

Read Vietnam Trend

THE SITUATION OF HEALTH SUPPLEMENT PRODUCTS IN VIETNAM IN RECENT YEARS

Abstract

In Vietnam, Japanese health supplement products are quite familiar to the Vietnamese people with many brands and an increasing volume of imports each year. However, products from markets such as Singapore and the United States still dominate compared to those from other markets.

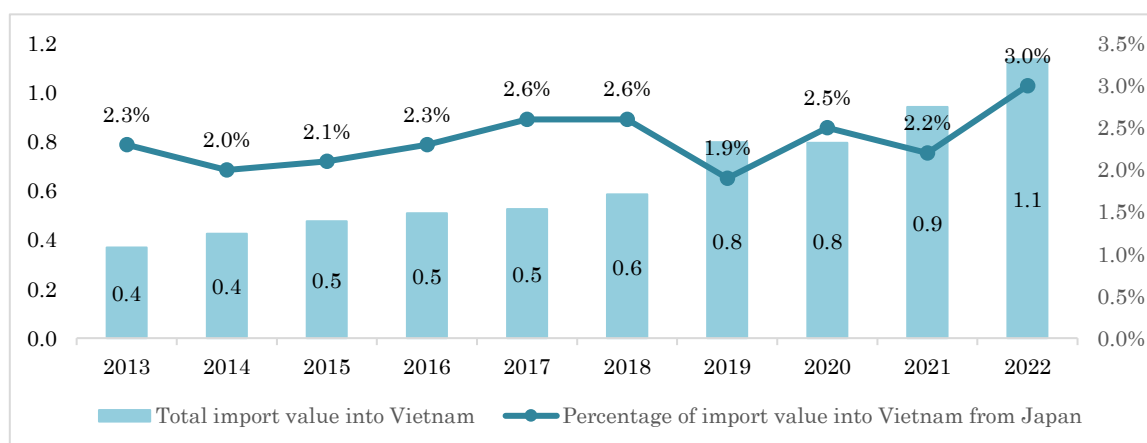
General context of the Vietnamese health supplement products market

These products have been imported into Vietnam since the 2000s and have grown steadily over the years, indicating that people are increasingly concerned about and desiring to improve their health. With the rising income and improving standard of living, people have more ability to afford these products. Additionally, the aging process is happening rapidly, especially after the Covid-19 pandemic, people pay more special attention to each individual's physical health and resistance. Meanwhile, modern lifestyles and unscientific diets cause the body to lack nutrients and need supplementation through supportive products. This growth is expected to continue to increase in the future as people increasingly recognize the supportive effects that these products bring.

The import value of health supplement products in Vietnam

The import value is large and growing year by year, but the percentage of import value from Japan is not much. Vietnam mainly imports from Singapore (24.4%), the United States of America (22.4%), Malaysia (6.1%), China (5.4%), and Korea (4.8%), with Japan ranking 11th, accounting for 2-3% of the total import value. The import value from Japan has increased over the years from 8.4 million USD in 2013 to 33.6 million USD in 2022. However, when considering the percentage of import value From Japan, there was a sharp decline in 2019 (<2%) but then recovered and increased higher and reached a value of 3% in 2022.

Import value of health supplement products into Vietnam, 2013-2022 (unit: billion US Dollar, %)



Source: ICT¹ (HS code: 210690)

¹ Trade map: <https://www.trademap.org/>



Japanese health supplement products in the Vietnamese market

In Japan, products labeled as dietary supplements are not regulated and are not subject to any supervision regarding issues including production method, ingredients or concentration, as well as product appearance. In contrast to the United States, the European Union and the Association of Southeast Asia both have their own legal frameworks for this product line². Some brands from Japan are known to Vietnamese people such as DHC, Orihiro, Unimat Riken, Kobayashi, Itoh, Daiichi Sankyo.

Vietnamese consumer behavior about using health supplement products

In Vietnam, only 21% of the Vietnamese population used health supplement products in 2017³, by the end of 2022, this figure had risen to over 60%. Despite the increasingly established role of health supplement products and their wider use in daily life, consumers still have concerns about product quality. These products are currently used mainly through word of mouth and are not officially prescribed by doctors⁴. According to a recent consumer survey by B&Company (in March, 2024), the benefits most expected by consumers when using health supplement products are Improving general health (75%), Maintaining a good appearance (18%) and Others (9%). Product selection for dietary supplements relies on recommendations from family or friends (74%), sellers (40%), pharmacists (26%), and the purchase location of these products is also through friends/acquaintances (nearly 40%) and pharmacies (30%)⁵.

Government direction

The direction for sustainable development of the health supplement products market was also discussed in a seminar (in December, 2022) attended by the Vietnam Food Safety Authority (Ministry of Health) and the Vietnam Association of Health supplement products. In 2022, 60-80% of these products in the Vietnamese market are domestically produced⁶. Along with the development of health supplement products, management faces certain difficulties, particularly in ensuring the quality of products sold and combating counterfeit products. In addition to penalties, in 2021 and 2022, the Vietnam Food Safety Authority issued numerous warnings on its website vfa.gov.vn, as well as on Facebook, YouTube, and e-commerce platforms. In 2021, 79 stores and 107 products in violation were processed, reviewed, and removed. In 2022, 1,145 stores in violation were processed⁷.

Prospects for the health supplement products market

Health supplement products will continue to be a highly promising business sector in the future. However, manufacturers and businesses still face many challenges, including inconsistencies in management mechanisms, product regulations, and most importantly, building trust with consumers⁸.

B&Company, Inc.

The first Japanese company specializing in market research in Vietnam.

The company's website publishes the results of industry and consumer surveys in Vietnam.

<https://www.b-company.jp>

² Kilala: <https://kilala.vn/van-hoa-nhat/nganh-tpcn-nhat-lao-dao-vi-khung-hoang-cua-kobayashi.html>

³ International Medical Consultants Company Limited: <https://imc.net.vn/tin-su-kien/hon-20-nguoi-viet-su-dung-thuc-pham-chuc-nang/>

⁴ Article 4, Clause 10 of Circular No. 52/2017/TT-BYT "Regulations on prescriptions and prescription of pharmaceuticals, biological products in outpatient treatment": <https://thuvienphapluat.vn/van-ban/The-thao-Y-te/Thong-tu-52-2017-TT-BYT-don-thuoc-va-ke-don-thuoc-hoa-duoc-sinh-pham-trong-dieu-tri-ngoai-tru-372634.aspx>

⁵ B&Company synthesized and analyzed based on a recent report conducted in early 2024.

⁶ Government News: <https://baochinhphu.vn/thuc-pham-chuc-nang-noi-chiem-60-80-thi-truong-trong-nuoc-102221214152509848.htm>

⁷ Communist Party of Vietnam - Online Newspaper: <https://dangcongsan.vn/kinh-te/phat-trien-ben-vung-thi-truong-thuc-pham-chuc-nang-628150.html>

⁸ Saigon Economy Online - magazine of the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City: <https://thesaigontimes.vn/thuc-pham-chuc-nang-manh-dat-mau-mo-voi-nhieuro-cao-can/>

