

## Thailand emphasises on increasing investments in food sector

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From January 2019 to June 2020, international and local investors have filed 116 investment promotion applications for food processing and drinks manufacturing projects in Thailand, representing a total value of 18.8 billion baht (ca. 600 million US dollars), the Thailand Board of Investment (BOI) states.

In the first half of this year alone, some 5.84 billion baht worth of investment applications were filed for the sector, despite the impact of COVID-19 on business, thus demonstrating Thai and international food companies' confidence in Thailand's resilient, innovation-focused food sector.

These new investments cover the manufacturing of products including seasonings, plant-based proteins, semi and ready-to-eat food, frozen meats and fruits, processed salmon, cricket powder, healthy drinks, UHT yogurt, etc.

Thailand, with a population of almost 70 million, is Southeast Asia's second largest economy and is one of the fortunate few countries in the world that can produce far more food than it consumes -- including the world's most sought-after staple, rice. The country is also at the center of the ASEAN economic community, a trade grouping of 650 million consumers.

Also known as the "Kitchen of the World," Thailand's food sector is backed by its geographical location, rich natural resources, a top-quality local workforce, supportive investment-focused government policies, and a reputation for quality and product safety.

Under the government's "Thailand 4.0" strategy to become the innovation hub of Asia, high-tech food processing is one of the key industries the government has selected to promote. The BOI is offering a suite of incentives to investors in this sector, including exemption of corporate income tax for up to 8 years and so-called smart visas that enable investors and key employees to stay in the country for up to four years.