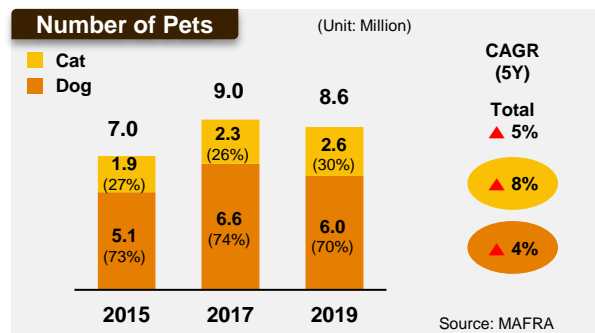
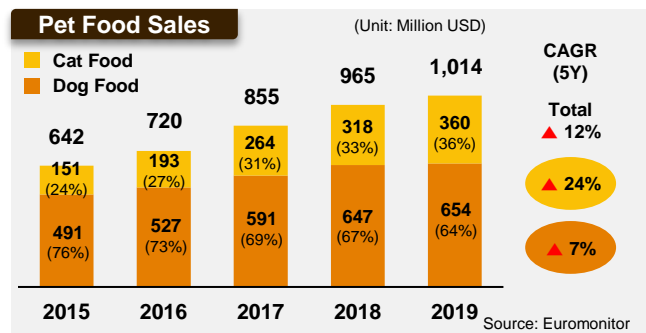


Korea Market Brief

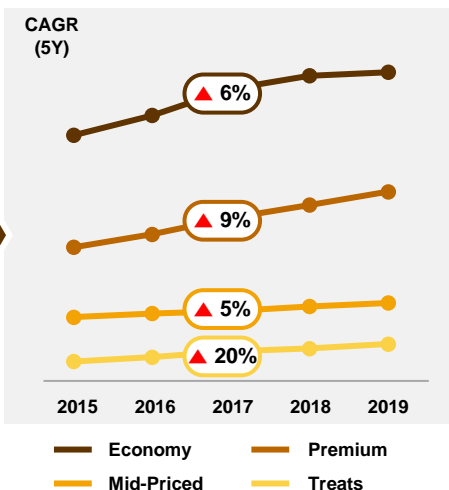
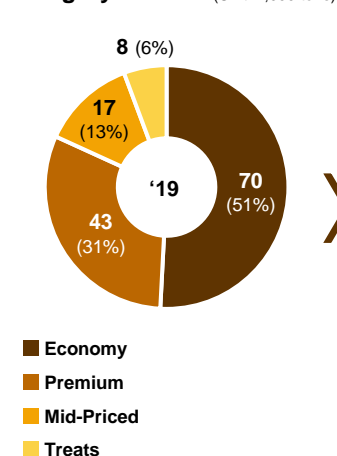
Pet Food

As of 2019, the Korean pet food market is estimated at over one billion USD. Korea's pet food market is expanding along with its growing pet population.



While low priced pet food still dominates the market, premium pet food sales have greatly increased as more pet owners view their pets as family members.

Market Share by Category



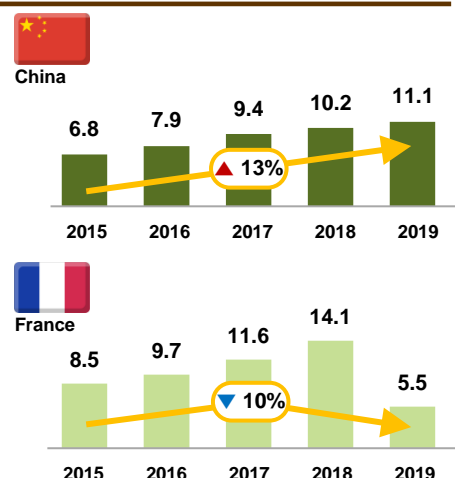
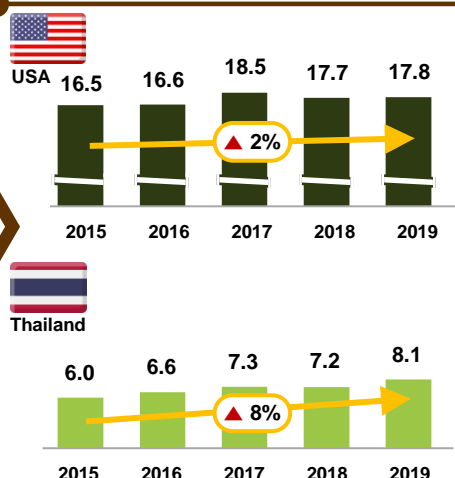
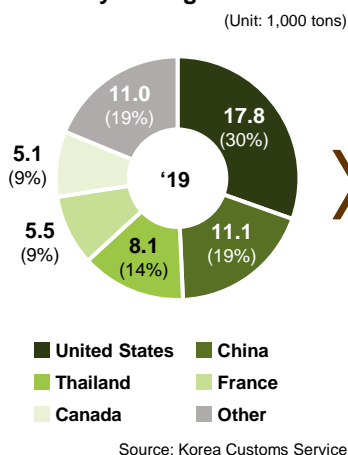
"Pet-humanization" is a common phrase in Korea; pet owners are providing their pets with human-like products and experiences.

Premium pet food sales have increased as pet owners view their pets as family members.

The pet treats category is booming as owners want to indulge their pets..

The United States is the market leader in terms of import volume. China and Thailand are growing competitors.

Market Share by Country of Origin



Consumer Trends

The number of pets in Korea has grown in recent years along with the rise in single person households. Both the economy and premium segments of the pet food market are growing as consumers with limited means demand affordable options and those with more resources seek to pamper their pets.

Pet Humanization Trend Leads to the Rapid Growth of Premium Products

Korea is seeing the pet-humanization trend proliferate. More people are considering pets as family members and providing pets with human-like experiences and products. New terms such as Pet-Famers (combining pet and family) and Pet-Me-ers (owners considering pets as equal) have become popular. As a result of this trend, consumers are willing to spend more for high quality pet food and pet products. Capitalizing on this trend, companies are launching premium pet food and treat products made from organic and protein-rich ingredients and without artificial preservatives, pigments, or flavors. The premiumization trend in pet food and treats has led to diverse product portfolios, including probiotics for pets and products made from mealworms.

Importance of Brand Marketing and Public Relations Activities

The pet food market in Korea is dominated by well-known, mostly foreign, brands. Many Koreans prefer U.S. brands as the United States has a long and solid pet food history. Many domestic and foreign brands continue to launch their products in Korea's pet food market, believing the market has a high potential. However, only the few that make active investments in brand marketing and public relations activities are surviving. Regardless of how internationally well-known a brand is, brands that fail to increase brand awareness in Korea eventually fail to survive. Korea's pet food market has great potential, but it is very competitive. As a result, brands need to have a solid understanding of the market and actively market their products.

Cat Ownership Drives Cat Food Revenue Growth

Up until 2019, the cat and dog populations have grown annually on average 8% and 4% respectively for the last five years. Cats are being favored as household pets as the number of single-family households in cities grows, because they are considered low-maintenance animals. With cat ownership on the rise, the cat food market will continue to generate more revenue growth. According to Euromonitor, the Korean cat food market is expected to reach \$550.9 million in sales by 2025, growing on average 6% annually over the next 6 years.

Online Retailing Now Leading Distribution Channel

More than half of Korean consumers primarily purchase pet food and products through online retail channels. Online platforms are popular among all age groups because they provide consumers with a wide range of pet products at competitive prices and with convenient delivery services. Pet shops, hypermarkets, and veterinary clinics follow respectively after online sales.

Regulatory Overview

***Disclaimer: This overview is not a comprehensive guide, and regulations can frequently change. Exporters should verify requirements with their importers before goods are shipped.*



Tariffs & Taxes

Korea applies import duty on U.S. pet food products as shown in the table below. Please refer to the [Agricultural Tariff Tracker](#) for details.

Pet Food	HS code	2020	2021	2022	2023
• Dog or cat food listed for retail	230910	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Source: <https://apps.fas.usda.gov/agtarifftracker/Home/Search>

A Pre-Registration and Required Certification for Import to Korea

Export Health Certificates

Export Health Certificates for Korea must be endorsed prior to the shipping date.

Veterinary Sanitary Certificate

Regular or Sterilized Pet Food Certificates are available and only one may be issued per shipment.

Phytosanitary Certificate

Pet foods containing plant products may also require a Phytosanitary Certificate depending on their level of processing.

For details, please refer to [APHIS Pet Foods to Korea](#), [APHIS Pet Foods Origin Ingredient](#).

B Labeling Requirements

All imported U.S. products are required to carry legible Korean language labels. Label stickers or tags may be placed upon arrival in Korea. Labels should not be easily removed or cover the original label such as product name or expiration date.

Korean Language Labeling

- Registration number of feed ingredient
- Product name and type
- Percentage of content
- Name of the composite raw ingredient
- Addition of veterinary drugs
- Precautions for use
- Purpose of use

- Manufacture date (year, month, and day) or expiration date
- Net weight
- Importer's or manufacturer's name and contact information
- Information regarding repackaged products
- Other matters specified by Ordinance of the Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs

C Import Inspection

Document Review

Inspectors review the health certificate for pet food and bill of lading documentation.

Epidemiologic Investigation

Confirm that the product is not from restricted regions and does not contain ruminant ingredients

Laboratory Test

After document review and epidemiologic investigation, shipments may be subject to laboratory tests.

For details, please refer to [APHIS Pet Foods to Korea](#), [APHIS Pet Foods Origin Ingredient](#).

Regulatory Overview

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Frequently Asked Questions

FAQ #1: Is labeling the 100% ingredient breakdown required for import?

The Korean government does not require a 100% ingredient composition breakdown on the import application for imported processed food products entering Korea. What is required is the percentage breakdown of major ingredients and the percentage of food additives in the product in case Korea has tolerances established on the additives. For food additives used in composite ingredients, the supplier may need to submit detailed information to verify if the product meets the Korean food additive standards.

FAQ #2: Is the manufacturing facility required to be inspected annually by APHIS VS?

Yes. The manufacturing facility must be inspected annually by APHIS Veterinary Services to document official supervision and compliance with the required certification statements. Exporters interested in being approved to export pet foods to Korea should contact their pertinent VS Service Center to arrange a facility inspection.

FAQ #3: What are the pet food certificates?

There are two certificates which can be used for the export of pet foods to Korea:

1. Veterinary Sanitary Certificate for the Export of Pet Food from the United States to Korea
2. Veterinary Sanitary Certificate for the Export of Sterilized Pet Food from the United States to Korea

Both certificates are available through the Korea home page of the International Animal product Regulations. *Only one certificate may be issued per shipment.*

FAQ #4: What are the roles and responsibilities of exporters?

Exporters should complete the pertinent fillable pet food certificate and submit them to the VS Service Center for endorsement. In instances when the exporter is NOT the manufacturer, the manufacturer must indicate on their shipping documentation (e.g. bill of lading, shipping manifest, letter of guarantee, etc.) that the product was produced under the requirements of Korea. This documentation must be provided to the VS Service. Further information can be found at APHIS [Pet Foods to Korea](#).

FAQ #5: Are there Ingredient Restrictions?

All U.S. pet food containing ruminant-origin proteins (except for milk, rawhide, and other dairy ingredients) is prohibited from importation into Korea at this time.

USDA GAIN Report Link

[Facility Registration](#)
[MRL](#)
[Exporter Guide](#)

FAIRS Reports

[FAIRS Country Report](#)
[FAIRS Export Certificate Report](#)

ATO Seoul - Regulation

[ATO Seoul Regulation](#)

USDA APHIS

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