

“Spain has a proud history in the food and beverage sector but needs show more confidence and look beyond their existing continental Europe customer”



The report “Exporter Guide. Foodservice in Spain” of New Zealand Trade & Enterprise provides a refreshing viewpoint from the antipodes of the food sector in Spain. We have contacted the New Zealand Trade and Enterprise office in Madrid to comment on this report, in particular, the statistical aspects. These are the answers given. Many thanks to Ralph Hays, Business Development Manager NZTE Madrid, Melody Smith and Alejandra Saiz for their help.

It is a nice surprise to see the interest shown by New Zealand institutions in the Spanish food sector. What lies behind this interest? Why is the food service market of particular interest?

The UK has been a traditional export market destination for New Zealand Food & Beverage products, however, for those companies looking for growth into continental Europe the Spanish market has some attraction. Spain is of particular interest to New Zealand F&B companies where distinct synergies exist across certain product groups. For example, New Zealand is a recognised global supplier of quality seafood and Spain has one of the highest rates of seafood consumption per capita in the world. New Zealand is also a major exporter of value added dairy products and Spain is a traditional importer of dairy products.

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In fact, Spain has one of the highest per capita consumption of yoghurt in the world. Note that in 2010 seafood represented 20% of all imports and dairy products 8%. Furthermore, as New Zealand is a small country we normally struggle to compete on volume and price and so must target the high end value added market that has been surprisingly resilient in Spain despite the recent economic difficulties across Europe.

How does the Spanish food service market compare to that of New Zealand? What can Spain learn from New Zealand and what conclusions can be drawn from the Spanish experience?

Spain’s annual tourist numbers of around 57 million and its related food service sector is of real interest to New Zealand. New Zealand is keen to build on its reputation as an outdoor adventure destination and Spain is seen as good source of inspiration and new ideas on how to make the gastronomic experience fun and exciting. How can New Zealand best cater to the growing number of young Spanish honeymoon couples that choose New Zealand for their holiday?

I think an area of interest for Spain as it struggles through the current economic crisis would be the lessons it can learn from New Zealand on exporting overseas, finding new customers and our ease of doing business. On the World Bank, Doing Business rankings for June 2012, New Zealand is No.3 and Spain is at 44. As New Zealand is a small country of just over 4 million inhabitants most companies are forced to expand overseas a lot earlier in their growth cycle in search of new business. Asia is now an important destination for New Zealand and I am sure our experiences would be of interest to Spanish companies looking to diversify away from the mature European market.

The report appears to have been developed in Spain, given the qualitative comments regarding the character and idiosyncracies of the Spanish population, and also from NZ, given the selection of international statistical sources used. Could

you tell us why these sources were chosen? Could you remind our readers which sources were used?

The Foodservice in Spain report was developed in Spain but does look at the Spanish foodservice sector from an anglo-saxon perspective. Furthermore, as the audience for this report tends to be English speaking this has meant that the majority of sources are also in English. Below is the principle list of documents used to source the majority of statistical information. Also, we often look for information available from other government trade development agencies when trying to find data – information tends to cycle around organisations.

- a) Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, June 2011. Foodservice Profile
- b) Euromonitor International, 10 Oct 2011. Consumer Foodservice in Spain
- c) Business Monitor International, August 2011. Food & Drinks Report Q4 2011
- d) International Monetary Fund, September 2011. Data and Statistics – Spain. Retrieved from www.imf.org
- e) Trading Economies, January 2012. Spain Unemployment Rate. Retrieved from www.tradingeconomics.com
- f) Euromonitor International, 10 Oct 2011. Consumer Foodservice by Location in Spain
- g) Euromonitor International, 31 May 2011. Tourism Flows Inbound in Spain
- h) International Trade Centre, nb. Trade Map
- i) Global Trade Atlas, December 2011. Trade Statistics - Spain
- j) New Zealand Trade and Enterprise Spain office
- k) GIRA Foodservice, January 2012. Foodservice Distribution in Europe
- l) Euromonitor International, 24 January 2011. Packaging Industry in Spain
- m) Euromonitor International, October 2011. Restaurants work hard to attract lunch time diners.

In your opinion, what is missing from the statistical information available regarding the Spanish food sector? As users of these statistics, could you briefly outline what proposals you would make to improve these?

The principle frustration in sourcing statistical information from within the various Spanish websites was the difficulty in navigating to the correct source. Most of the time the information exists but was usually found by accident of

while searching on another topic. Furthermore, removing out of date reports from a website would be helpful.

What is the profile of the readers of your publications and reports? Is it easy to access information regarding the economic sectors in Spain?

The majority of the readers on our NZTE website are New Zealand companies looking at Spain as a possible business destination and NZTE staff seeking information to help provide advice to the New Zealand companies who have chosen Spain as a target market.

We always round off our questionnaires looking to the future. How do you envisage the Spanish society in 20 years time? Could you give us a worry, a wish and a priority for Spain....?

I think that the Spanish customer is now more open to exotic food and beverages and this will help diversify the local market and create new business opportunities. Spain has a proud history in the food and beverage sector but needs show more confidence and look beyond their existing continental Europe customer. The desertification of land will become a growing issue for food producers in southern Spain.

