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Report Highlights:

The Danish food retail landscape is dominated by brick-and-mortar supermarkets, often located within walking distance and operating with generous hours, limiting the need for e-commerce. Most stores range between 500–1,500 m², and the country has the highest number of supermarkets per capita in the EU. Danes shop frequently—around three times a week—and spend about 10 percent of their disposable income on food and beverages, but the market remains conservative with little innovation. The abundance of stores relative to the small population may hinder individual store performance and discourage investment in modern retail concepts. Additionally, a strong foodservice sector offering affordable, ready-to-eat meals has limited the growth of convenience product offerings in supermarkets.

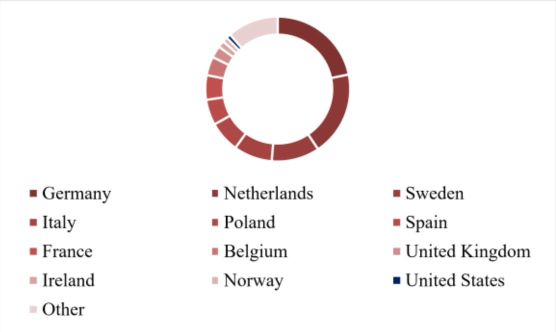
Market Fact Sheet: Denmark

Executive Summary:

Denmark, a Member State within the European Union (EU), is a high-income country in Scandinavia. The country's open economy is dependent on foreign trade and the government supports a relatively liberal trade policy. Its population totaled almost six million in 2024.

Imports of Consumer-Oriented Products:

Products from other EU Member States lead Danish imports of consumer-oriented products. In 2024, the United States was the 12th largest supplier of these products to Denmark, with imports valued at over $104 million.



Source: Trade Data Monitor

Food Processing Industry:

Denmark's food and beverage industry is comprised over 1,500 companies with a collective turnover of an estimated $30 billion. Denmark is one of the world's leading exporters of meat products, mainly pork. Other notable Danish exports include cheese, food preparations, and seafood (salmon).

Food Retail Industry:

The Danish retail sector is rather consolidated, with COOP, Salling, and Dagrofa dominating the market. Denmark has the highest number of supermarkets per inhabitant within the EU. Denmark continues to be a price sensitive market, and the Danes spend about ten percent of their disposable income on food and beverages. The sector's turnover for 2024 is forecasted to be $19.7 billion.

Foodservice – HRI Industry:

Despite the rising costs of living, the foodservice industry's turnover is back on track. Consumers returned en-masse to HRI foodservice outlets. Last year, total sales were valued at $9.5 billion. The Danish foodservice industry is fragmented and has many independent players. The majority of limited-service restaurants and delivery outlets, however, are consolidated and often part of an international chain.

Quick Facts CY 2024

Imports of Consumer-Oriented Products, total:

$10.5 billion

List of Top 10 Growth Products in Denmark (imported from the World):

1. Dairy products	6. Beef & products
2. Bakery goods	7. Fresh vegetables
3. Wine	8. Chocolate & products
4. Fresh fruit	9. Pork & products
5. Soup & preparations	10. Processed vegetables

Food Industry by Channels 2024, in $ billion:

Consumer-Oriented Products Imports	$11
Consumer-Oriented Products Exports	$15
Agricultural & Related Products Imports	$22
Agricultural & Related Products Exports	$27
Food Industry	$30
Food Retail	$17
Food Service	$10

Food Retailers in Denmark:

SuperBrugsen	Meny
Spar	Føtex
Netto	Rema1000
365discount	7-Eleven
Bilka	Kvickly

GDP/Population:

Population: 5.9 million

GDP: $449 billion

GDP per capita: $76,102

Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Challenges

Strengths:	Weaknesses:
U.S. producers offer a great variety of food products with a consistent quality and have a great story to tell about land stewardship.	Transatlantic transportation is costly and takes time. U.S. food products increasingly suffer from a negative perception among the Danes.
Opportunities:	**Threats:**
The Danish processing industry increasingly demands raw materials, in particular seafood and almonds.	There is fierce competition on price, quality, uniqueness, and innovation from other EU Member States.

Data and Information Sources: Trade Data Monitor, industry experts, company websites

Contact: FAS The Hague, agthehague@usda.gov

SECTION I. MARKET SUMMARY

With only six million inhabitants, Denmark is a small country. The Danish labor force totaled just over three million people at the beginning of 2025 and approximately 32 percent are employed in the public sector. Denmark's unemployment rate is low and reached 2.9 percent in March 2025. Its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita is estimated at $76,102 and ranks among the highest in the world. Many independent observers regard Denmark as one of the world's most attractive business environments and the country ranks highly in indices measuring political, economic, and regulatory stability. Denmark is a constitutional monarchy which shares a southern border with Germany and is connected, via a bridge, with Sweden. The country has been a member of the European Union (EU) since 1973. It maintains a fixed exchange rate policy, with the Danish Krone linked closely to the Euro. Denmark is a social welfare state with a thoroughly modern market economy heavily driven by trade in goods and services. More information can be found in the Investment Climate Statement, Denmark - United States Department of State.

Danish Food Retail Market

Exact turnover figures for the Danish food retail industry are not available. Based on conversation with industry sources, FAS/The Hague estimates the turnover to reach almost $19.7 billion (DKK 128 billion) in 2024. The Danish food retail sector is consolidated, with four large buying groups Salling Group (DKK 46.4 billion), COOP (DKK 37.7 billion), Reitan (DKK 21.3 billion), and Dagrofa (DKK 15.3 billion), controlling the majority of the market.

The Danish food retail landscape is known for its abundance of brick-and-mortar stores, with supermarkets found on nearly every corner of cities. Most stores operate on an average floorspace between 500 and 1,500 meters squared, and there are very few hypermarkets. This widespread physical presence, combined with generous store opening hours, has limited the growth of e-commerce in the country. The Danes enjoy the convenience of easily accessible stores, which reduces the need for online grocery shopping. In fact, Denmark is said to have the highest number of supermarkets per inhabitant within the EU, making frequent supermarket visits a common habit.

Danish shoppers spend an estimated ten percent of their disposable income on food and beverages, visiting supermarkets almost three times per week, and typically spending about half an hour per visit. Despite this steady customer traffic, supermarkets in Denmark remain quite conservative and show little innovation. The sheer number of stores relative to the small population could mean that individual supermarkets struggle to generate enough foot traffic to justify investing in new ways of presenting products or introducing novel concepts. As a result, the Danish retail market has been slow to change or innovate.

Another factor shaping the Danish food retail landscape is the relatively low availability of convenience products in stores. This is largely due to the high number of foodservice outlets, including fast-food concepts focusing on burgers, pizza, kebab, coffee, or sweets. These foodservice options offer ready-to-eat meals at competitive prices, making it difficult for supermarkets to compete in the convenience segment with ready-to-eat and or ready-to-cook products. Consequently, supermarkets face challenges in tapping into the foodservice market, further reinforcing the traditional nature of Danish grocery retail. In addition to the convenience stores of 7-Eleven, Føtex recently opened some convenience stores in Copenhagen.

Most supermarkets in Denmark have a limited selection of U.S. products. The most prominent products from the United States are wine (see below picture) and bourbons, followed by a couple of sauces or dressings, peanut butter, and sweetpotatoes. In addition, local food manufacturers use almonds (see below picture), peanuts, raisins, dried cranberries, and seafood and many other products and ingredients from the United States, in their finished products. Unlike the other Nordic market, the sales of alcoholic beverages in Denmark are not controlled by government owned stores.

Market Dynamics
Discount:
Despite having one of the highest GDPs per capita, Danes spend only about ten percent of their disposable income on food. They are highly price-conscious, constantly seeking the best deals, sales, and overall value for money. This price sensitivity has made discount stores the dominant force in Denmark’s grocery market. Leading chains such as Netto, 365Discount, the Norwegian-owned Rema 1000, and the German discount chain Lidl collectively account for roughly half of all supermarket formats in the country. Rising living costs and food price inflation have further intensified this trend, prompting Danes to prioritize value more than ever. As a result, they increasingly opt for cheaper alternatives and private-label products.

Private Labeled Products:
Private label products hold a strong and growing presence in Denmark, with an estimated market share of 35 percent. Consumers value these brands for their cost-effectiveness, viewing them as economical alternatives to A-branded products. For more detailed information on the European private label market, visit PLMA International. The world’s largest trade show for the private label industry, organized by the Amsterdam Private Label Manufacturers Association (PLMA), is held annually in Amsterdam. The next event is scheduled for May 19-20, 2026. U.S. parties interested in attending or seeking further details can contact agthehague@usda.gov.

Voluntary Front of Pack Nutritional Labeling – Keyhole:
Denmark, in collaboration with Norway and Sweden, has developed and implemented a joint Nordic nutrition label known as the Keyhole. This label indicates that a product meets specific criteria for salt, sugar, fat, and fiber content, helping consumers easily identify healthier food options. The average Danish consumer is well-acquainted with the Keyhole logo and places trust in it. The label appears on both branded and private label products. The Keyhole is a voluntary certification, and food producers are responsible for ensuring their products comply with the Danish Veterinary and Food Administration's regulations governing its use. For more information on voluntary front-of-pack nutritional labeling, visit https://food.ec.europa.eu/safety/labelling-and-nutrition/food-information-consumers-legislation/nutrition-labelling_en.

Deposit and Return System:
Denmark introduced a deposit and return system to collect valuable material which can be recycled and to prevent cans and bottles from ending up in the environment. The Danish deposit mark can be recognized by its logo which has a series of dots under two arrows in a circle. The deposit mark is a registered trademark ® owned by Dansk Retursystem. The deposit mark, see below, may be printed directly on the bottle or can. For U.S. exporters of (alcoholic) beverages is it good to know that it may also be a small sticker attached to the bottle or can. The return system works very well in Denmark, as 93 percent of all bottles and cans are collected. Itis assumed that the remaining seven percent include cans and bottles that were broken or have dents and therefore are not being returned. When returning, the consumer either gets the cash refund, or can donate the refund to charities.

Plant-based Food Action Plan:
In October 2023, the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Fisheries in Denmark launched the Danish Action Plan for Plant-based foods: "If we want to reduce the climate footprint within the agricultural sector, then we all have to eat more plant-based foods." The plan highlights the importance of plant-based foods in making the country's food system more environmentally friendly. In this context, the Danish Consumer Council started a joined campaign with retailers on getting consumers in Denmark eat more legumes in their everyday lives. They also aim to educate consumers on how best to use legumes. Denmark has seen an increase in people looking for plant-based products for health, climate, and animal welfare reasons, but also because meat and meat products have become more expensive in Denmark.

New Age Limits For The Sale Of Alcohol:
On April 1, 2025, Denmark implemented a significant change in its alcohol regulations for 16- and 17-year-olds. Under new legislation passed in December 2024 as part of a broader youth prevention plan, the maximum allowed alcohol by volume (ABV) for this age group was reduced from 16.5 percent to 6 percent – meaning that individuals aged 16 and 17 can no longer legally purchase beverages with an alcohol content exceeding 6 percent. Additionally, the new laws introduced stricter regulations on alcohol sales to minors. In designated nightlife zones, it became illegal to sell any alcohol to individuals

under 18 between 10:00 PM and 8:00 AM. More information can be found on nordicalcohol.org and danskerhverv.dk.

Home Delivery:
Consumers continue to use third party delivery platforms to place orders for home delivery. Younger consumers are particularly comfortable using mobile apps on their smartphones to order and pay for this service, as it offers greater convenience. Just Eat Takeaway and Wolt lead the market for meal delivery from various HRI foodservice outlets to consumers in Denmark. Home delivery is expected to continue to be driven by convenience as many consumers lead more home-centered lifestyles.

Table 1. Advantages and Challenges of the Danish Food Retail Market

U.S. Supplier Strengths & Market Opportunities	*U.S. Supplier Weaknesses and Competitive Threats*
Although a small consumer market, the Danes are affluent and open-minded consumers.	The Danes are among the most price-conscious consumers within the EU. Transatlantic transportation is costly which adds to the consumer price.
Local importers have had positive experiences working with U.S. suppliers because they are professional, deliver products with a consistent quality, and have a wide variety of innovative products to offer.	Growing demand for single portion packaged food products. U.S. companies tend to manufacture packaged food in larger packages. Transatlantic transportation takes time which can negatively impact the remaining shelf life of U.S. products.
U.S. producers fabricate products that are innovative (in packaging, flavor or composition), often trend setting, and are known for their strong brands.	Some products fabricated by U.S. food manufacturers suffer from a negative perception due to misinformation (e.g., local and small-scale is better), an image issue (e.g., U.S. foodstuffs are unhealthy), or due to consumer sentiment.
High per capita consumption of food products with a special claim (including organic) and sustainable production methods. U.S. farmers have a good story to tell about their heritage, sustainability, and supply chain.	U.S. beef that is not hormone-free and poultry cannot be exported to Denmark. This also applies to foodstuffs containing allulose, titanium dioxide, bio-engineered ingredients, flour bleaching agents, and some colors or dyes.
Local demand for food stuffs that contribute to a healthier lifestyle.	The EU has several Free Trade Agreements that may advantage other 3rd country competitors, including Canada and Mexico.
	Fierce competition on price, quality, uniqueness, and innovation.

Source: FAS The Hague

Information about the various markets in Denmark, including organic, seafood, wine, distilled spirits, craft beer, nuts, and condiments and sauces, can be found in the Denmark Exporter Guide.

SECTION II. ROAD MAP FOR MARKET ENTRY
U.S. exporters seeking to enter the Danish marketplace have many advantages, as indicated in the above table but might face several challenges as well.

Entry Strategy
Success in introducing your product into the Danish market will depend mainly on your knowledge of the market and your ability to build relationships with knowledgeable and established importers. An importer knows the market, its dynamics, and the required documentation. Prior to any exporting, it is recommended to invest in researching the Danish food culture (e.g., consumer trends, purchase patterns, local flavors, prices, requirements, etc.). Also be aware that the competition will be fierce. There are tariff and non-tariff trade barriers that can complicate exporting to the Dutch market. The EU also has several Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) which may advantage other third country competitors. FAS/The Hague maintains lists of Danish buyers, stands ready to help you, and can be contacted by email at agthehague@usda.gov for additional information.

Trade shows are excellent venues for U.S. exporters to meet potential Danish buyers, to conduct product introductions, and to gauge buyer interest. Depending on the products, U.S. exporters should consider visiting or exhibiting at one of the many trade shows in Europe. The only food trade show taking place in Denmark is the Food Expo. This biennial show takes place in Herning, Denmark and focusses strongly on the Danish Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional (HRI) foodservice industry. FAS The Hague visited Food Expo last year and the next edition will take place on March 22-24, 2026. An overview of Europe's leading trade shows can be found in the Denmark Exporter Guide.

Market Structure and Distribution Channels:
Figure 1. Distribution Channel Flow Diagram

Source: FAS/The Hague

Only a small selection of the food products that food retail companies place on their shelves are produced in countries outside the European Union (EU). Retailers do not import these products themselves but work with local, and often specialized, importers who are specialized in international trading and experienced in making sure these foreign products comply with local import requirements and standards. Retailers increasingly have their stores divided into different categories. For each category they will have two or three preferred suppliers who are responsible for supplying the full range of products within that category. This way, the retailer negotiates with just a handful of suppliers for produce, meat products, seafood, groceries, beverages, bakery products, etc. For the international specialty products (covering branded retail ready U.S. products) area within supermarkets, retailers usually work with only one or two specialized importers who are responsible for selecting products and filling those shelves.

Company Profiles:
The Danish retail industry is rather consolidated and on the purchase side, the industry is even more consolidated since several smaller food retailers have joined forces. The following figures provide an overview of the different buying combinations in Denmark.

Table 2. Leading Buying Groups in Denmark

Purchase Group:	Estimated Turnover:	Retail chains:
Salling Group Rosbjergvej 33, 8220 Brabrand, Denmark +45 8778 5000 Sallinggroup.com	DKK 46.4 billion	Discount: Netto Upscale: Føtex (supermarket) and Bilka (hyptermarket) Convenience: Føtex city
COOP Danmark Roskildevej 65, 2620 Albertslund, Denmark +45 4386 4386 coop.dk	DKK 37.7 billion	Discount: 365discount Upscale: SuperBrugsen (larger supermarket), Kvikly (supermarket), and ALMA (supermarket)
Reitan AS Buddingevej 195, 2860 Søborg, Denmark +45 8881 6000 reitandistribution.dk	DKK 21.3 billion	Discount: Rema1000 Convenience: 7-Eleven
Dagrofa ApS Kærup Industrivej 12, 4100 Ringsted, Denmark +45 7020 0268 kontakt@dagrofa.dk dagrofa.dk	DKK 15.3 billion	Upscale: Meny, Spar, Min Købmand, and Let-Køb
Lidl Profilvej 9, 6000 Kolding, Denmark +45 7635 0000 lidl@lidl.dk lidl.dk	DKK 5.8 billion	Discount: Lidl
ABC Lavpris Smedevej 2, 6880 Tarm, Denmark lager@abc-lavpris.dk +45 9735 4876 abc-lavpris.dk	DKK 1.4 billion	Discount: ABC Lavpris

Source: FAS/The Hague

Import Procedures:
Most Danish food legislation is harmonized at the EU level. Where EU regulatory harmonization is not yet complete or absent, imported products must meet existing Danish requirements. U.S. exporters should be aware that national measures still exist for enzymes, processing aids, packaging waste management, food contact materials, choice of language (Danish is the official language in Denmark), use of stickers, samples, novel foods, fortified foods, irradiated foodstuffs, and product registration.

Nevertheless, it is highly recommended that U.S. exporters verify the full set of import requirements with their local buyer, who is in the best position to research such matters with local authorities, before shipping any goods. Final approval of any product is subject to the Danish rules and regulations as interpreted by border officials at the time of product entry. More information can be found on the website of the Danish Veterinary and Food Administration.

Information about customs clearance, required documentation for imported products, labeling requirements, tariff information and FTAs, and trademarks and patent market research can be found in the EU Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards (FAIRS) Country Report and Certificate Report which can be downloaded from the following website: https://gain.fas.usda.gov/#/search.

Share of Major Segments in the Retail Industry and Sector Trends are described in Section I of the report.

SECTION III. COMPETITION

In 2024, total Danish imports of Consumer-Oriented products were valued at $10,5 billion, according to Trade Data Monitor. Imports from the United States totaled $104 million, similar to 2023 imports. The United States was Denmark's 3rd largest non-EU supplier. Imports of U.S. wines and tree nuts alone accounted for 70 percent of total imports of Consumer-Oriented products from the United States. Other imported products included food preparations, dried egg yolk, tea, bourbons, raisins, and BBQ sauces.

The table below summarizes the competitive situation that U.S. suppliers face in the Danish food retail market in terms of locally produced goods and imports (and their respective market shares). In addition, the strengths of supplying countries and the advantages and disadvantages of local suppliers are discussed.

Table 3. Denmark's U.S. Market Share Versus Main Suppliers' Market Share in Consumer Oriented (U.S. exports), Million USD, 2024

Product Category (product code) Imports in $ million	Main Suppliers, in percentage		Strengths of Key Supply Countries	Advantages and Disadvantages of Local Suppliers
Craft beer (HS2203) Total imports: $60.9 From USA: $1.5	1. Germany 2. Sweden 3. Netherlands 4. France 5. Spain 13. USA	17 12 11 11 8 2	Local breweries brew good quality and innovative craft beer and compete directly with U.S. craft beer.	Strong demand for new flavors, funky labels, and innovative tastes.

Distilled spirits (Product group) Total imports: $233.2 From USA: $3.6	1. Germany 2. UK 3. Italy 4. France 5. Netherlands 12. USA	20 18 12 12 8 2	Competition from nearby countries, in particular Germany and the UK.	Strong demand for whiskies with funky labels and innovative tastes.
Condiments & sauces (Product group) Total imports: $198.9 From USA: $1.6	1. Sweden 2. Germany 3. Netherlands 4. Italy 5. Belgium 16. USA	24 17 13 13 9 1	Good quality and taste sauces are locally available and benefit from its proximity and being in the EU market.	Demand for good quality, tasty, and unique, yet affordable condiments and sauces.
Dried grapes (HS: 080620) Total imports: $18.2 From USA: $1.3	1. S-Africa 2. Chile 3. Türkiye 4. Netherlands 5. Sweden 6. USA	22 22 16 9 7 7	Chile has a counter-seasonal supply. South Africa and Türkiye have competitive pricing and closer proximity to Europe.	Strong demand for both branded and private labeled raisins.
Wine (Product group) Total imports: $784 From USA: $201	1. France 2. Italy 3. Spain 4. USA	33 21 11 6	1, 2, and 3 are close to the market.	Although Denmark has some wine production is mainly depends on imports.
Chewing gum & candy (Product group) Total imports: $239 From USA: $0.3	1. Sweden 2. Germany 3. Netherlands 21. USA	30 19 17 0	Swedish candy is popular for cultural, economic, and product-related reasons. German brands are popular. The presence of U.S. confectionery is expected to be higher due to re-exports via Dutch specialized traders.	Demand for branded confectionery products as well as innovative candy and those that are popular on social media.

Source: Trade Data Monitor

SECTION IV. BEST PRODUCT PROSPECTS

A. Top Consumer-Oriented Products Imported from the World

- Dairy
- Bakery
- Wine
- Fresh produce

B. Top Consumer-Oriented Products Imported from the United States

- Food preparations
- Wine
- Almonds
- Distilled Spirits

C. Products Present in Market with Good Sales Potential

- Nuts and dried fruits
- Processed fruit
- Alcoholic beverages
- Food preparations

D. Products Not Present in Market with Good Sales Potential

- Affordable innovative sweets and snacks

E. Products Not Present in Market due to Significant Barriers

- Poultry (sanitary procedures)
- Foodstuffs containing: (unapproved) GMO ingredients, flour bleaching agents (chlorine, bromates, and peroxides), allulose, titanium dioxide, and unapproved colors or dyes.

SECTION V. KEY CONTACTS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

If you are a U.S. interested party with questions or comments regarding this report, need assistance exporting to Denmark, or are seeking information on potential foreign buyers of consumer-oriented products and seafood products, please contact the Foreign Agricultural Service:

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Attachments:

No Attachments