# Investment Opportunities in the Food Industry in Taiwan

# I. Introduction

Food is essential to our daily lives. After decades of development, the food industry in Taiwan has transformed from one covering only basic food processing operations and an export oriented secondary industry focused on supporting other industries and agriculture policies to a modern industry aiming to satisfy food demands in the domestic markets and raising the quality of life for all residents in Taiwan. In recent years, consumers have placed a greater emphasis on healthcare enhancement and convenience that food will bring to our life and hence, the food industry has also changed its development goals to provide quality health and convenient food to satisfy the domestic demands of dietary health. As cross strait exchanges have increased by the day, qualities of food made in Taiwan (MIT) are gradually accepted and preferred by consumers in the Chinese market, the food industry in Taiwan also starts their development in China. This will undoubtedly expand market territories for the food industry. The excessive population growth has increased the demand for food, and China, facing the crisis of population over-growth, will sooner or later be plagued by the issues of food supply. This is a great opportunity for Taiwan which is a country that shares similar dietary cultures and is in close proximity to China. Therefore, investing in Taiwan now not only means direct access to the China market, but also preparation for the next wave of foreseeable growth.

# II. Investment Opportunities in the Food Industry in

## **Taiwan**

#### Top 10 reasons to invest in the food industry in Taiwan

- (1) The food industry in Taiwan has solid technology strengths and possesses superior management ability
- (2) The food related education is universal in Taiwan, abundant supplies and high quality talents in the field of technologies and management are also available
- (3) High availability of related industries such as food processing machinery, packaging and distribution industries
- (4) The size of the domestic market exceeds NTD\$1 trillion and demands for high quality food are on the rise
- (5) The industrial supply chain is very flexible and can collaborate based on different requirements: task division by specialization, flexible collaboration between large and small enterprises, OEM, small batch with high diversity or mass product production is possible
- (6) Diverse dietary cultures in Taiwan, making it an ideal choice to develop different cuisines and conduct product sampling before distributing products worldwide
- (7) The food industry in Taiwan has started their deployment effort in China. With investment in Taiwan, foreign enterprises can maximize their returns by capitalizing on the China networks developed by Taiwan companies
- (8) The Taiwan government and private enterprises are aggressively expanding international markets with food as the cultural carriers and capital is available and continuously infused into the food industry
- (9) The market demands in China are enormous and are still growing along with rising production costs and prices. Food products produced in Taiwan are stable in terms of cost and quality, and if they are exported to China to fill the market demands, then sizeable profits are expected.
- (10) Competitive and complementary relationships exist between food industries

in Taiwan and China. The upstream and downstream value chains are fairly complete and foreign enterprises can capitalize on these relationships and cross-strait exchanges to gain bargaining chips for their business operations.

# III. Introduction of Major Manufacturers in the Food Industry in Taiwan

In terms of size of operations, Taiwan Tobacco & Liquor Corp, Uni-President and Taiwan Sugar Corp are the top three in the industry. As the largest one, Taiwan Tobacco & Liquor Corp achieved a net profit ratio of 12 %. As its name implies, Taiwan Tobacco & Liquor Corp supplies addictive products - tobacco and liquor as its primary products and it has entered the field of biotech and health food and product distribution. The sales territory covers the US, Japan and China. Taiwan Tobacco & Liquor Corp has in-house professional RD teams behind all its major products and possesses competitive advantages over national boundaries. The second largest manufacturer is Uni-President. As a publicly listed company, Uni-President is a regular champion in corporate revenue in the entire industry. Its net profit ratio even exceeded 26.48% in 2012, and its scopes of products cover all fields in the food industry. Uni-President also extends its operations in other related fields in addition to its core business, establishes compete support networks and enters into strategic and outsourcing partnership to enhance operational efficiency and establish a complete industrial value chain covering from the upstream to the downstream. Uni-President also invests in its operations in China, Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam and has development potential found in international brands. Following Uni-President is Taiwan Sugar Corp., or the third largest manufacturer in the industry. Taiwan Sugar Corp owns large land resources, controls agricultural breeding and production technologies. For the fields of sugar, swine breeding and orchids, Taiwan Sugar Corp has established complete RD, production and marketing systems. It holds a dominant position in the fields of several core technologies

and its businesses range from livestock breeding, organic produce, sugar, cooking oil, wholesale, merchandise marketing and biotech and healthcare. (please refer to Table 1)

 Table 1
 Introduction of Major Manufacturers in the Food Industry in Taiwan

	20	12	2011		20	2010	
	Revenue (in NTD\$1 million)	Net profit ratio (%)	Revenue (in NTD\$1 million)	Net profit ratio (%)	Revenue (in NTD\$1 million)	Net profit ratio (%)	
Taiwan Tobacco & Liquor Corporation	81,066	12	64,436	12.30	57,293	15.15	
<u>Uni-President</u>	46,852	26.48	51,829	18.22	48,962	22.32	
Taiwan Sugar Corp	40,681	11.98	41,606	12.63	32,769	33.15	
<u>Dachan</u>	23,612	3.11	23,083	4.64	21,033	5.13	
Datongy	17,530	2.53	16,631	3.52	15,629	4.28	
Charoen Pokphand Enterprise	15,186	2.03	15,063	0.90	14,039	2.45	
Wei Chuan	15,091	5.01	13,833	4.95	13,237	12.32	
Standard Food	12,163	18.4	12,544	19.59	11,423	18.65	
Fwusow Industry	10,275	-0.56	10,219	5.39	9,002	2.52	
<u>Fopco</u>	10,895	0.36	9,818	0.43	8,453	2.12	
Taisun Enterprise	8,331	-2.52	7,754	2.58	7,274	3.27	
Central Union Oil Corp	7,949	0.83	6,940	0.90	6,332	0.93	
<u>Lianhwa Foods</u> <u>Corp</u>	5,296	6.93	5,320	6.73	4,433	6.89	
<u>HeySong</u>	5,659	143.37	5,416	7.24	4,414	7.49	
A.G.V. Products  Corp	3,504	1.46	3,312	0.34	3,620	4.9	
HSIN TUNG YANG Corp	3,430	0.35	3,260	3.89	3,372	3.46	
Lianhwa Foods Corp	3,937	40.03	4,085	37.42	3,288	60.37	
<u>Tairoun</u>	3,132	4.58	3,116	4.61	2,776	4.04	
TAIYEN CO. INC	2,291	3.41	2,296	8.44	2,151	8.43	
Grape King Inc.	2,885	21.45	2,401	19.69	2,143	20.17	
<u>Hunya Foods</u>	2,685	6.23	2,480	7.27	2,069	7	

	2012		2011		2010	
	Revenue (in NTD\$1 million)	Net profit ratio (%)	Revenue (in NTD\$1 million)	Net profit ratio (%)	Revenue (in NTD\$1 million)	Net profit ratio (%)
Namchow	2,348	19	2,333	14.91	2,016	25.68
VE WONG CORP	1,939	5.17	1,963	2.10	1,936	5.96
<u>TenRen</u>	2,056	10.03	2,040	11.48	1,870	11.22
Chang Cuann	1,555	5.33	1,612	3.92	1,407	6.24
Taiwan Fructose	1,509	13.32	1,417	2.61	1,380	4.53
<u>Herngyih</u>	1,209	11.19	1,150	10.53	1,185	13.2

Source: Market Observation Post System, Food Industry Research and Development Institute

# IV. Competitiveness of the Food Industry in Taiwan

#### (I) Status of the food industry in Taiwan and its development trends

Over the years, industrial size has remained around 5,000 to 6,000 companies and by the end of 2012, the number had reached 5,235, the employed population in the industry grew to 132,000 and the average work hours and average monthly salary per employee has not changed much since previous years, indicating that the industry remains relatively stable. As for the size distribution, 99% of the manufacturers are small to medium enterprises (SMEs) and largest enterprises will tend to lead new developments in the industry.

According to the Department of Statistics, Ministry of Economic Affairs, the 2013 industrial production of the food industry reached NTD\$594.4 billion. The food industry is one of important industries in Taiwan and is constantly ranked among the top 10 industries in Taiwan. It is forecasted that the industrial production will continue to grow.

#### (II) Wide industrial breath for all investment types

Among 22 sectors in the food industry in Taiwan, the top seven sectors are: Prepared Animal Feeds Manufacturing (industrial production: NTD\$81.4 billions,

14.2% industrial total); Slaughtering (industrial production: NTD\$66.6 billions, 11.2% industrial total);Other Food Manufacturing (industrial production: NTD\$64.7 billions, 10.9% industrial total); Non-Alcoholic Beverages Manufacturing (industrial production: NTD\$52 billions, 8.8% industrial total); Grain Mill Products and Starches and Starch Products Manufacturing (industrial production: NTD\$40.5 billions, 6.8% industrial total); Grain Husking Manufacturing (industrial production: NTD\$31.5 billions, 5.3% industrial total.); and Manufacture of Dairy Products (industrial production: NTD\$30.3 billions, 5.1% industrial total.) The main material sources are produces and other material related industrials (please refer to Table 2) and include deep processing industries such as dairy products manufacturing industries. As for the industrial growth, they vary from year to year, and the price inflation for bulk feed ingredients in the last three years also causes both product prices and industrial production to rise.

Table 2 Industrial Production of the Food Industry in Taiwan (Broken down by Sectors)

Unit: NTD millions

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Slaughtering	53,789	58,443	61,300	65,927	66,581
Manufacture of Frozen Meat	20,559	21,104	24,600	25,967	26,016
Manufacture of Meat Products	5,056	5,399	5,600	5,663	5,850
Manufacture of Frozen Fish, Crustaceans and Molluscs	5,488	6,934	7,200	7,059	6,668
Manufacture of Frozen Fruit and Vegetables	2,011	2,707	2,600	3,064	3,022
Manufacture of Fruit and Vegetables Products	3,529	3,892	3,800	3,450	4,398
Manufacture of Edible Oils and Fats	24,678	27,963	30,600	28,852	26,181
Manufacture of Dairy Products	24,091	26,645	27,000	28,259	30,335
Grain Husking	36,566	28,368	33,800	35,875	31,526
Manufacture of Grain Mill	37,262	38,043	39,900	38,647	40,465

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Products					
Manufacture of Prepared Animal Feeds	73,587	76,900	85,200	85,698	84,141
Manufacture of Bakery Products	22,056	23,618	23,900	24,528	23,367
Manufacture of Macaroni, Noodles, Couscous and Similar Farinaceous Products	12,799	13,436	14,400	14,779	13,689
Manufacture of Sugar	6,875	9,691	9,600	8,218	7,168
Manufacture of Cocoa, Chocolate and Sugar Confectionery	5,125	6,102	6,300	7,280	6,899
Manufacture of Tea	4,273	4,636	4,800	7,323	6,904
Manufacture of Seasoning	16,410	18,267	17,600	16,833	17,900
Manufacture of Prepared Meals and Dishes	23,909	24,878	25,500	27,652	26,339
Manufacture of Other Food Products Not Elsewhere Classified	55,968	66,342	71,200	63,361	64,717
Manufacture of Beer	25,755	24,555	23,900	25,994	23,592
Manufacture of Other Alcoholic Beverages	10,217	9,909	10,200	26,430	26,580
Manufacture of Non-alcoholic Beverages	46,480	49,333	51,200	51,291	52,037
Total	556,950	593,958	630,400	602,149	594,373

Source: April 2014 Statistics by Food Industry Research and Development Institute

The fastest growing sector in 2013 is Manufacture of Fruit and Vegetables Products, Manufacture of Dairy Products and Manufacture of Seasoning, the growth rates are 27.50%, 7.35% and 6.34% respectively. In the order of their growth rate, are: Manufacture of Grain Mill Products, Manufacture of Meat Products, Manufacture of Other Food Products Not Elsewhere Classified, Manufacture of Non-alcoholic Beverages, Slaughtering, Manufacture of Other Alcoholic Beverages, Manufacture of Frozen Meat, Manufacture of Frozen Fruit and Vegetables, Manufacture of Prepared Animal Feeds, Manufacture of Bakery

Products, Manufacture of Prepared Meals and Dishes, Manufacture of Cocoa, Chocolate and Sugar Confectionery, Manufacture of Frozen Fish, Crustaceans and Molluscs, Manufacture of Tea, Manufacture of Macaroni, Noodles, Couscous and Similar Farinaceous Products, Manufacture of Beer, Grain Husking, and Manufacture of Sugar,

Table 3 2013 Export of the Food Industry in Taiwan

Unit: kg, NTD\$1,000

	Export (kg)	Export (NTD\$1,000)	Export Growth Rate	Export Growth Rate
Slaughtered meat	56,501	2,475	-71.87%	-71.45%
Dairy Food	14,336,302	1,562,265	52.00%	63.90%
Canned Food	8,770,338	1,011,355	9.03%	12.03%
Frozen Food	594,903,244	39,197,395	-6.00%	-15.98%
Dehydrated food	15,721,917	1,549,775	19.76%	4.94%
Preserved Food	13,179,550	2,023,784	6.03%	5.79%
Grain and Bakery Food	12,422,403	1,671,218	8.73%	18.08%
Sugar Confectionery and Chocolate	6,642,416	1,148,437	26.42%	25.91%
Cocoa Products	390,181	60,547	20.81%	37.84%
Coffee and Substitutes	15,607,830	710,236	-11.25%	-4.21%
Animal and Vegetable Fats and Oils	53,433,805	2,756,311	35.30%	16.32%
Grain Husking products	45,985,172	1,772,359	13.17%	11.51%
Sugar Confectionery and molasses	11,248,844	493,279	30.73%	21.76%
Condiment	41,640,440	2,124,579	-37.80%	-38.66%
Alcoholic Beverages	11,741,151	1,399,145	3.97%	-7.74%
None Alcoholic Beverages	224,591,986	5,860,089	7.64%	3.51%
Feed	56,065,214	2,655,974	-9.46%	-5.17%
Tea	4,828,714	1,363,531	13.84%	11.42%
Other Food Products	136,302,791	14,755,507	12.78%	10.98%

	Export (kg)	Export (NTD\$1,000)	Export Growth Rate	Export Growth Rate
Tobacco	4,640,485	2,196,786	3.24%	3.69%
Residues and waste	150,568,391	433,630	-30.70%	-26.48%
Refrigerated Food	77,632	26,909	-10.47%	2.52%
Total	1,423,155,307	84,775,584	-4.82%	-5.89%

Source: April 2014 Statistics from Food Industry Database by FIRDI

The total export value in 2013 is NT\$82.6 billion, 6.09% decline in comparison to 2012, because the major export sector, Frozen Food, has declined 15.99% this year, and export value of condiment decreases NT\$1.3 billion. But other sectors maintain a strong export growth, for example Dairy Food, Canned Food, Grain and Bakery Food, Sugar Confectionery and Chocolate, Cocoa Products, Animal and Vegetable Fats and Oils, Grain Husking products, Sugar Confectionery and molasses, Tea, and Other Food Products all enjoy a double digit export growth. Taiwan's export structure has changed since 2013. Though Frozen Food remains to be the most important export product, its export share has declined from 53% of total food export in 2012 to 47%. Other products like None Alcoholic Beverages, Animal and Vegetable Fats and Oils, Preserved Food, and Other Food Products are taking up more shares.

Table 4 2013 Import of the Food Industry in Taiwan

	Import Volume (kg)	Import Value (NTD\$1,000)	Import Volume Growth Rate	Import Value Growth Rate
Slaughtered meat	25,394,769	5,947,759	37.73%	48.00%
Dairy Food	159,088,113	19,452,562	5.23%	18.35%
Canned Food	43,592,963	1,997,758	-3.09%	-3.45%
Frozen Food	543,964,588	41,101,241	-8.80%	-0.13%
Dehydrated food	123,642,154	7,636,928	3.27%	6.89%
Preserved Food	66,137,451	3,362,219	-1.17%	4.47%
Grain and Bakery Food	20,402,991	2,155,646	10.16%	13.54%
Sugar Confectionery and Chocolate	18,401,671	3,084,611	0.38%	-0.55%
Cocoa Products	6,047,742	738,480	14.05%	-3.51%

	Import Volume (kg)	Import Value (NTD\$1,000)	Import Volume Growth Rate	Import Value Growth Rate
Coffee and Substitutes	30,874,885	4,765,470	15.61%	1.48%
Animal and vegetable fats and oils	328,158,692	10,503,322	-1.51%	-10.71%
Grain Husking products	570,607,746	9,903,988	-9.35%	-5.35%
Sugar Confectionery and molasses	629,294,347	8,346,993	-24.93%	-27.61%
Condiment	43,945,583	2,947,475	-6.17%	-8.87%
Alcoholic Beverages	190,520,046	23,031,732	1.38%	6.51%
None Alcoholic Beverages	74,145,638	3,043,938	6.76%	11.94%
Feed	348,556,714	8,609,843	-2.69%	2.52%
Tea	31,529,617	2,045,808	0.50%	5.98%
Other Food Products	284,260,114	20,641,764	-18.50%	3.25%
Tobacco	19,644,481	16,582,173	3.19%	3.13%
Residues and waste	777,379,775	12,124,606	-3.24%	-4.34%
Refrigerated Food	354,871	103,286	-46.16%	-20.41%
Total	4,335,944,951	208,127,601	-8.39%	1.50%

Source: April 2014 Statistics from Food Industry Database by FIRDI

The overall import value reached NT\$191.5 billion, which is 1.35% growth from 2012. The major import growth is driven from Slaughtered meat, Dairy Food, Grain and Bakery Food, Animal and Vegetable Fats and Oils, and None Alcoholic Beverages sectors, which grows more than 10% last year. On the other hand, import of Sugar Confectionery and Molasses sector declines the most, 27.61%.

Nevertheless, some sectors experienced both import and export growth in 2013. For instance, Dairy Food (export increases 64% and import increase 18%) and Grain and Bakery Food (export increases 18% and import increases 14%), which suggest that Taiwan food products have great potential in global market if we can effectively improve their competitiveness, attractiveness and visibility.

# (III) Major Exporting Countries for the Food Industry in Taiwan

In 2013, the major export countries and regions for the food industry are listed below. The largest exporting country is Japan, which is then followed by China, USA, Hong Kong, Thailand, Korea and Vietnam, and the export from these countries combined is over 70% of the entire industrial export. (Please refer to Table 5)

Table 5 2013 Top 12 Exporting Countries for Food Industry in Taiwan

Unit: NTD\$100 millions

Rank	Country	Export (NTD\$100 millions)	% Total Export
1	Japan	222.58	18.63
2	China	200.56	16.78
3	USA	131.66	11.02
4	Hong Kong	101.59	8.50
5	Thailand	100.36	8.40
6	Korea	55.10	4.61
7	Vietnam	50.10	4.19
8	Indonesia	38.76	3.24
9	Malaysia	34.05	2.85
10	Philippines	28.21	2.36
11	Australia	26.53	2.22
12	Singapore	25.34	2.12
Other	Other	180.19	15.08
Total	Total	1,195.04	100.00

Source: Statistic of Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance (2014.04):

## (IV) Major Importing Countries for the Food Industry in Taiwan

In terms of importing regions, the US is the number one importing source, then followed by China, New Zealand, Australia, Japan, France and UK, and the exports from these countries combined are about 60% of the entire industrial export. (please refer to Table 6)

Table 6 2013 Top 12 Importing Countries for Food Industry in Taiwan

Rank	Country	Import (NTD\$100 millions)	% Total Import
1	USA	462.35	21.41
2	China	173.25	8.02
3	New Zealand	163.77	7.58
4	Australia	149.12	6.91
5	Japan	130.63	6.05
6	France	105.65	4.89
7	UK	104.50	4.84
8	Malaysia	76.29	3.53
9	Thailand	74.76	3.46
10	Netherlands	67.36	3.12
11	Vietnam	62.30	2.89
12	Canada	59.05	2.73
Other	Other	530	24.56
Total	Total	2,159.33	100.00

Source: Statistic of Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance (2014.04)