



“Whatever challenge a company is facing, just come to us, and we will resolve it within 24 hours.”

- Assistant Professor Dr. Akkharawit Kanjana-Opas
Deputy Secretary of National Science Technology and
Innovation Policy Office (STI)
CEO of Food Innopolis

Advanced Research and Innovation in the Agri-food Sector

With its rich natural resources and favorable climate, Thailand has long been a leading food production hub, ranking 12th in global food exports, which totaled approximately US\$30 billion in 2018. This number is expected to increase by an additional 10% in 2019, according to the National Food Institute. Some of the largest export markets in 2018 were to other Asian countries. Neighboring Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam accounted for over 15% of the total, while Japan (13%), China (11%), the US (10%), Oceania (9%) and Africa (9%) were other large importers of food from Thailand. While approximately one third of the Thai workforce currently participates in the agriculture and food industries, they still only account for 6% of the GDP, creating a huge investment

opportunity for companies seeking to develop technical innovations or apply advanced technology that improve labor efficiencies, product yields or create new value-added products within the Agri-food sector.

With the abundant amounts of rice, palm oil, cassava and sugar produced each year, Thailand is well positioned to substantially increase the amount of food product that is produced. Additionally, its location in the heart of Southeast Asia, and its membership in ASEAN and other regional trade groups, facilitate the ability of companies to export their products to external markets via the



country's well developed and continually expanding transport infrastructure.



In order to strengthen Thailand's position as a global food supplier, the government created a food industrial park known as Food Innopolis to boost R&D and increase investment through science, technology and innovation. Offering to provide a one-stop service for problem resolution within 24 hours, Food Innopolis is located at the Thailand Science Park in Pathumthani Province. An innovative community center which covers an area of approximately 80 acres, it is fully equipped with excellent infrastructure, rental space for business purposes, and facilities for research and development. Dedicated to meeting the needs of regional and global investors and

facilitating their investments in the food industry in Thailand, it provides consultation and coordination services across multiple organizations in order to enhance investors ease of doing business, in addition to its role as a major food research center.

Strong collaboration with universities, advanced research institutes and large food companies are key factors in attracting foreign direct investment, according to Assistant Professor Dr. Akkharawit Kanjana-Opas, CEO of Food Innopolis. There are currently 36 investors collaborating with Food Innopolis. One third of the investors are from the Japanese food industry, who recognize Thailand's potential and the opportunities available in the food sector as well as the services and high technology equipment available at Food Innopolis. Food Innopolis has also created multiple extension sites through Industry Focus partnerships with leading academic institutions, including Kasetsart University, Chulalongkorn University, Mahidol University, King Mongkut University of Technology Thonburi in Bangkok, Chiang Mai University, Khon Kaen University, and

Prince of Songkhla University. They also recently added five additional sites which are located at Thammasat University, King Mongkut University of Technology Ladkrabang, Ubon Ratchathani University, Walailak University and Naresuan University. Major food producers such as Betagro, Charoen Pokphand Foods, Malee, Universal Food Company, Thai Beverage and a growing host of others have also allied themselves with Food Innopolis through signed memorandums of understanding (MOUs) and operations within the facilities.



Support from Public Sector

The government of Thailand currently has many large infrastructure improvements under way which will enable the Kingdom to maintain its leadership position in the food export industry. Included in their ฿895.8

billion (US\$25.2 billion) development plan are 36 major infrastructure projects covering rail, roadways, air transport and seaport expansions, which will further interconnect all regions of Thailand, as well as enhancing connections to neighboring countries. There are also several free trade agreements in place to enable companies to easily do business across international borders, such as the ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (AFTA) and the Thailand - Australia Free Trade Agreement (TAFTA). The Thai government continues to work towards negotiating additional free trade agreements that will make the Kingdom even more attractive as a major destination for global multinational enterprises looking to capitalize on the country's memberships in these free trade partnerships.

BOI also offers a package to encourage foreign nationals who wish to engage in R&D in the food industry in Thailand in order to support the exchange of knowledge between local, regional and international food industry experts.

Attractive BOI Incentives

The Thailand Board of Investment (BOI) offers a wide range of tax and non-tax incentives for projects that meet national development objectives. Tax-based incentives include an exemption or reduction of import duties on machinery and raw materials, as well as corporate income tax exemptions of up to eight years. Non-tax incentives include permission to bring in expatriates, own land and take or remit foreign currency abroad.

Additional information about the Food Innopolis can be found by clicking [here](#) or contacting the BOI's Investment Promotion Division 1.
