

June 3, 2020

## Israel Looks Inward for Food Supply



Tel Aviv...The Covid-19 crisis has triggered a new assessment by Israel's food industry on sources of its food supply for Israelis. The industry has relied increasingly on imported foods, both in ingredients and in packaged goods. Israelis have developed an appetite for international foods as have consumers in countries all over the world. Almost every US supermarket has one or more International aisles. Those aisles were growing with the globalization of food production. Israel now is considering incentivizing farmers to grow more and to expand their farms. In fact, there has been a lively debate on the expropriation of land to build housing and industrial developments that may otherwise have been destined for farming. One particular concern is imported products from China which in recent years has acquired interests in Israeli companies including the mega dairy cooperative Tnuva. The US has been critical of the close Israeli-China ties including the fact that a Chinese company actually manages the Haifa port, Israel's major water gateway to the world. The US Navy uses Haifa as a major port of destination in the Mediterranean.