

United Arab Emirates Ready-To-Eat Food Market Assessment, By Category [Instant Breakfast/Cereals, Instant Soups and Snacks, Baked Goods, Meat/Poultry, Others], By Packaging Type [Canned, Frozen or Chilled, Retort, Others], By End-user [Residential, Food Service, Institutional], By Distribution Channel [Online; Offline-Supermarkets/Hypermarkets, Departmental Stores, Convenience Stores, Others], By Region, Opportunities, and Forecast, 2016-2030F

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Abstracts

The United Arab Emirates Ready-To-Eat Food Market is projected to witness a CAGR of 5.73% during the forecast period 2023-2030. Convenience is the primary driver of the ready-to-eat food market's expansion. The majority of young customers' money goes towards quick-to-eat food items. The market is estimated at USD 27.28 million in 2022 and is expected to reach USD 42.6 million by 2030. The market is also impacted by shifting food consumption habits brought on by rising urbanization, which is fuelling the region's ready-to-eat food sector. Other factors driving the market's growth include a strong emphasis on exports, the adoption of new technologies, inventive promotional techniques, gaining special attention in retail format stores, retailers choosing private label ready-to-eat meals, the introduction of innovative and region-specific products, and the rising popularity of frozen ready-to-eat products. Al Islami Foods, a producer of frozen halal goods located in the United Arab Emirates, introduced a new dough category in April 2021, beginning with frozen paratha, in an effort to increase the brand's accessibility, diversity, and awareness.

The demand for convenient and healthy foods, including ready-to-eat options, is on the rise. This has led to the entry of new players in the market to capitalize on these opportunities. One such example is Nowadays Trading, a startup company that introduced products under the brand name FatBroccoli in March 2022. These offerings boast naturally sourced, locally manufactured, and nutritious frozen foods.

Preference for Organic and Healthier Ready-to-Eat Items

Some consumer groups are more concerned with their health, despite the rising desire for convenient food on the go. They have a preference for nutritious snacks, which promotes the development of nutritious ready-to-eat food products. The preference for healthy ready-to-eat foods has increased due to the rising prevalence of lifestyle illnesses like atherosclerosis, stroke, diabetes, and obesity. To meet the need for healthy convenience foods, market companies have started introducing new healthy food products. For instance, the United Arab Emirates-based food firm Freakin' Healthy declared in February 2022 that it would be expanding its portfolio of healthier meals by adding a new plant-based cheese spread.

Recently, there has been a considerable consumer demand for natural and organic food products. This shift is driven by increasing awareness among consumers about the potential health risks associated with consuming synthetic food ingredients like colorants, flavours, texturizers, fat replacers, and sweeteners. The government's implementation of bans and various research projects highlighting the adverse effects have further heightened this awareness. As a result, consumers are now actively seeking out products with natural additives, as they prioritize their health and well-being.

Growing Workforce Resulting in Time Shortage

Working individuals have less time to cook and hence prefer frozen food items or precooked meals like meatballs, veg dinners, etc. more frequently. In December 2022, the United Arab Emirates' labor force participation rate rose to 82.2%, showing growth compared to the previous year's rate of 81.3%. Items meant for rapid consumption require little to no preparation. These foods fall under the categories of canned, packaged, frozen, preserved, and instant. Foods that are frozen dominate this market. The UAE ready-meal market is anticipated to be driven by changing lifestyles and an increasing labour force over the course of the forecast period. Customers also have a significant demand for frozen food items that have received halal certification. Famous brands like Ta'moosh provide frozen gourmet ready-to-eat halal foods to keep a

sizeable share of the UAE market.

Impact of COVID-19

During the pandemic outbreak, relatively few markets around the world were operating smoothly. The country's ready-to-eat food market share in the UAE expanded significantly after the pandemic since more food goods needed to be packaged due to their extended shelf lives. Due to the ease of cooking packaged foods, consumers started buying them. Customers acquired this habit since the lockdown would likely last longer than expected. They required food items with longer shelf lives to avoid having to travel outside and spend more money on these items because many people lost their jobs and those who worked from home received very low pay.

Key Players Landscape and Outlook

There are many companies in United Arab Emirates, competing for customers in the fiercely competitive Ready-To-Eat Food business, including Global Food Industries, LLC, Freshly Frozen Foods Company LLC, Sidco Foods Trading LLC, and Emirates National Food Co. LLC among others. To maintain their competitiveness in the market, major corporations are introducing new items and creating cutting-edge technologies. New product developments and mergers and acquisitions are two other competitive strategies.

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- *Companies mentioned above DO NOT hold any order as per market share and can be changed as per information available during research work

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