# FOOD IN MALAYSIA



Malaysian culture has grown from a potpourri of ethnic mixes derived from some of the world's oldest civilisations. This fusion has created a rich diverse society that gives a unique essence in everything Malaysians do. Malaysia is a lush tropical land full of natural resources that add flavour and variety to research, cultivation and processing of foods. Thus, Malaysia is poised to become one of the leading Asian countries in food production and processing. With a deep-rooted tradition to excel, Malaysia is committed to develop the country's food industry for import substitution and export. Malaysia's commitment is her promise to your success. You don't just invest in Malaysia. You acquire a long-term profitable partnership from Malaysia.

# **Diverse Resources**

It is estimated that Malaysia's total agriculture land is amounted to 5.5 million hectares from 33 million hectares total land area. Industrial crops are mostly planted which consist of oil palm, rubber, cocoa, tobacco and pepper while other crops include paddy, fruits, vegetables and coconut. A steady supply of agricultural produce for processing is sustainable due to Malaysia's year long growing season. Malaysia has taken concrete measures to improve and increase agricultural production and adopting a liberal policy to allow duty-free importation of raw materials to enable the food industry meets specific market demand. Agriculture is one of the sectors identified in the National Key Economic Areas (NKEAs). It focuses on selected sub-sectors including aquaculture, seaweed farming, swiftlet farming, herbal products, fruits and vegetables and premium processed food which have highgrowth potential. There is a growing demand for these high value products which provide source opportunities for farmers to increase their income. Alternatively, paddy and livestock sub-sectors are also encouraged to ensure national food security.

The agriculture sector is expected to grow by 3.5 per cent per annum, contributing 8.2 per cent to total GDP by 2020 under the 11MP, with the agro-food sub-sector growing an expected 5.4 per cent per annum. The sub-sector will be transformed into a high-income and sustainable industry through innovative R&D and modernization initiatives. Malaysia has gradually developed and improved its agriculture and food processing industry to become a net exporter of processed food.

The food-processing sector account for about 10% of Malaysia's manufacturing output. Processed food contributed about RM21.76 billion and are exported to more than 200 countries, while import value of processed food is amounted RM20.27 billion in 2019.

Advances in processing technology have widened the usage of local raw materials, expanding the range of products and increasing the investment absorbing capacity in the food industry.



# MALAYSIA'S FOOD I N D U S T R Y





Livestock and Dairy: Poultry processing constitutes 60% of the meat processing industry. Although Malaysia is a net exporter of poultry meat, it is still a net importer of meat products, particularly beef and mutton. Poultry meat is a major raw material for further processed livestock products.

Among dairy products produced are milk powder, sweetened condensed milk, pasteurised or sterilised liquid milk, ice cream, yoghurt and other fermented milk. Except for the production of pasteurised milk, the dairy product industry is heavily dependent on imports.

**Fisheries:** The fisheries sector produced about 2.2 million tonnes of fish in 2019 of which aquaculture sector contributed more than 400,000 tonnes yearly.

An export-oriented sector, seafood processing includes the processing of prawns, frozen products, canning of fish and the production of surimi and surimi products. Malaysia's total exports of seafood processed products exceeded RM1.1 billion in 2019.



# **Cereal Products/Flour Based Products:**

The cereal products sub-sector, including the production of biscuits, bakery items and noodles, is well established in Malaysia. Although this subsector is dependent on imported raw materials, Malaysia is a net exporter of cereal preparations/ products, with a net export of more than RM3.5 billion in 2019. The range of products includes pre-mixes, bread, biscuits, snack foods, instant noodles, vegetarian food, frozen cakes and pastries.

# **Chocolate and Sugar Confectionaries:**

Malaysia is the seventh largest cocoa grinding country in the world. Malaysia is a net exporter of cocoa products including chocolates, exporting to more than 90 countries. Exports of cocoa preparations were valued at RM5.5 billion in 2019.

Malaysia's cocoa grinding capacity recorded 249,661 tonnes in 2019, provides raw materials for further downstream processing.



# Pepper and pepper products:

Malaysia's export of pepper and pepper products amounted to RM246.6 million in 2019. Value-added pepper and pepper products include specialty pepper and processed pepper-based products such as spice mixes and blends, seasonings and flavourings.

# Fruits and Vegetables:

A variety of fruits and vegetables are produced for fresh consumption in domestic and export markets as well as for downstream processing. Major activity in the downstream processing of fruits is the canning of pineapple and pineapple juice. Other fruits such as guava, passion fruit, jackfruit and banana are also being processed into puree/juice, snacks, pickles and jam. Processing of vegetables is confined to the production of sauces and pickles.

Malaysia's import of processed fruits and vegetables is valued at RM2.0 billion in 2019, while exports recorded at RM1.1 billion. The fruit and vegetable processing industry has tremendous potential for import substitution and export opportunities. Investors are encouraged to undertake the commercial cultivation of fruits and vegetables.

# Palm Oil-based Products:

Malaysia is the world's largest exporter and the second world's largest producer of palm oil in the world. Malaysia and Indonesia account for more than 84 per cent of the world palm oil output and about 89.6 per cent of global exports of palm oil. Export earnings from oil palm products reached RM63.7billion in 2019. Major markets for oil palm products are India, Europe, People's Republic of China, Pakistan and Philippines.

Main products exported are RBD palm oil, RBD palm olein and stearin, specialty fats such as cocoa butter substitutes, margarine, shortening and vanaspati. Further development is seen in the production of value-added palm oilbased specialty products to cater to health conscious and vegetarian consumers.

# GROWING DEMAND FOR FOOD

Malaysia's current population of 33.6 million with purchasing power (per capita income) exceeded RM44,686 in 2019. Lifestyle changes have led to an increase in the demand for convenience and health foods.

Exports of processed food recorded a positive growth indicating the increasing acceptance of Malaysia's food products in overseas market. This is contributed mainly by products such as cocoa and cocoa preparations, prepared cereals and flour preparations, processed seafood and dairy products. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), with a population of over 668 million has a vast market potential to be tapped and Malaysia is poised to become a major exporter of processed food for this region.

# Halal Industry The global halal market is currently estimated at US\$2.3 trillion and is expected to grow up to 3.4 trillion by 2024. With a majority Muslim population, Malaysia has a ready domestic market for halal food. Recognised as a modern Muslim nation, Malaysia is well positioned to be an international halal food hub in the branding, processing and marketing of halal foods to world Muslim populations.

The concept of halal is associated with food products which are of high quality in terms of cleanliness, sanitation and compliance with religious requirements. The Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) certifies all halal food products. The government has introduced Halal certification such as:

- MS 1500:2009 on the Halal Food: Production, Preparation, Handling and Storage which has incorporated the GMP and hygienic sanitary requirements.
- MS 2565:2014 Halal Packaging-General Guideline. This Malaysian standard describes the general guidelines in the manufacturing and handling of halal packaging.

# RESEARCH

# AND DEVELOPMENT

Malaysia's Halal industry provides immense opportunities for food processing industry players, due to its strong value propositions. The country's Halal certification is well-accepted internationally, boosting Muslim consumer confidence, and indicating that certified products have passed safety, quality, and legal requirements based on Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP). Potential investors are encouraged to leverage on this comprehensive halal ecosystem, particularly in the food industry.

The Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MARDI) focuses on genetic improvement and pest management using biotechnology, post-harvest technology and mechanization. It is also involved in the development of value-added products, with some of its research projects ready for commercialization.



To achieve Malaysia's vision of becoming a key center for cocoa processing in Asia, the Malaysian Cocoa Board (MCB) is continuously intensifying its R&D program for both the upstream and downstream sectors particularly in widening the product-base of cocoa products. The laboratory in the Downstream Research Centre of the MCB is accessible to manufacturers for analytical support.

The Forest Research Institute of Malaysia (FRIM) is another major research institution actively conducting research into the commercial cultivation of herbs and medicinal plants. It provides research-based services for the conservation, processing, management, development and utilization of these forest resources for commercialization.

The Fisheries Research Institute (FRI) conducts research in various fields including aquaculture, aquatic ecology, fish diseases, fisheries products and biotechnology.



# INCENTIVES FOR INVESTMENT

# MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND AGRO-BASED INDUSTRY (MOA)

- 100% Income Tax Exemption for 10 years for production of selected food activities
- 100% Income Tax Exemption for 5 years for reinvestment in the production of selected food activities

### **Halal Industry Development Corporation** MALAYSIAN INVESTMENT DEVELOPMENT (HDC)

100% income tax exemption on capital expenditure for 10 years or income tax exemption on export sales for 5 years for productions of Halal Specialty Processed Food, Pharmaceuticals, Nutraceuticals & Probiotics, Cosmetics and Personal Care products, Halal Ingredients and Livestock and Meat products.

- 100% Income Tax Exemption for 15 years or 100% Investment Tax Allowance for 10 years for manufacture of food products in the less developed areas
- Pioneer Status (PS)/Investment Tax Allowance (ITA);
- PS/ITA for small-scale companies;

**AUTHORITY (MIDA)** 

Additional 5 years reinvestment incentives for promoted food products;

- Reinvestment Allowance (RA) for 15 years;
- Tax deductible expenses for halal quality and safety certifications;
- PS/ITA for cold chain facilities and services;
- Import duty exemption on raw materials, machinery and equipment;
- Incentives for R&D



# R&D SERVICES INFRASTRUCTURE Universities / Research Industrial Parks / Free Industrial Zones Standards & Certifications Institutions Halal R&D Laboratories Halal Consultancy Halal Parks Agriculture Production Distribution Consumer PRODUCTION & SERVICES **HUMAN CAPITAL** Universities / College / Institutions Training Institutions **LOGISTICS & SERVICES** MINISTRIES, AGENCIES & ASSOCIATIONS SUPPORT





# NEW INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Investment opportunities abound in the food processing sector. The three thrust areas are:

# **Health Food/Functional Food:**

Malaysia is moving towards organic farming. Besides organic products, health foods include low caloric, fibre/nutrient enriched products, fruit juices and herbal products. New products using Malaysia's traditional herbs and resources are continuously being developed for Asian and global markets.

# **Convenience Food:**

Demand for convenience foods that can be prepared within minutes is a growing worldwide trend. Locally made convenience foods include frozen foods such as ready-to-eat meals, spiced fish and chicken, ethnic or traditional cuisine, instant powdered juice and retort pouch products. Malaysia is also in an excellent position to produce Asian recipes with convenience food technologies to meet the increasing global demand for specialty and ethnic foods.

# Food Ingredients:

Functional ingredients, food flavours, additives, colouring, seasonings and palm oil-based additives are some of the products that have vast potential for further development to enhance Malaysia's presence in the developed markets in the USA, the UK, Japan and Australia. The quality of these products is backed by continuous nutritional research.



Food Indust

# **MIDA** Headquarters

Malaysian Investment Development Authority, MIDA Sentral, No.5, Jalan Stesen Sentral 5, Kuala Lumpur Sentral, 50470 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia Tel: (603) 2267 3633 Fax: (603) 2274 7970 Email: investmalaysia@mida.gov.my Website: www.mida.gov.my

# MIDA State Offices

# **Johor**

## Director

Malaysian Investment Development Authority No. 5, Level 13, Menara Tabung Haji

Jalan Ayer Molek 80000 Johor Bahru Johor Darul Takzim

Tel: (607) 224 5500 / 226 5057

Fax : (607) 224 2360 E-mail : johor@mida.gov.my

## **Kedah & Perlis**

# **Director**

Malaysian Investment Development Authority

4th Floor, East Wing, No. 88 Menara Bina Darulaman Berhad

Lebuhraya Darulaman 05100 Alar Setar Kedah Darul Aman

Tel : (604) 731 3978 Fax : (604) 731 2439 E-mail : kedah@mida.gov.my

# Kelantan

# **Director**

Malaysian Investment Development Authority Aras 5-C, Menara Pejabat Kelantan Trade Centre Jalan Bayam

15200 Kota Bharu Kelantan Darul Nairn Tel : (609) 748 3151 Fax : (609) 744 7294

E-mail: kelantan@mida.gov.my

# Melaka

# Director

Malaysian Investment Development Authority

3th Floor, Menara MITC

Kompleks MITC, Jalan Konvensyen

75450 Ayer Keroh

Melaka

Tel : (606) 232 2877 Fax : (606) 232 2875 E-mail : melaka@mida.gov.my

# Negeri Sembilan

# **Director**

Malaysian Investment Development Authority Suite 13.01 & 13.02, 13th Floor, Menara Zurich

70200 Seremban

Negeri Sembilan Darul Khusus Tel : (606) 762 7921 Fax : (606) 762 7879

E-mail: nsembilan@mida.gov.my

# **Pahang**

# **Director**

Malaysian Investment Development Authority Suite 3, 11th Floor, Kompleks Teruntum

P.O. Box 178 25720 Kuantan

Pahang Darul Makmur
Tel : (609) 513 7334
Fax : (609) 513 7333
E-mail : pahang@mida.gov.my

# **Perak**

# Director

Malaysian Investment Development Authority Level 4, Perak Techno Trade Centre (PTTC) Bandar Meru Raya, Off Jalan Jelapang P.O.Box 210

30720 Ipoh

Perak Darul Ridzuan

Tel : (605) 5269 962/ 961 Fax : (605) 5279 960 E-mail : perak@mida.gov.my

# **Pulau Pinang**

# Director

Malaysian Investment Development Authority Unit 14.01, Level 14

Menara Boustead Penang 39, Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah

10050 Pulau Pinang
Tel : (604) 228 0575
Fax : (604) 228 0327
E-mail : penang@mida.gov.my

# Sabah

# **Director**

Malaysian Investment Development Authority

Lot D9.4 & D9.5, Tingkat 9 Block D, Bangunan KWSP, Karamunsing

88100 Kota Kinabalu

Sabah

Tel : (6088) 211 411/230 411

Fax : (6088) 211 412 E-mail : sabah@mida.gov.my

# Sarawak

# Director

Malaysian Investment Development Authority Room 404, 4th Floor, Bangunan Bank Negara No. 147, Jalan Satok, P.O. Box 716

93714 Kuching

Sarawak

Tel: (6082) 254 251/237 484

Fax : (6082) 252 375

E-mail: sarawak@mida.gov.my

# Selangor

# **Director**

Malaysian Investment Development Authority 22nd Floor, Wisma MBSA

Persiaran Perbandaran 40000 Shah Alam

Selangor Darul Ehsan Tel: (603) 5518 4260

Fax : (603) 5513 5392 E-mail : selangor@mida.gov.my

# Terengganu

### **Director**

Malaysian Investment Development Authority 5th Floor, Menara Yayasan Islam Terengganu

Jalan Sultan Omar 20300 Kuala Terengganu Terengganu Darul Iman

Tel : (609) 622 7200 Fax : (609) 623 2260

E-mail: terengganu@mida.gov.my

# **MIDA**

# **Overseas Offices**

# **ASIA-PACIFIC**

# **AUSTRALIA**

# **Sydney**

# Consul(Investment)/Director

# Consulate of Malaysia (Investment Section)

Malaysian Investment Development Authority Level 6, 16 Spring Street

Sydney NSW 2000

Australia

Tel : 61 (02) 9251 1933 Fax : 61 (02) 9251 4333 E-mail : sydney@mida.gov.my

# **JAPAN**

# Tokyo

# Director

Malaysian Investment Development Authority

32F, Shiroyama Trust Tower 4-3-1,Toranomon,Minato-ku Tokyo 105-6032, Japan Tel: 81 (3) 5777 8808

Fax : 81 (3) 5777 8809 Email : tokyo@mida.gov.my

# Osaka Director

Malaysian Investment Development Authority

Mainichi Intecio 18F 3-4-5 Umeda, Kita-ku Osaka 530-0001, Japan

Tel : 81 (6) 6451 6661 Fax : 81 (6) 6451 6626 Email : osaka@mida.gov.my

# REPUBLIC OF KOREA

### Seoul

# Counselor (Investment)/Director

**Embassy of Malaysia** 

# (Malaysian Trade and Investment Centre)

Malaysian Investment Development Authority

Level 17, Standard Chartered Bank Korea Limited Building 47, Jongro, Jongro-gu

Seoul 110-702, Republic of Korea
Tel : 82 (2) 733 6130/6131
Fax : 82 (2) 733 6132
E-mail : seoul@mida.gov.my

# **TAIWAN**

## Taipei

# **Director (Investment)**

Malaysian Investment Development Authority Malaysian Friendship & Trade Centre 12F, Suite A, Hung Kuo Building No. 167, Tun Hua North Road

Taipei 105, Taiwan

Tel: 886 (2) 2713 5020 (GL) /2718 6094

Fax : 886 (2) 2514 7581 Email : taipei@mida.gov.my

# PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

# Shanghai Director

Consulate General of Malaysia

(Investment Section)

Malaysian Investment Development Authority

Unit 807-809, Level 8 Shanghai Kerry Centre No.1515, Nanjing Road (West)

Shanghai 200040

People's Republic of China
Tel: 86 (21) 6289 4547
Fax: 86 (21) 6279 4009
E-mail: shanghai@mida.gov.my

# Guangzhou

# **Director**

Malaysian Investment Development Authority

Unit 1804B-05

CITIC Plaza Office Tower 233 Tianhe Bei Road Guangzhou 510610 People's Republic of China

People's Republic of China

Tel: (8620) 8752 0739

Fax: (8620) 8752 0753

E-mail: guangzhou@mida.gov.my

# **Beijing**

# Counselor (Investment) / Director Embassy of Malaysia (Investment Section)

Malaysian Investment Development Authority Unit C, 12th Floor, Tower A, Gateway Plaza No.18, Xiaguangli, East Third Ring North Road

Chaoyang District, Beijing 100600
People's Republic of China
Tel : (8610) 8440 0071/0072
Fax : (8610) 8440 0076
E-mail : beijing@mida.gov.my

# **UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**

### Dubai

Consul(Investment)/Director Consulate General of Malaysia

(Investment Section)

Malaysian Investment Development Authority Unit 2205, 22nd Floor, Tower A

Business Central Tower Dubai Media City (P.O.Box: 502876) Dubai United Arab Emirates

Tel : (9714) 4343 696/697 Fax : (9714) 4343 698 Email : dubai@mida.gov.my

# **INDIA**

# Mumbai

Consul (Investment)/Director Consulate General of Malaysia (Investment Section)

Malaysian Investment Development Authority 81 & 87, 8th Floor, 3rd North Avenue

Maker Maxity

Bandra Kurla Complex, Bandra (E)

Mumbai 400051, India

Tel : (9122) 2659 1155 / 1156 Fax : (9122) 2659 1154 E-mail : mumbai@mida.gov.my

# **SINGAPORE**

# Consul (Investment)/Director High Commission of Malaysia

Malaysian Investment Development Authority No. 7, Temasek Boulevard

26-01, Suntec Tower One Singapore 038987

Tel: (65) 6835 9326 / 9580 / 7069

Fax : (65) 6835 7926

E-mail: singapore@mida.gov.my

# **EUROPE**

# **FRANCE**

# Paris Director

Malaysian Investment Development Authority

42, Avenue Kleber 75116 Paris, France

Tel : (331) 4727 6696 / 3689 Fax : (331) 4755 6375 E-mail : paris@mida.gov.my

# FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

### **Frankfurt**

# Consulate General of Malaysia (Investment Section)

Malaysian Investment Development Authority (MIDA)

Level 9, HAT 64 Bleichstrasse 64-66 60313 Frankfurt Am Main

Germany

Tel : +49(0) 69 8700 679-0 E-mail : frankfurt@mida.gov.my

# Munich

# Director

Malaysian Investment Development Authority

Level 6, Bürkleinhaus
Bürkleinstrasse 10
80538 Munich, Germany
Tel : (4989) 2030 0430
Fax : (4989) 2030 0431-5

E-mail: munich@mida.gov.my

# **SWEDEN**

# Stockholm

# **Economic Counsellor**

Malaysian Investment Development Authority

c/o Embassy of Malaysia Karlavaegen 37, P.O. Box 26053 S-10041 Stockholm, Sweden Tel : (468) 440 8400 / 440 8416

Fax : (468) 791 8761

E-mail: stockholm@mida.gov.my

# UNITED KINGDOM

# London

# **Counsellor for Investment (Director)**

High Commission of Malaysia

Malaysian Investment Development Authority

17 Curzon Street London W1J 5HR United Kingdom

Tel : (4420) 7493 0616 Fax : (4420) 7493 8804 E-mail : london@mida.gov.my

# **ITALY**

# Milan

# Consul (Investment)/Director

Consulate of Malaysia (Investment Section)
Malaysian Investment Development Authority

2nd Floor, Via Albricci 9

20122 Milan, Italy
Tel : (39) 02 8909 382-4
Fax : (39) 02 8909 545-418
E-mail : milan@mida.gov.my

# **NORTH AMERICA**

# **SAN JOSE**

# Director

Malaysian Investment Development Authority 226, Airport Parkway, Suite 480 San Jose, CA 95110

United States of America
Tal: (1408) 392 0617/8
Fax: (1408) 392 0619
E-mail: sanjose@mida.gov.my

# **NEW YORK**

Consul (Investment)/Director Consulate General of Malaysia (Investment Section)

Malaysian Investment Development Authority 313 East, 43rd Street

New York, NY 10017
United States of America
Tel : (1212) 687 2491
Fax : (1212) 490 8450
E-mail : newyork@mida.gov.my

# **CHICAGO**

# **Director**

Malaysian Investment Development Authority John Hancock Center, Suite 1515 875, North Michigan Avenue Chicago, IL 60611 United States of America

Tel : (1312) 787 4532 Fax : (1312) 787 4769 E-mail : chicago@mida.gov.my

For more information, please contact:



# Food Technology and Resource Based Industries Division Malaysian Investment Development Authority

Level 23, MIDA Sentral, No. 5, Jalan Stesan Sentral 5 Kuala Lumpur Sentral 50470 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Tel : (603) 2263 2593 Fax : (603) 2273 8467

E-mail : investmalaysia@mida.gov.my

Website: www.mida.gov.my

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