

TRADE IN 3

DATA: A KEY DRIVER OF EXPORT



HIGHLIGHT

CARICOM-DR Agreement

The **CARICOM/Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement** entered into force providing for a significant amount of the trade between the two parties to enjoy duty-free entry into each other's markets.

With a market of over **8 million people**, the CARICOM-DR FTA provides a huge market opportunity for Jamaican exporters; however the agreement has been **woefully underutilized** by CARICOM countries, including Jamaica.

What does the data show?

Preliminary analysis shows that with the exception of a few beverages, inclusive of nutritional milk-based beverages, energy drinks, and bottled water, exports from Jamaica to the DR have not been robust and averages **just 922K USD** based on the period analyzed.

More concerning is the fact that there is low utilization of the Certificate of Origin which is issued by the Trade Board Limited, which would enable duty-free access to qualifying products into the Dominican Republic. Of the **approximate USD 1.3 million worth of goods exported to the DR** in 2020, **only USD 322,735.00** worth, representing two tariff lines utilized the trade duty-free access under the CARICOM-DR Agreement.

DATA-DRIVEN EXPORT MARKET TARGETING

An online article written for the 2020 United Nations (UN) World Data Forum highlighted that “the historical role of trade ministries and national statistics offices (NSOs) is evolving”. Increasingly, these bodies are transforming into data service providers, collaborating with non-traditional producers of data, to offer data solutions to their clientele.

The Ministry of Industry, Investment and Commerce (MIIC) has embraced this role and has committed to an initiative that will see to more direct use of trade data to guide product and export market decisions.

Recognizing that the effective execution of this role will require partnership with both public and private sector partners, the Ministry has partnered with the **Jamaica Customs Agency (JCA)**, the **Trade Board Limited (TBL)**, the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade** and the **Jamaica Manufacturers and Exporters Association (JMEA)**, to launch the initiative dubbed **Data-driven export market targeting**. The outcome of this initiative will be a series of market profiles highlighting direct export opportunities for Jamaican products. The first output takes a closer look at the CARICOM-DR Free Trade Agreement and the opportunities presented there.

The initiative focuses on:

- expansion of exports into non-traditional markets,
- diversification of the export basket to expand non-traditional exports such as nutraceuticals and craft; and
- the maximization of existing market access opportunities through trade agreements.



World Food Safety Day 7 June

“Safe Food Now for a Healthy Jamaica.”

To commemorate this year’s celebration of **World Food Safety Day**, Jamaica will engage the public in a week of activities from May 24, 2021, to June 7, 2021, under the theme “Safe Food Now for a Healthy Jamaica.”

Despite the fact that food has always been produced in a reliable and safe way to meet domestic and international demand, the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has significantly altered the way food is produced for consumption globally.

Much more focus is now centred on food safety procedures to reduce the risk of consumers becoming sick from various foodborne illnesses.

AREAS OF FOCUS:

- ✓ Cleaning and sanitization of surface areas and equipment in production houses, warehouses, supermarkets, and restaurants;
- ✓ Personal hygiene for all staff. This includes the provision of more hand-washing stations and hand-sanitizers;
- ✓ Robust deep cleaning to prevent pests and rodents;
- ✓ Proper storage for food. This includes warehouses, correct temperature for food storage and equipment.

Living with COVID-19 The Glass is Half Full

The COVID-19 pandemic has created unprecedented disruptions within the economy which have created spin-off social challenges. Millions are faced with the risk of losing their livelihoods, with very little consolation as it relates to when things will return to normal while there is a glimmer of hope with vaccine roll-out programmes underway, borders remain partially closed and restrictions on trade and confinement measures are still proving challenging, **particularly to entrepreneurs** in developing countries in accessing the international market.

Despite the challenges, there are opportunities that have arisen from the pandemic that can help Jamaican businesses to survive, and even thrive in the global trading system.

Proliferation of Online Advertising

The reduction of physical contact has become a requirement during the pandemic. While social media/online advertising was prominent before the pandemic, there is now even wider acceptance of online business to customer interaction. MSMEs are now, more than ever, provided with an almost level playing field (requires financial investment) in reaching potential customers and competing with local and international businesses.

Delivery service access

The pandemic has also increased the demand for delivery services, given the reduced desire for in-person contact due to the risk of exposing oneself to the virus.

Right-sizing packages

This crisis has allowed consumers to cut back on items that aren't seen as a priority. This provides an opportunity for businesses to tailor packages and marketing strategies to allow consumers to purchase packages of necessary products at affordable prices.

Need more information?

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