

Food Diversity Quotient: Export Potential Indicator

Why are some countries more receptive to international foods than others? My informal analysis reveals that certain countries have adopted world foods as a regular part of their diet. For example, a typical USA family consumes Italian food, Mexican food, and Asian food multiple times per month. Other countries maintain deep appreciation of their own traditional recipes, with few citizens venturing to explore dishes from foreign lands. This is a factor why China and India are difficult to enter and why the UK, UAE, and Singapore are open. Examining the Food Diversity Quotient of a country may serve as an indicator of receptiveness to your product portfolio.

5 Stages

Every country maintains a mix of consumers who eat primarily local foods to world travelers regularly enjoying a diverse mix of international menu options. Credit the Italians and Chinese for years of hard work pioneering their delicious cuisines to the mainstream in many countries. Now Mexican and Japanese are gaining traction. The leading ethnic food distributor in France stated "during Covid, people could not travel overseas on airplanes, so they began traveling in their kitchens instead."

Mass Versus Gourmet

An important data point is the percentage of the population regularly consuming food at different stages. Is it just a few high-income gourmets, travelers, and homesick expatriates? Or do most people in a country periodically enjoy pasta, tacos, and sushi? Understanding the

Food Diversity Quotient

Stage	Type	Description
1	Local	Traditional Foods Meat & Potatoes, Noodles
2	Popular	Italian, Chinese Food
3	Trendy	Mexican ,Thai, Japanese, Spanish Tapas
4	Explorers	Middle Eastern, Indian, Vietnamese
5	World Travelers	Open to All Types of Cuisine: African, Korean, Greek, Brazilian

country-level Food Diversity Quotient requires an assessment of whether the consumption of international food is a regular habit practiced by the masses, or niche.

Retail/Foodservice Clues

One way to determine acceptance is to track the size of international food sections in supermarkets. Is there a big section of Italian food brands? How many Mexican or Thai food items are stocked? Another method is to check the popularity of restaurants specializing in food from that country. Are there many Spanish or Japanese restaurants? Are the restaurants only in the capital city or countrywide? Do restaurants exist at multiple price points appealing to the "hungry student" and the executive gourmet?

Future

A positive development is the surge in acceptance of international foods. There are many factors in country segmentation and allocation of export resources. Assessing a country's Food Diversity Quotient serves as another worthy consideration. Export Solutions' distributor database maintains filters that allows subscribers to identify distributors in 96 countries specializing in food from Italy (1,417), Spain (414), Germany (653), Latin America (561), UK (688), Asia (466), and USA (1,205). For more information, visit www.exportsolutions.com.

Export Solutions Can Help!

- Distributor Search helper in 96 countries

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