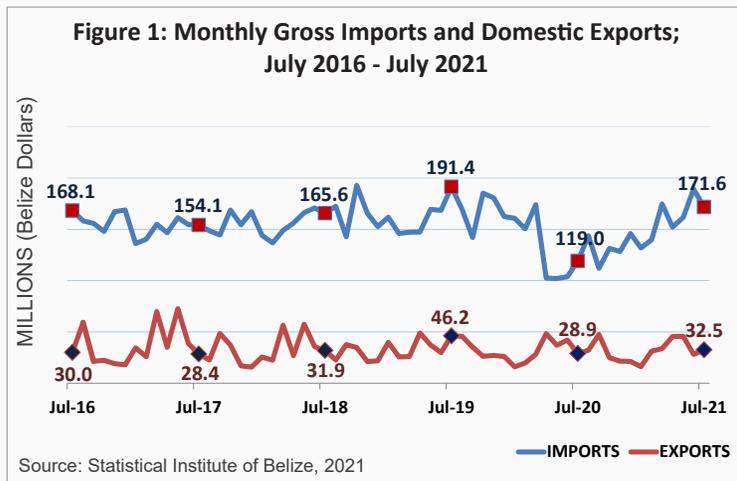




IMPORTS UP 44.2%, DOMESTIC EXPORTS UP 12.4% IN JULY 2021

IMPORTS

JULY 2021: During the month of July 2021, Belize's imported goods were valued at \$171.6 million. This was up considerably by 44.2 percent or \$52.6 million from \$119 million in July 2020, when the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which included drastically reduced demand for imported goods, resulted in significantly lower imports for that month (see Figure 1).



INCREASING CATEGORIES:

Every commodity category increased in July of this year, signaling a return to normal pre-pandemic import levels. Goods destined for the 'Commercial Free Zones' and 'Mineral Fuels and Lubricants' were the categories that saw the most striking increases for the month (see Figure 2).

Commercial Free Zones

Imports into the 'Commercial Free Zones' more than doubled, rising by \$15.6 million from \$13.9 million in July 2020 to \$29.5 million in July 2021, owing to increased imports across a variety of items, including footwear, fans and bags.

Mineral Fuels and Lubricants

Similarly, the 'Mineral Fuels and Lubricants' category also doubled, growing by \$15.6 million from \$12.9 million to \$28.4 million, an increase that was the result of higher prices for fuel and greater imports of bunker C fuel. Also contributing to this increase was the fact that no kerosene was imported in July of last year, while there was a shipment of this commodity in July of this year.

Manufactured Goods

Imports of 'Manufactured Goods' rose by 46 percent or \$8.3 million, from \$17.9 million in July 2020 to \$26.2 million in July 2021, on account of larger imports of construction materials, such as galvalume steel coils, corrugated steel rods and tiles.

Machinery and Transport Equipment

The 'Machinery and Transport Equipment' category grew by more than 30 percent or \$6.8 million, from \$21.5 million to \$28.3 million, due to bigger purchases of dielectric transformers, motor vehicles and computers.

Crude Materials

With heightened imports of treated pine lumber and used clothing for the month, the 'Crude Materials' category grew sharply from \$1.3 million in July of last year to \$4.6 million in July of this year.

Chemical Products

Imports of 'Chemical Products' went up slightly, from \$15.6 million to \$16.4 million, with increased purchases of PVC pipes, polyethylene resin and diagnostic testing kits being recorded for this category.

Oils and Fats

The 'Oils and Fats' category also saw a small increase, from \$1.6 million in July 2020 to \$2.2 million in July 2021, attributable mainly to greater imports of cooking oils.

FIRST SEVEN MONTHS OF THE YEAR: Merchandise imports for the period January to July 2021 totaled \$1.1 billion, representing a 22.8 percent or \$208.4 million increase from the same period last year, when imports totaled \$912.8 million. Almost all commodity categories went up during the period, as imports returned to pre-pandemic levels following the significantly reduced imports during the same period in 2020.

INCREASING CATEGORIES:

Manufactured Goods

Imports of 'Manufactured Goods' rose by 37 percent or more than \$49 million over the period, from \$131.5 million in 2020 to \$180.5 million in 2021, due largely to increased imports of construction materials such as steel pipes, corrugated steel rods and cement.

Mineral Fuels and Lubricants

Owing mainly to the rising cost of fuel on the world market, the 'Mineral Fuels and Lubricants' category grew by one-fourth or \$26.9 million, from \$106.3 million to \$133.2 million.

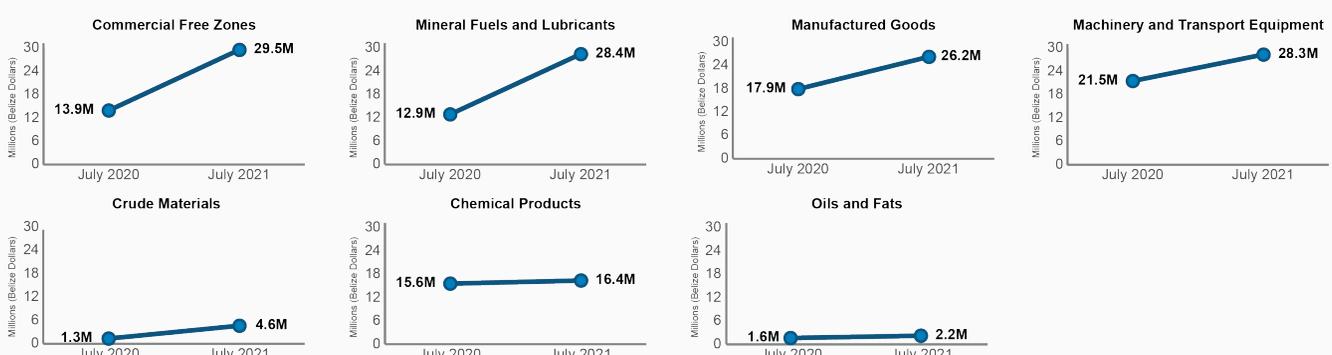
Commercial Free Zones

Goods destined for the 'Commercial Free Zones' went up by 20 percent or \$26.8 million, from \$132.6 million in 2020 to \$159.4 million in 2021, as a result of bigger imports of footwear, cigarettes and bags.

Beverages and Tobacco

Imports of 'Beverages and Tobacco' more than doubled during the first seven months of the year, rising by \$24.1 million from just under \$23 million to \$47.1 million, due for the most part to imports of beer meant for re-exportation.

Figure 2: Composition of Gross Imports by Type; July 2020 and July 2021



Machinery and Transport Equipment

With bigger imports of food and beverage processing machinery as well as tractor trucks, the 'Machinery and Transport Equipment' category increased by 13 percent or \$23.9 million, from \$181.3 million in 2020 to \$205.2 million in 2021.

Chemical Products

Imports of 'Chemical Products' went up by \$20.3 million, from just under \$98 million to \$118.3 million, a 21 percent increase that was mostly attributable to larger imports of diagnostic testing kits, biodiesel, and fertilizers.

Other Manufactures

Goods classified as 'Other Manufactures', including surveying equipment, lights and lighting fixtures, increased by 27 percent or \$17.5 million, from \$64.9 million in 2020 to \$82.4 million in 2021.

Food and Live Animals

Larger imports of various food items, including instant noodles, wheat, condensed milk and coffee creamer, led to a notable growth in the 'Food and Live Animals' category over the period, from \$130.8 million in 2020 to \$140.4 million in 2021.

Crude Materials

The 'Crude Materials' category grew by \$6.7 million, from \$12.1 million to \$18.8 million, as the country imported more treated pine lumber and used clothing over the seven-month period.

Designated Processing Areas

Imports into the 'Designated Processing Areas' went up from \$17.5 million in 2020 to almost \$20 million in 2021, the result of increased purchases of items such as computers, paper towels and oak.

DECREASING CATEGORIES:

Oils and Fats

The 'Oils and Fats' category recorded the only decrease for the period, falling from \$14.2 million to \$13.4 million, due to reduced imports of cooking oils over the first seven months of the year.

DOMESTIC EXPORTS

JULY 2021: Total domestic exports for July 2021 amounted to \$32.5 million, up by 12.4 percent or \$3.6 million from the \$28.1 million recorded for July of 2020 (see Figure 1).

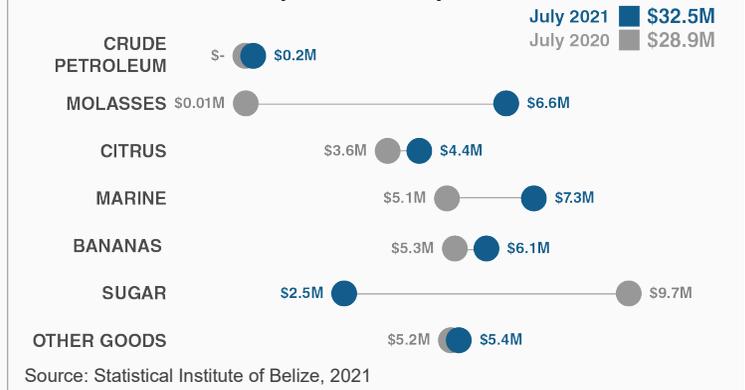
INCREASING CATEGORIES:

Molasses was the main contributor to this overall increase in earnings, as exports of this product surged from a mere \$0.01 million in July 2020 to \$6.6 million in July 2021. Marine exports also performed well during the month, with earnings rising by \$2.2 million, from \$5.1 million to \$7.3 million, owing almost entirely to improved sales of lobster tails. With boosted exports of orange concentrate during the month, revenues from citrus products rose from \$3.6 million in July 2020 to \$4.4 million in July 2021, while earnings from bananas went up from \$5.3 million to \$6.1 million. While there were no exports of crude petroleum in July of last year, this commodity recorded revenues amounting to \$0.2 million in July of this year (see Figure 3).

DECREASING CATEGORIES:

Sugar was the only commodity to have seen a notable decrease during the month, falling by \$7.2 million from \$9.7 million in July 2020 to \$2.5 million in July 2021. This was due to the fact that, while July of last year saw bulk sugar being shipped, only bagged sugar was exported in July of this year (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Composition of Domestic Exports by Type; July 2020 and July 2021



MAJOR DESTINATIONS:

As a result of the marked increase in exports of molasses and lobster tails, earnings from the United States of America doubled, from \$6.1 million July 2020 to \$12.7 million in July 2021. Similarly, with greater exports of orange concentrate and sugar to CARICOM during the month, revenues from this region increased by \$3.3 million, from \$3.7 million to almost \$7 million. On the other hand, while the United Kingdom was the main destination for the country's sugar exports in July of last year, no sugar was exported to this nation in July of this year. As a result, export earnings from this country dropped from \$11.5 million to \$6.4 million. Furthermore, with decreased exports of lobster products and bananas to the European Union, earnings from this region declined by \$2.1 million, from \$4.9 million in July 2020 to \$2.8 million in July 2021 (see Figure 4).

FIRST SEVEN MONTHS OF THE YEAR: Merchandise exports for the period January to July 2021 totaled \$232.9 million, up 5.8 percent or \$12.8 million from that same period last year, when total domestic exports were valued at \$220.1 million.

INCREASING CATEGORIES:

Earnings from molasses and animal feed were the main drivers of this overall increase, as revenues from both commodities almost doubled over the period. Earnings from animal feed rose from \$7.6 million in 2020 to \$14.8 million in 2021, while revenues from molasses went up from \$6.3 million to \$12.3 million. In addition, earnings from marine products grew by \$1.9 million, from \$20.2 million to \$22.1 million, due to improved conch exports. Revenues from bananas also increased over the period, from \$48.7 million in 2020 to \$49.9 million in 2021.

DECREASING CATEGORIES:

Notwithstanding the strong performances in the aforementioned exports, there were also notable decreases during the seven-month period. Despite a 7 percent increase in exported quantities of sugar, falling world market prices for this commodity resulted in a 5 percent or \$4 million drop in earnings, from \$75.6 million in 2020 to \$71.6 million in 2021. Revenues from citrus products were down by almost \$2.5 million, from \$29.7 million to \$27.3 million, owing to decreased exports of grapefruit concentrate, oranges and orange concentrate. Exports of red kidney beans, which had seen a spike due to a pandemic-driven increase in global demand in the early months of last year, stabilized within the first seven months of this year. As a result, revenues from this product were down by \$2.3 million, from \$10.2 million to \$7.9 million. The period also saw decreased earnings of black-eyed peas, from \$4.7 million in 2020 to just under \$3 million in 2021.

Figure 4: Composition of Exports by Destination; July 2021 (Millions of BZ Dollars)

