Country Profile – Saudi Arabia

Food Processing Sector

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Preface

The food processing sector serves as a critical engine of economic growth, food security, and global trade, bridging agriculture with industry and innovation. As countries seek to build sustainable and resilient food systems, international cooperation plays a vital role in unlocking shared opportunities across borders.

This Country Profile on the Saudi Arabia has been prepared as part of the knowledge and engagement initiative under World Food India 2025 (WFI 2025), a flagship platform of the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI), Government of India. Saudi Arabia is the "Partner Country in WFI 2025. The document provides a comprehensive overview of the Saudi Arabia's evolving food processing ecosystem its market size, trends, policies, trade dynamics, and investment potential with a focus on identifying synergies between India and the Saudi Arabia.

Of particular importance is the section on bilateral trade between India and Saudi Arabia, which maps current export-import flows, identifies potential product categories for collaboration, and suggests priority areas for investment and joint ventures. The document further outlines actionable avenues for cooperation ranging from integrated cold chain development and food park investments to academic exchange programmes and harmonisation of food standards.

This profile is part of MoFPI's ongoing efforts to support informed decision-making and catalyse international engagement in the Indian food processing ecosystem. We hope it contributes to strengthening India-Saudi Arabia cooperation and facilitates greater participation by stakeholders in shaping resilient, innovative, and mutually beneficial food value chains.

Overview of the Global Food Processing Sector

The food processing sector plays a pivotal role in transforming raw agricultural produce into value-added food products that are safe, nutritious, and suitable for consumption. This sector encompasses a wide range of activities, including harvesting, sorting, cleaning, packaging, preservation, and distribution. Advanced technologies and techniques—such as grinding, cooking, pasteurization, canning, freezing, and dehydration—are employed to enhance the quality, safety, and shelf life of food products. These processes often rely on specialized machinery, additives, and ingredients to optimize outcomes and meet consumer expectations.
The sector is essential in addressing global demand for diverse, convenient, and high-quality food products. It enables year-round availability of seasonal produce and facilitates the development of a wide array of food categories, including fruits and vegetables, grains, dairy, meat, poultry, seafood, baked goods, beverages, and ready-to-eat meals. Food processing enterprises range from small-scale units to large multinational corporations, all of which must adhere to strict international standards of food safety and quality control.

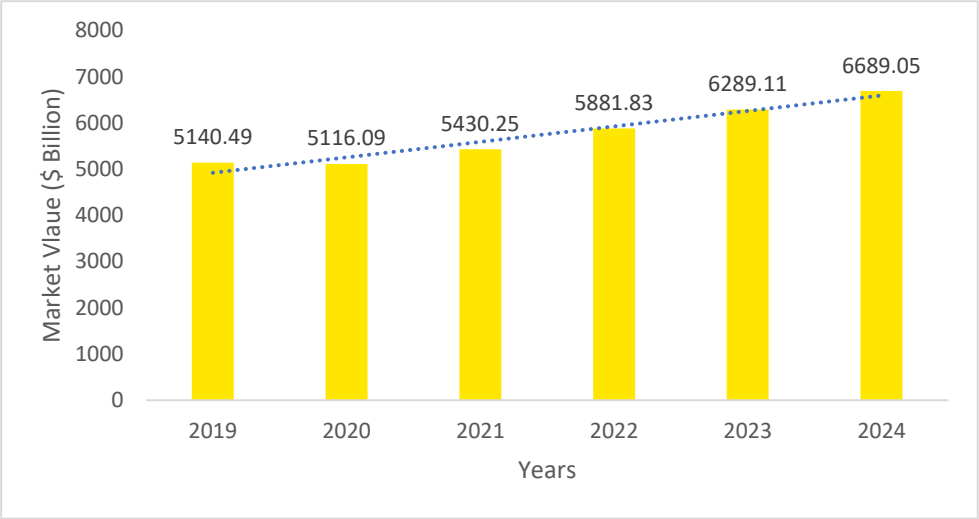
In 2024, the global food and beverages market was valued at USD 6,689.0 billion, representing a per capita consumption value of approximately USD 839.6. The sector contributed significantly to the global economy, accounting for 6.12% of the total global GDP.[1]

Among its segments, the meat, poultry, and seafood category held the largest share at 23.2%, followed by the bakery and confectionery segment at 13.6%, and the dairy segment at 12.3%. These figures reflect strong global demand and sustained growth across key categories within the food processing industry.[2]

Given Saudi Arabia's strategic investments in food security, self-sufficiency, and Vision 2030 initiatives, collaboration in this sector offers immense potential for enhancing domestic capabilities and forging strong international trade and investment partnerships.

[1] https://globalmarketmodel.com/DocViewer.aspx?id=165159
[2] Ibid

Figure 1: Global Food & Beverages Market, Historic Market Size, 2019-2024, $ Billion



- The global food and beverages market grew from US $5140.49 Bn in 2019 to US $6689.05 Bn in 2024[3]
- The market grew at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 5.41% [4]

Emerging Trends[5]

The food and beverages market is being shaped by several significant trends, including:

- Growing popularity of functional drinks for hydration and nutritional benefits
- Increasing demand for micro-distilled and artisan spirits
- Expansion of the alcohol e-commerce market
- Adoption of high-pressure pasteurization for fruits and vegetables
- Rising consumer preference for clean label products
- Advancements in Individual Quick Freezing (IQF) technology
- Integration of robotics and automation in meat processing
- Premiumization of pet food offerings
- Utilization of advanced cigarette filter technologies

[3] Ibid
[4] Ibid
[5] Ibid

Saudi Arabia: Country Overview

Saudi Arabia, the largest nation on the Arabian Peninsula, is home to over to 35 million people (2024) and holds strategic importance as the custodian of Islam's two holiest cities, Mecca and Medina. With Riyadh as its capital, the country boasts a GDP of USD 1.24 trillion and a GDP per capita of USD 35,057. In recent years, under Vision 2030 it is rapidly diversifying from an oil- dependent economy to one based on manufacturing, services, and innovation.

Saudi Arabia - Key Facts	
Capital	Riyadh
Area	2,149,690 sq. km[6]
Population (2024)	35.3 million[7]
Currency	Saudi Riyal
Languages	Arabic, Urdu, Farsi, Turkish
Life Expectancy	79 years (2023)
Global Population Rank	19th in Asia; 48th in world
Urban – Rural Population (2023)	Urban: 84.95%[8]; Rural: 25.67%[9]

Saudi Arabia: Economy Overview

Saudi Arabia, the largest economy in the Middle East, is undergoing a significant transformation under its Vision 2030 strategy, aiming to reduce dependence on oil and diversify into sectors like tourism, manufacturing, and renewable energy. In 2024, the country's GDP per capita of USD 35,057.20, the oil sector continues to be a major contributor, accounting for around 30% of GDP and over 70% of export revenue[10], though non-oil real GDP grew by 4.2% in 2024, primarily driven by private consumption and non- oil private investment, with retail, hospitality, and construction leading growth.[11]

Saudi Arabia - Economy Key Facts	
Gross Domestic Product per capita (current USD) (as of 2024)[12]	USD 35,057.20
GDP (current USD)[13]	USD 1.24 trillion (2024)
Total Final Consumption Expenditure (% of GDP)	66.3 % (2024)[14]
Gross Domestic savings (% of GDP)	33.7% (2024)[15]
CPI Inflation	1.7 % (2024)[16]

[6] Land area (sq. km) - Saudi Arabia | Data
[7] https://data.worldbank.org/country/saudi-arabia
[8] Saudi Arabia - degree of urbanization from 2013 to 2023| Statista
[9] Saudi Arabia Rural population, percent - data, chart | TheGlobalEconomy.com
[10] https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/CR/Issues/2024/09/03/Saudi-Arabia-2024-Article-IV-Consultation-Press-Release-Staff-Report-and-Informational-Annex-554530
[11] https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2025/06/25/saudi-arabia-concluding-statement-of-the-2025-article-iv-mission#:~:text=Saudi%20Arabia's%20economy%20has%20been,percent%20year%2Don%2Dyear.
[12] World Bank Country Statistics – Saudi Arabia - https://data.worldbank.org/country/saudi-arabia?view=chart
[13] https://data.worldbank.org/country/saudi-arabia
[14] https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NE.CON.TOTL.ZS?locations=SA
[15] https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDS.TOTL.ZS?locations=SA
[16] Inflation, consumer prices (annual %) | Data

GDP Growth (Annual %)	1.8% (2024)[17]

Saudi Arabia: Agriculture

Saudi Arabia's arid climate and limited arable land restrict large-scale agriculture. As a result, the country relies heavily on imports for food and agricultural raw materials, making supply chain integration and global partnerships essential. Strategic investments through SALIC (acquisitions, lifting its holding in Olam Agri to 80.01% for USD 1.78 billion) and the Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture (MEWA) focus on improving food security and sustainable domestic agriculture via greenhouse farming, poultry, and dairy initiatives.

Under Vision 2030 country aims to achieve high levels of self -sufficiency in dairy, eggs, and other essential commodities, ensuring that local production meets 100% of domestic demand. This goal has already been surpassed for dairy and eggs, with production exceeding 100% of local needs. It also aims to ensure the availability and price stability of food supplies across Saudi Arabia, while reducing food loss and waste by around 50%[18].

Agriculture market in Saudi Arabia: The Saudi Arabian agriculture market size is estimated at USD 18.1 billion in 2025 and is anticipated to reach USD 25.7 by 20230, at a CAGR of 7.2% during the forecast period.[19]

Saudi Arabia: Food Processing Sector Overview

The Food processing sector in Saudi Arabia has emerged as a key non-oil sector, driven by urbanization, rising disposable incomes, shifting consumer preferences, and robust government support. In 2024, Saudi Arabia led the Middle East's food and beverages market with a valuation of 57.93 billion and posted a strong CAGR of 7.95 during 2019-2024. The market is expected to grow further at a CAGR of 9.42% between 2024-2029.[20]

The sector is expected to attract over 70 billion in investment by 2030 up from USD 44 billion in 2016. Strategic partnership such as Tyson Food's collaboration with Tanmiah Food Group and incentives like soft loans, subsidized utilities, and 100% foreign ownership further highlight the government's commitment.[21]

Growth Drivers of the Food processing sector

- Population & income growth; Drives demand for packaged and protein rich foods
- Urbanization & Lifestyle shifts, fuel demand for convenience and health focused foods
- Government Incentives; loans, land subsidies, tax exemptions
- Trade Agreements; GCC, WTO, and bilateral partnerships ease import/export.

[17] https://data.worldbank.org/country/saudi-arabia
[18] https://saudifoodtech.sa/food-and-agriculture-sector-in-the-saudi-vision-2030-annual-report-2024/
[19] https://www.mordorintelligence.com/industry-reports/agriculture-in-the-kingdom-of-saudi-arabia-industry
[20] Global Market Briefing 2025 - Food & Beverages.pdf
[21] https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Food%20Processing%20Ingredients_Riyadh_Saudi%20Arabia_SA2023-0003.pdf

Key Stakeholders[22]

Name	Objective
The Saudi Food and Drug Authority (SFDA)	Responsible for regulating food in Saudi Arabia. It was established in 2003 and is tasked with ensuring the safety and quality of all food products, both imported and locally produced.
Saudi Standards, Metrology and Quality Organization (SASO)	SASO is responsible for developing and enforcing standards for a wide range of products, including food.
Saudi Agricultural and Livestock Investment Corporation (SALIC)	SALIC is responsible for the development of the agricultural sector in Saudi Arabia, including food safety.
Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture (MEWA)	Oversees agricultural policies, food security initiatives, and sustainability programs.

Major industry players[23]**:**

Companies	Sector	Core Competency
Savola Food	RTE, Prep	Edible Oil, Sugar, Pasta and ghee
Almarai	Dairy	Milk, Cheese, Yoghurt, Dips
Arasco	Poultry	Chicken
Health Water Bottling	Beverages	Soft Drinks and Carbonated Water
Tanmiah Food	Poultry	Chicken, eggs and Turkey
United Food Industries Co. Ltd - Deemah	Bakery	Bakery Products

Key Sub Sectors overview

Saudi Arabia Dairy products Market overview

In 2024, Saudi Arabia emerged as the largest dairy market in the Middle East, accounting for a market value of USD 8.63 billion. Between 2019 and 2024, the country registered the third-highest compound annual growth rate (CAGR) in the region at 9.71%. This strong growth momentum is expected to continue, with projections indicating a CAGR of 9.75% during the forecast period of 2024–2029[24].

The market volume stood at 1,774.5 million kilograms in 2021 and is forecast to reach 2,439.0 million kilograms by 2027, growing at a CAGR of 4.57%. Among the product types, the milk segment held the largest market share, valued at USD 1,733.5 million in 2021. This segment is expected to grow at a CAGR of 5.91% during the forecast period.[25]

[22] Ibid
[23] Ibid
[24] https://globalmarketmodel.com/DocViewer.aspx?id=165154
[25] Mordor Intelligence – Saudi Arabia Dairy Market, 2022-27

The Saudi dairy market is poised for significant expansion, driven by a robust domestic dairy industry and rising consumption of milk and dairy products. Increasing consumer awareness about the health benefits of dairy, coupled with a growing focus on fitness and nutrition, is further fuelling demand.[26]

Additionally, strict halal compliance regulations and the rising popularity of packaged dairy products are contributing to market growth. The industry is also witnessing the entry and expansion of several international players, as the country continues to rely substantially on imports to meet domestic demand. For example, in 2021, Arla Foods invested SAR 64 million in new production lines in Saudi Arabia to diversify its product offerings across the Middle East. Arla markets popular brands such as Lurpak, Puck, Kraft, and The Three Cows.[27]

The competitive landscape of the Saudi dairy market includes both regional and global players such as Almarai Co. Ltd., Arla Foods Amba, Saudia Dairy & Foodstuff Co. Ltd. (SADAFCO), Danone Group, and the National Agricultural Development Company (NADEC).[28]

Saudi Arabia is also characterized by a significant migrant population, estimated at approximately 10.7 million—accounting for around 30% of the total population. Ongoing capital-intensive development projects and labour-driven economic expansion are further boosting the demand for dairy products such as milk, butter, cheese, and milk powder.[29]

Saudi Arabia Poultry, Meat and Seafood Market overview

In 2024, Saudi Arabia emerged as the largest market for meat, poultry, and seafood in the Middle East, with a market value of USD 13.37 billion. During the period 2019–2024, the sector recorded the third-highest compound annual growth rate (CAGR) in the region at 6.83%, and it is projected to grow at a CAGR of 9.51% between 2024 and 2029.[30]

Ready-to-eat poultry meat has gradually become one of the fastest-growing segments within the packaged and processed food market. This growth is driven by rising purchasing power, evolving lifestyles, and shifting consumer preferences. Key players in the Saudi poultry market include Al-Watania Poultry, Americana Group Inc., Almarai Company, Tanmiah Food Company, and Sunbulah Group. Additionally, companies like Al-Kabeer Group ME offer a wide range of Halal-certified ready-to-eat and ready-to-cook poultry products such as samosas, spring rolls, nuggets, fillets, kebabs, sausages, and burger patties, catering to consumers seeking convenience and minimal preparation time.[31]

Saudi Arabia remains heavily reliant on imports to meet its domestic demand for poultry meat and related products. According to Saudi customs data, the country imported approximately 652,283 metric tons of chicken meat and products in 2021. To address rising demand, Saudi Arabia is actively engaged in international trade agreements and expanding partnerships with leading poultry-producing nations.[32]

[26] Ibid
[27] Ibid
[28] Ibid
[29] https://globalmarketmodel.com/DocViewer.aspx?id=165164
[30] https://globalmarketmodel.com/DocViewer.aspx?id=165164
[31] https://www.mordorintelligence.com/industry-reports/saudi-arabian-poultry-market
[32] Ibid

Under the Saudi Vision 2030 initiative, the Ministry of Environment, Water, and Agriculture (MEWA) is implementing several measures to bolster domestic poultry production. These include direct production-based subsidies of up to USD 187 million annually to support Saudi poultry farmers. The government is also encouraging foreign direct investment by allowing 100% local ownership and providing access to production-based subsidies. In response, market players are increasing investments in domestic production to reduce import dependence and enhance self-sufficiency.[33]

Saudi Arabia's Bakery Market Overview

The Saudi Arabian bakery market was valued at USD 6,653.7 million in 2022 and is projected to reach USD 9,273.2 million by 2028, registering a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 5.83% during the period 2022–2027. In 2024, Saudi Arabia was the second-largest country in the Middle East bakery and confectionery market, accounting for USD 7.95 billion. The country recorded the second-highest CAGR of 7.57% in the region during 2019–2024 and is expected to grow at a CAGR of 9.54% between 2024 and 2029.[34]

The market is primarily driven by the rising demand for convenience food products and increasing consumer preferences for products that offer better taste, safety, and consistency. The fast-paced and hectic lifestyles of consumers are encouraging the purchase of ready-to-eat and convenience foods, including bakery products such as croissants, rolls, and bread.[35]

The growing participation of Saudi women in the workforce is also contributing to increased demand for convenient and easy-to-prepare foods. Consequently, the retail landscape is shifting rapidly from traditional markets to hypermarkets, boosting the demand for packaged foods. Bakery products are experiencing higher demand than conventional food items, largely due to their extended shelf life.[36]

Leading players in the Saudi bakery segment include Sunbulah Group, IFFCO Holdings, Savola Group, Gandour, and Al Karamah Dough.

Moreover, Saudi consumers are becoming increasingly informed about health and wellness (HW) food products and are actively seeking to adopt healthier diets. This trend is driving demand for whole wheat, reduced-sugar, and gluten-free bakery products, reflecting a broader shift towards health-conscious consumption.[37]

Saudi Arabia: Trade Overview

Saudi Arabia plays a pivotal role in the global economy, not only as one of the world's leading oil producers and exporters but also through its strategic initiatives aimed at economic diversification under Vision 2030. The Kingdom's position as a major trading hub is underpinned by its substantial energy resources and growing focus on expanding non-oil sectors, including food processing and agriculture. The following sections present an overview

[33] Ibid
[34] https://globalmarketmodel.com/DocViewer.aspx?id=165145
[35] Mordor Intelligence – SAUDI ARABIA, Bakery Segment
[36] Ibid
[37] Ibid

of Saudi Arabia's key exports and imports in processed food and agro-based products, along with insights into its principal trading partners.

Export of processed Food (2024)[38]

Main Commodity	Total Value (USD) exported from all countries	Main Partner Country	Commodity Value (USD)
Cane or beet sugar	597,182	Jordan	124,153
		UAE	36,231
		Palestine	32,102
Processed cheese	260,814	United Arab Emirates	54,390
		Oman	41,443
		Kuwait	36,340
Bread, pastry, cakes, biscuits and other bakers' wares	246,408	United Arab Emirates	48,310
		Kuwait	45,158
		Yemen	34,537
Milk and cream of a fat content by weight of <= 1%	227,186	United Arab Emirates	79,341
		Jordan	39,063
		Kuwait	36,651

As highlighted in the table, Saudi Arabia's processed food export data indicates that the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Jordan, and Oman are the top destinations for its overall processed food exports. The primary exported products include cane or beet sugar, processed cheese, bread and biscuits, milk and cream, among others.

Import of processed Food (2024)[39]

Main Commodity	Total Value (USD) imported from all countries	Main Partner Country	Commodity Value (USD)
Semi-milled or wholly milled rice,	1,971,661	India	1,486,594
		Pakistan	221,345

[38] Trade Map - List of products exported by Saudi Arabia
[39] Trade Map - List of products imported by Saudi Arabia

whether polished or glazed		United States of America	130,351
		Australia	54,581
Raw Cane Sugar	1,194,252	Brazil	1,194,092
		India	13,871
		Mauritius	3,899
Food preparations, n.e.s.	1,078,956	Egypt	54,684
		United Arab Emirates	43,825
		Oman	4,580
		Jordan	4,274
Oilcake and other solid residues	761,192	Brazil	108,499
		United States of America	22,147
Crude Palm Oil	582,790	Indonesia	373,971
		Malaysia	208,175

As shown in the table above, Saudi Arabia's import data indicates that the major imported products include rice, raw cane sugar, food preparations, oilcake and other solid residues, and crude palm oil. The top import sources for these products are India, the United States of America, Brazil, Indonesia, and Malaysia.

Saudi Arabia: India Food Trade Overview

India and Saudi Arabia enjoy warm and cooperative relations, underpinned by deep-rooted economic, historical, and socio-cultural ties. This strategic partnership continues to strengthen through robust bilateral trade and investment flows.

In FY 2023–24 (April–March), India's imports from Saudi Arabia stood at USD 31.80 billion, primarily comprising crude oil and petrochemicals. During the same period, India's exports to Saudi Arabia were valued at USD 11.56 billion. Key Indian export items included engineering goods, rice, petroleum products, chemicals, textiles, food products, and ceramic tiles.

This enduring trade relationship reflects the mutual commitment of both nations to deepening economic cooperation and exploring new avenues of partnership under their respective national visions—Vision 2030 and Viksit Bharat 2047.

Saudi Arabia- India Bilateral Trade scenario

Saudi Arabia is India's fourth-largest trading partner and a key pillar in India's energy security framework, supplying over 18% of the country's crude oil imports. In FY 2023–24, bilateral trade between the two nations stood at USD 43.36 billion, reflecting the depth and strength of their economic ties. Saudi Arabia ranks 20th in terms of FDI equity inflows into India, with

cumulative investments amounting to USD 3.22 billion between April 2000 and September 2024. The Indian diaspora in Saudi Arabia, comprising approximately 2.6 million people, represents the largest expatriate community in the Kingdom. This community is widely regarded as the 'most preferred,' owing to its professional expertise, disciplined work ethic, and law-abiding, peace-loving nature. The strategic partnership between the two countries is mutually reinforcing while Saudi Arabia plays a vital role in securing India's energy needs, India is an essential partner in ensuring Saudi Arabia's food security. Notably, in 2021–22, Saudi Arabia was the second-largest source of hydrocarbon imports for India, further highlighting the importance of this bilateral relationship.[40]

Saudi Arabia's processed food exports to India (2024)[41]

Product	Value (USD '000)	Growth YoY
Animal/vegetable oils & fats	3,756	+24.9%
Cocoa-based food preparations	2,838	-8.2%
Fruit & nut powder	495	+976%
Fruit/vegetable juice mixtures	444	-

Trade data highlights strong growth in select agri-food categories between India and Saudi Arabia. Notably, the export of flour, meal, and powder derived from edible fruits and nuts, including citrus peel, witnessed a remarkable surge of 976%, reflecting rising demand and untapped potential in this segment. Furthermore, animal or vegetable fats and oils, and their fractions have emerged as a distinctive area of bilateral trade, with Saudi Arabia and India maintaining an exclusive trading relationship in this category. These trends point toward the deepening diversification of agri-food trade and open avenues for further collaboration and value addition in the food processing sector.

Saudi Arabia's processed food imports from India (2024)[42]

Product	Value ('000)	India's Share
Semi/wholly milled rice	1,486,594	75.39%
Fruit & vegetable juices	40,277	51.83%
Dairy spreads	22,556	43.01%
Butter	22,327	7.89%

Products such as dairy spreads and butter recorded exceptionally high growth rates, with increases of 1,049.64% and 83.86%, respectively. In addition to these, several other commodities also registered significant growth in trade between the two countries, reflecting the strengthening and diversification of bilateral agri-food trade.

[40] https://www.ibef.org/indian-exports/india-saudi-arabia-trade
[41] https://www.ibef.org/indian-exports/india-saudi-arabia-trade
[42] Ibid

Opportunities for Collaboration between India and Saudi Arabia

Agri-Raw Material Trade (e.g., Grains, Spices)

India is one of the world's largest producers and exporters of agricultural commodities such as rice, wheat, pulses, and spices. Saudi Arabia, with limited arable land and water resources, relies heavily on imports for its food security. There is significant potential to formalize and expand trade in agri-raw materials between the two countries, particularly in:

- Basmati and non-basmati rice, which is already a major export item from India.
- High-value Indian spices such as turmeric, cardamom, cumin, and chili, which are in demand in Saudi food and hospitality sectors.
- Animal feed, pulses, and millets, aligning with Saudi Arabia's diversification of imports and India's promotion of nutritionally dense grains.

Establishing long-term procurement contracts and agri-export zones focused on Saudi demand can further enhance this trade relationship.

Halal Food Processing & Certification

Saudi Arabia, being a leading market for halal-certified products, offers a vast opportunity for India to:

- Expand halal-certified food processing units, especially in meat, ready-to-eat meals, and bakery segments.
- Collaborate on mutual recognition of halal standards and certifications, enabling smoother export processes.
- Set up joint halal certification bodies or partnerships with existing Saudi institutions to ensure compliance with Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) standards.

This cooperation would boost Indian exports to Saudi Arabia and beyond to other Islamic nations seeking halal-certified products.

Food Processing Machinery & Technology Transfer

Saudi Arabia is actively investing in modernizing its food processing infrastructure under Vision 2030. India, with its cost-effective machinery and frugal innovations in food tech, can:

- Export food processing machinery, especially for dairy, fruits, vegetables, pulses, and bakery products.
- Set up technology transfer arrangements and establish manufacturing/assembly units in Saudi Arabia under joint ventures.
- Collaborate in automation, packaging, and value-added processing to increase efficiency in Saudi food industries.

This can position India as a partner in Saudi Arabia's food self-sufficiency and localization goals.

Skill Development & Training Programs

India's strong base of technical institutions and training infrastructure can support Saudi Arabia in developing a skilled food industry workforce. Opportunities include:

- Establishing joint food industry training centres in Saudi Arabia with Indian expertise.
- Offering customized short-term training programs on food safety, quality control, halal certification, packaging, and supply chain logistics.
- Launching exchange programs for Saudi professionals and students to train in India.

Such cooperation supports both countries in building human capital and enhancing employment in food processing.

Joint R&D in Health Foods, Packaging, and Preservation

With growing demand for nutrition-rich and functional foods, both nations can collaborate on:

- Research and development of health foods, especially using Indian superfoods like millets, moringa, and amla tailored for Saudi tastes.
- Innovations in eco-friendly and smart packaging, crucial for extending shelf life in desert climates.
- Advanced preservation techniques such as freeze-drying and high-pressure processing.

Joint R&D initiatives and startup incubation programs in both countries can promote innovation, reduce post-harvest losses, and create scalable, export-ready products.

Integration into Saudi Retail & Cold Chain Supply Chains

India can leverage its diverse food product range by integrating into Saudi Arabia's growing retail ecosystem:

- Partnering with Saudi hypermarkets and convenience store chains for direct supply of packaged foods, spices, and beverages.
- Investment in Saudi cold chain infrastructure through joint ventures for storage and transport of perishable Indian exports like dairy, fruits, vegetables, and meat.
- Launching Indian food aisles or brands in Saudi retail chains catering to the Indian diaspora and local population.

This will enhance market access, reduce spoilage, and build brand presence in the Middle East.

Export-Oriented Processing (Gulf, Africa, Europe)

Saudi Arabia's strategic location and free trade agreements make it a gateway to regional markets. India and Saudi Arabia can jointly invest in:

- Processing units in Saudi Arabia using Indian raw materials for re-export to GCC, African, and EU markets.
- Developing export hubs and logistics corridors for processed food under India-Saudi joint branding.
- Creating India-Saudi food parks or export zones focused on halal, organic, and specialty foods for global distribution.

This model leverages India's production capacity and Saudi Arabia's logistics advantage, unlocking access to high-growth markets.

Conclusion

Saudi Arabia's robust investment in food security and processing, supported by favourable policies, a young population, and rising consumption trends, make it a pivotal hub in the Middle East's food economy. India, as a strategic agri and food processing partner, is well-placed to deepen bilateral engagements in this sector especially in processed food, ingredients, technology, and halal-certified exports.

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About World Food India

A global event to facilitate partnerships between Indian and international businesses and investors, World Food India (WFI) is a gateway to the Indian food economy and an opportunity to showcase, connect and collaborate.

Write to us at:

Ministry of Food Processing Industries,
Government of India
Panchsheel Bhawan, New Delhi, India.
Telephone Number: +91 11-26496647
Email Id: world-foodindia@gov.in
Find us at: **www.mofpi.gov.in**
www.worldfoodindia.gov.in