

U.S. Country Commercial Guides



Haiti
Year 2020

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Doing Business in Haiti

Market Overview

The Caribbean nation of Haiti occupies the western third of the island of Hispaniola, sharing a land border with its eastern neighbor, the Dominican Republic. Its capital is Port-au-Prince. The country's economy is heavily dependent on trade ties with its neighbors, particularly the Dominican Republic and the United States. Although the business climate presents challenges, Haiti's legislation encourages foreign direct investment and the Haitian investment code provides the same rights, privileges, and protection to local and foreign companies. The Government of Haiti provides two types of incentives for foreign investment: customs duty incentives and income tax incentives. Import and export policies are non-discriminatory and are not based on nationality.

President Jovenel Moïse designated agriculture, energy, transportation, and water as key investment sectors for development in Haiti in his inauguration speech February 2017. President Moïse's stated priorities are:

- Reform the state apparatus and maintain political and social stability;
- Transform Haiti into an investment destination;
- Increase agricultural production and improve the environment;
- Build energy, transportation, and port infrastructure;
- Reinforce water and sanitation infrastructure;
- Improve the infrastructure and quality of the education system; and
- Promote stability through social projects.

The United States is one of Haiti's top trading partners. In 2019, the United States imported \$1.06 billion in goods from Haiti, up 7.1 percent from \$990 million in 2018. Of the 2019 total imports from Haiti, the United States imported \$1.00 billion in apparel from the Haitian garment sector through the Haitian Hemispheric Opportunity through Partnership Encouragement and Haiti Economic Lift Program (HOPE/HELP) Acts and Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act (CBTPA) legislation, constituting nearly 95 percent of total exports to the United States. Haiti's garment sector remains of interest to large-scale manufacturing operations. Beyond the apparel assembly sector, the shipping and telecommunications sectors attract a significant number of foreign investors.

In 2019, Haiti continued to experience an economic downturn, with inflation topping 20 percent and the Haitian currency, the gourde (HTG), depreciating against the dollar by 25.5 percent over the fiscal year. Following recurring periods of country-wide shutdown due to protests in 2019 and the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, businesses in Haiti are working their way back to full operations, though it will take time for them to fully recover. The tourism sector was particularly hard-hit and may take the longest to recover.

While there are business opportunities in the country, Haiti's investment and trade climate is challenging. Haiti ranks near the bottom globally in well-known indices tracking ease of doing business and corruption perceptions. Impediments to needed investment include poor infrastructure, weak investor protections, uneven contract enforcement, high energy costs, and corruption.

Exports of U.S. goods to Haiti totaled \$1.39 billion in 2019, and the United States remains Haiti's priority partner in international trade. There are a few categories of products that comprise the great majority of Haitian exports to the United States: in order, they are 1) apparel; 2) fruit and other agricultural products; and 3) essential oils such as vetiver.

U.S. companies may consider exporting to Haiti for the following reasons:

- The Haitian economy is one of the most open economies in the Caribbean;

- Haiti offers proximity to the United States and many Haitian businesspeople speak fluent English;
- U.S. goods comprise over 32 percent of Haiti's total imports;
- Four major international security-certified ports (Port au Prince, Cap Haitian, Lafito, and St. Marc) provide maritime access to Haiti;
- Two international airports (Port au Prince and Cap Haitian) offer multiple daily flights between Haiti and the United States. The airport in Cap Haitian facilitates commerce and provides quick access to the Caracol and CODEVI industrial parks located in free-trade zones in the northeastern region of Haiti.

According to the Central Bank of Haiti, Haiti's total imports reached \$4.1 billion during fiscal year (FY) 2019, while total exports were only valued at \$1.2 billion. Imports represent more than 70 percent of goods sold inside Haiti.

Since July 2018, Haiti has experienced recurring public protests, including a "country lockdown" movement which put a near complete halt to business and public operations for weeks in 2019. Haiti's political and economic situation remains fragile. According to the World Bank, Haitian gross domestic product (GDP) is estimated to have contracted by 0.9 percent in 2019, with overall GDP at \$8.49 billion and per capita GDP at \$756. Haiti's economy was particularly affected by setbacks in the agriculture sector, which suffered from localized droughts, and the service sector, which has been impacted by prolonged unrest. This weak performance was accompanied by a deepening of the budget deficit, which was 3.8 percent of GDP in FY2019, and increasing domestic arrears. The public debt-to-GDP ratio jumped from 40 percent to 47 percent over the fiscal year, per the International Monetary Fund. The country experienced rapid currency depreciation against the dollar of 25 percent and rampant inflation of 20 percent at the end of the fiscal year. The economic decline was combined with poor administrative capacity to collect revenue. The fiscal deficit, however, was contained due to cuts in capital investment and social programs. Energy subsidies, estimated by the World Bank at 6.5 percent of GDP in 2019, continued to be a fiscal burden limiting the fiscal space for spending in growth-enhancing sectors. The economic outlook reflects continuing downside risks due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Increasingly, the budget deficit has been financed by the Central Bank. As a result, the national currency the gourde continued to depreciate through July 2020, with inflation at 23 percent as of May 2020. Inflation in Haiti is attributed to weak domestic production, a chronic budget deficit, and depreciation of the Haitian gourde against the U.S. dollar. The Government of Haiti's ability to collect taxes continues to be a challenge, with the most recently reported internal revenue collections reaching 12.6 percent of GDP in FY2018, according to the Central Bank, compared to 13.6 percent in 2017.

Haiti remains vulnerable to natural disaster, including hurricanes and earthquakes. According to the Haitian Ministry of Environment, a total of 301 earthquakes with magnitudes ranging from 1 to 4.8 on the Richter scale were recorded across the entire country for the year of 2019. The seismic activity was greater in the departments of South-east (30.6%), West (25.6%), Northwest (16.3%) and Nippes (8.6%).

Market Challenges

Although Haiti offers an open economy in principle, there are serious barriers to development and foreign investment in the country, including corruption, political instability, and burdensome bureaucracy. The World Bank's 2019 [Ease of Doing Business report](#) issued Haiti a score of 37.9 out of a possible 100, resulting in a ranking of 179th out of 190 countries on the list.

The most common concerns expressed by foreign investors include:

- Political instability, which both capital investments and productivity;

- Widespread corruption;
- Lack of transparency in governmental tender procedures;
- Unreliable electricity from the grid and high cost of onsite electricity generation;
- Haiti’s need for improved port entry and generally poor infrastructure;
- High obstacles to credit and the lack a national credit bureau, and
- Frequent land disputes, in part due to the lack of effective cadastral and civil registries.

The business environment for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Haiti remains challenging. Haiti usually receives relatively modest levels of FDI, totaling \$75 million in 2019, according to the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

Fuel

The retail prices for gasoline, diesel, and kerosene are fixed in gourdes by the government at a rate that usually requires government subsidies to maintain. This subsidy and its contribution to the government’s budget deficit exert considerable negative pressure on the value of the gourde. Haiti also experienced recurring disruptions to its fuel supply throughout 2019, with the government unable to pay for fuel imports in a timely manner, in addition to recurring insecurity interfering with fuel distribution. The government therefore began allowing locally-based fuel companies to import fuel directly in April 2019 but subsequently forbade direct imports as of June 2020. The government continues to struggle to reimburse fuel distributors for the cost of the subsidized retail fuel price.

Haitian Imports of Petroleum Products, 2019 (Central Bank of Haiti)

Gasoline	\$250 million
Kerosene	\$55.6 million
Gasoil	\$348 million
Heavy oil fuel	\$53 million
Lubrificants	\$25.4 million
Liquified petroleum gas	\$21.5 million

Market Opportunities

Despite challenges, there are opportunities in the Haitian market for small-to-medium sized U.S. businesses. Haiti imports rice, poultry meat and edible offal, sugars and sweeteners, dairy products, wheat, vegetable oils, iron and steel, vehicles, electronics, machinery, and refined fuel. In 2019, Haitian total imports (goods and services) were valued at \$4.13 billion, per Haiti’s Central Bank. Haiti’s main import partners are the Dominican Republic, the United States, Canada, the Netherlands Antilles, and China.

For the year 2019, Haiti’s main import categories per the Central Bank were:

Food products	\$729.12 million
Drinks and tobacco	\$36.87 million

Inedible raw materials	\$60.51 million
Fuel	\$1,111 million
Fat, edible oils	\$115.15 million
Machine and transport materials	\$516.28 million

The apparel assembly sector is the most developed and promising opportunity in the manufacturing sector in Haiti and is an area where the country represents one of the best market prospects in the Caribbean region. Through its industrial parks and free trade zone facilities, the apparel sector has grown dramatically in the past decade, with total exports valued at more than \$1 billion in 2019, according to the U.S. Office of Textiles and Apparel.

According to U.S. trade data, Haiti’s exports of apparel to the U.S. market under trade preference programs increased by 8.2 percent from 2018 to 2019. About two-thirds of Haiti’s duty-free exports of textiles and apparel enter the United States through the preferences in the Haitian Hemispheric Opportunity through Partnership Encouragement and Haiti Economic Lift Program (HOPE/HELP) Acts and about one-third enter via the Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act (CBTPA) preferences.

Emerging sectors in Haiti include regional and onsite energy production, agribusiness, and light manufacturing. There is strong demand in Haiti for power generation equipment, including renewables; energy efficient and smart grid systems; packaging and food processing equipment; and construction materials. Other sectors with growth potential include apparel, agribusiness, business process outsourcing (BPO), infrastructure development, real estate and construction.

The government of Haiti has made limited efforts to improve telecommunication infrastructure and internet connectivity. In 2019, Haiti’s energy regulator issued several tenders for regional electricity production with requirements for cleaner and renewable sources of energy.

One of Haiti’s greatest assets is its flexible, trainable and often multilingual workforce. The labor force is estimated at 4.3 million. The country’s population of over 11 million is very young, with approximately 55 percent of the population under the age of 30, and 40 percent between ages 30 and 65. The labor-eligible population has a strong desire for work. The Haitian government’s Center for the Facilitation of Investment (CFI) also reports a stable labor force, with factory managers reporting low levels of absenteeism (2 percent) and turnover between 4 percent and 6 percent per year. Haiti is also recognized for its heritage in the areas of crafts, artisan-level industry, and processing of products.

USAID Initiative: Haiti INVEST

The U.S. Government, through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), launched an initiative in 2019 to attract private capital and credit for small and medium sized enterprises (SME) across Haiti. The Haiti INVEST project is intended to create a platform to facilitate and mobilize financing for investment in high-potential sectors in Haiti such as agriculture. Haiti INVEST has three main objectives. First, it will help businesses raise debt and equity and access financing that would otherwise not occur, thereby increasing competitiveness in target sector enterprises. Second, the project will build local capacity to mobilize financing through business advisory service providers, transactions advisors and financial institutions as they originate, structure, and close complex transactions. For example, Haiti INVEST will pay transaction fees to business advisory service providers based on results achieved and pay transactions advisors to help qualified businesses access finance. Third, Haiti INVEST will work with key partners to establish a convening body to address systemic and institutional constraints to financing and investment, while developing and implementing a

sustainability strategy for the platform. For more information, please contact Marie-Renee Vertus at USAID at mvertus@usaid.gov.

Market Entry Strategy

For many companies (particularly in the manufacturing and construction sectors), frequent visits to Haiti and establishing a presence through local agents are critical to long-term market success. Many exporters rely upon local distributors to market their products, and foreign businesses often employ local agents familiar with the appropriate offices within the government, allowing them to take advantage of local and regional expertise while sharing the burden of risk with the local firms. Many Haitian businesses hold exclusivity agreements with international companies. Businesses should thoroughly research potential local distributors and agents.

The U.S. Department of Commerce should be the first point of contact for U.S. firms interested in doing business in Haiti. The United States Export Assistance Center (USEAC) offices in the United States, as well as the Commercial Service (CS) offices located abroad, will inform any interested U.S. firm of the best methods for finding an agent or distributor in Haiti.

The Commercial Section at the U.S. Embassy in Port au Prince, Haiti is a partner of the U.S. Department of Commerce, which allows it to offer a range of commercial services to U.S. companies seeking to do business in Haiti. The U.S. Commercial Service, for example, may assist U.S. companies in performing their due diligence when choosing local business partners. Please visit the following sites: [Export Information](#) and [Economic Data on Business in Haiti](#).

Leading Sectors for U.S. Exports & Investments

Energy

Overview

Haiti faces significant challenges in generating and distributing energy reliably and lack of access to affordable and reliable power significantly hinders investment and business development. On average, 80 percent of electricity is produced using imported fossil fuels. The Haitian government is exploring various avenues to advance conventional energy usage to lower costs. Underutilized opportunities for small hydropower, smart grid, and biomass systems make Haiti an interesting renewable energy prospect. While hydropower is the renewable option that contributes the most to Haiti's energy supply, most of the population relies on biomass such as charcoal and wood as their main source of energy. Solar energy has not been formally developed for large-scale use. Following months of grid instability and decreased power from the electricity utility in 2020, however, a number of middle and upper-income households purchased solar power systems to ensure electricity.

Local demand for U.S. electrical machinery and equipment was valued at \$20.4 million in FY 2018. Electricite d'Haiti (EDH), the underperforming government-owned electricity utility, supplies nine hours or less of electricity per day for most circuits, according to a 2018 World Bank report. During disruptions to the fuel supply chain or in the dry season, electricity availability on EDH-managed grids falls significantly. The company drastically rationed electricity throughout the metropolitan region of Port au Prince in 2019, with most of the population accessing only a few hours of power every two or three days and in some cases experiencing weeks of blackout. EDH does not collect enough revenue to finance the company's operations. The estimated losses from the electricity sector amounted to about 1.8 and 1.9 percent of GDP in FY2018 and FY2019 respectively. According to information from the Commercial Directorate of EDH, the government of Haiti provides an annual subsidy of around \$250 million to keep the utility afloat. Illegal siphoning from the grid, poor billing practices, and unpaid invoices, including from government offices, also result in consistent shortfall for the company, which operates at a loss.

In October 2019, the Haitian Council of Ministers issued a resolution instructing the Ministry of Finance to suspend payments to three named independent power producers related to the execution of power purchase agreements between the Government of Haiti and the power producers. By the end of November 2019, two of those companies were no longer actively operating as independent power producers. Availability of electricity on the Port au Prince metropolitan grid fell by nearly half.

There is an urgent need to repair and expand existing power plants throughout the country. Haiti has an installed capacity of 250 to 400 Megawatts (MW) but only 60 percent of the installed capacity is reliable, as many generation units and grid elements need rehabilitation and repair work. Total unmet demand for residential and commercial electricity in the country is estimated at approximately 550MW per day. Only one third of the population has access to electricity, and of those with access, many are freeriders who are not billed or do not pay. On average, Haitians consume 21 Kilowatts (kW) per person annually, although the Ministry of Public Works estimates that the coverage could be higher when irregular connections are considered.

Even for those with access to electricity, reliability is inconsistent. This unreliability has led many businesses and larger households to install diesel generators. Multinational businesses have expressed dissatisfaction at the expensive energy rates in Haiti's commercial and industrial sectors, compared to other countries in the region where they do business. The lack of access to affordable and reliable power hinders investment, constrains the development of productive businesses, and degrades living standards for residential customers.

The fuel of choice for food preparation for many rural households in Haiti remains charcoal, which is a major cause of deforestation. The annual consumption of wood products by Haitians is estimated at 4 million metric tons (MT), of which about one-third is transformed into charcoal to meet the cooking fuel needs of urban consumers. Apart from the negative environmental impact of cutting trees for fuel, cooking with firewood and charcoal exposes the population, especially women and young girls, to increased levels of smoke and indoor air pollution.

Authoritative data on electricity generation is not available. Although the government hopes to modernize EDH, it made minimal efforts to improve its performance through July 2020. Electrical blackouts occur frequently in Haiti. Residential owners drive demand for low-cost electrical generation equipment and small-scale power charging stations because of severe limits on local generating capacity. There is also a consistent residential demand for solar energy equipment and smart grids, as well as demand from private businesses. According to Haitian dealers' records, 50 percent of power generators come from the United States. Other suppliers include Japan, France, China, and South Korea.

Haiti's largest electricity grid is the Port au Prince metropolitan grid, plus eight smaller regional grids. Some towns, such as Fort-Liberté in the northeast, have an electricity distribution network, but have been effectively abandoned by the national utility EDH for about a decade. Users thus have to rely entirely on small, privately owned generators to meet their electricity demand. One of EDH's problems is its lack of capital to maintain power plant generators, meaning they cannot run at full capacity. As of September 2020, Taiwan provided the Haitian government a \$150 million loan primarily for repairs and upgrades to the metropolitan grids, with \$20 million set-aside for rural electrification projects. In addition to production technology, officials are also looking at updating business technology.

In 2019, the Haitian energy sector regulatory authority, ANARSE, began issuing a series of prequalification rounds for concessionaires to take over and expand electricity production, transmission, and distribution for several of the country's regional grids, including in the Northeast. While this process slowed in 2020 due to

COVID-19, ANARSE is expected to select concessionaires for the initial three grids and issue further tenders for more of Haiti's regional grids in late 2020 and in 2021.

Opportunities

EDH's inability to provide reliable, centrally-supplied power continues to drive demand for power generation equipment, such as new electrical power systems, generators, inverters, solar panels, and batteries, as well as maintenance for the equipment. U.S. electrical companies, including those that supply generators, parts, and service, may find opportunities in Haiti. The World Bank financed the Electricity Loss Reduction Project to increase production and strengthen the management of the electric network in Haiti. With Haiti's tropical climate and high percentage of daily sunlight, the country could be a prime candidate for solar power generation projects. There are also opportunities to generate energy from small hydropower and biomass projects.

Haiti's energy regulator ANARSE is expected to launch prequalification rounds to identify potential concessionaires for several regional electricity grids, including production, transmission, and distribution, in late 2020 and 2021. As of July 2020, ANARSE is also assisting EDH with a procurement tender for the installation and operation of several hundred thousand prepaid smart meters for the metropolitan area and rural areas.

USAID funded the construction of a 10-megawatt (MW) power plant with transmission and distribution facilities to serve the Caracol Industrial Park tenants as well as commercial and residential customers in the surrounding villages. The 10MW power plant provides uninterrupted 24/7 electricity to 13,000-metered customers. For those customers with regularized electricity service (proper connections and meters), the collection rates for electricity bills is above 90 percent, compared to below 25 percent for those customers in other parts of the country with electricity provided by the national electric utility.

Renewable Energy

The country's location in a tropical area gives it very strong solar energy capacities. Many Haitians are starting to equip their homes with devices capable of producing and storing solar energy. The recurrent fuel disruptions and EDH'S severe rationing of electricity contributed to Haitians turning to solar systems with hybrid backup, although there is no formal data documenting the extent of this type of usage.

It is believed solar energy will play a fundamental role in access to electricity over the next 10 to 15 years. In 2017, the Government of Haiti exempted solar modules and inverters from import duties, although some customs fees still remain. Solar energy powers agricultural work (irrigation, conservation of agricultural products), hotels, hospitals, schools, commercial endeavors (food storage), and even public lighting in cities and villages.

In July 2020, President Moïse announced that the government would add 190 MW of generation capacity, including 130MW of solar projects and 60MW of thermal power facilities, though relatively few details for the solar projects had been released as of one month later. The largest planned project is a 55MW (60MW installed) fuel-flexible plant in the capital, Port au Prince with 10MW facilities planned for Port-de-Paix and Jacmel, and a 5MW array is intended for Jeremie. The balance of the generation capacity will be supplied by smaller facilities at unspecified sites in the regions of Grand'Anse and Nippes.

Waste Management

Solid waste management remains problematic in the country. Waste is managed in some municipalities on an individual basis without any control by municipalities, and waste management is stressed by a set of interrelated factors including population growth, urban expansion, insufficient infrastructure, and public management issues. Waste collection in cities is not provided in many municipalities. Almost all of the waste is sent to illegal dumps (rivers, drainage canals) by households without any prior treatment and without

development of receiving sites. In some areas, solid waste is burned or buried in the ground, contributing to pollution and emission of greenhouse gases.

Resources

Electricite d'Haiti (EDH)

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Agricultural Sector

Overview

The exodus of Haiti's rural population to its major cities, coupled with a lack of agricultural capitalization, has hindered the development of food crops. In light of this, there is a strong demand for U.S. agribusiness firms to invest in Haiti and help boost domestic food production. Haiti does not produce enough food to meet domestic demand, and must import a significant portion of the agricultural products it consumes. Another constraint to food availability is the poor internal infrastructure which is required to transport food within Haiti.

Major food imports include cereals, meat, and poultry. U.S. exports of rice, processed food, wheat, and poultry are good market prospects. Haiti's food imports were valued at \$864 million in 2019, decreasing 4.2 percent between FY2018 and FY2019 (Source: Trade Data Monitor (TDM) and other sources).

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) authorizes credit guarantees to Haiti under the Commodity Credit Corporation's (CCC) Export Credit Guarantee Program (referred to as GSM-102). More information on USDA's GSM-102 program can be found at <https://www.fas.usda.gov/programs/export-credit-guarantee-program-gsm-102>, or contact the Foreign Agriculture Service's Office of Agricultural Affairs in Port au Prince (AgPortauPrince1@fas.usda.gov).

Major imported agricultural products

- Rice
- Cereal products; malt, starch, wheat gluten
- Poultry, meat and edible meat offal

Rice

Rice is a staple food for a majority of Haitians. When Haitians consumed less rice per person, they were self-sufficient in rice; however, consumption increased, and 80 percent of rice now consumed in Haiti is imported. The United States is especially competitive in long grain milled rice (less than 10 percent of whole or broken kernels of medium and short grain rice). The total amount of rice imported was valued at \$218.4 million in 2019, which represented an 8.4 percent decrease from 2018. Of total rice imports, \$207 million came from the United States. U.S. exports of milled rice are typically 4 percent broken and packaged in 50 kg and 25 kg bags.

Other Cereal Products – Malt, Flour, Starch, and Wheat Gluten

Cereal products, especially wheat and flour, are major components of the Haitian diet. Haiti, however, does not produce sufficient milled grains to satisfy domestic demand. After rice, other cereal products are the second largest category of U.S. agricultural exports to Haiti. The United States remains Haiti's largest supplier of wheat, corn, sorghum and millet, as well as rice. U.S. exports of all cereal products increased 9.5 percent from 2018 to 2019, from \$253 million to \$277 million.

Poultry, Meat and Edible Meat Offal

The United States is Haiti's leading supplier of poultry. Over the past several years, decreases in the availability of local livestock and increasing feed prices that forced Haitian farms out of business have also factored into the rising demand for poultry imports.

Following the detection of the H5N2 avian flu virus in the Dominican Republic, on January 7, 2008, the government of Haiti instituted a ban on Dominican poultry and egg products. In June 2013, the Minister of Commerce and Industry declared that the government of Haiti had lifted the ban on Dominican poultry meats, but Dominican poultry exporters have to fulfill the requirements of the Haitian government before exporting to Haiti and must obtain an import permit.

Haiti imported \$85 million worth of meat and edible meat offal during FY2019, a 13.6 percent decrease in comparison to 2018.

Customs, Regulations & Standards

The Government of Haiti maintains an official trade portal that includes information on import and export procedures, tariff rates, and fees in both English and French: <http://haiticommerce.gouv.ht/>. Customs formalities can take from 24 to 48 hours if all forms are in order. Some importers complain that the customs clearance process is lengthy and can result in delays.

Import Tariffs

Verification fee: The charge for inspection is 5 percent of the CIF (cost, insurance, freight). The government waives the fee for goods in transit, storage, or temporary entry regimes and for goods used for diplomatic missions and the import of personal effects.

Value-Added Tax (French acronym TCA): The 10 percent TCA is a general tax on the local sale of goods, supply of services, and imports. It is applied to the CIF value in addition to the customs duty, inspection fee, and excise duties. The TCA is calculated at each stage of production, distribution, and import. Products that are exempt from this tax include: petroleum products; newspapers, books, magazines, and paper used for school materials; local agricultural products; agricultural, livestock breeding, and fishing inputs; inputs used to

manufacture medicines sold in pharmacies; agricultural, fishing, and livestock breeding machinery and equipment; and legal services. Goods entering the country under the transit, storage, or temporary entry regimes, including those to be used in processing and assembly industries produced solely for export, are also exempt.

Contribution to Management Funds for Territorial Collectives (CFGDCT): The CFGDCT is applied at the rate of 2 percent on all imports, except on petroleum products, pharmaceuticals, parcel posts, some food products, agricultural inputs, and paper.

Excise Tax: A 10 percent fee is levied on imported cars of 2200 cubic centimeters or more; 90 percent of CIF on gasoline; 40 percent of CIF on diesel fuel; 30 percent of CIF on kerosene; 2 percent of CIF on heavy fuel oil; 2 percent of CIF on lubricants; and 3 percent of CIF on aviation fuel. The excise tax is waived for fuel products which receive a subsidy to keep prices fixed for consumers.

Other Tariffs

In general, tariff rates are low for raw materials and unprocessed goods, but are higher for semi-finished and finished goods.

New and used automobiles, buses, trucks, and vans are subject to a 5 percent to 20 percent registration tax. This tax applies to the customs value.

- A 5 percent tax is applied to vehicles valued at less than HTG 35,000;
- A 20 percent tax is applied on vehicles valued over HTG 75,000;
- A 5 percent tax is applied to trucks that weigh less than two tons and minibuses with a capacity not exceeding 24 passengers;
- Tax exemption applies if capacity accommodates more than 24 passengers; and
- A 10 percent Environmental Protection Tax (EPT), is levied on imported used vehicles.

The EPT tax is applicable to the import of used tires, used batteries, and second-hand clothes.

There are additional taxes on new cars, ranging from 5 percent to 20 percent and from 5 percent to 30 percent for used vehicle imports, used passenger transportation vehicles, and used trucks. New passenger transportation vehicles that accommodate more than 25 passengers and new trucks over two tons are exempt. Transit and storage duties are imposed on the import of goods entering under the relevant tax regimes. The highest transit duty is five gourdes per parcel or per 100 kg of net weight. Customs storage duties are 2 percent of the customs value per month of storage. In addition, shipping lines in Haiti charge demurrage fees to clients who are unable to unload their goods within 17 days. An experienced expediter may help move goods more quickly and, therefore, potentially avoid onerous demurrage charges.

The following goods are not always subject to duty (not all products are listed):

- Certain bones and horn-cores
- Malt (not roasted)
- Hops
- Straw and pellets of unprepared cereals
- Certain sowing plants and parts of plants (other than garden seeds) used in perfumery, medicine, or pharmacology

- Certain types of fodder
- Certain resins and fats for industrial use
- Vegetables saps and extracts
- Linseed oil
- Crude glycerol
- Animal oils and fats (in specific forms)
- Yeast
- Denatured ethyl alcohol of any type
- Some protein materials and their vegetable saps and extracts
- Fisheries products
- Live animals
- Rubber
- Ores, slag, and ash
- Organic chemicals
- Pharmaceutical products
- Silk
- Fertilizers
- Tin and articles thereof
- Knitted or crocheted fabrics
- Vegetable plaiting materials
- Wool, fine or coarse animal hair
- Vegetable products
- Yarn and woven fabric
- Nickel and articles thereof
- Lead and articles thereof
- Impregnated, coated, covered, or laminated materials
- Other base metals, cements
- Fabric and technical articles textiles
- Rail and tram locomotives, rolling stock and parts thereof, mechanical traffic signaling equipment

The following goods have a 15 percent duty (not all products are listed):

- Pork
- Sugars and confectionery
- Cotton
- Moss and lichen
- Carpets and other textile floor coverings
- Cut flowers

- Natural or cultured pearls, precious stones and similar articles
- Jewelry and other articles
- Edible vegetables, plants, roots
- Manufactures of straw, and tubers (fresh, chilled, or frozen), other plaiting materials, basketwork, and wickerwork

Other products and duties:

- Cereal based products obtained from blow molding or roasting: 35%
- Food preparation based on unroasted cereal flakes: 35%
- Rice: 3%
- Buckwheat: 15%
- Millet: 15%
- Canary Seed: 3%
- Sorghum and other products of the milling industry: 15%
- Citrus fruit: 20%
- Certain edible products of animal origin: 20%
- Some types of grape must, cider, and vinegar: 15%
- Cigarettes: 15%
- Cigars: 10%

In addition to these duties, the government imposes an excise tax on a number of imported or locally produced goods, such as tobacco, alcohol, sugar, flour, aerated water, and some "luxury food products." Excise taxes may be either specific or value-added. Locally manufactured cigarette firms are required to pay 50 percent duty on product value, although the government issued a delay of the tax rate increase until October 1, 2020. Heavy agricultural and public works machinery are exempt from paying excise duties. Haiti has World Trade Organization (WTO) bound import duties on agricultural and non-agricultural products. Tariffs on agricultural goods range from 0 percent to 30 percent. WTO-bound tariffs on non-agricultural goods, such as hydraulic cement; gasoline for engines; naphtha and benzene; certain varnishes and paints; straw products; esparto or other plaiting materials; basketwork and wickerwork; certain precious metals and stones; imitation jewelry; coins; and camping trailers, range from 0 to 58 percent.

Tariff Preferences

Haiti does not currently grant tariff preferences to any country, but will grant them when provisions of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Treaty come into effect and when the Africa, Caribbean, Pacific (ACP) – European Union Agreement is ratified by Parliament. Firms that import machinery, spare parts, semi-finished products, or materials needed to promote the development of specific sectors within the economy are exempt from duties on imports.

Registered Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are exempt from customs duties on food products and non-commercial imports of medical materials and equipment; however, NGOs must first obtain certification from the Ministry of Economy and Finance and the Ministry of Planning. NGOs may also be exempt from duties and taxes on imported vehicles, with the exception of the inspection fees, local fees, and Contribution to Management Funds for Territorial Collectives (Contribution au Fond de Gestion et de Développement des Collectivités Territoriales, CFGDCT).

Other duty free goods include:

- Educational materials and teaching materials
- Equipment and materials needed for national defense
- Traveler's luggage
- Goods imported under diplomatic or consular privileges and covered by the Vienna Convention
- Furniture and objects imported when changing residence
- Correspondence courses and related teaching materials
- Agricultural equipment (this includes samples with no commercial value, tools, machinery, and re-imported goods that were temporarily exported)

The government of Haiti signed a pre-shipment inspection agreement with Société Générale de Surveillance (SGS) on May 5, 2003. As of August 21, 2020, SGS declared a cessation of its agreement with the Haitian government for pre-shipment inspection and customs valuation activities. As the Haitian government works to designate another pre-shipment inspection contractor, potential exporters should verify shipment and customs procedures with the Bureau of Customs (AGD).

All imports must carry proper documentation, including the Declaration Prior to Import (DPI) and the original of Certificate of Verification (AV) before shipping cargo to Haiti. A DPI is not needed for shipments of used products regardless of the value.

Previously, under the agreement between the government of Haiti and SGS, all imports with a Free on Board (FOB) value of at least \$3,000 had to be inspected by SGS. SGS issued a verification certificate, which the importer submitted to Customs. The inspection certificate, with the declared value and the document, is affixed to the other shipping documents. As of September 2020, the SGS office in Port au Prince remained open.

Goods exempt from inspection:

- Precious stones and metal art
- Ammunition and arms other than for hunting and/or sporting purposes
- Explosives and pyrotechnical articles
- Live animals
- Scrap metal
- Newspapers and magazines
- Personal effects and used household articles (including used vehicles)
- Parcels
- Commercial samples
- Supplies for diplomatic or consular missions
- Supplies for United Nations organizations
- Machinery for international subcontracting enterprises
- Petroleum and petroleum products
- Donations by foreign governments or international organizations to charitable organizations.

All used items are subject to the same import tax treatment as new items. However, used cars are subject to an additional tax of 10 percent of CIF.

Resources

SGS Liaison Office

116, Avenue Jean Paul II

Turgeau, Port au Prince - Haiti

Tel: + (509) 2816 0102 / 0103 / 1683

+ (509) 3701-1956 / 2791

<https://www.sgs.ht/>

Bureau of Customs (Administration Générale des Douanes, AGD)

Blvd. La Saline, angle rues du Quai et des Fronts-Fort

Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Tel.: +509 2813 6161 / alternate extensions 62 / 63 / 64 / 65

E-mail : directiongenerale@douane.gouv.ht

<https://www.douane.gouv.ht/>

Director General Romel Bell

Import Requirements and Documentation

The government requires a license for the import of firearms, pharmaceutical products, petroleum products, plant and plant products, and animal and animal products. Importers of pharmaceutical products must request an import permit from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. In addition, all pharmaceutical products imported to Haiti are subject to sanitary registration, required by the Ministry of Public Health. To satisfy these sanitary registration requirements, the Ministry of Public Health requires information regarding clinical studies, toxicology, and pharmaceutical certification from the country of origin. The Ministry also requests three product samples of each drug to be imported. Importers of plant and plant products, animal and animal products must request an import permit from the office of Animal Quarantine and Control of Fishing and Agricultural Products (DQCSPAP in French).

Food products imported to Haiti require:

- The phytosanitary certificate/zoosanitary certificate from the exporting country;
- Certificate of origin from the country of origin (farm included);
- An import permit from the Ministry of Agriculture, when required, is required for every shipment; the validity is for 15 days. Formal requests must be submitted to Agriculture Quarantine Division;
- The Declaration Prior to Import (DPI)
- Commercial invoice;
- Freight invoice;
- Bill of lading or Air Way Bill;
- Laboratory certificate, if required, from the country of origin;

- Certificate of weight and quality, if required, from the country of origin;
- Fumigation treatment certificate, if required, from the country of origin;
- Insurance certificate, if required, from the country of origin;
- Certificate of freeze, if required, from the country of origin;

Shipment

Depending on the product, Haitian legislation requires that the manifest provide additional information, such as transport temperature, net weight or quantity and packaging type.

Verification process

At the arrival port, the customs bureau (Administration Générale des Douanes - AGD) and Ministry of Commerce and Industry review the documentation to ensure that all requirements are met and if physical inspection is required. In addition, AGD confirms the customs classification and submits the customs value of the imported goods.

Physical Inspection

A physical inspection may be conducted by an inspector of the Office of Quarantine and Control of Fishing and Agricultural Products to verify the documents and control the status of imported goods. For live animals, the inspector may recommend fifteen days in quarantine before release of the animal. If the inspection reveals anything abnormal, the goods may be confiscated or returned to the exporting country.

Customs payments

Customs duties and taxes are required for goods clearance. The cost, insurance and freight (CIF) value of imported goods is used as a basis for the calculation of the import customs duties and taxes. Taxes include the verification fee (5 percent of CIF), value-added tax (10 percent of transaction value), Contribution to Territorial Collectivities Funds (2 percent of CIF, applicable for some food products), and Special Duty (1 percent of CIF). The payment of customs duties and taxes is collected by National Credit Bank (BNC in French), a state-owned enterprise.

Aside from engaging with the Customs office, the formalities for commercial imports prior to customs clearance in accordance with the law are:

- Payment and regular renewal of license and importer's license
- A notice from the Ministry of Commerce for each order
- Certificate of Fiscal Completion or Discharge
- Duty-waiver Letter (a "franchise") from the Ministry of the Economy and Finance (in case of donation or the importer holding a "franchise," which is a waiver of import duties available under limited and specific circumstances)

Customs Clearance

The Customs office requires all importers fill out the customs declaration and submit the following documents for customs clearance:

- Declaration Prior to Import (DPI)
- Original Certificate of Verification (AV)
- Customs declaration

- Bill of lading
- Freight cost certificate
- List of products
- Commercial invoice
- Import permit, if required
- Zoosanitary or phytosanitary certificate, if required
- Certificate of origin
- Laboratory certificate, if required
- Certificate of weight and quality, if required
- Fumigation treatment certificate, if required
- Insurance certificate, if required
- Certification that item has remained frozen, if required

Labeling and Marking Requirements

Specific marks or labels are required for food and pharmaceutical products. All other goods do not require a label. Labels on processed food products should indicate ingredients in order of predominance, the name and address of manufacturer, and expiration date. Labels on pharmaceutical products must indicate weight or quantity of active ingredients and the lot control number. The date of expiration and the generic name and/or commercial name of pharmaceutical drugs should also be included.

U.S. Export Controls

The nature and quantity of all goods entering Haiti should be clearly specified in the bill of lading, as well as in the invoice attached to the bill of lading. U.S. exporters should follow all requirements concerning labeling, as well as those related to prohibited and restricted imports.

The United States imposes export controls to protect national security interests and promote foreign policy objectives. At the Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) in the U.S. Department of Commerce, the Export Enforcement (EE) is responsible for the enforcement of the Export Administration Regulations (EAR). BIS works closely with U.S. embassies, foreign governments, industry, and trade associations to ensure that exports from the United States are secure. In accordance with the EAR, BIS officials conduct site visits, also known as End-Use Checks (EUCs), globally with end-users, consignees, and/or other parties to transactions involving items subject to the EAR, to verify compliance.

An EUC is an on-site verification of a party to a transaction to determine whether it is a reliable recipient of U.S. items. EUCs are conducted as part of BIS's licensing process, as well as its compliance program, to determine if items were exported in accordance with a valid BIS authorization or otherwise consistent with the EAR. Specifically, an EUC verifies the *bona fides* of recipient(s) of items subject to the EAR, to include: confirming their legitimacy and reliability relating to the end use and end user; monitoring their compliance with license conditions; and ensuring such items are used and/or re-exported or transferred (in-country) in accordance with the EAR.

BIS officials rely on EUCs to safeguard items subject to the EAR from diversion to unauthorized end uses/users. The verification of a foreign party's reliability facilitates future trade, including pursuant to BIS license reviews. If BIS is unable to verify the reliability of the company or is prevented from accomplishing an EUC, the company

may receive, for example, more regulatory scrutiny during license reviews or be designated on BIS's Unverified List or Entity List, as applicable.

BIS has developed a list of "[red flags](#)", or warning signs, intended to discover possible violations of the EAR.

Also, BIS has "[Know Your Customer](#)" guidance.

BIS provides a variety of training sessions to U.S. exporters throughout the year. These sessions range from one to two-day seminars and focus on the basics of exporting as well as more advanced topics. Check a [list of upcoming seminars and webinars](#).

BIS also provides [online training](#).

The EAR does not regulate transactions involving all U.S. goods, services, and technologies. Other U.S. Government agencies regulate more specialized exports. For example, the U.S. Department of State's Directorate of Defense Trade Controls has authority over defense articles and services. A list of other agencies involved in export control can be found on the [BIS website](#) or in Supplement No. 3 to Part 730 of the EAR.

The EAR is available on the [BIS website](#) and on the [Electronic Code of Federal Regulations \(e-CFR\)](#).

The [Consolidated Screening List \(CSL\)](#) is a list of parties for which the United States Government maintains restrictions on certain exports, reexports or transfers of items. The CSL consolidates a number of smaller lists of restricted parties that are maintained by a variety of U.S. Government agencies, including the Department of Commerce, as an aid to industry in conducting electronic screens of potential parties to regulated transactions.

Temporary Entry

A rate of 0.25 percent is applied to goods entering under diplomatic concessions and for those that are on "temporary entry." Temporary entry refers to goods that will be processed before being re-exported. These goods are subject to a security deposit equivalent to 150 percent of the duties and taxes payable under the release for consumption regime. The deposit is in the form of a bank check and released once the goods are re-exported. Goods that enter the country under the temporary entry regime and are then used for consumption purposes are taxed on the amount of their depreciation when they are re-exported. All imported goods are subject to verification fees and administrative costs. Goods imported into the country under the temporary entry regime are also subject to a 0.25 percent uniform rate, as are goods entering under diplomatic concessions.

Prohibited and Restricted Imports

To import weapons, waste, drugs, and agricultural products, the importer must have authorization from the Haitian government. In June 2013, the Minister of Commerce and Industry removed the 2008 ban on poultry meat only, and imports of eggs are still prohibited from areas exposed to avian influenza. Other than poultry and eggs, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry has not updated the list of prohibited products since 1962. Prohibited items include: materials of a pornographic nature; military equipment, including tanks, armored vehicles and parts, warships and lifeboats; arms and ammunition not intended for government use; narcotics; and equipment to be used to manufacture or print counterfeit currency or securities. According to the 1962 law, it is illegal to import used shoes and used clothing. Nonetheless, the law is not usually enforced and used clothing imports constitute a lucrative business in Haiti, particularly used clothing coming from the United States and the Dominican Republic. The goods are usually cleared through customs as personal effects.

The Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Rural Development, and the Ministry of Environment are responsible for the health and environmental controls of imports. Imports of certain goods are subject to control for security and health reasons. Reasons for prohibition and/or restrictions include protecting Haiti's flora, fauna, and livestock from dangerous diseases.

Imports of ethyl alcohol, generic chemicals, and pharmaceuticals require prior authorization from the Ministry of Public Health. Imports of agricultural inputs, cattle feed, and animal products (processed or unprocessed) require authorization from the Quarantine Department of Ministry of Agriculture and the submission of a health certificate issued by the exporting country. Imported live animals, plants, and seeds are subject to quarantine. An animal health certificate is required for imports of bovine animals and swine, and the certificate must indicate that the country of origin is free of foot and mouth disease, contagious bovine pleuro pneumonia, rinderpest, vesicular stomatitis, and lumpy skin disease.

In the case of swine, the certificate must also indicate that the animals originate from countries free of vesicular exanthema, African swine fever, ordinary swine fever, and swine encephalomyelitis. Haiti is not a member of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES); however, it voluntarily adheres to CITES directives. Haiti has no quantitative restrictions on imports of animals.

Customs Regulations

The following documentation is required under the basic regulations governing the import and export of commodities:

For imports into Haiti, the Haitian Customs Authorities request the following:

- A bill of lading signed by the captain or his/her delegate, and
- An original invoice for the goods.

- The bill of lading must include:
- Name of the vessel (sea freight and the identification number for airfreight); name of the shipping company;
- Port(s) of origin;
- Port(s) of destination;
- Complete manifest of the cargo and the volume on which the freight calculation was based;
- Nature of the merchandise (includes bulk items);
- Shipping cost;
- Name of the shipper, and
- The name of the consignee.

Haitian law requires that foreign exporters obtain an import permit from the Ministry of Commerce for the import of some agricultural and textile products. American exporters seeking information on Haitian tariffs should contact the U.S. Embassy in Port au Prince and the Haitian Customs Authority.

Standards for Trade

Overview

Haiti has no special legislation on standards, testing, approval, and certification. With its accession to the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Haiti has adopted the standards established by the Caribbean Organization of Standards and Quality (COSQ), which is the CARICOM body responsible for defining standards for goods and services at the regional level.

Standards

In addition to Haiti's adoption of the CARICOM standards, Haiti also uses other international standards as a reference. These include the International Standards Organization (ISO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and Codex Alimentarius for food products.

Members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) are required under the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT Agreement) to notify to the WTO proposed technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures that could affect trade. Notify U.S. (www.nist.gov/notifyus) is a free, web-based e-mail registration service that captures and makes available for review and comment key information on draft regulations and conformity assessment procedures. Users receive customized e-mail alerts when new notifications are added by selected country or countries and industry sector(s) of interest and can also request full texts of regulations. This service and its associated web site are managed and operated by the USA WTO TBT Inquiry Point housed within the National Institute of Standards and Technology, part of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Testing, inspection and certification

The government's primary goal under the proposed Haitian Standard System, which has been with the Parliament awaiting approval since 2012, is to protect consumers and to monitor the safe sale of food, chemicals, and pharmaceutical products, as well as cosmetics. Special attention will be given to exports in order to ensure that they have a positive impact abroad and improve the Haitian trade balance.

For the Haitian Standard System to move forward, it must be ratified by Parliament after a consultation process with stakeholders. Accreditation would then be accorded to all products that meet the standards set by the government per a Presidential Decree on Standards.

Publication of Technical Regulations

Le Moniteur, the national gazette published by the National Press of Haiti, contains public agency rules, decrees, and public notices. Although Le Moniteur publishes draft bills and regulations, these draft regulations are not open to comment by the private sector. The Government of Haiti publishes laws and regulations once final. Decrees are printed, published and executed at the behest of the Prime Minister and relevant Cabinet ministers. Copies of publications can be ordered by phone or through Le Moniteur's website, <http://www.pressesnationalesdhaiti.ht/>.

The Government of Haiti maintains an annual regulatory agenda for the Parliament, but the agenda is seldom followed. Haiti mostly adopts international standards, and there are no recent Haitian technical regulations that impact U.S. products. A bill on quality control has been in draft status for years.

Contact Information

Directorate of Quality Control

Ministry of Commerce and Industry (Ministère du Commerce et de l'Industrie)

Parc Industriel Métropolitain (SONAPI)

Port-au-Prince, Haïti

Tel: (509) 3838-1859 / 3894-2112

E-mail: dcqpc_mci@yahoo.fr

(Ms. Roberta Jean-Baptiste, Director General)

Trade Agreements

Haiti acceded to CARICOM in July 1999, negotiating a ten-year period as a Least Developed Country to fully integrate into CARICOM. The legislation on the Common External Tariff is still pending Parliament approval. To import into the U.S. market, Haiti benefits from several preferential trade programs, including the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI), the Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Agreement (CBTPA), the Haitian Hemispheric Opportunity through Partnership Encouragement Act II (HOPE II) and the HELP Acts, and the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), as outlined below.

Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI)

The Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) remains an important element of U.S. economic relations with Haiti. The CBI is intended to facilitate the development of stable economies in the Caribbean Basin by providing beneficiary countries with duty-free access to the U.S. market for most goods.

Approximately 3,500 Haitian export products are eligible for duty-free entry into the United States under the CBI. Most textiles are excluded, with the exception of those made from linen or silk, or qualifying as handcraft work. Other excluded items include certain watches and watch parts, petroleum and its by-products, prepared or canned tuna, sugar, molasses, syrup, beef, spirits, and footwear.

Products must be shipped directly from Haiti to the United States to qualify for CBI preference. The products may incorporate imported components as long as the goods exported to the United States are a new merchandise product distinct from such components and the Haitian direct costs of production (including domestic raw materials and those originating in other CBI beneficiary countries, including Puerto Rico and the

U.S. Virgin Islands) must amount to at least 35 percent of the customs value. Materials of U.S. origin may be included up to a maximum of 15 percent of its customs value.

Eligible articles assembled or processed from U.S. materials, components, or ingredients are accorded duty free access into the United States regardless of whether such articles satisfy the 35 percent value-added criterion.

Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act (CBTPA)

On October 2, 2000, Haiti was designated as a beneficiary of the CBTPA. Congress passed the CBTPA as part of the Trade and Development Act of 2000. It is designed to provide greater duty-free access to the U.S. market for Caribbean and Central American nations. The CBTPA expands on the CBI program by allowing duty-free and quota-free treatment for imports of certain apparel from the region, and by extending USMCA-equivalent tariff treatment to a number of other products previously excluded from the CBI program. The CBTPA is scheduled to expire on September 30, 2020.

The HOPE and HELP Acts

Partially in response to concerns over issues of equal pay between male and female apparel workers in Haiti, Congress enacted the Haitian Hemispheric Opportunity through Partnership Encouragement (HOPE) Act of 2006, which went into effect on March 19, 2007. Congress provided HOPE in addition to other trade preferences under the General System of Preferences (GSP), Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act (CBERA), and CBTPA. Eligibility criteria includes progress towards achieving a market-based economy, increasing employment, enhancing the rule of law, eliminating barriers to U.S. trade, combating corruption, and protecting internationally recognized human and worker rights.

In May 2008, the U.S. Congress passed an extended HOPE bill—HOPE II. The HOPE II bill includes an increase in the Tariff Preference Level (TPL) for woven and knit products from 50,000,000 to 70,000,000 square meter equivalent; co-production with the Dominican Republic; and the inclusion of luggage, headgear, and sleepwear.

HOPE established special new rules of origin that make Haiti eligible for new trade benefits for apparel imports, and that enhance sourcing flexibility for apparel producers in Haiti. HOPE II modified the existing trade preference programs under HOPE, and HELP provided duty-free treatment for additional textile and apparel products from Haiti. These preferences are scheduled to expire on September 30, 2025.

The trade preferences available under HOPE/HELP are specifically designed for Haiti, and are conditioned on both the Haitian government and individual producers meeting certain core labor standards and Haitian labor laws. Producers must participate in a Technical Assistance Improvement and Compliance Needs Assessment and Remediation program (TAICNAR) and comply with internationally agreed core labor standards.

The Haiti Economic Lift Program (HELP) Act helps create sustainable support for Haiti's economy by expanding tariff benefits for certain Haitian textile and apparel exports to the United States. HELP also allows the expansion of duty-free access to the U.S. market for Haitian textile and apparel exports and extends existing trade preference programs for Haiti.

Generalized System of Preferences (GSP)

The U.S. Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), a program designed to promote economic growth in the developing world, provides preferential duty-free treatment for over 3,500 products from a wide range of designated beneficiary countries. As a least-developed beneficiary developing country, Haiti qualifies for duty-free access to the U.S. market for an additional 1,500 products, to make a total of 5,000 duty-free eligible products under GSP. The combined lists include most dutiable manufactured and semi-manufactured products and also certain agricultural, fishery, and primary industrial products that are not otherwise duty-free.

Current Preference Highlights

Current trade preference highlights include:

- Duty-free access, with some exclusions, for up to 70 million square meter equivalents (SME) of knit apparel and 70 million SMEs of woven apparel without regard to the country of origin of the yarn, fabric or components, as long as the apparel is wholly assembled or knit-to-shape in Haiti; once the 70 million SME limits for knit and woven apparel are hit, the limits increase up to 200 million SMEs;
- Duty-free treatment for apparel wholly assembled or knit-to-shape in Haiti with between 50 percent and 60 percent value from Haiti, the United States, a U.S. free trade agreement partner or preference program beneficiary, or a combination thereof; this preference is currently set to expire in 2020;
- Duty-free treatment of knit or woven apparel under a “two for one” earned import allowance program: for every two SMEs of qualifying fabric (sourced from the United States or certain trade partner countries) used to produce exports for the U.S. market in Haiti, one SME of non-qualifying fabric can also be used;
- Duty-free treatment for certain brassieres, luggage, headgear, and certain sleepwear; and
- Permission for Haitian goods to enter the United States duty-free if shipped either directly from Haiti or through the Dominican Republic.

More information on these programs is available from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Office of Textiles and Apparel (OTEXA).

Free Trade Zones

A law on free trade zones entered into force on August 2, 2002, and set out the conditions for operating, creating, and managing free trade zones, along with the exemption or incentive regime applicable to investment in such zones. The law defines free trade zones as geographical areas to which a special regime on customs duties and customs controls, taxation, immigration, capital investment, and foreign trade applies, and where domestic and foreign investors can provide services, import, store, produce, export, and re-export goods. Free trade zones may be private or joint ventures, involving state or private investors.

To date, Haiti has issued free trade zone licenses for the following areas:

- FTZ de Trou du Nord, the first agricultural free trade zone.
- FTZ CODEVI in the northeastern city of Ouanaminthe, where a Dominican company, Grupo M, manufactures clothing for a variety of U.S. companies and rents factory space to several American and foreign companies.
- FTZ Port Lafito: in Douillard, Cabaret. Lafito is the home of the Haiti's only Panamax seaport.
- FTZ Hispaniola in Route 9 Cité Soleil.
- FTZ SIDSA in Tabarre Port-au-Prince.
- FTZ de Dignerons: in Croix-des-Bouquets.
- FTZ Santo Dujour located in Croix-des-Bouquets.

- FTZ HEH Les Palmiers in Carrefour, Port-au-Prince.
- FTZ Balan in Ganthier.

An inter-ministerial commission, called the Free Zones National Council (CNZF), comprised of representatives from both the public and private sector, is responsible for:

- Receiving applications for approval as a free zone.
- Approving applications for admission to the free zone regime.
- Ensuring that projects approved are carried out in accordance with relevant regulations.
- Authorizing the operation of free zones.
- Defining and regulating free zones.
- Approving and monitoring procedures and operations in free zones.
- Approving its own rules and procedures.

The Free Zones Directorate, an entity within the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, acts as the CNZF's Technical Secretariat. It implements and ensures implementation of decisions taken by the CNZF; receives investors and potential investors; sends quarterly reports on the establishment and operation of free trade zones to the CNZF for approval; examines applications for approval of free trade zone; participates in all negotiations likely to lead to agreements or conventions on free trade zones at the national and international level; monitors the operation of all free trade zones in Haiti; and ensures regular monitoring of the free trade zones.

The law provides the following incentives for enterprises located in free zones:

- Full exemption from income tax for a maximum 15-year period, to be followed by a period of partial exemption that gradually decreases;
- Customs and fiscal exemption (including registration taxes) for the import of capital goods and equipment needed to develop the area, with the exclusion of tourism vehicles;
- Exemption from all communal taxes (with the exception of the fixed occupation tax) for a period not exceeding 15 years;
- Registration and transposition of the balance due for all deeds relating to purchase, mortgages, and collateral.

Goods and services sold from free trade zones on the Haitian market are considered to have entered through Haitian customs and are subject to relevant duties and taxes. The volume of free trade zone goods allowed for sale in Haitian markets may not exceed 30 percent of the total production of an enterprise in the free zone.

Licensing Requirements for Professional Services

Non-nationals are required to have a work permit in Haiti. The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs issues work permits. To obtain a work permit, American citizens should contact the Ministry of Social Affairs directly:

Minister Nicole Yolette Altidor

7, Ave. Charles Sumner

Port-au-Prince, Haïti

Tel: (509) 2940-1095/ 2519-0069/ 2940-0905

Fax: (509) 2221-0717/3853

Web Resources

Additional information can be found at:

www.brh.ht

www.mac.doc.gov/CBI/Legislation/cbileg-00.htm

www.ustr.gov/Trade_Development/Preference_Programs/CBI/Section_Index.html

www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/06/20060630-8.html

www.answers.com/topic/lom-convention

Selling U.S. Products & Services

Distribution & Sales Channels

Haiti is strategically well-positioned in the Caribbean near many of the world's major ports, with maritime transport to the United States possible within three days, Panama within five days, and Europe within 10 days. With two international airports in Port au Prince and Cap Haitian, Haiti can serve as a strategic hub for businesses and materials alike. It is a 90-minute flight from Miami, Orlando, or Fort Lauderdale, enabling frequent direct supervision trips for U.S. investors.

U.S. companies have several options for entering the Haitian market, including direct exporting, franchising, partnering, licensing, wholesaling, and through representatives. The five main regional markets in Haiti are: the North province including the city of Cap Haitian; the Artibonite Department and its main cities, Saint-Marc and Gonaives; the West Department where the capital, Port-au-Prince, is located; the Central Plateau with the cities of Hinche and Mirebalais; and the South and South-East Departments and their main cities, Les Cayes and Jacmel. Rural retailers generally travel once or twice a month to larger cities such as Port au Prince or Cap Haitian to purchase food and other imported products from wholesalers who import primarily from the United States, Europe, China, the Dominican Republic, and Panama. Products in Haiti are generally distributed through regional wholesalers, who in turn supply small and rural shopkeepers. Most of these transactions are paid for in cash. Businesspeople complain of the inconsistency of customs in which taxes are assessed. This causes uncertainty and makes trading cumbersome.

American Airlines, JetBlue, and Spirit all have daily flights between Port au Prince and their respective hubs in Miami, Fort Lauderdale, New York JFK, Boston, and Orlando. Eastern Airlines has flights twice a week between Port-au-Prince and New York JFK. Air France offers flights from Port au Prince to Miami International airport 4 days a week. Missionary Flights International (MFI) makes regular bi-weekly flights to Haiti transporting supplies, missionaries and their family, and the missionary airline Agape also makes regular flights to Port au Prince. IBC Airways, based out of Florida, provides cargo flights to Cap Haitian. Due COVID19 flight reduction, American Airlines has not yet restarted its international daily round trip flights connecting Cap Haitian to Miami, Florida. These flights provide another opportunity to strengthen commercial ties between South Florida and Northern Haiti.

Although the Haitian government is prioritizing infrastructure development, its roads, electricity grids, and water systems are in poor condition. Auto routes remain the primary conduit for the movement of goods in Haiti, leaving businesses dependent upon often-unpaved interior routes vulnerable to delays and impasses.

Using an Agent to Sell U.S. Products and Services

Many foreign firms conduct business in Haiti through local agents and distributors. Under Haitian law, two parties are free to negotiate a contractual agreement and do not require the government of Haiti's supervision

or approval. Agents are usually compensated on a commission basis. A good local agent may play an important role for U.S. companies as they have detailed knowledge of local conditions. The Haitian Ministry of Commerce and Industry may also assist with identifying local agents. The Haiti Service Provider portal (HSP) provides a list to international investors looking for suppliers to support their businesses in Haiti. Foreign businesses should conduct due diligence when selection a local distributor or agent.

The U.S. Embassy in Port au Prince is available to assist U.S. exporters to find agents and distributors through the U.S. Department of Commerce International Partner Search (IPS) program. It is prudent to choose an agent or distribution and sales channels distributor after visiting Haiti to survey the situation and interview candidates firsthand. Other fee-based services carried out by the U.S. Embassy's Commercial Section include company profile reports, the Gold Key Service, single company promotions, and contact lists.

Establishing an Office

The Center for the Facilitation of Investment (CFI) is Haiti's national investment promotion agency, mandated to promote investments and help potential investors find and take advantage of opportunities in Haiti. Created by presidential decree on January 31, 2006, the CFI functions as an independent bureau under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. The CFI's mission is to work to attract investments that contribute to the development of the country, diversify the economy, strengthen supply chains, and stimulate job creation. Although the CFI has proposed the development of a "one-stop" project for streamlining the process of doing businesses in Haiti in the past, this project has not come to fruition. While a local partner can assist with navigating the challenges of Haiti's business environment, care should be taken to ensure bona fides, particularly when doing business remotely, as corruption is endemic in Haiti (see "Due Diligence" section).

Rules for establishing a business include the following:

- All companies incorporated in Haiti must have a minimum of three shareholders; one must be a Haitian national and a company board member;
- Haitian legislation does not establish a minimum requirement for Haitian nationals to own shares of capital stock; and
- The founding members of the corporation must establish nominal value for the capital stock.

Commercial rent prices vary greatly depending on the area and departments. Costs are usually per square meter with with either monthly or yearly payment plans.

Franchising

There are no specific regulatory laws for franchising. The government of Haiti does not restrict private citizens from establishing franchises. U.S. companies with franchises or affiliated local partners in Haiti include: Office1 Superstore, Radio Shack, Federal Express (FedEx), Culligan Water Technologies, Coca Cola, Pepsico, NAPA Auto Parts, Avis Rent-a-Car, Hertz, Dollar, Thrifty, Budget Car Rental, Crowley, Domino's Pizza, Amazon, and Marriott. Franchising is still relatively new to Haiti with only a few U.S. businesses penetrating the Haitian market. While U.S. franchises such as Holiday Inn and Kentucky Fried Chicken came to Haiti in the 1980s and 1990s, one issue these brands faced was customizing to the local preferences.

Direct Marketing

Product marketing is an underutilized U.S. business opportunity. Many small Haitian producers make quality products ranging from foodstuffs to beauty products, but need help to market them to national and international audiences. Although the products are successful and are certified in Haiti, many brands lack recognition beyond the local communities they service. Products are often marketed using billboards and road signage.

Direct mail marketing is practically non-existent in Haiti considering that Haiti's postal service lacks the funds to operate at full capacity. Haiti has several well equipped marketing agencies including Blue Mango Studios, DigiPub and Dagmar.

Joint Ventures/Licensing

Foreigners are free to enter into joint ventures with Haitian citizens. The distribution of shares is a private matter between partners. Foreign companies are free to own private property in Haiti, and there are no restrictions on the repatriation of profits. The law does not, however, permit foreigners to own property or buildings alongside national borders, including the Haiti/Dominican border and maritime borders. Foreign citizens purchasing land in Haiti should be aware that Haiti's cadaster has not been effectively maintained and land disputes are common.

Express Delivery

Courier services are available in certain areas of the country, mainly in Port au Prince, through international and local express delivery companies. The most popular ones include DHL, FedEx, TNT, and UPS. The average delivery time from the United States to Port au Prince and vice-versa is one to three days, with about a two-day delay for packages that require customs clearance. Haitian customs may apply a 30 percent tax on packages valued over \$50.

Due Diligence

Due to corruption, intellectual property protection, and other concerns, it is always advisable to conduct due diligence on potential partners in Haiti. U.S. firms interested in doing business in Haiti should respond to trade opportunities and review market research information published on the U.S. Department of Commerce website. Foreign businesses should take care to ensure bona fides and maintain records such as receipts and acknowledgements of payment in dealing with both the government and commercial or non-profit enterprises (see "Market Entry Strategy").

eCommerce

Overview

E-Commerce is a slow-growing sector in Haiti, constrained by limited internet infrastructure and regulation. U.S. owned company Access Haiti has been successful with wireless Internet Service Providers (ISP). Natcom, a joint venture between the Vietnamese state-owned telecoms company Viettel and the government of Haiti, provides both cellular and internet service, and continues to work to expand its services nationwide. Cellular provider Digicel also offers internet service. The government of Haiti has made minimal progress to modernize the law that governs credit banking practices, security instruments, and laws on collateral. In early 2017, the Parliament enacted legislation making electronic signatures and electronic transactions legally binding, but no further action to improve laws governing credit banking practices have been taken since.

Despite the principles established by the law on electronic signatures, the Haitian justice system lacks a specialized unit to effectively investigate abuses committed with electronic devices. A cybercrime bill to limit scams, incitement to violence, threats and forgery has not yet been ratified by the Parliament. Haiti's national domain is ".ht."

Amazon

In November 2019, Amazon HT cash certified debuted its air delivery service in Haiti. All online orders are to be purchased at selected locations and subject to an additional 40 percent charge fee, customs rate of 30 percent and TCA 10 percent. Delivery takes 7 to 10 business days through warehouse in Miami to be picked up at selected stores in the country.

Online Payment

Cash payments, checks, and bank transfers are the preferred methods of payment used in Haiti. Phone and online payments are only offered by a few companies.

E-Commerce Intellectual Property Rights

There are currently no laws in place to regulate electronic intellectual property rights.

Mobile E-Commerce

Mobile banking is becoming increasingly popular and is seen as a more secure and reliable alternative to mainstream banks, which are subject to service disruptions and street crime. The sector is composed of the country's two cell-phone providers, Digicel and Natcom. Under a mandate from the Haitian Central Bank, both providers are using a bank-led partnership to deliver their mobile money services to their customers. Standard services include cash in/cash out, airtime purchases, formal bill payment, informal payroll, international remittances, and repayment loans.

Digital Marketing

Many companies and informal business owners are taking advantage of social media platforms to maximize their online presence and boost their brand visibility.

Social Media

Social media has expanded in Haiti. Haitians turn to social media for breaking political news and to critique the government, particularly over WhatsApp and Twitter. Utilized as a mechanism for sharing information, social media can be particularly helpful for information-sharing in times of crisis and natural disaster.

A study by the firm Safitek Research published in April 2019 confirms no less than 94 percent of smartphone users are connected to social networks. WhatsApp instant messaging is the most popular social network, used by 85 percent of smartphone owners, while Facebook is used by 55 percent. Fifteen percent of smartphone owners use Youtube, 14 percent use Instagram, and 6 percent use Twitter. Less than 11 percent of homes have an internet connection, and Wi-Fi access remains limited. The lack of Wi-Fi access makes most users dependent on mobile data purchases to gain online access. This limitation in Internet access makes mobile phones the primary tools used to access the Internet.

Selling Factors & Techniques

Overview

U.S. companies commonly use an official representative or distributor to enter the Haitian market because the Haitian commercial code does not allow foreigners to engage in wholesale or retail businesses without first obtaining a professional license. Such agents or representatives typically work in Port au Prince and distribute products throughout the country.

Companies usually market products with billboards, road signage, radio and television advertising. Advertising campaigns are carried out in Haitian Creole and French. Firms also promote heavily at carnivals and music concerts, by supporting the national soccer team, and in international sports tournament broadcasts. Beverage firms have also run successful bottle cap promotions.

Trade Promotion & Advertising

While there is a growing number of advertising professionals and commercial producers in Haiti, the media reports that advertising revenue continued to decline in 2019. Billboards, radio, and TV commercials are popular advertising venues, and marketing companies typically use commercial flyers to target the higher social strata. In Port au Prince, billboard fees can cost thousands of dollars. In the outlying municipalities, advertisers pay billboard fees to the mayor’s office of the municipality where the billboards are displayed. As most Haitians acquire information via radio, radio still dominates the advertising sector. Per 2019 data released by Haitian telecommunications regulator CONATEL Conseil National des Télécommunications), there are 398 legal sound broadcasting stations on the territory, including about 60 community radio stations, seven radio stations on the AM band. The FM band in Haiti is oversaturated by 158 percent. Most radio stations broadcast 17 to 19 hours a day. There are 105 television stations operating in Haiti, including 36 TV stations in Port au Prince, 41 others in the provinces and more than 40 radio-television stations. A large number of broadcasting stations operate irregularly. Some stations operate with technical parameters that do not comply with established standards thus causing harmful interference to existing telecommunications systems.

Radio is one of the most consumed media in Haiti and is accessible at low cost. The population has access to it even with their mobile phones. Despite digital information and communication technology (ICT) alternatives, Haitian radio remains reliable and popular. It allows real-time interaction and remains the preferred channel of communication, particularly in times of crisis or disaster.

Outside Port-au-Prince, there are a few local television channels in other departments of the country broadcasting in analog mode, often with poor quality transmission. However, these television stations remain important to the people in these regions because they broadcast local content every day, covering regional life that Port au Prince channels might not cover.

Advertising is regularly viewed in the daily newspapers, such as “Le Nouvelliste,” and “Le National” or through local Haitian TV channels and radio stations. Television-based advertisements have been increasing over the years, but this occurs primarily in Haiti’s largest cities. Cable TV subscriptions are available through three cable providers: Tele Haiti, NuTV, and Canal+. To cater to a wider audience, cable providers also offer up to 250 foreign (Latin American, European, and Caribbean) and many American channels such as CBS, ABC, NBC, FOX, HBO, TNT, ESPN, and CNN. However, some remote areas in the countryside still lack access to cable TV. The lack of any rating system makes actual audience reach by radio or broadcast television hard to assess. Cell phone penetration in Haiti remains high with the ITU estimating over 58 percent penetration rates in 2018. The internet penetration rate has increased to 32.5 percent. Digicel maintains the largest market share in the tightly owned and operated SMS advertising sector.

Number of radio stations and cable providers per department, per CONATEL and cable companies:

Department	FM Stations	Percentage of saturation	Cable
OUEST (West)	106	212	3
SUD-EST (Southeast)	32	64	2
NIPPES	16	32	1
SUD (South)	45	90	2
GRANDE-ANSE	22	44	1
CENTRE (Center)	28	56	2

ARTIBONITE	67	134	2
NORD and NORD-EST (North and North-East)	55	110	1
NORD-OUEST (North-West)	28	56	1

Pricing

There is no fixed pricing structure, but the government imposes restrictions on the mark-up of some products. For example, retailers are prohibited from increasing the sale price of pharmaceutical products by more than 40 percent. Prices of petroleum products are strictly controlled. Haiti has the highest port fees in the hemisphere as well as various import taxes and duties that apply to all imported products. These associated costs add approximately 35 percent to the final sale price of imported products.

Large European and Asian companies compete against U.S. manufacturers of large-scale equipment and services. Contraband goods, low-priced and low-quality counterfeit products create a grey market at the disadvantage of legitimate distributors.

Sales Service/Customer Support

Most companies operating in Haiti are limited in their customer service capabilities. U.S. manufacturers need to adequately demonstrate they can supply spare parts and provide technical assistance. Training and monitoring local service providers is advisable.

The use of ATM machines is limited to urban areas. Most ATM machines can be found at banks, super markets, a few gas stations, and the Port au Prince international airport. Some phone providers and cable and internet providers, including banking institutions provide customer assistance after hours.

Local Professional Services

Several business and industry associations in Haiti offer mechanisms to identify business partners. The most common type of professional services include staffing services, consultation services, accounting services, translation and legal services. Credit reporting is in its infancy in Haiti and is difficult to perform, although the Central Bank in Haiti established a database to give commercial banks access to information such as the credit history of loan applicants. In-person meetings are required to open accounts, process loan applications, and add new members.

Principal Business Associations

Several business and industry associations in Haiti offer mechanisms to identify business partners. The most prominent associations include:

The American Chamber of Commerce in Haiti (AmCham)

Angle Rue Panamericaine et Impasse des Hotels

Ritz Kinam

Pétion-Ville, Haïti

HT6140

Tel: (509) 2940-3024

Fax: (509) 2811-9092

Email: info@amchamhaiti.com / lsaintcyr@aic.ht

Web: www.amchamhaiti.com

(Mr. Laurent Saint-Cyr, President)

(Ms. Erika Vaval Rosenthal, Executive Director)

For additional information please visit the AmCham website: <http://amchamhaiti.com/home/>

Haitian Manufacturers Association (ADIH)

21, Rue Borno, Pétion-Ville, Haiti

B.P. 15199

Tel. (509) 2946-1211

Email: adminidtration@adih.ht / info@adih.ht

Web: www.adih.ht

(Mr. Wilhelm Lemke, President)

(Ms. Sophia Joseph Riboul, Executive Director)

Haitian Canadian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCIHC)

Hotel Visa Lodge, Suite 219

Rue des Nimes

Route de l'Aéroport

Port-au-Prince, Haïti

Tel: (509) 2813-0773

Email: ccihcsecretariat@gmail.com

Web: www.ccihc.com

(Mr. Claudel Dumas, President)

(Mrs. Nancy Dubosse, Executive Director)

Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH)

Adresse : 4^{ème} étage, Immeuble Digicel, #151 angle Ave Jean Paul II & imp. Duverger, Turgeau

Port-au-Prince, Haïti

Tel : (509) 2946-7777 / 2943-1173

Email: directionexecutive@ccih.org.ht / info@cciouest.com

Website: <http://www.ccih.org.ht>

(Mr. Frantz Bernard Craan, President)

(Ms. Beatrice Ilias, Executive Director)

Association Haïtienne pour le Développement des Technologies de l'Information et de la Communication
(AHTIC)

29 2ieme Ruelle Nazon

Local Infotonic Haiti

Bourdon, Haïti

Tel : (509) 2942-1966

E-mail : secretariat@ahtic.ht

(Mr. Max Larson Henry, President)

Haitian Tourism Association (ATH)

18 Rue Moïse

Petion-Ville, Haïti

Tel : (509) 2946-8484

E-mail : rainaforbin@yahoo.com

(Ms. Raina Forbin, President)

(Ms. Jennica Germain, Executive Director)

Franco-Haitian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CFHCI)

5 Rue Goulard

HT 6140

Petion-Ville - Haïti

Tel: (509) 3949-5449 / 2227-3436

Email: cfhci@yahoo.fr

Website: www.chambrefrancohaitienne.com

(Mr. Geoffrey Handal, President)

(Ms. Ella Alexandra Joseph, Executive Director)

Association for Micro-Enterprise Corporations (ACME)

4, impasse Pierre Legrand

Puits-Blain

Petion-Ville, Haiti

Tel : (509) 2813-0545 / 2813-1972 / 2949-0101 / 2940-1364

E-mail: infos@acmehaiti.com

Website: <https://acmehaiti.com/>

National Association of Microfinance Institutions of Haiti (ANIMH)

7 Impasse Price-Mars, Rue Boisrond Canal

Freres

Petion-Ville, Haiti

Tel : (509) 2941-6464 / 3648-5767

(Chantal Mascary, Administrator)

(Daphne Louissaint, President)

E-mail : chantalmascary@yahoo.com

info@animhati.net

Board of Conciliation and Arbitration of Haiti (CCAH)

4eme etage Building Digicel, 151, Angle Ave. Jean Paul II et imp. Duverger

Turgeau, Haiti

Tel: 2940-5142 / 2940-5144

Email: ccah-haiti@hotmail.com

Haitian Association of Construction Companies

108, Rue Lambert

Petion-Ville, Haiti

Tel : (509) 3933-5707

E-mail : ahec1996@yahoo.fr

Association Nationale des Medias Haitiens (ANMH)

20, Ave Lamartiniere, Apt 9

Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Tel : (509) 3410-5596 / 3727-8539

Email: jadesro@yahoo.fr

National Association of Importers and Distributors of Pharmaceutical Products (ANIDPP)

41, Rue Lambert, 3eme etage
Petion-Ville, Haiti
Tel: (509) 3449-5575 / 3487-6641
Email: anipdd@gmail.com

National Association of Distributors [Gas Stations] of Petroleum Products (ANADIPP)
401, Route de Delmas
Local Dubois Shopping Center
BP 1379
Port-au-Prince, Haïti
Tel : (509) 3462-1296
Email: anadipp@hainet.net

Professional Association of Banks (APB)
133, Rue Faubert
Petion-Ville, Haïti
HT6140
Tel: (509) 3748-8852
Email: apbhaiti@hotmail.com

Chamber of Maritime Companies Association (AMARH)
360 Boulevard la Saline,
Port-au-Prince, Haïti
Tel: (509) 3175-1177
Email: ebaussan@agemar.com
(Mr. Edouard Baussan, President)

Association of Mango Exporters (ANEM)
Santo 20, Route National #3
Croix des Bouquets, Haïti
Tel: (509) 4240-3919

Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Professionals of the North (CCIPN)

115, Rue 13 B
Cap-Haitien, Haïti
Tel : (509) 3754-2939 / 3457-1001/ 509-2260-1951
(Marc Georges, President)
Email: ccipnispn89@gmail.com / georgesmarc@hotmail.com

Chamber of Commerce, Industry and the Professionals of Croix-des-Bouquets
11, Rue Republicaine
Croix-des-Bouquets
Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Tel : (509) 3734-0094 / 2238-8001
E-mail : jjerrickbrutus@hotmail.com

Chamber of Commerce, Industry and the Professionals of the South
Quai des Cayes
Les Cayes, Haiti
Port-au-Prince Contact :
c/o Agrisupply, 172 Rue du Centre, Port-au-Prince
Tel : (509) 2940-0034
(Pierre-Antoine Borgat, President)
E-mail : chambredecommercesud@hotmail.com / chambredecommercesud@yahoo.com

Chamber of Commerce, Industry and the Professionals of the Grand'Anse
13 Angle des Rues Alexandre Petion et Saint Leger Pierre-Louis
Jeremie, Haiti
President : Monode Joseph
Tel : (509) 3721-0685 / (509) 3327-5466
E-mail : infocciga@gmail.com

Société Nationale des Parcs Industriels (SONAPI)
Blvd Toussaint Louverture
Route de l'Aéroport
Port-au-Prince, Haïti

Tel : (509) 3750-2323 / 2141-4200 / 2141-4700

E-mail : parcindustriel@yahoo.com

Caracol Industrial Park (PIC)

Route de Caracol

Caracol, Dept du Nord Est

Tel : (509) 2941-0290 / 3750-2323

Email : info.caracol@ute.gouv.ht

Website : <http://www.ute.gouv.ht/caracol>

Cosa Industrial Park

Route Nationale No. 1, Chancerelles

Port-au-Prince, Haïti

Tel: (509) 3866-7558 / 3701-0077

Email: Shodecosa@yahoo.com

Website: www.shodecosa.com

(Ms. Youri Mevs, General Director)

Airport Industrial Park Transact S.A.

Boulevard Toussaint Louverture

Fleuriot Tabarre

Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Tel: (509) 2245-9616

Center for the Facilitation of Investments

116, Ave. Jean Paul II, Turgeau

Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Tel : (509) 2811-6234

E-mail : info@cfihaiti.com

Website: <http://www.cfihaiti.com>

Ms. Tessa Jacques Antoine, General Director

To view market research reports by the U.S. Commercial Service visit the following website: <http://export.gov/mrktresearch/index.asp> and click on Country and Industry Market Reports.

Please note that these reports are only available to U.S. citizens' companies. There is no fee but registration to the site is required. Please click on the link below for information on trade events: <http://export.gov/tradeevents/index.asp>.

Limitations on Selling U.S. Products and Services

The government of Haiti does not impose discriminatory requirements on foreign products and services. However, investment in certain sectors, such as health, agriculture, and maritime, requires special authorization from the government of Haiti. Investment in "sensitive" sectors, such as electricity, water, and telecommunications, requires Haitian government concession as well as authorization from the appropriate government agency. In general, natural resources are considered to be the property of the state. As a result, prospecting, exploring, or exploiting mineral and energy resources requires concessions and permits from the Bureau of Mining and Energy, in the Ministry of Public Works. Mining, prospecting, and operating permits may only be granted to firms and companies established and resident in Haiti.

Trade Financing

Methods of Payment

Cash is the most commonly used form of payment in Haiti; debit cards and credit cards are accepted by some established business. For information about the methods of payment or other trade finance options, please read the Trade Finance Guide available at www.Export.gov/TradeFinanceGuide.

Banking Systems

Residents as well as foreigners can hold bank accounts in Haiti in local currency as well as in USD. Accounts can be opened immediately at no additional fee to the minimum required deposit.

The required documents to open an individual bank account include:

- Valid identity card or passport
- Resident Permit
- Proof of address (rent receipt, electricity bill, accommodation contract)
- A minimum of HTG 2,500
- A completed application form

Required documents to open a bank account as a legal entity/company include:

- A completed application form
- Company bylaws
- Copy of the edition of the national gazette, "Le Moniteur," in which company was announced as registered
- Proof of company address
- Minutes of the last General Assembly electing, amending, or renewing the Board of Directors
- Valid license to operate and Tax Identification number of Company
- An initial deposit of 25,000 HTG (~\$230) if account is opened in local currency
- An initial deposit of USD 2,500 if account opened in US currency

- For each signatory on the account: two valid pieces of identification are required
- Proof of address for each signatory on account

Foreign Exchange Controls

The government of Haiti does not impose restrictions on the inflow or outflow of capital. The Law of 1989 governs international transfer operations and remittances. Remittances are Haiti's primary source of foreign currency and are equivalent to approximately 30 percent of GDP.

There are no restrictions or controls on foreign payments or other fund transfer transactions. While restrictions apply on the amount of money that may be withdrawn per transaction, there is no restriction on the amount of foreign currency that residents may hold in bank accounts, and there is no ceiling on the amount residents may transfer abroad.

The Haitian gourde (HTG) is convertible for commercial and capital transactions. Banks and currency exchange companies set their rates at the market-clearing rate. The BRH publishes a daily reference rate, which is a weighted average of exchange rates offered in the formal and informal exchange markets. The market determines the exchange rate for the HTG. The difference between buying and selling rates is generally less than five percent. Declining aid inflows and low domestic production led to a significant depreciation of the HTG in FY2019.

The government of Haiti has expressed an intention to put in place stricter measures to monitor money transfers in accordance with Haiti's efforts to deter illicit cash flows, as mandated by the 2013 Anti-Money Laundering Act and the expected implementation of an agreement on the United States Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA).

U.S. Banks & Local Correspondent Banks

Citibank is the only bank in Haiti, and primarily serves corporate accounts. There are no local correspondent banks.

Protecting Intellectual Property

Haitian law protects copyrights, inventions, patent rights, industrial designs and models, special manufacturer's marks, trademarks, and business names. The law penalizes persons or enterprises involved in infringement, fraud, or unfair competition. In order to ensure the protection of these rights, the law requires certain formalities, such as registration with the Ministry of the Interior and Territorial Communities. The Haitian constitution recognizes certain scientific, literary, and artistic intellectual property rights. According to the 2005 decree in force in Haiti, the owner of a copyright has the right to exploit his or her works, as well to reserve or share them. The right exists throughout the life of the owner and 60 years after his or her death.

The Haitian Copyright Office (BHDA) guarantees the protection of the brand name or trademark as well as the concept. In order to benefit from these privileges, enterprises or individuals must first register their work with the BHDA. Weak enforcement mechanisms, inefficient courts, and judges' limited knowledge of commercial law compromise the effectiveness of statutory protections. Haiti ranks globally 128 out of 129 in the International Property Rights Index, based on a score of 2.7 out of a possible 10. Haiti is a signatory to the Buenos Aires Convention of 1910, the Paris Convention of 1883 regarding patents, and the Madrid Agreement regarding trademarks. Haiti has ratified the Berne Copyright Convention.

In any foreign market, companies should consider several general principles for effective management of their intellectual property. For background on these principles, please click on the links to the following two articles:

[Protecting Intellectual Property](#) and [Stopfakes.gov](#) for more resources. The U.S. Commercial Service can provide a list of local lawyers upon request.

IP Attaché Contact:

Cynthia C. Henderson
Regional Patent and Trade Office Attaché for Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean
U.S. Trade Center
United States Embassy, Mexico City
Tel: +52 (55) 5080-2189

Selling to the Public Sector

Many Haitian government agencies finance public works projects through grants, and in some cases borrowing, from multilateral development banks. Tenders are often used to open bidding on Haitian government contracts and are advertised through newspapers and government websites. Tenders are often exclusive to Haitian companies when the necessary goods and services to complete a project are found in Haiti. However, when the government procures goods and services that are not produced in Haiti and must be imported for the completion of projects, tenders are open to international participation. Open tenders from the Haitian government are posted to the website of the National Commission for Public Procurement (CNMP), available only in French, at cnmp.gouv.ht. They are also listed in the newspaper Le Nouvelliste.

U.S. companies bidding on Government tenders may also qualify for U.S. Government advocacy. A unit of the U.S. Commerce Department's International Trade Administration, the Advocacy Center coordinates U.S. Government interagency advocacy efforts on behalf of U.S. exporters bidding on public sector contracts with international governments and government agencies. The Advocacy Center works closely with our network of the U.S. Commercial Service worldwide and inter-agency partners to ensure that exporters of U.S. products and services have the best possible chance of winning government contracts. Advocacy assistance can take many forms but often involves the U.S. Embassy or other U.S. Government agencies expressing support for the U.S. bidders directly to the foreign government. Consult [Advocacy for Foreign Government Contracts](#) for additional information.

Financing of Projects

Public projects are often financed through multilateral development banks, international organizations, and state actors. Investment projects in Haiti are eligible for consideration of financing from the [U.S. International Development Finance Corporation](#), known as the DFC.

Multilateral Development Banks and Financing Government Sales. Price, payment terms, and financing can be a significant factor in winning a government contract. Many governments finance public works projects through borrowing from the Multilateral Development Banks (MDB). A helpful guide for working with the MDBs is the [Guide to Doing Business with the Multilateral Development Banks](#). The U.S. Department of Commerce's (USDOC) International Trade Administration (ITA) has a Foreign Commercial Service Officer stationed at each of the five different Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs): the African Development Bank; the Asian Development Bank; the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development; the Inter-American Development Bank; and the World Bank.

Learn more by contacting the Commercial Liaison Office to the [Inter-American Development Bank](#).

Business Travel

Facilities for visiting businesspersons have improved significantly over the years. Hotels offer a full range of business services, including internet connectivity, voicemail and business meeting areas. Popular hotels for business travel include Hotel Karibe, NH Hotels' El Rancho, Kinam Hotel, Servotel, Visa Lodge, Royal Oasis,

Marriott, and Satama. Reservations can be made by telephone, fax, e-mail, or online travel agencies. Currently, only the Marriott, Royal Oasis, Karibe, Servotel, Satama, and Kinam hotels provide online booking service through their websites.

Many hotels have a well-trained staff of planners, decorators, chefs, and waiters available to host professional special events such as dinners, company launch events, forums, conferences, seminars, and staff parties.

Business Customs

Haitians are open to working with foreign investors and are particularly well disposed towards U.S. investors. Most Haitian businesspeople speak English fluently but appreciate salutation in local languages. Most meetings with Haitians begin with introductory conversation about backgrounds and families to create a sense of personal connection and to learn more about meeting participants. Appointments with Haitian business operators should be made in advance. The most effective mode of communication with Haitian firms is over the phone, and business and/or personal e-mail. Haitian businesspeople frequently use the WhatsApp messaging platform as a method of communication, although care should be taken to ensure bona fides.

Invitations to restaurants for meetings are appreciated, and business is discussed in restaurants and hotels as frequently as in offices. Haitian businesspeople generally dress in business attire for meetings and are generally formal during presentations and speeches. Business phone calls before 8am, on Sundays, and on holidays are uncommon unless in case of emergency. Meetings often begin and end later than scheduled.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, President Moïse encouraged many employers to allow teleworking when possible. Unfortunately, many private companies and state institutions are not equipped with adequate technology for teleworking.

Travel Advisory

As of September 2020, the State Department Travel Advisory for Haiti was at Level 4 – Do Not Travel. The Department of State reports on the latest [Country Information for Haiti](#) with information on such matters as health conditions, crime, customs regulations, entry requirements, and the location of the U.S. Embassy. Please review up-to-date travel advisory information at <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories/haiti-travel-advisory.html>.

U.S. citizens living or traveling in Haiti are encouraged to enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) to receive important safety and security announcements, and to make it easier for the Embassy or Consulate to contact U.S. citizens in the event of an emergency. <https://step.state.gov/>

If you are planning a business trip, always check travel.state.gov before you go.

Visa Requirements

U.S. Companies that require travel of foreign businesspersons to the United States are advised that security evaluations are handled via an interagency process. Visa applicants should go to the following link: [State Department Visa Website](#)

Visitors to Haiti are required to have a valid passport. Visitors from the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, France, and Germany may not require a visa. However, if a U.S. citizen expects to be in the country for more than 90 days, they need to apply for an extension of stay with the Haitian Immigration Service in order to obtain an exit visa. It is highly recommended to do this prior to the 90-day expiration date.

An airport tax of \$55 is required from every traveler departing Haiti, and is included in the price of airline tickets. All foreign passport holders six years of age and older traveling to Haiti must pay a tourist fee of \$10.00 at the airport upon entry. Foreign passport holders with the place of birth listed as Haiti in their passport are exempted from this fee. A green entry card is given to all foreign passport holders upon their

arrival on Haitian territory. This document is required and is collected by the authorities when the traveler leaves the country: its loss can cause difficulties with the immigration services when leaving the country.

A publication (“Guide for Business Representatives”) is available for sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, 20402, telephone 202-512-1800, or fax 202-512-2250. Business travelers to Haiti seeking appointments with U.S. Embassy officials in Port-au-Prince should contact the Economic Section in advance of their arrival date by calling +509-2229-8000 and asking to be transferred to the Economic section or via e-mail at Papecon@state.gov

Haitian Immigration Service

Joseph Cianciulli

Directeur General

171 Avenue John Brown, Lalue

Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Tel: +509-2244-1737

Embassy of the Republic of Haiti

2311 Massachusetts Ave., N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20008

Phone: +1 202-332-4090

Fax: 202-745-7215

Currency

The gourde is the national currency of Haiti, with HTG as the currency code. The currency symbol is G, and the most frequent HTG conversion transaction is between USD andHTG.

Telecommunications/Electric

There are two cellular companies in Haiti and they both use GSM wireless cellular phone technology: Digicel, the company with the largest market share, and its main competitor Natcom, a Vietnamese/Haitian state-owned joint venture created in April 2010. Natcom provides high-speed bandwidth through its network of 6,000 kilometers of fiber optic cable broadband throughout Haiti, which allows high-speed stability and a high-quality connection. Per CONATEL March 2020 data, the proportion of voice calls that took at least 30 seconds to connect was 7.76 percent for Digicel calls and 9.01 percent for Natcom calls.

The distribution of electricity is sporadic, usually ranging from 3 to 15 hours on a daily basis, for those buildings which are connected to an electricity grid, although blackouts lasting multiple days also occur. Most large buildings and organizations have diesel generators.

Transportation

In order to rent a car and drive in Haiti, visitors will need a valid driver’s license. When in Haiti, drive on the right-hand side of the road. The roads are often unmarked, with very few traffic lights, and the speed limit is

often not posted. Roads other than major thoroughfares are often unpaved. It is illegal to drink and drive in Haiti, and it is a legal requirement to wear a seat belt.

The major car rental agencies located in Port au Prince include Hertz, Avis, Budget, Dollar, Thrifty, and Secom. Avis is the only major car rental company outside of the capital, with two locations in the North Department. Air travel is possible from Port au Prince to many of the provinces. The islands of Ile-a-Vache, Ile de la Tortue, Petite and Grand Cayemite, Grosse Caye, and Ile de la Gonave are reachable by ferry or small sailing/motor boats. Only the Ile de la Gonave, has an airstrip, though it is rarely used.

Though distances are short, travel in Haiti, including in the Port au Prince area, is extremely slow. Traffic jams are a common occurrence, and drivers can be unpredictable. Haiti has eight national highways to facilitate travel to the cities outside of Port au Prince, but many are in bad condition. Due to poor drainage and construction, flooding is recurrent during rainy season. Self-driving in Haiti can be challenging for visitors not used to the mountainous terrain. Privately operated taxicabs and other public transportation vehicles are not recommended for use. Visitors are advised to hire a driver for ground transportation.

Language

French and Haitian Creole are the official languages of Haiti. However, English is widely spoken in the business community and Spanish is spoken to a lesser extent.

Health

Medical facilities are limited, particularly in areas outside of the capital. Doctors and hospitals often expect immediate cash payment for health care services. U.S. medical insurance is not always valid or accepted outside the United States, and some U.S. insurance companies that offer the international coverage may require an invoice claim refund. Travelers should confirm the validity of their insurance coverage before departing the U.S. The Medicare/Medicaid program does not provide for payment of medical services outside the United States. It is prudent to hold medical evacuation coverage when traveling to Haiti.

Local Time, Business Hours and Holidays

Government and commercial offices typically open between 8:00 AM and 9:00 AM and close between 3:30 PM and 5:00 PM. Retail businesses remain open until 6:00 PM. Supermarkets, depending on the area, may close at 7:00 PM or 8:00 PM, and observe their Sunday schedule on national holidays.

The Ministry of National Education and Vocational training sets the number of teaching hours in schools at 7.35 hours for primary and 8 hours for secondary. Most schools observe a 7:30am to 2:30pm schedule.

Effective June 29, 2020, the Haitian government set the national curfew (during which people cannot move about in public areas) from 12:00am to 4:00am due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Haitian Holidays for 2020 (officially published by Ministry of Communications):

January 1, Independence and New Year's Day

January 2, Ancestors' Day

February 25, Carnival

April 10, Good Friday

May 1, Labor and Agriculture Day

May 18, Haitian Flag day

June 11, Corpus Christi

August 15, Assumption Day

October 17, Death of Dessalines

November 1, All Saints' Day

November 2, All Souls' Day

November 18, Battle of Vertieres Day

December 25, Christmas

Haitian Holidays for 2021 (tentative, pending Ministry of Communications official announcement):

January 1, Independence and New Year's Day

January 2, Ancestors' Day

February 16, Carnival

April 2, Good Friday

May 1, Labor and Agriculture Day

May 18, Haitian Flag day

June 3, Corpus Christi

August 15, Assumption Day

October 17, Death of Dessalines

November 1, All Saints' Day

November 2, All Souls' Day

November 18, Battle of Vertieres Day

December 25, Christmas

Temporary Entry of Materials or Personal Belongings

There is no fee for the entry of personal belongings. However, a 0.25 percent unique rate is applied to goods entering under diplomatic concessions and for those that are on "temporary entry."

Goods that will be in the country temporarily must be imported under the temporary entry regime. Temporary entry refers to goods that will be processed before being re-exported. These goods are subject to a security deposit equivalent to one and a half times the duties and taxes payable under the release for consumption regime. This deposit is paid in the form of a bank check that will be released once the goods are re-exported. Goods that enter the country under the temporary entry regime and are then used for consumption purposes are taxed on the amount of their depreciation when they are re-exported.

All imported goods are subject to verification fees and administrative costs.

Travel Related Web Resources

Ministry of Tourism

Andy Durosier, Director General

8, Rue Legitime

Champs de Mars

HT 6112 - Port-au-Prince - HAITI

Tel: (509) 2949-2010 / 2949-2011 / 2223-5633

E-mail: info@haititourisme.gouv.ht

Tourist Association of Haiti: <http://athaiti.com>

Investment Climate Statement (ICS)

The U.S. Department of State's Investment Climate Statements provide country-specific information on the business climates of more than 170 countries and are prepared by economic officers stationed in embassies and posts around the world. They analyze a variety of economies that are or could be markets for U.S. businesses of all sizes. Click on the link to read [Haiti's Investment Climate Statement](#).

Political Environment

For background information on the political and economic environment of Haiti, please click on the following link: <https://www.state.gov/countries-areas/haiti/>.