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Report Name: Perception of Brazilian Consumers on US Food Products

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Report Highlights:

The Agricultural Trade Office (ATO) in Sao Paulo hired a Brazilian research institute to gather data to help the ATO further develop a social media strategy to increase U.S. food promotions with Brazilian consumers. The analysis focused on attitudes and behaviors towards U.S. cuisine and U.S.-origin food items. The information may also be helpful for American exporters of U.S. consumer-oriented products interested in the Brazilian market and consumers' perceptions towards U.S. products. For further information, contact ATO Sao Paulo through atosaopaulo@usda.gov

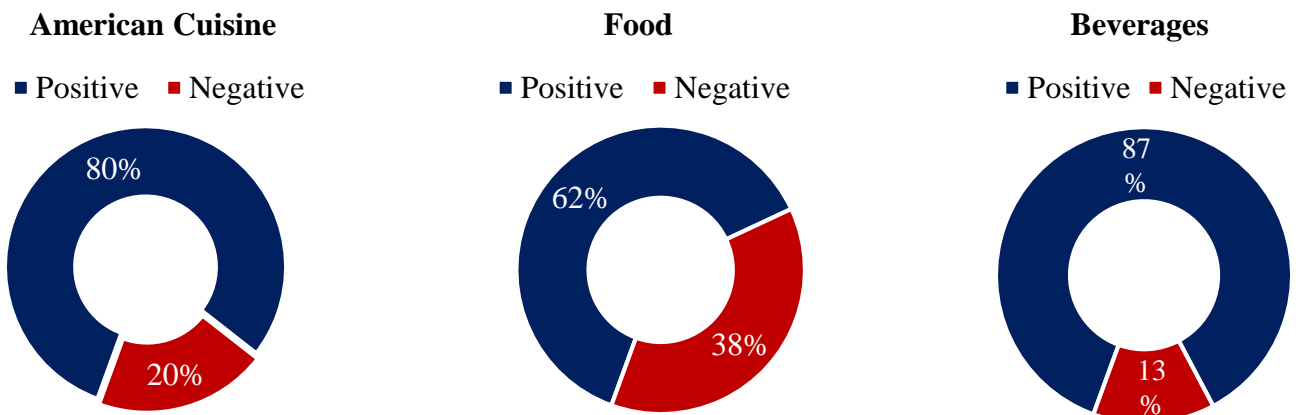
Telephone Interviews for Social Media Qualitative Research

The Agricultural Trade Office (ATO) in Sao Paulo hired a Brazilian research institute to gather data to help the ATO further develop a social media strategy to increase U.S. food culture visibility to Brazilian consumers. The analysis focused on attitudes and behaviors towards U.S. cuisine and U.S.-origin food items. The ATO has already publicized the first part of this research to deepen our knowledge on media usage in Brazil, consumers' perception of American products available in the Brazilian market, and ATO social media efforts. Click on [Social Media in the Brazilian Market](#) to access the report.

The second part of this project interviewed 120 qualified professionals selected by the ATO from March to June 2021. It included restaurant owners, chefs, gastronomy students, importers, food critics, and sommeliers. The main objective of these interviews was to deepen our knowledge on views and perceptions of American cuisine and products from a specialized audience.

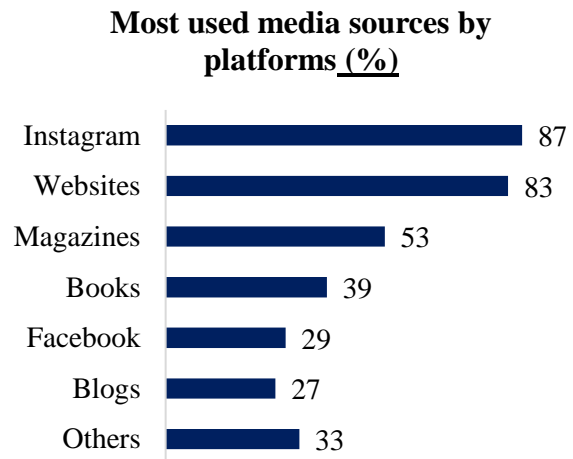
General perception on American Culinary

In general, interviewers positively perceived American beverages (87 percent) and cuisine (80 percent). On the other hand, American food products received a 62 percent approval rating among the interviewers. Chefs have the most positive perception of American culinary culture and U.S. food products. The positive aspect highlighted by the participants were the American gastronomic diversity and the high quality of American food and beverages found in the Brazilian market. They also mentioned that the United States is a great innovator for culinary and trend launchers; therefore, interviewers keep an eye on the gastronomic scene in the United States to keep updated with news and trends.



Almost all participants (91%) have consumed some imported food or beverage from the United States, such as wine (43%), beer (40%) and bourbon (28%), American beef (picanha) (19%), nuts (11%), fresh fruits, and others. However, it also mentioned the difficulty of finding American products in their region.

The research also shows that almost all interviewers were familiar with American chefs and their influence. Among those chefs, the following ones were highlighted: Thomas Keller, Grand Achatz, David Cheng, Anthony Bourdain, and others. In addition, the internet was identified as the most used mean to search for information about gastronomy. Instagram was the most cited medium for this research (87%). Almost all participants mentioned that they search for new information in the Instagram account of renowned chefs. Searching for information on websites appears in second place as the most used mean (83%), followed by magazines and periodicals with 53%.



Views from Brazilian Chefs

Perception of U.S. food products

Brazilian Chefs have a very positive perception of American food products (80%), beverages (90%), and cuisine (90%). Regarding cuisine, the U.S. gastronomic diversity was one of the most mentioned positive aspects during this research. They emphasized the influence of other cultures and the gastronomic singularity in different regions in the United States. Paradoxically, the acculturation of other cuisines is also mentioned as negative aspect, giving the impression of a lack of identity.

When it comes to beverages, bourbon is widely mentioned and praised. The aspect most cited as negative among chefs is the high price found in the Brazilian market for these products. American food products are well seen by chefs, with few of them using high-quality sauces imported from the United States.

Industry influencers

Thomas Keller, Anthony Bourdain, David Chang, Sean Brock, and Grant Achatz were the most cited American chefs among this audience. In terms of Brazilian chefs, it can be highlighted Alex Atala, Felipe Bronze, and Leo Paixao.

Media sources

Michelin Guide is used to get informed about restaurants, news, and trends.

Additional Information

The most utilized beverage in the chefs' restaurants are: bourbon, wine, beer, and gin. In terms of food are: Alaska fish, fresh fruits, nuts, sauces, and dried fruits. The research also showed that 65% of the chefs would like to use a specific American product, but they are not able to purchase them due to several reasons, such as high price, not being available in sufficient quantities, and not available in a specific region. Among those products can be highlighted: American beef, Alaska fish, lobsters, oysters, mussels, and others.

Views from Gastronomy Students

Perception of U.S. food products

Gastronomy students have a good perception of American culinary (72%) and beverages (76%); however, less than half of the students (48%) have a good perception of American food products. Gastronomic diversity is cited as a positive point, with the presence of different cuisines in each U.S. region. Commonly, students associate American cuisine with fast foods, which is a negative point when evaluating the quality of American cuisine and products. The interviewees generally cited the association of being unhealthy products, ultra-processed, and with inadequate nutritional content.

Industry influencers

American influencers cited by students are Don Barber, and Grant Achatz, and Joshua Weissman. Brazilian influencers include Alex Atala, Henrique Fogaca, and Leo Paixao. There are other non-Brazilian influencers but with presence in the country, such as Paola Carossella and Erick Jacquin.

Media sources

According to the research, most of the students get informed about gastronomy at the university or through Instagram.

Additional information

Students' perceptions of the imported products are positive. In addition, 76% of the students interviewed mentioned that they had contact with American culinary culture in the university. Products mentioned by their professors in the university are: maple syrup, liqueur, wheat, Californian wine, cherry, blueberry, and pomegranate. However, many students have not consumed those products due to the high price and low availability.

Views from Restaurant Owners

Perception of U.S. food products

In general, the perception of American beverages (81%) is more positive than that of cuisine (75%) and American foods (69%). The most positive aspect of American beverages is the wide variety of wines, distilled spirits, and juices. The perception of the cuisine is also considered positive by most of the interviewees, with emphasis on its excellence, quality, and diversity. However, they argue that American gastronomy is not well publicized in Brazil.

Industry influencers

Anthony Bourdain, Emeril Lagasse e Mario Batali are some Americans influencers for restauranteurs. Alex Atala, Erick Jacquin, Paola Carossela, Rita Lobo, and Helena Rizzo are other professionals that influence the interviewed restauranteurs.

Media sources

The majority of the restauranteurs affirmed that they look for information on sommeliers blogs and food critics articles.

Additional information

About 88% of restaurant owners interviewed claim that they have already consumed some products imported from the United States. The most consumed product cited is beer and wine. A reason why some restaurant owners have not been exposed to American products can be attributed to its availability in the market.

About 69% of the restaurateurs commercialized American alcoholic beverages in their restaurants. In addition, a little more than half of the restaurant owners interviewed stated that they use or have used some ingredient imported from the United States to prepare a dish in their restaurants. Spices or condiments were the most mentioned ingredients.

Among those who never used American ingredients, the most cited reason for not using it was that ingredients imported from the United States are not part of the restaurant's theme, are not available in the domestic market, or they find similar products at a better price. In the opinion of restaurant owners, the American products with the greatest potential for sale are: bourbon, nuts, beer, wines, and processed foods.

Views from Food Critics

Perception of U.S. food products

Journalists and food critics have a positive perception of American beverages (92%) and cuisine (84%). However, the perception is balanced regarding American food, where 56% have a favorable view. The diversity found from one coast to another is emphasized, making it an exciting cuisine. It was also mentioned that many iconic American chefs come from the United States and are able to set new culinary trends.

The perception of imported beverages is very positive, emphasizing alcoholic beverages such as whiskey, wines, and beers. Highlights such as the variety of alcoholic beverages, the possession of an emblematic whiskey, the presence of a brewing culture with new ideas, new recipes, and excellent Californian wines are mentioned by this audience.

However, regarding American food products, the perception that the products are ultra-processed and that they are not healthy are reasons pointed out by those who have a negative view. The association with junk food and high prices are also mentioned.

Industry influencers

The main influencers of the interviewed journalists and critics are mostly chefs such as Alex Atala, Janaina and Jefferson Rueda, Rita Lobo, Bella Gil, Marcelo Katsuki, and Dan Barber

Media sources

Food critics mainly get informed on specialized newspaper and magazines, such as Revista Prazeres da Mesa, Veja SP, Estadão Paladar, What to Eat (NYT), Viagem e Gastronomia website, Revista Menu, Revista Gula, among others.

Additional Information

Most respondents have written articles about food and beverages imported from the United States (80%). The most cited communication vehicles for the publication of these articles were Revista Prazeres da Mesa and Paladar.

Views from Sommeliers

Perception of U.S. food products

The sommeliers interviewed had a positive perception about American beverages (89%) and cuisine (78%) is much higher than the perception about American foods (56%). The quality of alcoholic beverages is the highlight, with an emphasis on quality Bourbons and technical rigor and wines considered excellent from a school that invests in research. The reasons given by those who claimed to have a negative perception are not linked to the quality of the product but the price charged and the lack of variety present in the Brazilian market.

The Sommeliers interviewed highlight the diversity, variety, and gastronomic innovation, denoting an evolving cuisine when it comes to American cuisine. On the other hand, opinion on imported foods from the United States is quite divided. Although many recognize the high quality of American food products, others associate them with industrialized products and canned goods. High prices in the local market and lack of availability are also negative for U.S. food products in Brazil.

Industry influencers

When it comes to American influencers, James Suckling, Thomas Keller David Chang are on the top of the mentions. Domestically, influencers are Alex Atala, Rita Lobo, Helena Rizzo, Olivier Anquier, and Alexandra Corvo.

Media sources

About 44% of Sommeliers interviewed said they had written an article about American food or beverages. Prazeres da Mesa Magazine was the most cited media for publishing articles and the blogs of the sommeliers themselves.

Additional information

All sommeliers interviewed have already consumed at least one American food or beverage, with wine being the most consumed product, followed by beers. Among the beverages, all respondents stated that they had already had contact with American wines, mainly from California, followed by bourbon.

Views from Brazilian Importers

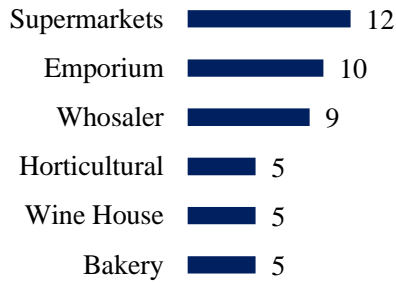
Perception of U.S. food products

Importers have a positive perception of American cuisine (89%), food (81%), and beverages (75%). Regarding beverages, the quality of distilled spirits, beers, and wines were highlighted. In addition, the rich culinary culture and diversity stand out compared to other positive aspects of American cuisine. Generally, importers have a positive perception towards American foods, emphasizing the quality of fish products, beef, fresh fruits and others. Quality requirements set by American bodies to commercialize food products in the United States are high, which gives confidence to the Brazilian importer.

On the other hand, importers face challenges bringing U.S. products to Brazil, such as high import taxes and the volatile exchange rate. Some argue that importing products in small quantities is hard to test them in the local market.

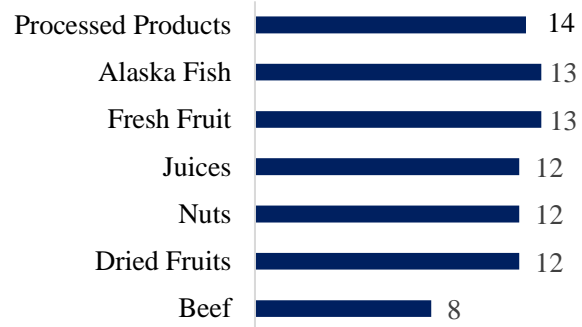
The tables below show the most used channels by importers to sell American products and the products with most sales potential according to the 20 importers interviewed.

Main Buyers of American Products by Channel

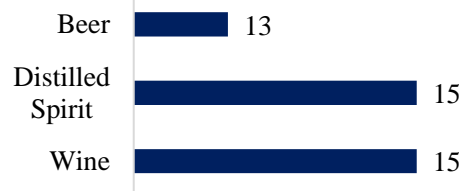


U.S. Products with most sales potential

Food



Beverages



Attachments:

No Attachments.