



**IDAL**  
INVEST IN LEBANON

## **AGRO-FOOD**

FACT BOOK  
2016



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# SECTOR OVERVIEW

The Agro-Industrial sector is one of the major contributors to the Lebanese economy. It generates around 20% of Lebanon's GDP<sup>1</sup>, with GDP growing at a CAGR of 10.87% between 2009 and 2013. The sector has an estimated size of 1.13 Billion USD<sup>2</sup>.

As per the latest survey by the Ministry of Industry, the sector currently employs an estimated workforce of

**20,607**<sup>3</sup>



Accounts for **25%**

of the Industrial sector workforce<sup>4</sup>



The largest employer in the industrial sector

**1st**



**18.2%**

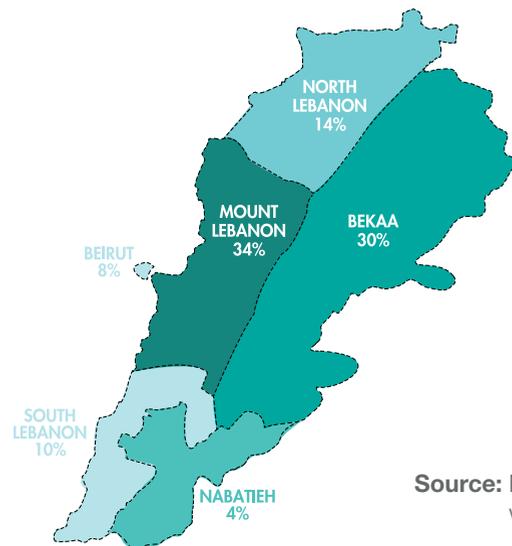
of industrial enterprises are involved in agro-industrial activities<sup>5</sup>



In addition to its significant employment generation potential, the sector also benefits from a well-trained labor base. A considerable number of students graduate yearly with specialized university degrees as well as vocational training in agro-industrial processing and food quality management. Agro-food enterprises account for the largest share of industrial establishments in Lebanon, with 18.2% of enterprises or around 736 companies

involved in agro-industrial activities. The sector is predominantly composed of small family owned enterprises, employing 6 workers on average. Agro-food activities are mostly concentrated in Mount Lebanon where 34% of agro-industrial enterprises are located. Bekaa region ranks second in terms of concentration of establishments (30%), followed by North Lebanon (14%), South Lebanon (10%), Beirut (8%), and finally Nabatiyeh (4%) (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Distribution of Agrofood Companies by District % | 2010**

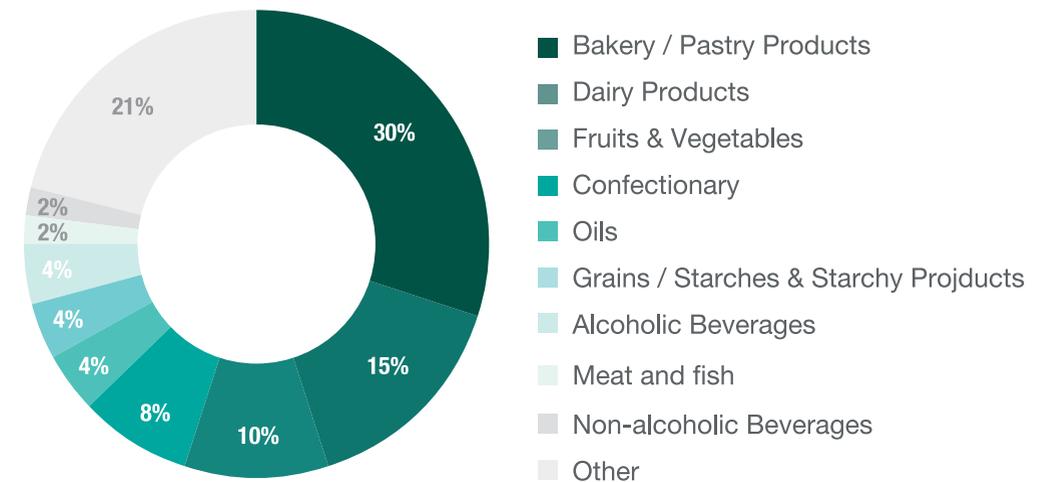


**Source:** Ministry of Industry (in coordination with UNIDO and the Association of Lebanese Industrialists **2010**)

The highest share of agro-food establishments is involved in the production of baked goods with nearly 30% of total enterprises. Baked goods occupy a significant share in the diet of Lebanese households, and therefore form the vast majority of agro-food companies.

Other sectors of activity with a high share of enterprises include milk and dairy with 15% of establishments or 112 companies as well as the processing and preservation of fruits and vegetables with 9.5% or 70 companies (Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Agro-food Enterprises in Lebanon by Type of Production % | 2010**



**Source:** The Lebanese Industrial Sector Facts and Findings 2007, published by the Ministry of Industry in **2010**



<sup>1</sup> Lebanese National Accounts, 2004-2011, July 2013

<sup>2</sup> Blom Bank, Agro Industries in Lebanon, June 2014

<sup>3, 4, 5</sup> Ministry of Industry (2010), The Lebanese Industrial Sector Facts & Findings 2007

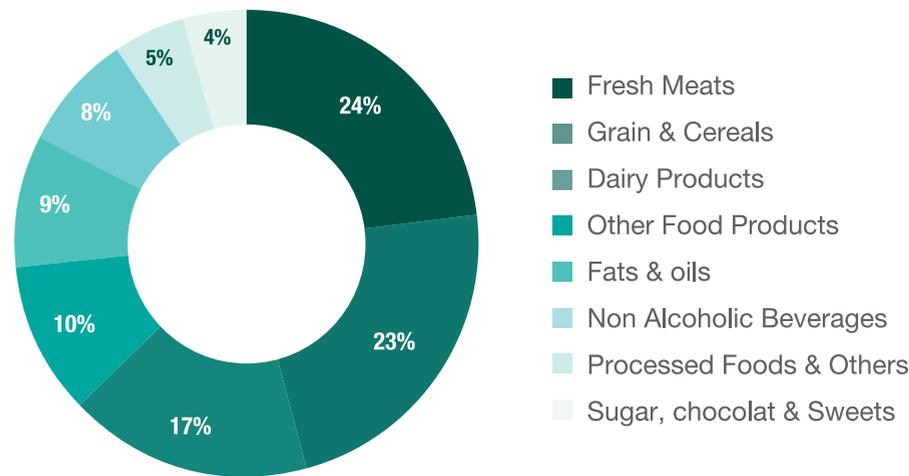
Nearly 24% of total household consumption goes to food products, and 65% of this share is allocated to agro-food products.

Within this category, fresh meats occupy the highest share with 24% of total consumption, while grains and cereals rank second at 22%, and the share of dairy products stands at 16.93% (Figure 3). On other level, processed foods witnessed a sharp increase in consumption levels throughout 2010, growing at a rate of 21% from 2009 levels<sup>6</sup>. This steady rise in local market demand offers promising prospects for producers within the sector. It is important to note that the relatively positive economic growth the country has

witnessed over the past 4 years was able to sustain an improved purchasing power, and a resulting increase in consumer spending.

From a development perspective, agro-industrial activity is crucial for the Lebanese economy. Not only does it establish backward linkages with the agricultural sector, but it also has the potential of creating employment opportunities, particularly for women and rural communities, thus directly contributing to an improvement of their livelihoods. The sector moreover ensures the creation of higher value added through the production and export of processed goods.

Figure 1: Household Consumption of Food in Lebanon by Type of Product % | 2010



Source: Lebanese National Accounts 2010

<sup>6</sup> National Accounts (2010)

## TRADE STATISTICS

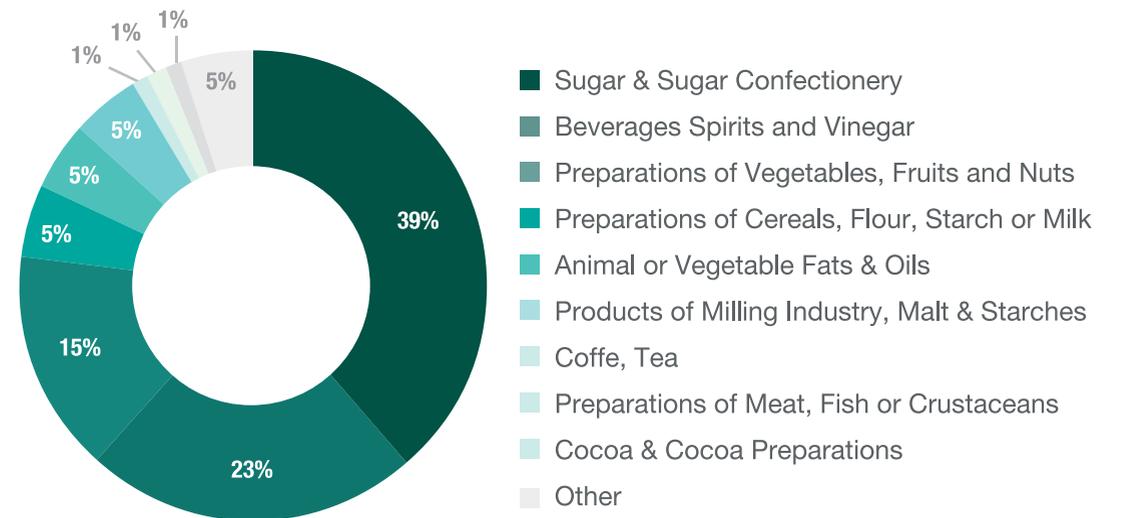
### EXPORT PERFORMANCE

Agro-food products accounted for 20.7% of total exports and for 36.5% of total industrial exports in 2015. Exports grew at a CAGR of 11.2% between 2012 & 2015.

Agro-food exports have continued to grow steadily despite the general decline in industrial exports.

Key exported agro-food products include Sugars & Sugar Confectionary at 37.4% of total agro-food exports, Beverages, Spirits & Vinegar occupy the second largest share at 22.4%, followed by Prepared Vegetables, Fruits, and Nuts at 14.8% (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Agro-Food Exports Net Weight Tons | 2015



Source: Lebanese Customs

## EXPORT DESTINATIONS

The largest share of Lebanese agro-food exports is destined to the Arab Countries (excluding GCC Countries), at 53.2% of total exports. Syria, Iraq and Egypt rank first, second and third respectively within this category.

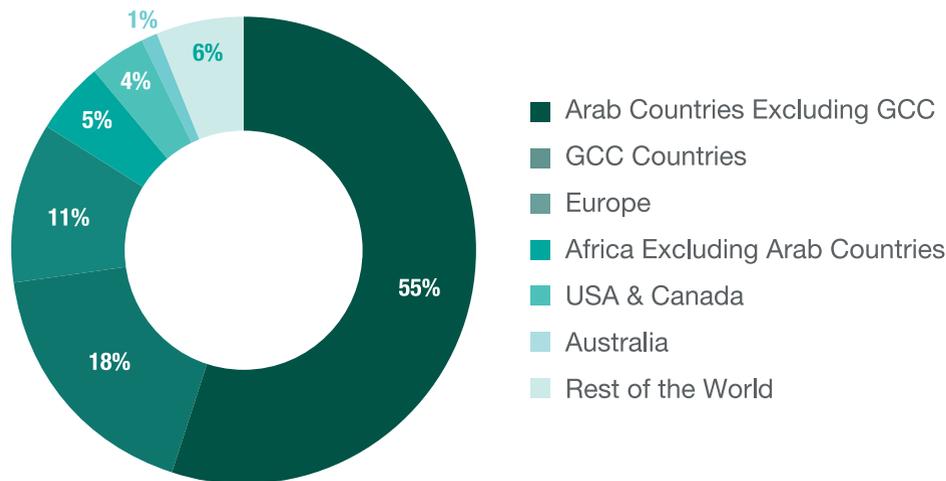
GCC Countries rank second amongst country groups and occupy around 18% of total exports, with Saudi Arabia, UAE and Kuwait as main destinations.

Europe ranks third with a share of 10%, While Africa occupies the fourth place,

lower volumes are exported to North America, Asia and Australia<sup>7</sup> (Figure 5). Between 2012 & 2015 exports to Iraq, Syria and Egypt have increased by 44.2% 30.6% and 6.9% respectively.

This indicates that while the Syrian Crisis has had its share of negative impact on the Lebanese economy, it has allowed for increased demand for Lebanese products to compensate for the decrease of Syrian exports to these markets.

Figure 5: Export Destinations for Agro-Industrial Products % | 2015



Source: Lebanese Customs

## LOCAL INVESTMENTS

Local investment in the sector has been on a steady rise, driven by the increase in local and foreign demand and the availability of raw agricultural products. One proxy that reflects upon investments in the sector and indicates increases in agro-food activities is the increase in imports of intermediary products intended for the sector. Import values for such products have consistently grown on an annual basis with a compounded annual growth rate figure of 5.15% over the past five years.

## INVESTMENTS THROUGH IDAL

Since 2005, IDAL has mediated several investments in the agro-industrial sector. 8 agro-industrial enterprises with a total investment value of 93.2 Million USD have benefited from IDAL's incentives allowing for the creation of more than 970 job opportunities.

**Master** ماست

**Master Potato Chips** was established with the assistance of IDAL in 2005. The company has greatly expanded ever since, and now not only produces potato chips for the local market but for foreign destinations as well. In 2009, the enterprise expanded its operations into frozen fries and again with the assistance of IDAL was able to branch out into the Master Fried Potatoes, generating nearly 120 new employment opportunities.

**120 new jobs**

**TAYYEBAT**

**Tayyebat** is a newly established enterprise specializing in the production of frozen potatoes. The industry has launched its operations in 2010 with the support of IDAL's Package Deal contract, and has created 60 new job opportunities.

**60 new jobs**

**popPins**

**Poppin's Cornflakes** is a project in the Bekaa area specializing in the production of cornflakes cereals. The project benefited from IDAL's Incentive Package and generated 256 job opportunities.

**256 new jobs**

**CEDAR'S**  
PREMIUM FOOD & BEVERAGE S.A.L

**Cedar's Beverage** is a newly established enterprise for the production of beverages. It has benefited from IDAL's Package Deal contract in 2010 to establish its enterprise in the caza of North Lebanon, and currently employs 63 workers. The company has considerable export activity and is looking to expand into the production of food products.

**63 new jobs**



**Castania** is an expansion project for the production of mixed nuts, located in Housoun-Byblos. The project benefit from IDAL's Incentive Package and generates 75 additional job opportunities.

**75 new jobs**

## OMRAN

**Omran** is a Lebanese owned company located in the Bekaa region and specializes in the manufacturing of confectionary more specifically biscuits, chocolate, wafers, juice, sweets, cake, bakery and the like. The company serves both the local and Middle East market and is planning on expanding to Arab markets in the near future. The project benefit from IDAL's Incentive Package and generates 62 new job opportunities.

**62 new jobs**



**Rifai** is an expansion project for the production of mixed nuts, located in Hallat-Byblos. The project benefit from IDAL's Incentive Package and generates 97 additional job opportunities.

**97 new jobs**



**Hawa Chicken** is a Lebanese poultry company offering high quality poultry and eggs. With the increasing demand for its high quality products, Hawa Chicken has decided to expand its production capacity by establishing in Anfeh, North Lebanon a new slaughterhouse with further processing of poultry products in addition to a rendering plant and a pet food industry. The expansion of the project benefit from IDAL's Incentive Package and generates 238 new job opportunities.

**238 new jobs**

## FOREIGN INVESTMENTS

Foreign companies operating in the agro-industrial sector include Swiss food and nutrition giant Nestle. Also producing in Lebanon is General Mills (USA), Coca Cola (USA), Unilever

(UK / Netherlands), PepsiCo (USA). Most of these companies have manufacturing plants in Lebanon through which they serve the local market.



## MAIN STAKEHOLDERS

Since the early 90s, the Lebanese government has given special attention to the agro-industrial sector. This has materialized in its efforts to improve the sector's governance structure; it was also coupled with an increased emphasis on marketing strategies, together with the creation of incubators that foster better production practices. Efforts of public institutions have equally been amplified through the contributions of private entities like the Syndicate of Lebanese Food industries, as well as international organizations such as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the European Commission's delegation to Lebanon.

### IDAL

IDAL is mandated as per Investment Law No. 360 to assist in the support, promotion and marketing of Lebanese products, especially agricultural and agro-industrial products. As a result, IDAL has signed a protocol of cooperation in 2004 with the Syndicate of Agro Food industries (the AGROMAP protocol), whereby it committed to actively promote the export of agro-food products, mainly through its co-sponsorship of Lebanese pavilions in international food fairs. As of today, IDAL has managed to support Lebanese participation in 11 regional and international fairs, enabling the showcase of Lebanese products of at least 45 local companies.

### MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY

The Ministry is a main stakeholder in maintaining quality standards and promoting better production practices. Its Industrial Research Institute (IRI) conducts

product testing and issues quality certifications. The ministry equally hosts the ELCIM program providing technical support for manufacturers in issues of production, finance and marketing.

### MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

Through its sectoral strategy, the Ministry has focused on enhancing linkages between agricultural and agro-food activities, and has included the development of agro-food industries in its support scheme.

### MINISTRY OF ECONOMY AND TRADE

The Ministry has partnered with the European Commission in Lebanon to establish 'Association AGR-IPOLE' a business incubation center targeting agricultural and agro-industrial enterprises. AGRI-POLE targets existing businesses and start-ups alike, providing them with incubation and business development services.

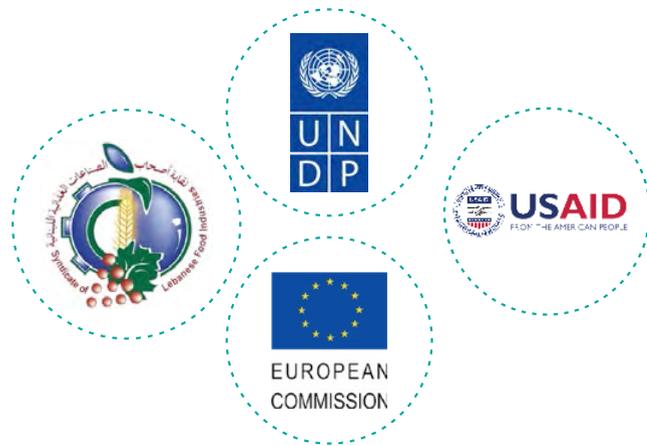


## SYNDICATE OF LEBANESE FOOD INDUSTRIALISTS (SLFI)

Founded in 1995, the syndicate represents over 150 food manufacturers, and groups 85 percent of all major food exporters. By capitalizing on its considerable food chain expertise and its global networking skills, the SLFI continuously supports its members in their business endeavors. The syndicate guides its members to relevant sources of market information, organizes Lebanese national pavilions in international food fairs, and advocates for its stakeholder's interests with concerned authorities and international organizations. It also assists its members in adhering to local and foreign market standards as well as ISO certification procedures.

## OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

International organizations have launched several initiatives in support of the Lebanese agro-industrial sector. Notable for instance is the European Union's EU Integrated SME Support Programme (ISSP), which aims at supporting SMEs in Lebanon by providing them with a combination of legislative, business development and financing support. Also of significance is a recent USAID project aimed at enhancing the sector's competitiveness through the promotion of agro-industrial products, the creation of market penetration strategies, and the improvement of production practices and standards.



## MAIN CONTACT DETAILS

Various public and private actors play a major role in shaping the agro-industrial sector; these main stakeholders are listed below.

**Ministry of Industry-MoI**  
[www.Industry.gov.lb](http://www.Industry.gov.lb)

**Ministry of Agriculture-MoA**  
[www.agriculture.gov.lb](http://www.agriculture.gov.lb)

**Ministry of Economy & Trade-MoET**  
[www.economy.gov.lb](http://www.economy.gov.lb)

**Investment Development Authority of Lebanon-IDAL**  
[www.investinlebanon.gov.lb](http://www.investinlebanon.gov.lb)

**Syndicate of Lebanese Food Industries-SLFI**  
[www.slfi.org.lb](http://www.slfi.org.lb)

**Association of Lebanese Industrialists-ALI**  
[www.ali.org.lb](http://www.ali.org.lb)

**Syndicate of Agrifood Traders in Lebanon**  
[www.agrifood.org.lb](http://www.agrifood.org.lb)

**The Federation of the Chambers of Commerce Industry and Agriculture in Lebanon**  
[www.cci-fed.org.lb](http://www.cci-fed.org.lb)

► **Beirut and Mount Lebanon**  
[www.ccib.org.lb](http://www.ccib.org.lb)

► **Tripoli and North Lebanon**  
[www.cciat.org.lb](http://www.cciat.org.lb)

► **Saida and South Lebanon**  
[www.cciias.org.lb](http://www.cciias.org.lb)

► **Zahleh and the Bekaa**  
[www.cciiaz.org.lb](http://www.cciiaz.org.lb)

**Industrial Research Institute-IRI**  
[www.iri.org.lb](http://www.iri.org.lb)

**Quality Programme-QUALEB**  
[www.qualeb.org](http://www.qualeb.org)

**Euro-Lebanese Center for Industrial Modernization-ELCIM**  
[www.elcim-lb.org](http://www.elcim-lb.org)

**Lebanese Cleaner Production Center-LCPC**  
[www.lebanese-cpc.net](http://www.lebanese-cpc.net)

**Lebanese Standards Institution-LIBNOR**  
[www.libnor.org](http://www.libnor.org)

**KAFALAT s.a.l**  
Loan guarantee company  
[www.kafalat.com.lb](http://www.kafalat.com.lb)





## CONTACT US

If you require any further information on investing in Lebanon or on the services IDAL can offer you, please do not hesitate to contact us at the following:



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