerging country markets, such as China.

Due to the negative impact of the global financial crisis, exporters from developing countries have recently faced shrinking or marginal export growth in many developed country markets. Although 80% of world imports are still into traditional developed country markets, the imports in large emerging markets, such as those of BRICS countries (Brazil, Russian Federation, India, China and South Africa), are growing faster and there is significant potential for exporters.

The International Trade Centre (ITC) has a comprehensive approach to assisting LDC exporters in market development and market diversification for key products in some priority sectors. This includes improvement of market networks, increased knowledge of new market opportunities in emerging markets and promotion of South-South trade along the value chain, among other activities.

This report is one of a group of sector/market studies in BRICS countries commissioned by ITC. The report supports the need for greater knowledge on how to export organic food products to the Chinese market. It was funded by limited internal resources from the ITC regular budget, and due to costs few printed copies will be published as part of a series of technical papers on selected sector markets for BRICS countries. Dissemination to exporters in Least Developed Countries LDCs will be done electronically and through the ITC website.

Chinese imports of organic foods were about US\$ 20 million in 2009, still a limited amount compared with the size of the population, but the market has been growing rapidly and may become promising for LDC exporters. Consumers are foreigners and emerging high-income local people, with a healthy lifestyle and who are increasingly concerned about nutritional value and pesticides in food. Main exporters of organic foods to China have been the United States, Australia and the European Union. Initially, imports were mostly finished products, but at a later stage bulk organic products were imported for repackaging. Some opportunities for new exporters may include processed products and food supplements, especially gourmet foods, children's food, dairy products, fresh tropical fruits, dried fruits, nuts, spices, ethnic grains, honey, coffee and snacks. This report provides an initial overview of the Chinese market for these products, as well as useful inputs for an initial proactive marketing strategy and preparation of the exporter's sales visit.

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