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Report Highlights:

Cameroon is situated in the heart of Central Africa and bordered by Nigeria, Chad, the Central African Republic, the People's Republic of Congo (Brazzaville), Gabon, and Equatorial Guinea.

Cameroon is the business hub of Central Africa due to its strategic economic and geographical position as well as enabling Cameroon to have access to Nigeria with a common border of 1,690 kilometers and access to a 170 million people market. Total food and agricultural exports from the U.S. to Cameroon reached nearly US\$ 18.7 million in 2012, down from two consecutive years worth US\$ 25.1 million in 2011 and \$26.2 million in 2010 due to fierce price competition from France, Belgium, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, China, Thailand, Pakistan, and Vietnam. However, potential for U.S. agricultural exports in the retail sector continue to be present. The CFA is pegged to the euro at CFA fr655.96: 1 Euro and fluctuates in line with the euro: dollar movements. CFAfr 511: US\$ 1.

General Information:

SECTION I. MARKET OVERVIEW

Cameroon has a relatively diversified yet immobile economy with services accounting for 44.5 percent of 2012 GDP, agriculture and manufacturing 19% each, and oil and mining 7%. Despite boasting a higher GDP per capita than Senegal and Ghana at \$2,300 (2010 est), and steady economic growth, Cameroon lags behind these two countries in important socio-economic indicators including health, education, and income disparities.

Cameroon is an economic leader in Central Africa with the largest economy and the largest population (estimated at 21.0 million) of the six-member regional Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (*Communaute Economique et Monetaire de l'Afrique Central, CEMAC*), a monetary union with a supranational central bank and a monetary policy pegged to the Euro. The Bank of Central African States (*BEAC*) sets monetary policy for Cameroon and other *CEMAC* members. *CEMAC's* currency, the Central African Franc (CAF), is managed by *BEAC* and guaranteed at a rate of 655.957 CFA to the Euro by the Treasury of the Government of France.

Cameroon is divided in ten geographical “regions” which are governed by handpicked presidential appointees. Larger cities are managed by presidential-appointed delegates. The president is the head of the state and elected by popular vote for a seven-year term. President Paul Biya and his ruling party have been continuously in power since 1982. Although the Constitution provides for a National Assembly (Parliament), a Senate, and an independent judiciary, in practice the constitutional provisions relating to the Senate have not yet been implemented and the judiciary remains under the control of the presidency. Yaoundé is the nation’s political capital, but Douala, the largest city, serves as the economic capital of Cameroon and the Central African region. Almost all transport in and out of Cameroon and the land-locked countries of Chad and the Central African Republic (CAR) passes through the Douala Port, located slightly inland from the Gulf of Guinea, on the banks of the Wouri River.

Cameroon’s economy depends on commodity exports and global demand for its products which include oil, wood, rubber, coffee, cocoa, cotton and aluminum swings in world prices strongly affect its economic development and growth. In addition, Cameroon is dependent on imported food and food security is one of its major challenges. However, its main economic development challenge is to stimulate economic growth and ensure dividends are shared equitably among its population in order to reduce poverty in a country where 55 percent of the population are poor compared with 12 percent make up the urban households and the remainder, about 87 percent of the poor live in rural areas.

Cameroon is the fifth world’s largest cocoa bean producer with an estimated 236,000 tons produced in 2011/2012, following the Ivory Coast, Brazil, Ghana, and Nigeria. In addition, Cameroon exports two varieties of coffee beans, Robusta and Arabica, with an estimated production of 43,560 tons and 12,094 respectively in 2010/2011. In 2010, cotton production reached approximately 115,000 tons, however only 5% is processed domestically.

The government’s development objectives are outlined in its “Vision 2035” – an ambitious plan that serves as the long-term footprint for the country’s new Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS), the 2009 Growth and Employment Strategy (*Document de Stratégie pour la Croissance et l’Emploi*, or *DSCE*). The main objectives of “Vision 2035” are to reduce poverty to less than 10 percent; for the country to become a middle-income, industrialized nation; and to consolidate democracy and national unity in a country where it was estimated that over half of the population lives below the poverty line and 30% were unemployed.

According to the World Bank, “weak productivity, a looming energy crisis, and the effects of the global financial crisis, food insecurity, stagnating poverty, and high unemployment are key challenges over the 2009 to 2019 period.” In addition, the World Bank’s most recent “*Doing Business Survey 2012*” ranked Cameroon as the 161th worst place to do business out of 185 countries surveyed. Furthermore, Cameroon ranked as the 144th most corrupted country out of 176 countries surveyed by the 2012 *Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index*.

Macroeconomic Indicators

| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 |
|----------------|--------|--------|----------|----------|
| POPULATION | 20.1m | 20.4m | 19.7m | 20.1m |
| INFLATION RATE | 3.0% | 3.0% | 3.8% | 2.9% |
| GDP (USD) | 21.88b | 21.9b | 25.8b | 24.5b |
| GDP GROWTH | 3.8% | 2.9% | 4.2% | 4.7% |
| TOTAL IMPORTS | \$4.8b | \$4.9b | \$6.0b | \$6.6b |
| US AG IMPORTS | \$22m | \$27m | \$25.15m | \$18.7 m |

Sources: Economic Intelligent Unit, CIA Fact Book, BICO Report, Economy Watch, World bank, ADB, IMF

Agriculture in the Economy

Cameroon is endowed with an abundance of natural resources, including oil, high value timber species, and agricultural products (coffee, cocoa beans, cotton, rubber, bananas, oilseed, grains, cassava (manioc), livestock, and timber) and untapped resources including natural gas, iron, bauxite, and cobalt. Palm oil has gained interest lately, but it is not been exported.

Agriculture was the main source of growth and foreign exchange until 1978 when oil production boomed. Currently, agriculture contributes an estimated 20% to the GDP and about 70 percent of the work force is engaged in agriculture and pastoral activities for their livelihoods.

While the Government of Cameroon (GOC) has professed a determination to foster urgent economic growth and job creation, and there is an increasing interest in the mining sector and infrastructure development, it is not clear how well these promises will translate into higher incomes and job creation.

Cameroon has not signed a Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Program (CAADP)

compact; however, it has begun to engage in preparation for CAADP (as of March 2013) and it is expected to formally launch implementation in the future. [*CAADP focuses on improving security, nutrition, and increasing incomes in Africa by raising agricultural production by at least 6 percent per year and increasing public investment in agricultural to at least 10 percent of its national budget per year*].

Agricultural production is expected to increase in the near future as many development projects aimed at boosting agriculture will begin to show results; however, climate change, and infrastructure challenges- such as a lack of land rights, a lack of credit, a lack of storage facilities, and a lack of investment-may prevent the agricultural sector from reaching its potential.

Challenging Agricultural Statistics

The latest official agricultural statistics from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (*MINADER*) were released in February 2010 covering the 2007-2008 period for major staple commodities. National rice production was estimated at 72,000 tons while maize and sorghum production was estimated at 1.39 million tons and 1.1 million tons respectively.

The Association for Citizens Collective Interest Defense, ACDIC keeps track of statistics for imported food products (quantities and CFA franc values). It also includes the names of the major food importers/wholesalers in Cameroon. The following statistics draw from *MINADER*, *ACDIC* and other sources.

Rice: According to *MINADER*, Cameroon rice production reached 72,000 tons while the country imported 373,536 tons of rice in 2009 mainly from Asia (Thailand, Pakistan and China. In addition, *ACDIC* statistics indicate that Cameroon imported over 450,000 tons of rice (est.2011) mainly from Thailand, Vietnam, Pakistan, and Burma. More recently, media reports indicated that rice is the most consumed food in all regions of Cameroon, mainly because it is cheap and these reports indicate that total consumption needs are over 650,000 tons.

Production of domestic rice is rising slightly due the government and donors' commitment to increase local production through a comprehensive rice strategy that has the financial support of multilateral donors including the World Bank (WB) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The ambitious rice strategy aims to eventually replace rice imports by increasing local production from 72,000 tons in 2008 to 627,250 tons by 2018. However, even if production increased, this does not mean that consumers will buy local rice. Cameroonian consumers are used to the imported quality of imported rice and paying a cheaper price for imported rice. Also, due to the landlocked nature of the rice growing areas, rice produced in the North is already often transported towards Nigeria where prices are higher and the road infrastructure in the border is generally in good condition.

According to the *National Strategy for Rice Growing in Cameroon*, rice consumption is estimated at 25.7 kilogram per person and growing at annual rate of 4 percent per year.

Preliminary import data from *ACDIC* for the first half of 2012 shows that Cameroon authorities spent nearly CFA franc 96.7 billion to import 366,600 tons of rice during the first half of 2012, emphasizing the demand needs for the staple.

Vegetable Oil: National production of oils (mainly palm oil) was estimated at 225,606MT in 2008 according to data from the Department of Statistics of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. , *ACDIC* statistics report that Cameroon imported 379,493 tons of palm oil, mainly from Indonesia, Malaysia, Belgium and France in 2011.

Wheat: Cameroon does not produce any type of wheat. In 2011 *ACDIC* reported that Cameroon imported nearly 300,000 tons of wheat from France, Canada, and Argentina to serve their growing pasta, instant noodle, biscuits and bread consumer needs not only in Cameroon, but in Central Africa. There are 11 wheat mills based in Douala with a capacity of 586,000 tons per year, however, only 9 are actively milling. The milling industry in Cameroon is well organized and a powerful in lobbying the government. The group is called *Societe Minoteries du Cameroon (SMC)* According to SMC, Cameroon imported 421,799 tons in 2010. Most of the wheat imported is French soft wheat and Canadian CRWS. Pasta, biscuits, and instant snack noodles have become staples in the Cameroonian diet and are consumed by individuals in all income groups.

Livestock production is estimated at 5.3 million cattle; 7.7 million sheep and goats; 3.3 million poultry; and 1.35 million pigs.

Policy

The Republic of Cameroon has a strong central government headed by President Paul Biya who has been in office since 1982. President Paul Biya won the October 2011 presidential election and has been in power for 30 years. Legislative and municipal elections have been postponed potentially for a year (initially due in July 2012). The country is run by Presidential decrees; however, President Biya continues to face many challenges including high unemployment and high commodity prices.

Food Policy

The Government regulates and subsidizes imported food, basically as a way to moderate the impact of high food prices that resulted in food riots in 2008. In that year, after the food riots, the government eliminated a 5 percent tax on imported rice, wheat, flour, and fish and suspended customs duties on fuel, as the cost of basic commodities and high commodity global prices seriously impacted Cameroon's economy, depressing exports, growth, and overall global consumption. More recently, in February 2011, President Paul Biya created a government run agency that regulates the supply and price of basic food items such as rice, wheat, corn, oil, fish, and sugar. The government continues to subsidize imported food, electricity, and fuel imports, thus moderating the impact of global prices.

Trade Regulations

The 1994 Regional Fiscal Reform Program outlines six different tariffs and taxes related to the importation of goods: The common external tariff, the generalized preferential tariff, the temporary surcharge, the excise tax, the valued added tax, and other service taxes.

Cameroon's trade policy is based on the Common External Tariff (*TEC* acronym in French) which groups merchandise into four categories, with tariff levels ranging from 5 to 20 percent. The administration of these tariffs is very complex. For this reason, potential exporters to Cameroon may

contact the Customs Administration or *Societe Generale de Surveillance* (SGS), the agency responsible for pre-loading cargo inspections for the Cameroonian Government and issuance of the importation declaration upon receipt of the pro forma invoice.

Trade Barriers

Cameroon bans imports of frozen poultry to protect local production as a result of a highly publicized battle in the early 2000s when frozen poultry parts from Europe flooded the market and were sold at prices below local production costs and thousands of poultry farmers loss their jobs. In addition, live poultry, including day-old chick imports, were banned. However, the government may issue ad hoc import waivers and quotas to meet demand for poultry meat, which is estimated at 30,000-31,500 tons annually.

| ADVANTAGES | CHALLENGES |
|--|--|
| Cameroon is eligible to participate in AGOA. | Cameroon continues to be one of the most challenging business environments in the world –ranked 161th out of 185 countries. |
| Cameroon is officially a bilingual (French and English) country. French is most commonly used in business, politics, and social interaction. | Cameroonians appreciate an opportunity to “get to know” potential partners before beginning concrete discussion in French and/or English. |
| Citibank is present in Cameroon. Cameroon has 13 commercial banks and 25 insurance companies. | U.S. consolidators may see the Cameroon market as too small and unprofitable to service due to the high cost of transportation from the U.S. to Douala. |
| Highest per capita income in Sub-Saharan Africa (\$2,300) Cameroon has 4 ports; however Port Douala handles an annual traffic of about 6 million tones, over 95% of the national port traffic. | Cameroonian businesses are extremely price-sensitive and suffer from lack of readily-available local credit. |
| Government is “committed” to agricultural development. | Economic policy mismanagement and poor business climate have restrained investment and hindered economic diversification. The private sector continues to identify predatory tax environment, insufficient and unreliable power, and inadequate infrastructure. |
| Strong US Non Governmental Organization & Private Voluntary Organization presence. | Government imposes spontaneous price controls on some basic commodities (e.g., poultry products, maize, vegetable oils, sugar), but these price controls are marginally effective. |
| There is room for growth and | Corruption is endemic in Cameron. In 2012, Cameroon |

| | |
|--|--|
| modernization of the sector and agricultural industry. | ranked 144 out of 176 on the Transparency International Corruption Perception Index. |
| Increasing interest to explore biotech cotton (bt). | No Biosafety legislation. |
| Cameroon imports much of its food, particularly higher value and non-staple goods and will do so for foreseeable future. | Some imported products are priced-controlled and/or subsidized by the government. |
| Almost all good entering Cameroon (and land-locked neighbors Chad and Central African Republic) transit through the Port of Douala and are distributed by truck to the road network. | Expensive shipping costs and limited direct routes puts US exporters at disadvantage with competitors shipping from nearby. Internal transport costs are high, and rainy season movements are constrained due to lack of all-weather roads |
| Cameroon has the largest private sector in French-speaking Central Africa | |
| Although French is the predominant language of Cameroon's economy, many Cameroonians (especially higher-end consumers) speak English and English only language products will not be disadvantaged. | The road infrastructure is poor. Road transport is the main mode of transport for goods and persons. The road network totals of about 50,000 km, of which 56% is classified as primary road. Many check points both legal and illegal create several delays and add further to the cost. |
| Cameroon has undertaken several anti-corruption and good governance initiatives. | Sectors of high corruption potential include government procurement, customs, and public health facilities. |

SECTION II: EXPORTER BUSINESS TIPS

- Be careful of internet scams;
- The use of the internet is increasing, however, many companies do not have websites or they are under construction;
- Business negotiations tend to be slower than in the United States, persistence and patience are highly recommended when doing business in Cameroon;
- Cameroon business class is very formal, dress attire must be worn regardless of weather;

- Knowledge of French and some historical national moments are viewed positively;
- French language in printed materials is preferred, although some Cameroon businessmen in the import/export sector are bilingual;
- Use a personalized approach with consistent attention in service and delivery with follow up visits;
- When contacting with top decision-makers communication is most effective in person;
- Some importers maintain buying/ agents in London/Europe and consolidate their shipments through third party consolidators;
- Supermarkets and HRI prefer not to import directly, but buy imported products from the local distributors in wholesale markets to avoid delays;
- Business attire is recommended when meeting with government officials;
- Cameroon uses the metric system for measurements and weights, so using the metric system in labels and packaging is recommended;
- Major Cameroon retailers (importers/distributors) attended the *SIAL* Salon International de l'Alimentation, Paris 2012 and some transactions were initiated at the show;
- AmCham Cameroon will open an office in Pennsylvania (PA) to facilitate trade between U.S. and Cameroon;
- Think long term strategies;
- HRI operators prefer fresh fruits and vegetables and the quality of products is very important, especially in the upper class hotels serving the international business community;
- Ethnic restaurants can be found in Yaoundé and Doula mostly serving the expatriate community and upper income Cameroonians.

General and Agricultural Trade Situation

Cameroon has fertile land and abundant rainfall which enables farmers to produce a variety of crops to meet not only its domestic needs, but also earn higher incomes from export crops. Coffee and cocoa are grown in the central and southern regions. Bananas and cotton grow in the northern regions. Small-scale farmers and/or farming families grow millet, sorghum, peanuts, plantains, sweet potatoes, yams, and cassava on 0.2-5 hectares of land, and, although women produce 80 percent of the country's food needs, they own only 2% of the total agricultural land. Legume crops (beans, cowpeas and ground nuts) are produced throughout the country as well as fruits and vegetables, while most of the livestock production takes place in many provinces in the North.

The western highlands are among the most fertile regions in Cameroon and have a relatively healthy environment in the higher altitudes. Corn, the main staple for the Southern region, is grown in the Western highlands.

Cameroon is the fifth cocoa largest producer behind Ivory Coast, Ghana, Brazil, and Nigeria with 236,000 tons of cocoa beans produced in 2011/2012. Currently, production is estimated at 212,000 tons (11 percent down from last season) due to drought and crop infection.

SPS and Regulatory Systems

The National Agency for Standards and Quality, *L'Agence de Normes et la Qualité (ANOR)* is the organization responsible for setting the standards for all processed products including processed and packaged food. International standards such as those set by the Codex Alimentarius Commission and international Plant Protection Convention are used by this organization to carry out its responsibilities. There are over 300 standards for food production.

Labeling

There are specific labeling requirements for imported goods. Labels should be in English and French and well-labeled goods enjoy quicker identification and customs clearance as SGS has the authority to inspect the quality of any goods shipped into the country. Food products destined for Cameroon should have the manufacturing and expiration dates engraved or stamped on the top of the container and packaging in clearly legible ink. Also, a small comment stating “made in” and “to be consumed before” labeling in English/French.

Information on food labels imported or domestic *should* include:

Name and brand of product

Country of origin

Name and address of the manufacturer

List of ingredients (including salt) and additives

Nutrition and caloric value

Allergenic ingredients and allergenic processing aids (gluten, soybean, peanuts, etc)

Net weight/volume (metric system)

Expiration date/shelf life

Shelf life (if the product has a shelf life of less than three months, it must include the day/month/ year of expiration)

Products containing GMO s must be labeled accordingly.

All products sold in Cameroon must have the following statement: “Sold in *CEMAC*” or “*Vente en CEMAC.*”

Business Customs and Keys to Success

U.S. agribusiness interested in exporting to Cameroon should contact the USDA office in Nigeria to find about market opportunities and contacts for credible contacts working in Cameroon.

U.S. exporters are advised to explore and look at entering the Cameroonian market as a transit corridor for the other *CEMAC* countries and Nigeria.

U.S. exporters of agricultural product considering entering the Cameroon market are advised to visit Cameroon and hire the services of a reputable agent or distributor fluent in both French and English and familiar with local businesses practices.

U.S. exporters should provide prices on a CIF (Cost, Insurance and Freight) basis. New U.S. exporters should require an irrevocable letter of credit prior to shipping.

Most importers of U.S. food products recommend that food products are labeled both in French and

English as the North West region speaks mainly English. However, 50 percent of the population is bilingual.

Consumer Tastes and Preferences

Cameroonian consumers from all income levels enjoy imported food products; but, they are price-sensitive. Cameroonians are used to imported food products as domestic production/value added processing is very low and locally produced products are considered of lower quality and sometimes more expensive than imported ones. Also, the government spends millions of CFA franc in food import subsidies to avoid a recurrence of the 2008 food riots, and strained the national budget year after year. In a World Bank report published in 2012, the food imports (% of merchandise imports) in Cameroon was last reported at 17.70 in 2010. Most recently, it was reported that food imports subsidies consumed approximately 20 percent of the current national budget which is highly dependent on increased commodity exports.

For lower and middle-lower end consumers, price remains the most important factor in determining preferences, so they prefer cheaper imported food. Retailers buy imported products from the open air markets avoiding the long wait for importing on their own. Good quality items are not overlooked and highly sought by retailers and restaurant owners to serve their international business clientele. However, most cooking is done within the home and dining out in restaurants is still very limited. Also, lower-end consumers spend smaller amounts of money and shop at the open-air markets, street vendors, and do so more frequently since they can afford to buy only smaller quantities.

Food Standards, Product Registration and Regulations

In the absence of any specified domestic norms or standards, international norms and standards are applied. There is no well-defined system for the elaboration of food standards, however, *L'Agence de Normes et de la Qualite*, National Agency for Standards and Quality, *ANOR* sets the food quality standards to align with the international CODEX Alimentarius Committee standards. The United States has sponsored the contact focal point, Mrs. Garonne Chouya Tchakoute, to attend the regional Codex Meetings the last couple of years.

General Import and Inspection Procedures

In general, Cameroon does not have quantitative restrictions on imports, tariff protections or import licensing requirements. In theory there are no tariffs within the *CEMAC* countries and only a value-added tax is applied to goods traded among the *CEMAC* countries at the point of entry. However, in an effort to protect the poultry sector, the government controls imports of frozen chicken parts. Importers must have an importation license issued from the Ministry of Trade. *SGS* must be notified of import transactions above 2 million franc CFA (\$4,000). A one-stop shop exists for all customs procedures. All documents must be submitted within 48 hours of a shipment's arrival. In 2009, the Customs Department started to use an online clearing system called *SYDONIA* to expedite the clearing process and tracking containers.

Import Tariffs

For further information on customs procedures in Cameroon, potential exporters may contact the Customs Administration or *Societe Camerounaise de Surveillance*, (*SGS*) who are responsible for handling pre-loading cargo inspections for the Government of Cameroon and they issue an import

declaration upon receipt of a pro-forma invoice.

There are six different tariff and taxes for imported products: The Common External Tariff (*TEC*); The Generalized Preferential Tariff; the Temporary Surcharge, The Excise tax; the Value Added Tax; the Regional Integration Tax; and other Service Taxes.

The *TEC* groups products into 4 categories-with rates ranging from rates 5-30 percent. **Category I** refers to first necessity goods (5%) defined by ministerial decree as foodstuffs; **Category II** refers to materials and equipment (10%); **Category III** refers to intermediary (semi-processed) goods; and **Category IV** refers to final consumption imported goods (30%).

The value added tax (VAT) is a consumer tax. The VAT is charged on merchandise entering the country on the CIF value and levied on most products at a flat rate of 19.25%.

SECTION III: MARKET SECTOR STRUCTURE AND TRENDS

Retail Sector

The Cameroon retail sector consists of supermarkets and independent grocery/convenience stores as well as the traditional, open-air street vendors where 90 percent of total retail food sales take place.

While open-air markets supplied by wholesalers remain the dominant channel for Cameroon's retail food sales, there has been a gradual but steady preference towards consumer food purchasing at supermarkets and the convenience store channels.

The formal retail sector is going through major developments. However, there are still only a few supermarkets, concentrated in Douala and Yaoundé, serving the higher income local and expatriate consumers. On a recent trip to Cameroon Post visited Mahima Supermarket, SKT Supermarket, Casino and Mboppi open market in Douala, DOVV Supermarket, Espace Landmark, Rayco Supermarket, and MFoudi open market in Yaoundé. There are several supermarkets in Douala. Mahima is the largest supermarket in Douala, followed by Casino (France), Leader (price discounter- part of the Casino group) and convenience store including Bonjour (Total's brand) and other local smaller supermarkets in Yaoundé.

Most of the products available in the food section were originally from France or the EU, but sourced out of Dubai. American brands found on the supermarket shelves were Magic Time, Jolly Time, American Garden, and Grand Jury brands. Kellogs and Heinz Ketchup were sourced locally by the stores but imported by others.

The purchasing managers attend international food shows, buying missions, etc, or they establish a direct contact with the foreign supplier or local agent and import directly from them. Cameroonian food importers/distributors attended the *SIAL* 2012 food show in Paris.

Cameroon does not have a history of very well developed supermarket retailing, but continues to mainly use the traditional open-markets. Even the government sponsors an open air market run by MIRAP which is similar to a U.S. farmers' market and is scheduled for a set date where consumers can find both imported and local products.

The importers, wholesalers, distributors, and retailers may be essentially all the same and sell directly to the consumer when it is more profitable.

A distributor/wholesaler agent and the retailer may buy mixed-grocery containers from various consumer-oriented food exporters and wholesale/retail outlets around the globe. Restaurant and hotel managers may also be direct importers or prefer to buy imported products from a local agent or go to the local market and buy off the wholesalers and/or distributors. Post confirmed that HRI managers would prefer to buy local imported products from the local agents rather than importing themselves due to the severe delays at the ports.

The main problem purchasing managers indicated to Post was that they must buy what is available when it is available because otherwise the product may be gone the next day. Therefore, wholesalers sell to retailers in large quantities and at discounted prices. Retailers purchase more than 90 percent of their stock of consumer-oriented foods from importers/wholesalers/distributors who are located in the traditional, open markets, or even from other supermarkets. It is interesting that a few of the retailers interviewed by Post referred to imported products at times as “local products” because they were purchased in the open-air market or from local distributors. By buying from the wholesalers in the open markets they avoid dealing with the delays and transactions at the port.

Post confirmed the origin of most imported processed food products in Cameroon supermarkets as mainly from the EU. However, some products had labels in Arabic, French, Portuguese, Spanish, etc. These products had been shipped from Dubai, UAE. The EU countries (Spain, Italy, France, etc) are the major wine suppliers to Cameroon. One supermarket owner had brought in a container of wine from California that had been sitting on the shelves for over 4 years.

The availability of same quality products is the main sourcing problem for operators in Cameroon.

There are two options to source products in Cameroon:

Option 1: Buy directly from the source which requires tremendous amounts of administrative hours and dealing with taxes, agents, ports.

Option 2: Buy from the wholesaler, so you don't have to deal with the first option.

U.S. market share is low, mainly due to:

- Competitive prices offered by other food exporters
- Lack of sponsored agricultural trade missions from the U.S. to Cameroon and reverse trade missions to the U.S
- Higher freight rates for shipments from the United States
- U.S. exporter are unfamiliar with the business environment in Cameroon
- Prices almost double when importing from anywhere
- EU exporters offer better credit terms to Cameroon importers

SECTION IV: BEST PROSPECTS

Consumer-oriented products

- Tomato Ketchup, Mayonnaise & Salad Dressing
- Canned Soups, vegetables, fruits *
- Baby Foods & Health Food products
- Powdered milk
- Rice
- Fish products
- Wheat

*canned products are used as substitute for fresh products. Cameroonians prefer homemade soups and stews and fresh vegetables whenever possible.

SECTION VI: POST CONTACTS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

1. Agricultural Affairs Office (USDA/FAS)

U.S. Consulate General Lagos
2, Walter Carrington Crescent
Victoria Island, Lagos-Nigeria
Tel: 234 -1-460-3577;3485
E-mail: aglagos@usda.gov
Website: www.fas.usda.gov

United States Embassy Yaoundé, Cameroon

Political/Economic/Commercial Section
Christopher A. Ekom
Trade Specialist
6050 Avenue Rosa Parks
P.O. Box 817 Yaounde, Cameroon
E-mail: EkomCA@state.gov
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United States Embassy, Douala, Cameroon

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Edward A. Gallagher

Consul
5th floor, Ecobank Building
Champagne Plaza

Rue Thobie Kuoh/Rue French
Douala, Cameroon
Telephone: +237-3342-5331
Email: gallaghera@state.gov

Olivier Tchamake
Commercial Specialist
+237 33-42-53-31
TchamakeBO@state.gov

3. Government Regulatory Agency Contacts:

The Societe Camerounaise de Surveillance, SGS
Director of Customs Valuation
(+237) 22-20 2541
Website: www.sgs.com/

Agence des Normes et de la Qualite, ANOR
National Agency for Standards and Quality
General Director *Charles Boto'o a Ngon*
Address: Headquarters P.O Box 14996
Yaoundé, Cameroon
Email: contact@anorcameroon.org
Telephone: +237) 2222-6496
Website: www.anorcameroon.org

The Mass Product Consumer Regulatory Authority, MIRAP
Chairman of the Board: Fouda Seraphin Magloraire
Administrator: Bamok Ntol Cyprien

This program was created by Presidential Decree in February 2011 and is placed under the technical oversight of the Ministry of Finance. The goal is to regulate the supply and price of basic food items such as rice, wheat, corn, oil, fish, and sugar. It is supposed to be an early warning structure responsible for the purchase, import products and storage of essential goods- it is responsible for building up reserve stocks, opening stores (rather open-air markets) and set up of vendor spaces. Consumers are able to buy products of good quality at subsidized prices. Consumers in certain urban areas take advantage of the cheaper prices and stock up once a month when the “*MIRAP* markets” are set up in their neighborhoods.

The Government of Cameroon Official Website (English/French)
Presidency of the Republic: <http://www.prc.com>
Prime Minister's Office: <http://www.spm.gov.cm>

The American Chamber of Commerce in Cameroon

AmCham Cameroon

Executive Director: Ms. Charmian Penda

Address: Champagne Plaza Building

P.O.Box 4006

Douala, Cameroon

Email: amchamcam@live.com

Telephone : +237 77 11 52 72

WebSite : www.amchamcam.org

The American Chamber of Commerce in Cameroon (AmCham Cameroon) is a voluntary organization of companies and individuals doing business in Cameroon. Its primary objective is to advance the development of trade, commerce, and investment between the U.S. and Cameroon. It pursues policy initiatives at the highest levels of government, provides valuable advocacy, information, networking and business support services. AmCham Cameroon works closely with the staff at the U.S. embassy in Cameroon, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in the United States as well as business associations in Cameroon.

4. Private Sector Contacts:

Imperial Foods Company is a Cameroonian food company located in the Industrial Magzi Zone at Bassa, Douala. Also involved in importing, wholesale, and distribution, etc.

Ahmadou Danpoulo Baba, CEO

Rue Castelnau, Akwa, B.P. 18607, Douala, Cameroon

Email: danpoulobaba@yahoo.com; imperialfoods@gmail.com

Tel : (+237) 33 43 72 21

Website : <http://www.imperialfoods-sa.com>

DOVV Distribution SARL is a Cameroonian distributor, importer, and retailer of grocery products throughout Cameroon

Philippe Tagne Nobissi, CEO

B.P. 20829 Yaoundé

Email : dovvcam@yahoo.fr

Tel: (+237) 22 20 41 66/22 20 43 07

Espace Landmark (ELM) is a convenience/ US \$1 store that sells a great variety of products with a small section of U.S. food.

Marie Ortance Epse Akame Mfoumou, Owner

B.P. 15181 Yaounde, Cameroon

Email : marieotense@yahoo.fr

Tel: (+237) 22 22 18 32/22 22 18 49/99 99 47 74

Supermarché MAHIMA, Douala-Yaoundé

Rajwani D.U., General Manager

Akwa Avenue Ahmadou Ahidjo
BP : 15430- Douala-Cameroon
Tel : (+237) 33 42 61 82/33 43 01 90
Email : drajwani@stemahima.com

Le Meridien Hotel, Douala- Cameroon

Dominique Viard, General Manager
35 Avenue des Cocotiers
PO Box 3232 Douala, Cameroon
Tel : (+237) 33 43 50 00
Email : Dominique.viard@lemeridien.com
Web site: www.lemeridien.com

5. Other Important information:

For a List of 2013 Agriculture Trade events in the United States. Please, visit:

http://www.fas.usda.gov/agx/trade_events/2013DomesticTradeShowCalendar.pdf.

Active U.S. Cooperators/ Representatives covering the Sub-Saharan region:

USA Poultry and Egg Export Council (USAPEEC) representative in South Africa

Ms. Zelda Sharp
Zodiac Marketing
64 Summit Drive
Patlynn 101, Johannesburg, South Africa
(Covers Sub-Saharan Africa)
ph: 27-11-867-7082
fx: 27-86-612-5407
cell: 27-82-900-5199
E-mail: zelda.sharp@mweb.co.za

U.S. Wheat Associates Regional Office in Capetown

Telephone: (27 21) 418-3710
Fax: (27 21) 419-0400

E-mail: InfoCapeTown@uswheat.org

*Providing trade services to: Angola, **Benin**, Botswana, Burkina Faso, **Cameroon**, Cape Verde, Chad, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, **Ghana**, Gambia Conakry, Lesotho, **Liberia**, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, **Nigeria**, Sao Tome/Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, St. Helena, Swaziland, Togo, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.*

The World Initiative for Soy in Human Health (WISHH), a program of the American Soybean Association (ASA), brings the benefits of U.S. soy protein to developing countries where it can make a

difference in lives today and in the future. Over 800 million people worldwide, including 200 million children are undernourished.

Kim Rochette, Country Representative based in Senegal

Email: pmpwa.kim@gmail.com; pmpwa@ymail.com

Website: <http://www.wishh.org/>