



Marketing Turkish Hazelnuts in the United States

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Executive Summary

This marketing plan outlines a comprehensive strategy to introduce and establish Turkish hazelnuts in the United States. Leveraging Turkey’s dominant global position – producing over 70% of the world’s hazelnuts – and capitalizing on the product’s superior taste, larger size, higher oil content, and exceptional nutritional benefits, the plan aims to reposition Turkish hazelnuts as a premium, sustainable, and ethically produced alternative to domestic offerings.

Situation Overview

Turkish hazelnuts have a long, storied history and are renowned for their quality, yet face challenges including climate change, aging orchards, and labor issues. In the U.S., despite robust local production (predominantly from Oregon), there is a growing opportunity driven by increased health awareness and a shift toward sustainable, high-quality foods. Consumers are increasingly seeking products that deliver both superior taste and a strong ethical narrative.

Goal

The primary objective is to capture market share in both business-to-consumer (B2C) and business-to-business (B2B) segments by positioning Turkish hazelnuts as a gourmet, healthful, and socially responsible ingredient. This involves penetrating new consumer segments, securing ingredient branding partnerships with major food manufacturers, and building a trusted premium brand.

Strategy and Target Market

The plan adopts a segmented approach:

- **Primary Target:** Health-conscious, affluent consumers (ages 25–55) who prioritize nutritional benefits and ethical sourcing.
- **Secondary Target:** Athletes, gourmet food buyers, and B2B clients (e.g., bakeries, chocolate manufacturers) seeking superior quality ingredients.

Key differentiators include the product’s naturally sweeter flavor, higher nutritional profile, and the sustainable, community-driven ethos embodied by the “İmece Farms” brand – named after the Turkish concept of collaborative work. This narrative reinforces the link between traditional, responsible farming practices and modern consumer values.

Tactics

- **Product:** Develop two distinct lines – a B2C range featuring retail-packaged raw and roasted hazelnuts, and a B2B bulk offering (including hazelnut oil and extracts) tailored for ingredient branding.
- **Price:** Implement a premium pricing strategy with a modest 10% markup to reflect superior quality and sustainable production, aligning with competitive benchmarks while delivering added value.
- **Promotion:** Execute a multi-channel campaign combining digital marketing (social media, influencer partnerships, and targeted online content), traditional media (print, radio, in-store displays), and experiential events to tell the Imece Farms story and highlight the product's unique benefits.
- **Place:** Focus on distribution through upscale and specialty retailers – such as Whole Foods, Trader Joe's, and select local chains – targeting urban centers with high disposable incomes and strong health and sustainability values.

Implementation and Control

The plan will be rolled out in phases, from pre-launch awareness to active market penetration and post-launch engagement. Success will be monitored through key performance indicators such as social media engagement, sales metrics, and feedback from B2B partners. Detailed exhibits provide data-driven support for market forecasts and strategic decisions.

Conclusion

By leveraging Turkey's established expertise in hazelnut production and emphasizing product quality, sustainability, and ethical sourcing, this plan positions Turkish hazelnuts as a premium alternative in the growing U.S. market. Through strategic segmentation, multi-channel promotion, and targeted distribution, Imece Farms is poised to capture consumer interest, drive market penetration, and secure lasting partnerships in both consumer and industrial markets.

Part 1: Internal Analysis

Background and Supply

Modern day Turkey has produced hazelnuts for thousands of years with the earliest known documentation in Uighur epics from 2838 BC (Islam, 2018). Turkey accounts for approximately 70% of world hazelnut production and 20% of the country's agricultural exports (Islam, 2018). Just 15%–20% of natively grown hazelnuts are consumed in Turkey; the rest are exported or stored (Brown, 2024).



Service Area and Geographics

According to the International Society for Horticultural Science, Turkish hazelnuts have been economically grown in 14 provinces near the Black Sea (Erdogan, 2018), including provinces of Ordu, Giresun, and Trabzon (Khyunprject, 2024). This unique mountain-meets-sea ecosystem, hosting



orchards in a temperate maritime climate, yields approximately 60% of Turkey's hazelnuts (Brown, 2024).

Hazelnut cultivations and growth thrives under specific environmental conditions: temperature, elevation, and moisture.

The acceptable temperature range is between -8°–36°C and windy conditions are detrimental (Islam, 2018). A yearly minimum of 700 millimeters of rainfall is needed, although supplemental

irrigation is usually needed in June and July (Islam, 2018).

These environmental conditions suitable for hazelnut cultivation are suffering under global climate change. In recent years, climate change has directly caused heat waves, shifted essential rain patterns, and brought severe storms to Turkey's Black Sea region, resulting in fewer crop yields (Hazelnut: great for the environment, but vulnerable to climate change, 2021). There are now higher levels of humidity that last for longer periods during the year, which brings increased and new types of pests;

both of these factors can cause lower production, increased discarded crop, or death of entire plants (Brown, 2024). Pests that were not attracted to the hazelnuts in the past are now more difficult to overcome than traditional and well-known pests. Increased humidity can also cause mildew on plants, another cause of lower output, and modern pesticides can alter the microorganisms in the soil (Brown, 2024).

It's worth noting that hazelnut trees, while vulnerable to the effects of climate change, do have a reputation for being a tough and ideal crop. Hazelnut crops are known to thrive even in tough soil and through drought (Hazelnut: great for the environment, but vulnerable to climate change, 2021). They also require little pesticides in comparison to other crops, and they reduce erosion, draw more carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, and even filter harmful pollutants from groundwater (Hazelnut: great for the environment, but vulnerable to climate change, 2021). Furthermore, a 2023 study examined the willingness and interest of traditional hazelnut farmers to transition to organic production. It found several factors influenced how favorable farmers felt about shifting to organic farming. First, organic production yields less, so farmers had to feel confident that a smaller harvest could still lead to higher revenue. Second, farmers were more likely to accept organic methods if they had strong familial support extending into the future. Third, younger farmers were more interested in organics for both the health advantages and environmental benefits. And fourth, if a farmer had a general positive attitude, they were more amenable to organic farming (Meral & Millan, 2023). The authors of this study stress the need for policy change and attempts to make rural farming areas more attractive to younger farmers to keep young people interested in investing their lives in the family business (Meral & Millan, 2023).

An organic and earth-friendly approach can be beneficial from a marketing perspective as consumers grow more conscious of sustainability and company accountability. Being able to brand Turkish hazelnuts as an organic, green alternative to other snacks, nuts, or additives is a strength as pressure is increasingly put on businesses to give back (Kotler et al., 2022).

Labor

Harvesting hazelnuts is extremely labor intensive and migrant labor is critical to the harvest season that occurs in August and September each year (Fiolhais, 2023). Seasonal laborers typically come from the southeast region of Turkey and includes Kurds and Syrian refugees (Fiolhais, 2023). Women have historically been very involved in growing hazelnuts and are increasingly taking a larger role in production and sales (Brown, 2024). The vast majority of hazelnut farmers have no other employment and have dedicated their lives to hazelnut productions; the average years of experience is 41 years and

the average age of a hazelnut farmer is 63 years old (Temizyurek-Arslan, 2023). However, young people are increasingly leaving the region to pursue educational and additional employment opportunities in larger cities.

Controversially, child labor makes up 8.5% of the workforce in hazelnut supply chains (Maki, 2018). According to the Child Labor Coalition, 90% of hazelnut harvesters work 11 hours per day, 99% of harvesters work seven days a week, and children are often forced to work the same hours as their parents (Maki, 2018). Turkish hazelnut farms are reliant on mobile seasonal agricultural workers driven by poverty and governed by weak labor law enforcement (Piloting the USDA Guidelines in the Hazelnut Supply Chain in Turkey, 2015).



Vision, Strategy, and Industrial Competition

While there has been an increase in hazelnut consumption in the United States (U.S.), the country primarily consumes the majority of its own hazelnut production (Inventory of Hazelnut Research, Germplasm and References. (n.d.)). According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Oregon's Willamette Valley alone produces 99% of U.S. hazelnuts, followed by a small percentage grown in Washington state (Climate-Resilient Hazelnuts in Oregon and Washington | USDA Climate Hubs, n.d.). This self-sufficiency has caused the U.S. to become a table hazelnut exporting country (Inventory of Hazelnut Research, Germplasm and References. (n.d.)). In the U.S., the compound annual growth rate is projected to be 7.60% through 2030, rocketing the national market from \$1,785.95 million in 2022 to \$3,192.75 million (Data Bridge Market Research, 2022). To compete with the steep U.S. supply, the Turkish hazelnut will need to be marketed as a superior product in both business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer markets (B2C). Securing B2B footholds will likely be more of a challenge, with most of the hazelnuts lining U.S. shelves originating from Oregon and Washington. Purchasing hazelnuts from Turkey could be significantly more expensive than cross-country shipping from a reliable source of climate-resistant hazelnuts.

Yet, as the world's largest exporter and producer, Turkey has a sizable advantage in setting global prices and consistently keeping up with the demand of its global importers, including the U.S. B2B transactions can benefit from knowing that Turkish hazelnuts are just as reliable as U.S.-grown

hazelnuts. CropLife International claims that eight out of every 10 hazelnuts consumed around the world are grown in Turkey (CropLife International, 2023). Turkish hazelnuts have an edge on American-grown hazelnuts in that they tend to be larger, sweeter, and contain a higher fat content, earning them a reputation as having the highest quality hazelnuts in the world (Fruits of Turkey, 2020). Turkish hazelnuts are widely seen as superior to their harder, slightly bitter American counterparts, which can be a strong selling point in B2B markets as an additive or a direct-to-consumer product with nutritional value.



When compared to other types of popularly consumed nuts in the United States, the nutritional composition of hazelnuts has some important differences regarding heart health. When compared to almonds, pistachios, cashews, and peanuts, hazelnuts have approximately one-third to twice as much monounsaturated fat content (Van Der Voort, 2025). Monounsaturated fats are associated with reducing cardiovascular risk

factors such as diabetes 2, an imbalance of lipids, and metabolic syndrome—factors that often lead to diabetes 2, heart disease, and stroke (Jones, 2025).

Part 2: Environmental and Industry Analysis

Turkey's climate and geography present a natural advantage to hazelnut growers with soil the trees love and farms who use them in part to help combat erosion (Yıldırım et al., 2024); however, the country's international advantage is slowly dwindling with the combination of climate change and exhausted orchards that have been used for hundreds, if not thousands, of years. In speaking with Dr. Samet Tekoglu via email, he also referenced the challenges that Turkey's hazelnut industry faces, specifically climate change. Due to these challenges, the local industry will potentially need to adjust its planting and harvesting seasons (Dr. S. Tekoglu, personal communication, January 27, 2025), and major investments in renewal will be vital for Turkey's continued dominance in the hazelnut market (Yıldırım et al., 2024).

The social influence of hazelnut production in Turkey cannot be understated. Much of Turkey is a rural economy. In the Black Sea region of the country, the agricultural industry is the main source of income for its roughly 3 million residents. In many of these regions, entire communities and their traditions have been built around the hazelnut industry. These rural farm communities engage in "*imece*," which translates to "collaboration" in English. This is the practice where people from various

farms, sometimes producing various crops, will help work together on each other's farms to accomplish their common goals (Dr. S. Tekoglu, personal communication, January 27, 2025).

Hazelnut production is not as deeply embedded in the culture of the United States, but hazelnut trees are being planted across more acreage and increasing their yields year over year. Hybrid trees mixed between native U.S. and the more traditional European varieties are producing heartier plants that can better withstand changing climate conditions (Climate-Resilient Hazelnuts in Oregon and Washington | USDA Climate Hubs, n.d.). Those same changing climate conditions are also expanding the amount of farmland able to support these trees, which require moderate temperatures and a limited number of extreme weather events. They are also drought resistant, store more carbon than other crops, reduce erosion, and contribute to land diversification in the areas where they're planted (Climate-Resilient Hazelnuts in Oregon and Washington | USDA Climate Hubs, n.d.). To influence American consumers, we will need to promote Turkish hazelnuts as sweeter and better-tasting than their American counterparts. There will also be a subsection of consumers who prefer to "buy American" that we will likely never be able to convert. This, in turn, could be countered with a focus on ingredient-branding of Turkish hazelnuts to American-based companies, such as Hershey's.

The American market also favors almonds as their favorite nut to consume (*Almonds Lead Increase in Tree Nut Consumption* | *Economic Research Service*, n.d.); however, the consumption of tree nuts has doubled in the last 50 years (*Almonds Lead Increase in Tree Nut Consumption* | *Economic Research Service*, n.d.), which implies that there is room for growth in hazelnut consumption with the right branding and marketing strategy.

Market Research and Competitors

The global hazelnut market is expected to grow by more than 8% annually through 2033 (Hazelnut Market Size & Trends 2023-2033, 2023), while the U.S. hazelnut market is expected to grow by a CAGR of nearly 10% through 2030 (The United States Hazelnut Market Size & Outlook 2024-2030, 2024).

The European region is the largest consumer market of hazelnut products, with Italy and Germany being at the top of the consumption countries within Europe (Misachi, 2018). Turkey is the second-highest consuming country, despite being the world's largest producer of hazelnuts, accounting for 63.98% of global hazelnut production. The second-highest producing country is Italy, at only 8.25% of global production. Following the top two, the next-highest producers of hazelnuts are: Azerbaijan – 6.03%, the U.S. – 5.88%, Chile – 5.23%, and various other nations – 10.63% (Misachi, 2018). Despite

supplying power globally, Turkish hazelnuts saw a 3% drop in exports from 2022 to 2023. During this same period, U.S. hazelnut exports increased by 48% (Eisele, 2025). Moreover, the U.S. has consistently recorded the highest yield per hectare of all the top five countries that produce hazelnuts, while Turkey has recorded the lowest yield per hectare over the past five years (MacNeil, 2024). While Turkey has tremendous supply power for the hazelnut, the declining yield is a trend that needs to be addressed. The decline will impact forecasting, pricing, competition, the overall stability of the supply chain, and the reliability of the product for American importers and consumers.

Within Turkey, the main competitors to hazelnut consumption are other savory snacks. Currently, nuts and seeds comprise the largest segment of the salty snack market in Turkey, accounting for 37.4% of salty snack sales (MarketLine, 11). While PepsiCo is the leading seller in salty snacks, Turkish companies Tadim Gida and Peyman Gida are the second and third largest market shares and sell more nuts and seeds than PepsiCo (MarketLine, 24). The salty and savory snack market is expected to grow through at least 2028.

The U.S. hazelnut market has seen increases in production and exports over the past four years; however, imports have declined by nearly 50% from 2021 to 2024.

United States Hazelnut Market				
	2021	2022	2023	2024
Production	77,700 tons ^(b)	77,500 tons ^(b)	94,200 tons ^(b)	97,460 tons ^(c)
Exports	\$126.8 million ^(a)	\$149.4 million ^(a)	\$129.7 million ^(a)	\$149.9 million ^(a)
Imports	\$26.2 million ^(a)	\$20.1 million ^(a)	\$9.2 million ^(a)	\$13.6 million ^(a)

**Import/export data references fresh or dried hazelnuts.*

(a): (Fruit and Tree Nuts Data - Data by Commodity - Imports and Exports, 2025)

(b): (Tree Nuts Bearing Acreage, Yield, Gross Returns per Acre, Production..., 2024)

(c): (Malcolm Media, 2024)

There is little recent data available regarding the exact consumption of hazelnuts in the U.S.; however, it is clear that American consumption per capita is far lower than in many European countries (Grand View Research, n.d.). This, coupled with the fact that the U.S. hazelnut market is expected to grow

over the next five years, presents an opportunity for the Turkish hazelnut industry to implement a market development strategy to attract new customers to the Turkish hazelnut.

In addition to the consumer-use growth opportunities, there are also industrial-use opportunities that are coming to light. Once shelled for consumption purposes, the hazelnut shell has a wide variety of uses in various industrial settings. The shells can be burned to produce heat and thereby produce electricity, which is significantly cleaner than fossil fuels. Moreover, hazelnut biomass plants are already being created in Turkey (Premium Growers, 2024). This could allow Turkish hazelnuts to be branded as a carbon-neutral option to the U.S. market, appealing to eco-conscious consumers eager to support brands with similar values to their own. Hazelnut shells also serve as an eco-friendly abrasive in industrial uses. Many companies use synthetic chemicals for abrasive cleaning agents, when hazelnut shells are an excellent, eco-friendly option.

Part 3: Market Analysis

Defining the Local Target Market

Five-C Framework

In applying the Five-C Framework (Kotler et al., 2022), the ‘company’ will be the overall Turkish hazelnut industry. The *total* target market for Turkish hazelnuts is a global target market, with an emphasis on exporting to foreign countries, particularly the U.S. Due to Turkey’s dominance in the global production of hazelnuts, it is in a unique position to capitalize on the forecasted growth.

Segmentation Strategy

As previously referenced, the global demand for hazelnuts is expected to grow exponentially over the next five to ten years. Market research shows that consumers are shifting to healthier options in many of their food choices, and Hazelnuts are excellent sources of vitamin E, protein, fiber, antioxidants, and other ingredients that benefit brain function, which guides us toward our target consumers (Siegnier, 2018). To effectively position Turkish hazelnuts in the U.S. market, we employ a segmentation strategy that categorizes consumers based on demographics, psychographics, geographic regions, and behavioral factors (Kotler et al., 2022). The following segmentation variables are most relevant:

Demographic Segmentation:

- **Health-conscious consumers** who prioritize heart health, weight management, and diabetes-friendly foods (WebMD Editorial Contributor, 2024).
- **Athletes and active individuals** who seek sustained energy and anti-inflammatory benefits.

- **Affluent consumers** who prioritize high-quality, premium food products and are willing to pay a higher price for imported goods.
- **Consumers with dietary restrictions** who follow plant-based, keto, or gluten-free diets.
- **Psychographic Segmentation:**
- **Wellness-focused individuals** who seek organic, non-GMO, and minimally processed foods.
- **Ethical and sustainability-driven buyers** who prefer sustainable farming practices and fair-trade products.
- **Luxury buyers** who associate premium international brands with exclusivity and superior quality.

Geographic Segmentation:

- **Urban centers with high disposable income**, like metropolitan areas such as New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago, and San Francisco, where demand for premium and imported foods is strong (*Hazelnut Market Size, Share, and Growth Forecast From 2025 - 2032 - Persistence Market Research, 2025*).
- **Regions with a high percentage of health-conscious consumers**, like states such as California, Oregon, and Colorado, where there is a greater demand for plant-based, organic, and wellness-focused products.
- **Areas with large immigrant and Turkish-American communities**, like cities with significant Middle Eastern, Mediterranean, and European populations who may already have familiarity with hazelnuts in their cultural cuisine.
- **Behavioral Segmentation:**
- **Consumers seeking functional foods** who consume food with specific health benefits (e.g., heart health, anti-inflammatory properties) (WebMD Editorial Contributor, 2024).
- **Brand-loyal consumers** who favor well-known, high-quality brands and are open to ingredient branding.
- **Frequent buyers of premium nuts and nut-based products** who purchase hazelnuts as snacks or ingredients for baking, spreads, and confectionery.

Target Market

Based on the segmentation strategy, we define our primary and secondary target markets:

Primary Target Market:

- **Health-conscious consumers** (ages 25–55) who actively seek foods with cardiovascular, anti-inflammatory, and energy-boosting benefits (WebMD Editorial Contributor, 2024).
- **Affluent and premium shoppers** (ages 30–60) who purchase high-quality food products, particularly organic and imported specialty foods.
- **Plant-based and alternative-diet consumers** (ages 18–45) looking for dairy-free and keto-friendly alternatives.

Secondary Target Market:

- **Athletes, fitness enthusiasts, and active professionals** who consume high-energy foods for performance and recovery.
- **Luxury and gourmet food buyers** who purchase premium chocolates, spreads, and high-end snacks.
- **Business-to-business (B2B) customers** such as bakeries, chocolate manufacturers, and health food brands incorporate hazelnuts into their products.

Strategic Insights and Potential Changes

Not only is there already a strong demand for hazelnuts in the U.S., but that demand is expected to grow significantly in the coming years (Choudhury, 2023). As consumers process through the buying decision process, they need important factors (to them) to guide them to Turkish hazelnuts over alternatives. Turkey is known for their hazelnut production, and it holds tremendous supply power and has been producing hazelnuts for over 2,000 years (Brown, 2024). While Turkish hazelnuts hold a dominant share in the global market, their positioning in the U.S. can be improved through differentiation, branding, and strategic segmentation adjustments. The following changes could help enhance their market presence:

Premium Branding and Storytelling:

- Position Turkish hazelnuts as superior to domestic varieties through messaging that highlights quality, responsibly produced, tradition (longest production), and health benefits.
- Develop a "Turkish Hazelnut Inside" ingredient branding strategy (similar to "Intel Inside" in computers (Kotler et al., 2022) to increase consumer recognition.
- Place an emphasis on equal gender pay and the lifestyle benefits hazelnut production affords Turkish citizens.

Expanded Product Offerings:

- Introduce organic, fair-trade, and sustainably sourced Turkish hazelnuts to cater to ethical consumers.
- Develop new hazelnut-based products (e.g., hazelnut butter, protein bars, non-dairy hazelnut milk) to appeal to alternative-diet consumers.

Strategic Partnerships and Co-Branding:

- Collaborate with premium chocolate brands, plant-based food companies, and coffee brands to integrate Turkish hazelnuts into widely consumed products.
- Work with nutritional influencers and fitness professionals to endorse hazelnuts as a functional superfood.

Retail and Distribution Expansion:

- Increase presence in health food stores, specialty grocery chains (Whole Foods, Trader Joe's), and premium online marketplaces.
- Explore B2B partnerships with artisanal bakers, snack food manufacturers, and specialty food brands.



These strategic adjustments would enable Turkish hazelnuts to penetrate new market segments, strengthen brand positioning, and enhance competitive differentiation in the U.S. market.

Consumer Profile

A 2017 survey revealed that the top consumers of hazelnuts are females, between 18 and 44 years old, college educated, and with higher incomes (Siegnier, 2018). Diving deeper into this consumer profile and recognizing both primary and secondary target markets, Turkish hazelnut producers should focus on consumers who are aimed at living a healthy lifestyle, affluent and premium shoppers, eco-conscious individuals, and plant-based or alternative-diet consumers. The secondary focus should be on athletes, fitness enthusiasts, active professionals, luxury and gourmet food buyers, and B2B customers. These consumers should live in urban centers with high disposable income or metropolitan areas, regions where health-conscious consumers tend to live, and areas with large immigrant and Turkish-American communities. Additionally, attention should be paid to consumers seeking functional foods, those who favor well-known, high-quality brands, and buyers of premium nuts and nut-based products.

In addition to the health benefits offered by hazelnuts, more consumers are focused on companies' social responsibility. The target age range referenced above falls into the Millennial generation.



According to research published by Harvard Business Review, millennials place significantly more weight on CSR when making purchase and investment decisions compared to other generations (Stobierski, 2021). Moreover, 70% of Americans believe that companies should strive to make the world a better place (Stobierski, 2021). This is a critical area that Turkish hazelnut producers can also capitalize on.

Wage studies have revealed that there is a significant wage gap between genders amongst Turkish agricultural workers

(Dierks, 2024). In the Konya province, the average daily wage for a male agricultural worker was 76% higher than their female counterparts (Dierks, 2024). If Turkish producers close this wage gap and provide equal wages for all of its workers, these brands could be marketed and branded as being socially responsible. This, in turn, will cultivate the target consumer base that we are focusing on.

Consumer Decision Process

The consumer decision process is the series of steps a buyer goes through when making a purchase (Kotler et al., 2022). Marketers can optimize each stage by providing educational content, engaging branding, and strong customer support to guide consumers toward choosing their product. For U.S. hazelnut consumption, the consumer decision process may look like:

Stage	Influencing Factors
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Problem Recognition	Health trends, word-of-mouth, dietary needs, influencer promotions
Information Search	SEO, product reviews, food blogs, organic vs. non-GMO labels
Evaluation	Price, quality, availability, certifications (Fair Trade, organic)
Purchase Decision	Discounts, ease of ordering, and premium branding
Post-Purchase	Customer experience, taste, texture, freshness, and eco-friendly packaging

Awareness

At this stage, potential customers become aware of Turkish hazelnuts and their benefits. Marketing efforts should focus on building brand visibility and educating consumers about the product.

Tactics:

- Social media campaigns highlighting the superior taste and sustainability of Turkish hazelnuts
- Content marketing, such as blogs and videos on the health benefits of hazelnuts
- Collaborations with influencers in health, fitness, and gourmet cooking

Interest

Here, consumers actively engage with the product by seeking more information and considering how it meets their needs.

Tactics:

- Providing detailed product information on packaging, websites, and ads, emphasizing the flavor, nutritional value, and cultural heritage of Turkish hazelnuts.
- Sharing recipes and use cases, such as hazelnut spreads or dairy-free alternatives, to build interest.
- Highlighting certifications like organic or fair trade to attract ethical consumers.

Desire

At this point, consumers form a preference for Turkish hazelnuts over competitors. Messaging should focus on emotional appeal and value propositions.

Tactics:

- Testimonials and reviews from satisfied customers or businesses.
- Promotions emphasizing Turkish hazelnuts as a premium, gourmet product.

- Storytelling campaigns highlighting the cultural and ethical aspects of hazelnut farming in Turkey.

Action

In the final stage, consumers make a purchase decision. Ensuring a smooth purchasing process and post-purchase engagement is crucial.

Tactics:

- Offering discounts or promotions to incentivize purchases.
- Making the product widely available online (e.g., Amazon, specialty food stores) and in premium retailers like Whole Foods.
- Loyalty programs to encourage repeat purchases and strengthen the customer relationship.



Confirmation Bias

One challenge that Turkish hazelnuts may face when entering U.S. markets is confirmation bias. Confirmation bias occurs when consumers intentionally look for information that certifies what they already believe rather than try to look for an objective answer; sometimes, consumers will even oppose credible examples that speak to the contrary of their own beliefs (Cherry,

2024). From this perspective, it can be useful to first attempt to resonate with what customers are already feeling instead of attempting to change their minds about a product. To deeply resonate with the target market for Turkish hazelnuts in the U.S., branding and messaging must be tailored to reinforce their beliefs about hazelnuts and associate them with the introduction of Turkish hazelnuts into the market. For example, a Whole Foods shopper may believe Turkish hazelnuts are of a superior quality because of where they are being distributed, or a browsing e-consumer may believe that Turkish hazelnuts are



sweeter than U.S. hazelnuts because of popular chocolate-hazelnut spreads.

Tactics:

- Align branding with the values of the target audience (i.e., earth-friendly, eco-conscious, sustainability, etc.).

- Marketing perceived and proven health benefits.
- Working on reviews or testimonials to speak to the ideal experience for consumers of the target market.

Points of Difference (PODs) and Points of Parity (POPs) for Turkish Hazelnuts in the U.S. Market

To effectively position Turkish hazelnuts in the U.S. market, it is important to identify their Points of Difference (PODs) – the unique characteristics that set them apart from competitors – and Points of Parity (POPs) – the attributes they share with other hazelnuts to meet baseline consumer expectations (Kotler et al., 2022). These distinctions and commonalities shape marketing strategies and influence how Turkish hazelnuts are perceived by both direct consumers and B2B buyers.

Points of Difference (PODs): What Sets Turkish Hazelnuts Apart

Turkish hazelnuts have several unique advantages that distinguish them from other varieties. These key differentiators include:

- **Global Market Leadership:** Turkey produces over 70% of the world’s hazelnuts, far surpassing any other country. Generations of farming expertise contribute to consistently high-quality yields. This production scale and experience make Turkish hazelnuts a preferred choice for many global brands, particularly in the confectionery industry (Choice of the World’s Most Famous Chocolate, Bakery, Cereal and Snack Brands - Ask Türkiye, n.d.).
- **Superior Flavor and Oil Content:** Turkish hazelnuts are known for their naturally richer, buttery taste and higher oil content, making them highly desirable in chocolate and baking applications. This distinction is a key reason why major chocolate manufacturers, including Ferrero, source a significant portion of their hazelnuts from Turkey (Ferrero, n.d.).
- **Sustainable and Traditional Farming Practices:** Turkish hazelnuts are cultivated using farming techniques passed down through generations, often relying on minimal mechanical processing. This approach helps preserve the integrity of the hazelnuts while appealing to consumers who prioritize sustainable, non-GMO, and ethically sourced food products.
- **Ethical and Cultural Significance:** The Turkish hazelnut industry has a unique ethical and cultural narrative that can be leveraged for branding and storytelling. Many Turkish



Source: Amazon

hazelnut farms are maintained by women, particularly in regions such as Giresun, where hazelnuts are deeply embedded in local culture (*Hazelnut Cultivation in Turkey's Giresun Region*, 2024). This presents an opportunity for brands to highlight their commitment to ethical sourcing and community support – an increasingly important factor for sustainability-conscious consumers.

By emphasizing these points of difference, Turkish hazelnuts can strengthen their positioning in both consumer and business-to-business markets.

Points of Parity (POPs): Shared Attributes with Other Hazelnuts

While Turkish hazelnuts have several distinct advantages, they also share many key characteristics with other varieties, ensuring they meet standard industry expectations. These points of parity include:

- **Nutritional Benefits:** Like all hazelnuts, Turkish hazelnuts are rich in monounsaturated fats, vitamin E, and antioxidants. They provide plant-based protein and fiber, making them an excellent option for consumers focused on heart health, weight management, and sustained energy (Siegener, 2018).
- **Dietary Versatility:** Turkish hazelnuts, like those from the U.S. and Italy, are gluten-free, keto-friendly, and dairy-free, making them suitable for various dietary lifestyles (Frank, 2024).
- **Product Availability and Forms:** Turkish hazelnuts are offered in multiple forms – whole (shelled or unshelled), chopped, sliced, roasted, ground into flour, or pressed for oil. This versatility allows them to be incorporated into a wide range of products, from snack foods and confectionery items to dairy alternatives like hazelnut milk and plant-based spreads.
- **Packaging and Distribution Standards:** Turkish hazelnuts adhere to industry-standard packaging and distribution practices, meeting global food safety regulations. They are typically stored in airtight, bulk-friendly containers to extend shelf life and maintain quality (*Unshelled Hazelnuts: How Long Do Hazelnuts Last in the Shell?*, n.d.).
- **Market Reach:** Turkish hazelnuts compete within the same retail and commercial sectors as U.S. and Italian hazelnuts. They are available in premium grocery chains such as Whole Foods and Trader Joe's, specialty food stores, and online marketplaces. Additionally, they



are widely used in B2B applications, particularly by major confectionery brands, bakeries, and health food manufacturers.

By maintaining these points of parity, Turkish hazelnuts can easily integrate into existing distribution channels while leveraging their unique advantages to differentiate themselves.

Strategic Implications for Marketing

Establishing a presence in the U.S. market is the first step for Turkish hazelnuts – ensuring they meet industry expectations in areas like packaging, distribution, and product versatility will allow them to compete effectively against other hazelnut varieties. Once within the category, differentiation becomes key. Their unique flavor, sustainability practices, and cost advantages should be highlighted to appeal to health-conscious and premium food consumers. By first securing a position in the market and then leveraging these differentiators while maintaining strong parity with competitors, Turkish hazelnuts can establish a stronger foothold in both the consumer and business-to-business markets (Kotler et al., 2022).

Part 4: SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Ecological Advantages Turkey’s climate and natural environment provide hazelnut trees with ideal growing conditions. In concurrence with being a native species, Turkish hazelnut trees have a spread-out root system that competes with the country’s erosion problems. Farmers support local ecology by engaging in traditional and sustainable farming practices.</p> <p>Established and Mature Industry The hazelnut industry, through production, processing, and sales, has created a robust foundation in Turkey’s economy and is responsible for millions of created jobs.</p>	<p>Low Crop Yields A significant number of Turkey’s hazelnut orchards are densely planted and approaching the end of their economic life. Accordingly, Turkey has the lowest average yield out of all major hazelnut-producing countries</p> <p>Future Investments Required Because many Turkish hazelnut orchards are approaching the end of their economic life, major investments are needed to sustain Turkey’s hazelnut market dominance.</p> <p>Geographical Challenges and Pests Despite hazelnut trees’ positive contributions</p>

<p>Cultural Significance</p> <p>The hazelnut industry strengthens social ties and has cultural significance in areas of production. Through “imece”, rural communities have become more cohesive.</p>	<p>against erosion, Turkey’s hilly black sea region is still prone to destructive landslides.</p> <p>Additionally, local pests such as the hazelnut weevil further reduce crop yields.</p>
Opportunities	Threats
<p>Healthier Lifestyle Trends</p> <p>The U.S. has a growing segment of its population that has become increasingly health conscious. Hazelnuts are nutrient-dense foods with a variety of consumable uses that may be appealing to target markets.</p> <p>Trends Toward Sustainability</p> <p>The U.S. has a growing segment of its population that has strong concern for our planet’s future. Natural dyes can be extracted from hazelnuts, hazelnut trees can be burned as fuel, and hazelnut tree leaves can be used as livestock fodder.</p> <p>Market-Disrupting Tariffs</p> <p>The recent tariffs in the U.S. have created uncertainties for various foreign economies. Turkey, having strong economic relations with the U.S., may be able to take advantage of the turmoil.</p> <p>Enhancing Awareness of Emerging Products</p> <p>Developing a comprehensive marketing</p>	<p>Substitutions</p> <p>There are popular substitutes to hazelnuts, such as almonds, which are cheaper, offer plentiful health benefits, and are presently, and in the foreseeable future, more commonly consumed in the U.S. than hazelnuts.</p> <p>Climate Change</p> <p>Climate change threatens the stability of environments where Hazelnut trees are grown. Extreme heat, water shortages, and ideal pest conditions threaten hazelnut tree survivability and yield numbers</p> <p>Outside Investments into Competitor Markets</p> <p>Leading countries and chocolate-producing companies have invested in competing Hazelnut-growing countries with an effort to reduce raw material costs associated with hazelnut production.</p> <p>Increasing Costs of Living in the U.S.</p> <p>Imported hazelnuts will fetch a higher price in</p>

<p>strategy to elevate awareness of existing hazelnut products – such as hazelnut milk – can strengthen overall market penetration for both current and future offerings. Introducing flavored varieties, similar to the banana and vanilla options available in almond milk, may further appeal to alternative milk consumers and encourage trial of hazelnut-based alternatives.</p> <p>New Product Creation</p> <p>The introduction of hazelnut oil production to the U.S. market could be a lucrative opportunity for hazelnut producers; it would require an expensive marketing campaign to reach and educate target markets.</p>	<p>the U.S., where rising costs of living force customers to make more economically friendly choices. Premium, imported hazelnuts are an elastic good that could see demand dip with higher prices.</p>
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Part 5: Marketing Mix – Product

Branding

As a brand, we have created Imece Farms. According to Dr. Samet Tekoglu, imece means “collaboration” or “collective work” in English, and we’ve learned that the harvesting of hazelnuts, especially in the rural areas of Turkey, is an imece activity that builds community among neighbors and friends. The brand will reflect that sense of community and collaboration. We will incorporate our slogan into our advertising and packaging:

“From our village to your modern life.”

The above slogan will reinforce the sense of community and partnership we are building between the brand, customers, and farmers.

The brand will promote Turkish hazelnuts by publicizing their deeper, sweeter, and more robust flavor, larger size, and focus on harvesting as a community. We will encourage consumers to support



the small farmers we buy our products from and help hazelnut production remain a viable and reliable source of income for the next generation of Turkish farmers.

Product Lines

Imece Farms will ship shelled hazelnuts to America in airtight industrial containers. While there are no registration requirements to import foodstuffs on a commercial basis, we will need to file a Prior Notice of Import with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and then meet all food safety regulations for American distributors (Investigations, 2025). Once the bulk hazelnuts arrive in the U.S., they will be split into different lines where they will be packaged according to product. There will be two lines of hazelnut products sold by the Imece Farms. One will be considered a B2C line that will cater to consumers looking to buy hazelnuts to snack on or bake with. While this line might be sold in a single-level channel to merchants, these products will be packaged with the direct consumer in mind and we will refer to this as the B2C line throughout our report. We will produce four products in this line of goods:



1. 6 oz. bag of raw hazelnuts
2. 6 oz. bag of roasted hazelnuts
3. 12 oz. bag of raw hazelnuts
4. 12 oz. bag of roasted hazelnuts

The roasted hazelnuts will be considered a snack or side and will be sold to gas stations, airports, or convenience stores, and will be placed in the snack and deli aisles of grocery stores. The raw hazelnuts will be intended for home bakers and will be housed in the baking aisle. We will build a sense of imece with our direct customers by encouraging them to choose our product so that we can help them build their health or feed their family.

We anticipate being able to grow the product line length by using a market-penetration strategy and adding additional bag sizes, selling halves and pieces, and using a product-development expansion strategy by adding different seasonings to the roasted hazelnuts. The seasonings could include salted hazelnuts, spicy hazelnuts, and candied hazelnuts.

The second product line will be considered B2B and will likely be sold through a zero-level or direct marketing channel. This product line would include:

- Raw hazelnuts sold in bulk by the pound
- Roasted hazelnuts sold in bulk by the pound
- Hazelnut oil and extract for use in liquid flavoring

Likely customers for this line include chocolate companies like Fannie May, Albanese, Hershey's; bakeries like Little Debbies; and coffee shops like Starbucks. Additionally, any company will be able to put the premium hazelnut seal on any packaging used with our hazelnuts as part of the product as an ingredient branding tactic.



Quality-Based Product Differentiation

To align with behavioral segmentation strategies and consumer preferences, Imece Farms will introduce a tiered grading system for its hazelnuts. Hazelnuts will be categorized into three grades based on size, flavor profile, and aesthetic quality. The top-grade hazelnuts, with the largest size and most robust flavor, will be reserved for luxury buyers and gourmet markets willing to pay premium prices. The second-tier hazelnuts will target mainstream health-conscious and value-driven customers. The third tier, consisting of smaller or imperfect hazelnuts, will be sold at a lower price point to price-sensitive consumers or businesses using hazelnuts as secondary ingredients. To ensure credibility and global acceptance, the grading process will be certified by an internationally recognized quality assurance firm. This approach allows Imece Farms to appeal to a broader range of customer segments while maintaining product integrity and transparency.

Part 6: Marketing Mix – Price

Pricing Objectives

Setting a price begins with setting a pricing objective. Turkish hazelnuts should pursue quality leadership because they have a positive association with crop quality and are produced in a sustainable and ecologically friendly manner. This association turns an otherwise commoditized product into a product that is viewed favorably and even preferably. Consumers will be willing to pay more for hazelnuts that have less negative environmental impact and are perceived as tastier ((Hazelnut Market Size, Share & Trends Analysis Report by Product (Whole Hazelnut, Hazelnut Paste), by Application (Food & Beverage, Pharmaceuticals), by region, and Segment Forecasts, 2024 - 2030, n.d.).

Competitors' Pricing

Competitors largely follow each other in the hazelnut market. Hazelnuts, no matter how they're marketed, are a commodity and their price is largely determined by the interaction of supply and demand. As demand is expected to increase over the next 5-10 years, prices are likely to increase as well. Supply is harder to predict in the agricultural sector, as weather and other variables can have



Source: gourmeturca.com

significant impacts on crop yields (Balasubramaniam, 2024). Most of Turkey's competitors export shelled hazelnuts (*Hazelnut Market Size* | Mordor Intelligence, n.d.). These varieties can demand significant premiums versus in-shelled versions. Shelled hazelnuts, as of 2023, typically sold for around 60% more per ton (Workman, n.d.). Of Turkey's primary competitors – Italy, the United States, Chile,

Azerbaijan, and Georgia – export pricing of hazelnuts has varied slightly. Italy has been able to demand the highest prices, followed by the United States then Chile. Azerbaijan and Georgia have had to discount their prices relative to Turkey to remain competitive (MacNeil, 2024).

Pricing Model

While utilizing competitive pricing as a basis, Turkey's points of differentiation and its dominant position as a producer serve as a justification to charge a premium over many of its competitors. It is important that Turkey must justify the value of their hazelnuts through effective marketing and communications; otherwise, Turkey as a producer will be unable to charge any markup for their commodity product.

B2B Sales

In the case that Turkish hazelnuts are being sold to the business sector at scale, we will assume three potential inputs: shelled hazelnuts, in-shell hazelnuts, and hazelnut oil. Prices vary significantly per source, but for the sake of example, we will conclude the prices of the following products presently purchased in bulk (greater than 27 lbs): shelled hazelnuts \$8.82/lb. (Wiedman et al., n.d.), in-shell hazelnuts \$3.92/lb. (Heath et al., n.d.), and hazelnut oil \$6.98/lb. (*Crafter's Choice Hazelnut Oil*, 2025). Through new positioning, consider a 10% markup on all existing prices. This would align Turkish hazelnuts closer to those of their competitors Italy and Chile, relaying a message of high quality and sustainable production to customers. From this information, the following prices can be computed:

Shelled Hazelnuts		In-shell Hazelnuts		Hazelnut oil	
Current Wholesale \$/lb.	\$8.82	Current Wholesale \$/lb.	\$3.92	Current Wholesale \$/lb.	\$6.98
Proposed Markup	10%	Proposed Markup	10%	Proposed Markup	10%
Proposed Wholesale \$/lb.	\$9.70	Proposed Wholesale \$/lb.	\$4.31	Proposed Wholesale \$/lb.	\$7.68

B2C Sales

New positioning and pricing should then be passed on to the consumer. Primarily, Turkish hazelnuts will be sold to consumers in two forms: roasted, in 6 oz. and 12 oz. bags, and raw, in 6 oz. and 12 oz. bags. Prices per product will vary per retail location, but for the sake of example, we will conclude the following prices: roasted hazelnuts \$1.00/oz (Holmquist Hazelnut Orchards, 2024) and raw hazelnuts \$.62/oz (*Filberts Raw Tub*, 2025). Here too, price increases will be proposed to increase by 10% to accommodate for product positioning changes and related costs endured in distribution, but the increased value to the consumer will be delivered through ingredient branding. On all products, packaging will include a stamp that says “Hazelnuts grown in Turkey”. We calculate the following prices:

Roasted Hazelnuts		Raw Hazelnuts	
Current Retail \$/oz.	\$1.00	Current Retail \$/oz	\$0.62
Current 6 oz bag of Roasted Hazelnuts Price	\$5.99	Current 6 oz. bag of Raw Hazelnuts Price	\$3.72
Current 12 oz. bag or Roasted Hazelnuts Price	\$11.99	Current 12 oz. bag or Raw Hazelnuts Price	\$7.44
Proposed Markup	10%	Proposed Markup	10%
Proposed Retail \$/oz.	\$1.10	Proposed Retail \$/oz.	\$0.68
Proposed 6 oz. bag of Roasted	\$6.59	Proposed 6 oz. bag of Raw	\$4.09

Hazelnuts Price		Hazelnuts Price	
Proposed 12 oz. bag or Roasted Hazelnuts Price	\$13.19	Proposed 12 oz. bag or Raw Hazelnuts Price	\$8.19

Challenges and Advantages of the Pricing Strategy

The main challenge to be considered is how marketing channels and end users will respond to higher prices for a new competitor in the market, Imece Farms. Affected marketing channels may attempt to source their hazelnuts elsewhere. Consumers may have a similar sentiment and buy hazelnuts from competitors.

To address this challenge, Turkey as a country needs to push their competitive advantages and tell its story, which will resonate deeply with many target markets and justify the higher price tag that comes along with Turkish hazelnuts. Done successfully, Turkish hazelnuts will be repositioned as more premium, desirable products, with health, sustainability, and social responsibility to justify the higher prices. This repositioning is the first advantage. The second advantage derives from the first and is increased profits. These profits can be distributed as necessary, but they will ultimately generate wealth within the Turkish hazelnut industry, which needs the capital to reinvest into their aging farms and further promote their products.

Part 7: Marketing Mix – Promotion

Overview of Promotion Strategy

The promotion strategy for Turkish hazelnuts in the United States will employ a mix of public relations, advertising, personal selling, and digital marketing to effectively communicate the product's point of difference (POD) and align with the target market's needs. The strategy will focus on positioning Turkish hazelnuts as a superior choice in both business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) markets. The goal is to create a cohesive and compelling message that highlights the added value to the customer while differentiating from competitors.

Key Problems and Alignment with Target Market

The promotion strategy will address key challenges in the U.S. market, including strong competition, local product preferences, and external factors like climate change.

Key Problems	
Primary Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition from U.S.-grown hazelnuts • The preference for locally sourced products • The dominance of other nuts, particularly almonds, in the U.S. market.
Secondary Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change impacts on Turkish hazelnut yield • The cost of importing hazelnuts into the U.S.

By aligning messaging with the needs of health-conscious consumers, premium shoppers, and food industry businesses, the strategy will emphasize Turkish hazelnuts' superior taste, quality, and sustainability to create a strong market appeal.

Target Market Alignment	
Target Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health-conscious consumers • Affluent shoppers • Socially and eco-conscious consumers • Businesses in the food industry, such as bakeries and confectionery companies
Messaging Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superior taste emphasis • Higher oil content • Sustainability of Turkish hazelnuts to attract both retail consumers and B2B partners

Value Proposition in Promotional Efforts

The promotional strategy will emphasize the unique value added for the customer, including:

Added Value	
Functional Benefits	Turkish hazelnuts provide superior taste, higher nutritional value, and unique culinary uses.

Emotional Appeal	Creating a connection through storytelling that highlights the tradition and sustainability of Turkish hazelnut farming.
Experiential Value	Showcasing Turkish hazelnuts as a premium, gourmet ingredient in recipe and healthy snacks.

Differentiation from Competitors

To effectively position Turkish hazelnuts in the U.S. market, it is crucial to highlight the distinct advantages that set them apart from competitors. Through targeted messaging and educational content, the promotion strategy will create a compelling narrative that not only showcases the product's quality but also appeals to consumers' growing demand for sustainability and responsible sourcing, using highlights such as:

- Turkish hazelnuts offer a richer, sweeter taste and higher oil content compared to American hazelnuts. This distinction will be highlighted in marketing materials.
- Turkish hazelnuts integrate well into a healthy diet, especially for those emulating a Mediterranean, paleo, or keto way of eating.
- The promotion will include educational content on the ecological and ethical benefits of Turkish hazelnuts, including support for traditional farming communities and sustainability initiatives. Customers become more motivated to purchase a specific product or support a firm when there is a higher good associated with it (Kotler et al., 2022).

Message Strategy

The message strategy for Turkish hazelnuts will focus on building a strong brand identity by effectively communicating the product's unique benefits and differentiators (Kotler et al., 2022). Through a combination of direct consumer messaging and strategic "ingredient branding" partnerships, the message will position Turkish hazelnuts as a premium, versatile, healthy, and sustainable choice in both business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) markets. The messaging will not only highlight the superior taste, quality, and health benefits of Turkish hazelnuts but also leverage co-branding opportunities with established brands to enhance credibility and broaden market reach. By integrating storytelling, educational content, and a consistent brand voice, this strategy aims to create a lasting impression that resonates with health-conscious and gourmet-focused audiences (Kotler et al., 2022).

Communicating the Product's Position and POD

The message strategy will focus on developing a clear and concise brand that effectively communicates the product's key benefits and unique selling points. The brand positioning statement, "For health-conscious and premium shoppers, Turkish hazelnuts offer unmatched flavor, quality, and sustainability, providing a gourmet experience unlike any other," will serve as the foundation for all promotional efforts. Additionally, the strategy will introduce the concept of "ingredient branding" as a core approach to build brand recognition through partnerships with established consumer brands (Kotler et al., 2022). By emphasizing Turkish hazelnuts as a mark of quality and gourmet appeal in co-branded products, the promotion will reinforce the product's premium positioning in both consumer and B2B markets.

Media Strategy

The media strategy will combine traditional channels like print and radio with digital tactics such as social media and influencer partnerships. Co-branding with established brands will enhance credibility and broaden market reach, positioning Turkish hazelnuts as a premium choice in both B2B and B2C markets (Kotler et al., 2022).

Media Selection

The promotion strategy for Turkish hazelnuts will utilize a diverse range of traditional media channels to effectively reach both consumer and business audiences. By incorporating print, radio, television, and event-based marketing, the campaign will create a strong presence in key markets. This multi-channel approach ensures broad visibility and reinforces the brand's premium positioning across various touchpoints (Kotler et al., 2022).

Traditional Media	
Print Ads	Feature in health, food, and lifestyle magazines, as well as industry publications targeting B2B clients.
Billboards	Strategic placements in urban centers with high disposable income, focusing on premium branding and product benefits to build awareness before differentiating.
Radio Advertising	Target regions with high disposable income or areas with a strong

<i>Local and National Radio Stations</i>	interest in healthy and gourmet foods.
<i>Radio Advertising Niche Programs</i>	Focus on segments related to health, cooking, and lifestyle.
<i>Radio Advertising Sponsorships</i>	Consider sponsoring popular podcasts or radio segments that align with health-conscious and gourmet food audiences.
<i>Television Commercials Targeted Networks</i>	Food Network, HGTV, and lifestyle channels where audiences are more likely to be interested in healthy eating and premium food products.
<i>Television Commercials Cooking Shows and Sponsorships</i>	Partner shows that highlight international ingredients or gourmet recipes.
<i>Food Industry Trade Shows</i>	Such as the Fancy Food Show, Sweets & Snacks Expo, or Natural Products Expo West.
<i>Sampling Events</i>	Offer tastings of Turkish hazelnuts and hazelnut-based products to showcase their superior taste and quality.
<i>Direct Mail Campaigns B2B Focus</i>	Send targeted mailers to businesses such as bakeries, chocolate manufacturers, and health food brands.
<i>Direct Mail Campaigns Consumer Focus</i>	Distribute recipes, coupons, or promotional offers to select demographics.
<i>Magazines and Print Publications Lifestyle and Health Magazines</i>	Such as Bon Appétit, EatingWell, and Real Simple.
<i>Magazines and Print Publications Industry Journals</i>	Publications like Food Business News or NutraIngredients-USA for B2B engagement.

In-Store Displays and Promotions <i>Point of Sale (POS) Marketing</i>	Use standees, banners, and sample stations in premium grocery stores like Whole Foods and Trader Joe's.
In-Store Displays and Promotions <i>Co-Branded Displays</i>	Collaborate with brands that use hazelnuts in their products, such as chocolate or health snack companies.
Airport Advertising	Target travelers in high-traffic areas, promoting Turkish hazelnuts as a premium and portable snack option.
Product Placement	Strategically place Turkish hazelnuts in cooking scenes or as a snack option in shows watched by the target demographic.

The digital media strategy for Turkish hazelnuts will leverage a mix of online platforms to engage target audiences with dynamic and interactive content. Through social media, influencer partnerships, email marketing, and digital advertising, the campaign will build brand awareness and drive consumer engagement. This approach will allow for precise targeting and measurable impact, enhancing the overall effectiveness of the promotional strategy.

Digital Media	
Social Media Campaigns	Utilize platforms like Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, X, YouTube, and LinkedIn to reach specific demographics with tailored content.
Influencer Marketing	Partner with influencers in the health, wellness, and culinary spaces to enhance reach and credibility.
Email Marketing	Develop personalized email campaigns for both B2B clients and retail consumers to maintain engagement.

To integrate traditional and digital media, we will combine print ads with QR codes, leading to digital experiences, such as exclusive recipes, health information, videos, or promotions. QR codes will provide an added layer of monitoring in real-time to see how well an ad placement is performing.

To enhance transparency and connect emotionally with consumers, all Imece Farms packaging will include a QR code linking to a 15–30 second video. This immersive content will showcase the breathtaking Black Sea region, blooming hazelnut orchards, traditional harvesting methods, and processing techniques – visually reinforcing the brand slogan, “From our village to your modern life.” This digital storytelling strategy bridges cultural and geographic distance, fosters trust, and strengthens Imece Farms’ positioning as a sustainable, community-driven premium brand.



Additionally, we will launch a 30-day social media challenge. Contestants will post an Instagram Reel or Facebook story every day highlighting how they’re eating or using Turkish hazelnuts. At least twice a week, the video must involve using our hazelnuts as an ingredient in a recipe. All contestants who fulfill the challenge’s requirement will be entered to win Imece Farms hazelnuts as well as branded merchandise such as t-shirts, stickers, and tote bags. The ultimate winner will be decided based on the highest number of “likes” on a video for a recipe that includes Imece Farms hazelnuts. This sort of influencer exposure, implementing user-generated content (UGC) costs Imece Farms nothing but the prize or additional promotion of the challenge. The winner will receive Turkish hazelnuts and Imece Farms products and merchandise to further experience the versatility of the hazelnut and provide free in-person marketing by carrying branded merch.

Face-to-Face Marketing Strategy

While not a major slice of the overall marketing strategy, we will optimize strategically placed face-to-face events utilizing local social media influencers and potentially winners of the baking competition. Initially, we will focus on well-known markets in large cities that cater to consumers interested in gourmet cooking and ingredients. Locations such as Farmers Market L.A. in Los Angeles, Union Square Greenmarket and Brooklyn Borough Hall Greenmarket – both in New York – and the Logan Square and Lincoln Park Farmers Markets in Chicago are strong places to



launch this initiative because of their size, customer base, and proximity to health and wellness social media influencers and customers.

Direct Selling to Industrial Buyers

To effectively reach business-to-business partners, Imece Farms will implement a direct sales strategy targeting mid-sized industrial users. A dedicated sales team will focus on educating potential partners about the benefits of Turkish hazelnuts, emphasizing superior quality, *ingredient branding opportunities*, and consistent supply. Salespeople will highlight the option for *co-branding* on packaging and marketing materials using phrases like “**Made with Turkish Hazelnuts**”, helping to increase brand awareness and elevate product value among end consumers.

Target firms will include confectionery producers such as Albanese Candy, gourmet bakeries, specialty food manufacturers, and even microbreweries exploring unique flavor profiles in seasonal releases. Direct relationships with these firms offer multiple advantages:

- Reduced costs for B2B buyers by bypassing intermediaries
- Decreased dependency on large distribution chains
- Stronger supplier-buyer relationships that allow for customization, flexibility, and mutual growth

This personal, consultative selling approach will not only build brand trust but also secure strategic partnerships that help expand the market presence of Turkish hazelnuts in the U.S.

In-Person Marketing	
Prominent Farmer’s Markets	Set up booths at farmer’s markets in major metropolitan areas that are well-known for gourmet products.
In-Store Sampling	Identify health-forward grocery stores in upscale neighborhoods and strategically place local influencers as brand ambassadors to hand out samples.

Implementation and Monitoring

The implementation of the promotion strategy for Turkish hazelnuts will involve a carefully planned campaign launch that moves through distinct phases – from pre-launch teasers designed to build anticipation, to active launch activities that maximize visibility, and finally, to post-launch engagement strategies that maintain momentum. Each phase will be tailored to both business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) audiences, ensuring broad market coverage and consistent messaging across all channels. The campaign will utilize a mix of traditional and digital media, aligning with the broader media strategy to create a cohesive and impactful brand presence.

Monitoring the campaign’s success will involve setting clear and measurable key performance indicators (KPIs) that track brand awareness, engagement, and conversion metrics. Success will be measured through social media engagement, website traffic, and sales performance, providing insights into the effectiveness of the promotional activities. Additionally, specific goals will be established for co-branding partnerships, with metrics to assess the reach and impact of joint marketing efforts. Evaluating the sales performance of co-branded products will serve as a crucial indicator of market acceptance and the long-term potential of Turkish hazelnuts in the U.S. market.



Part 8: Marketing Mix – Place

Overview of Place Strategy

According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), studies have consistently found consumers to have a positive willingness to pay for foods with reduced fat, whole grains, and additional nutrients from fruits and vegetables (Alsubhi, et al., 2022). Generation Z (Gen Z), born between 1997–2012, is redefining luxury with trips to the grocery store, with the generational segment making up the largest portion of premium grocery store shoppers (Wadford, 2024). 70% of Gen Z is willing to pay more for high-quality foods, prioritizing health, wellness, and sustainability (Shen, 2024). This shift in generational values is signaled by an increase in health awareness, but also the identity surrounding wellness. Between the rise of influencer marketing, celebrity endorsement, and the desire to project a wellness lifestyle on social media, Gen Z is a prime target segment for Imece Farms.

In order to reach the audience most drawn to health foods and premium food products, the brand must consider which distribution channels will reach this target market geographically and culturally.

Placement

Distribute Imece Farms premium hazelnuts to retailers and wholesalers with reputations for being health food stores or specialty chains. Popular examples include Whole Foods, Trader Joe's, Sprouts, and Publix, which are accessible to consumers nationwide. These chains have a reputation for carrying high-quality, diet-accommodating (gluten free, organic, keto, etc.) products. A testament to this market trend, for example, can be observed in Gen Z's behaviors in Southern California, where general grocers lost ~2 points of share, and Whole Foods and Sprouts in particular have each either maintained or slightly grown their respective shares of 8% and 7% (*Health grocers find their niche among Gen Z, Millennials*, 2024). Additionally, with the power social media plays in the affirmation of consumer identities,

Consider distributing to local chains and corner storefronts – like Goddess and the Grocer in Chicago, Sunrise Health Foods in Valparaiso, Indiana, or Erewhon Market in Southern California. These businesses neighbor geographic hotspots of the brand's target market. The first two examples, in particular, are close to college campuses that host large geographic proportions of Imece Farms' target market. These small chains may not get as much foot traffic as national chains, but they can appeal to Gen Z's attraction to novelty and making grocery shopping an experience (Shen, 2024). Imece Farms should be selective in relation to its partnerships to local storefronts in order to ensure market success and a mutually beneficial partnership. While Erewhon Market is not easily accessible for many Gen Z'ers, for example, the attraction and viral space found on platforms like TikTok can reflect what consumers of this generation are looking for in the food-stuff space (Slater, 2025).



Where Not to Place

Avoid selling directly to the consumer for the time being manufacturer-to-consumer sales may instigate vertical conflict by drawing consumers away from allied retailers or wholesalers (Kotler, et al., 2022). If a door opens after strong relationships with distribution partners are built, B2C online channels can be considered. While Gen Z adults have a cultural reputation for being chronically online

(and are the generation that is most likely to use mobile payment online (by 27.3%), consumers belonging to this target segment are 11.9% less likely to shop online regularly in comparison to the average American consumer every week and 12% less likely every year (“Online Shopping Demographics,” 2024). Furthermore, about 30% of Gen Z shoppers choose the route of in-person purchasing because of instant gratification, while 28% prefer this method because they can inspect the product and avoid needless returns (Repko, 2024). Many consumers will naturally associate hazelnuts with in-store purchases, as opposed to items that are commonly purchased online, like books, clothes, and home goods; a quick search on Amazon.com reveals these items as the most frequently purchased (“Top Items Sold on Amazon In 2024,” n.d.).

For partnerships like artisanal bakers, snack food manufacturers, specialty food brands, and other good manufacturers, bulk distribution can be utilized for efficiency and relayed to wholesalers and retailers as a partnership exclusive to manufacturers to avoid vertical conflict.

Placing Turkish Hazelnuts Near Competitors

In comparison to other tree nuts, hazelnuts make up a smaller portion of the U.S. market, though the overall trend toward greater tree nut consumption is on the rise. Over the last fifty years, the pounds of tree nuts consumed by American customers have approximately doubled, growing from 1.38 pounds per consumer in 1970 to 3.69 pounds in 2016 (Bentley, 2019). Almonds, in particular, have seen the highest growth of consumption (Bentley, 2019). Almonds, along with other consumer favorites – peanuts, pecans, pistachios, and walnuts – can be purchased at virtually any storefront, from convenience stores to high-end retailers; however, some brands of these nut varieties will be marketed as premium brands, only available in select locations. For example, the Whole Foods Market sells Mitica truffled marcona almonds among its offered variety, while Speedway or Walgreens may only offer a more widespread brand of almonds like Blue Diamond. Imece Farms, positioning itself as a premium and, could follow Mitica’s example in predominantly selling in locations that are known for hosting specialty, health-conscious brands like Whole Foods.

Geographic Location

When it comes to hazelnuts specifically, Imece Farms would likely fare better in markets farther away from Oregon’s Willamette Valley, where 99% of U.S. hazelnuts are grown (*Climate-Resilient Hazelnuts in Oregon and Washington*, n.d.). Here, consumers will likely already have product preferences, brand loyalty to their home state, and access to Oregon hazelnuts in grocery stores where they frequently shop. In other



areas of the country, accessibility to hazelnuts is more limited and consumers are less likely to happen upon them or deliberately find them in grocery stores and other retail locations. This is where Imece Farms steps in, giving customers outside of Oregon’s abundance access to high-quality hazelnuts without having to shop online and take a chance on a brand they are unfamiliar with. Imece Farms could enter Oregon’s geographic market as a competitor once the brand is more firmly established in other markets.

Part 9: Marketing Mix – Explanation

The immediate sources of competitive advantage for Imece Farms hazelnuts will stem largely from product and promotion within the marketing mix when comparing hazelnuts against similar competitive alternatives such as American hazelnuts, almonds, or other nut-based snacks. We explore the Buyer Utility Map in this section (Kotler et al., 2022):

	Purchase	Delivery	Use	Supplements	Disposal
Customer Productivity	Turkish hazelnuts are not as popular as almonds and other nuts in the U.S.		Hazelnuts contain more vitamins than almonds and peanuts	Ingredient branding with product options Alternative uses: cosmetics, pharmacy, etc.	
Simplicity		Turkish hazelnuts have a long-proven track record of exporting to other countries			
Convenience	Ease of purchase through social media				

	advertising Availability in gas stations and convenience stores				
Risk Reduction			Adding warning label for nut allergy notification		
Fun and Image	Ingredients sourced from CSR- focused Imece Farms <i>“From our village to your modern life”</i>				
Environ- mental Friendliness					Many eco- friendly uses for shells

Product

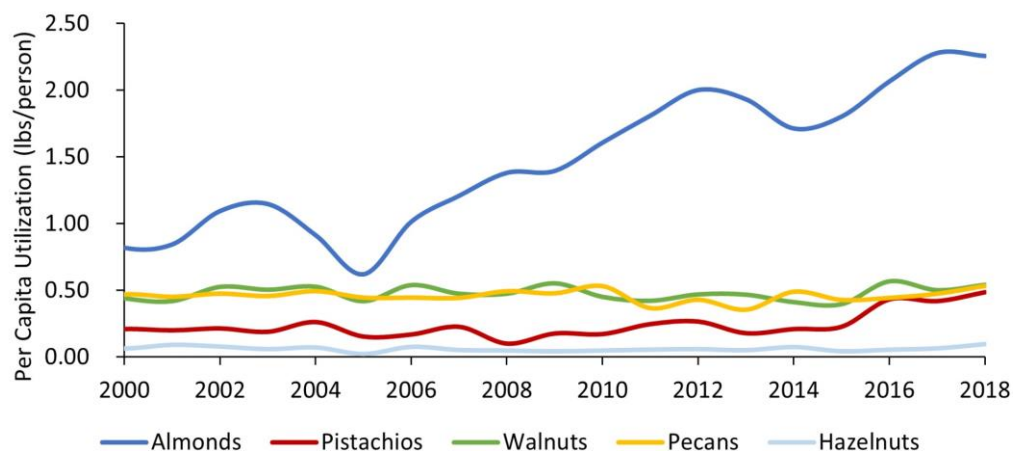
Hazelnuts offer consumers a healthy snack choice compared to other processed foods, and offer separate unique benefits compared to their main competitors. Imece Farms will focus on branding its products to fill this gap for consumers.

As we compare hazelnuts to almonds, a main competitor, Imece Farms will promote hazelnuts as containing more iron, copper, and manganese than almonds, all while containing less sodium (Khachatryan, 2023). Additionally, Imece Farms hazelnuts contain higher levels of essential vitamins compared to almonds (Khachatryan, 2023).

Comparing hazelnuts to peanuts, another main competitor, Imece Farms will emphasize that hazelnuts contain more vitamin E and iron than peanuts, also while containing less sodium (*Nutrition Comparison: Peanuts Vs Hazelnut*, n.d.).

Comparing Imece Farms hazelnuts against American-grown hazelnuts, our brand will emphasize the fact that Turkish hazelnuts are sweeter, larger, and have a more robust flavor. Moreover, references will be made to the experience that these farmers have, noting Turkey's supply dominance across the globe and sustainability efforts.

Shifting our focus to the U.S. market, hazelnut consumption is very much an untapped market. For the past several decades, hazelnut consumption has been significantly lower than other tree nut options. Almonds have consistently been the top choice for American consumers by a significant margin. Moreover, per capita tree nut consumption in the U.S. has been increasing for many years. A primary catalyst in this increased demand for all tree nuts is the nutritional benefits that have been marketed to consumers (Asci & Devadoss, 2021). To capitalize on this industry-wide growth, Imece Farms will not only focus on the health benefits of nuts overall (POPs) but will also emphasize the benefits unique to Imece Farm hazelnuts (PODs).



Source: USDA (2020a) / (Asci & Devadoss, 2021)

Promotion

Imece Farms will target health-conscious consumers who value social responsibility. Many competitors, selling almonds, peanuts, or other similar snack products, rarely touch on how or where their products are sourced. To deliver this message to prospective consumers, Imece Farms will primarily utilize social media advertising, with an emphasis on Facebook and Instagram given the audiences on each platform. Advertising short-form videos (or “Reels,” as Meta has dubbed them)

allows for Imece Farms to not only focus on POPs – detailing our products – but also focuses on our PODs: our **why**. These Reels can depict local Imece Farms, our corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices, and briefly explain the benefits of hazelnuts compared to other snacks or baking ingredients (Kotler et al, 2022). Not only will these Reels successfully and effectively deliver Imece Farms’ story, aiming to capture the viewer’s attention and emotions, but will end with how to buy the product. Reels will list points of sale geographically near the viewer, along with a link to purchase direct from Amazon for convenience. We will also aim to incorporate celebrity influencers in these Reels to fortify the brand’s image and story.

As we look toward a long-term strategy for sustainable competitive advantage, Imece Farms will aim to utilize ingredient branding with major confectionaries. Specifically, Imece Farms will focus on establishing strategic partnerships with American corporations, such as Hershey’s or Albanese, to use Imece Farms hazelnuts in various chocolates or spreads. Backed by the power of the Imece Farms story, a new hazelnut spread could be promoted to the American market to attack Nutella’s foothold on hazelnut spread in the U.S.

Conclusion

Fortunately, the strategies outlined in all four sections of the marketing mix all align toward a common target customer profile. Consumers in the United States, who are health-conscious and place a priority on social responsibility, are willing to pay a premium to satisfy those elements that are important to them. Imece Farms can capitalize on this untapped market utilizing short-term strategies through B2C sales with advertising on various platforms, coupled with a long-term strategy through B2B ingredient branding with American companies. By focusing on Imece Farms’ critical PODs (superior hazelnut quality, nutritional benefits that are separate from other snacks, CSR, and storytelling), the organization will successfully navigate the competitive landscape and thrive.

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