



# Food Imports in Malawi: Trends, Drivers and Policy Implications

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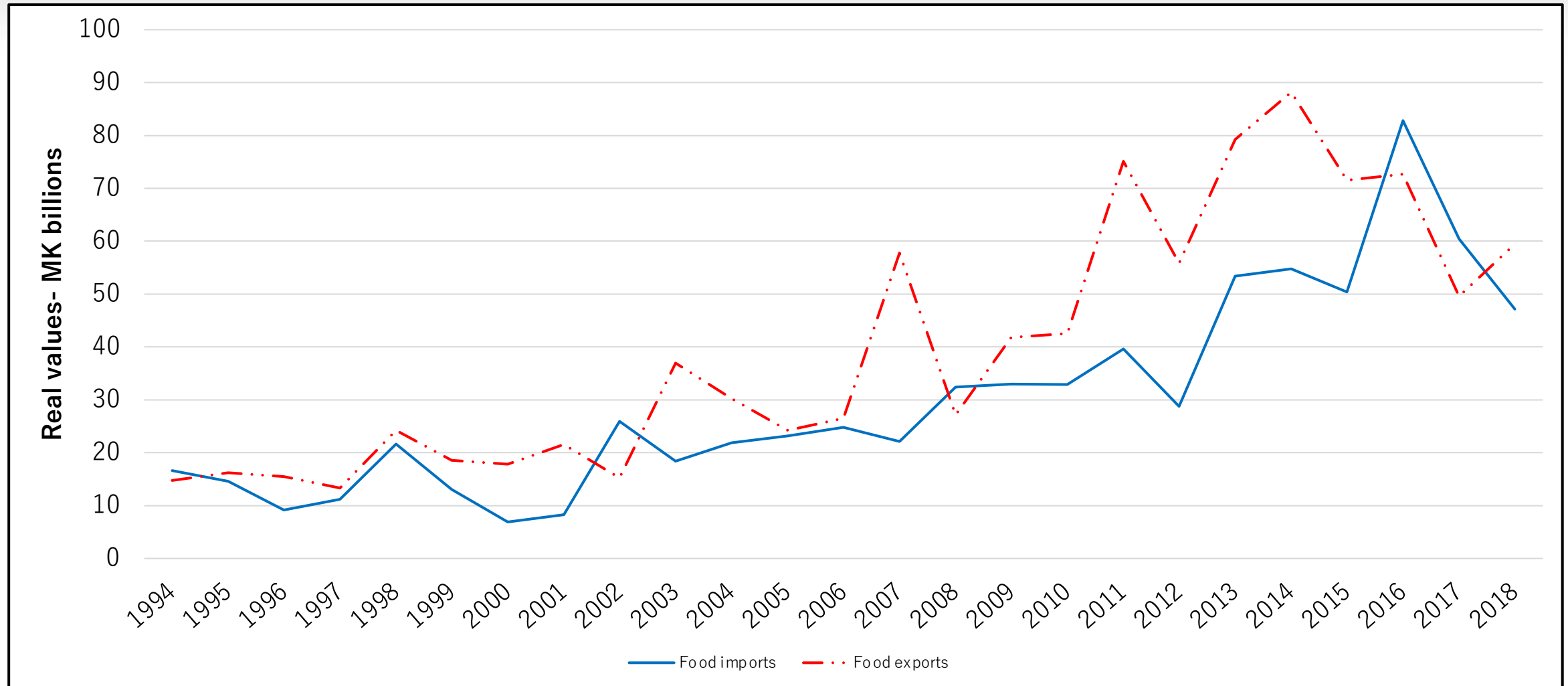


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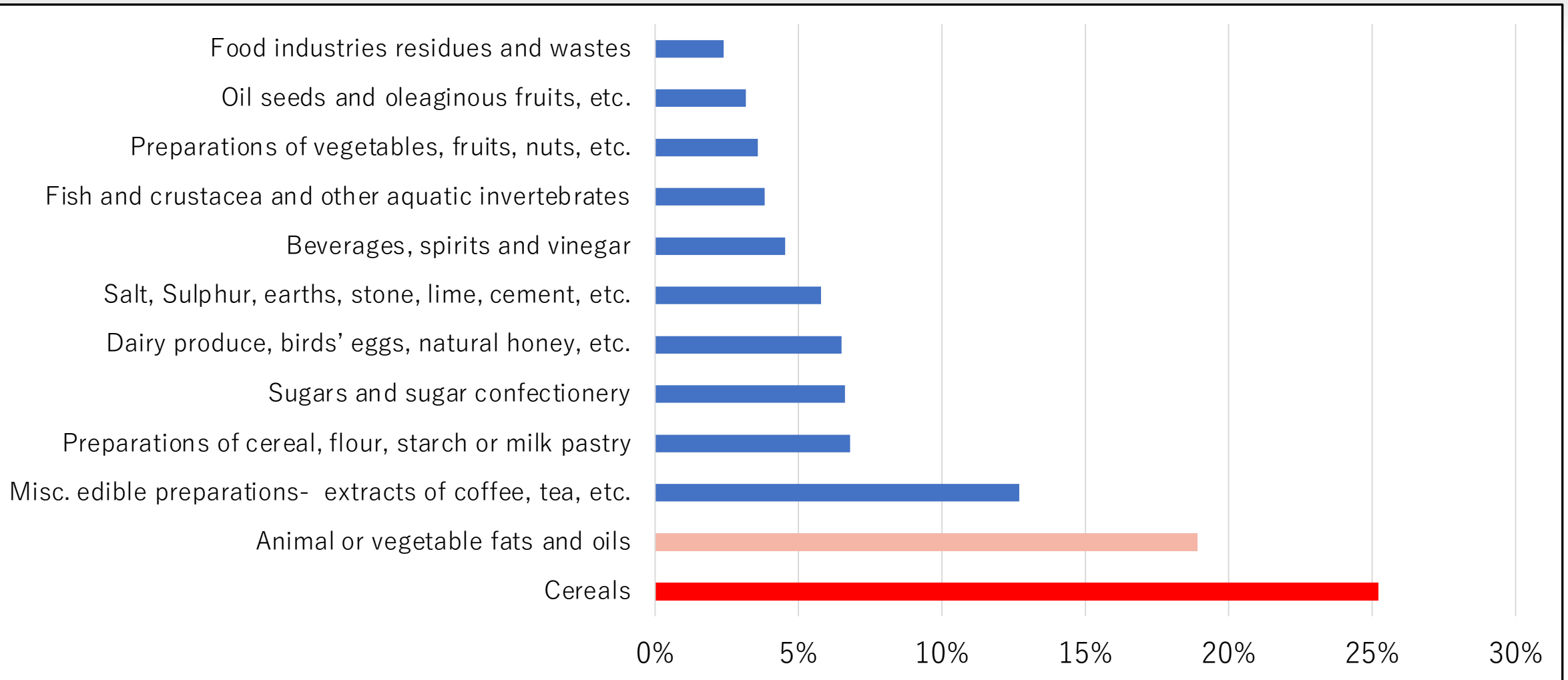


# Total value of food imports in Malawi has more than doubled between 1998 and 2018



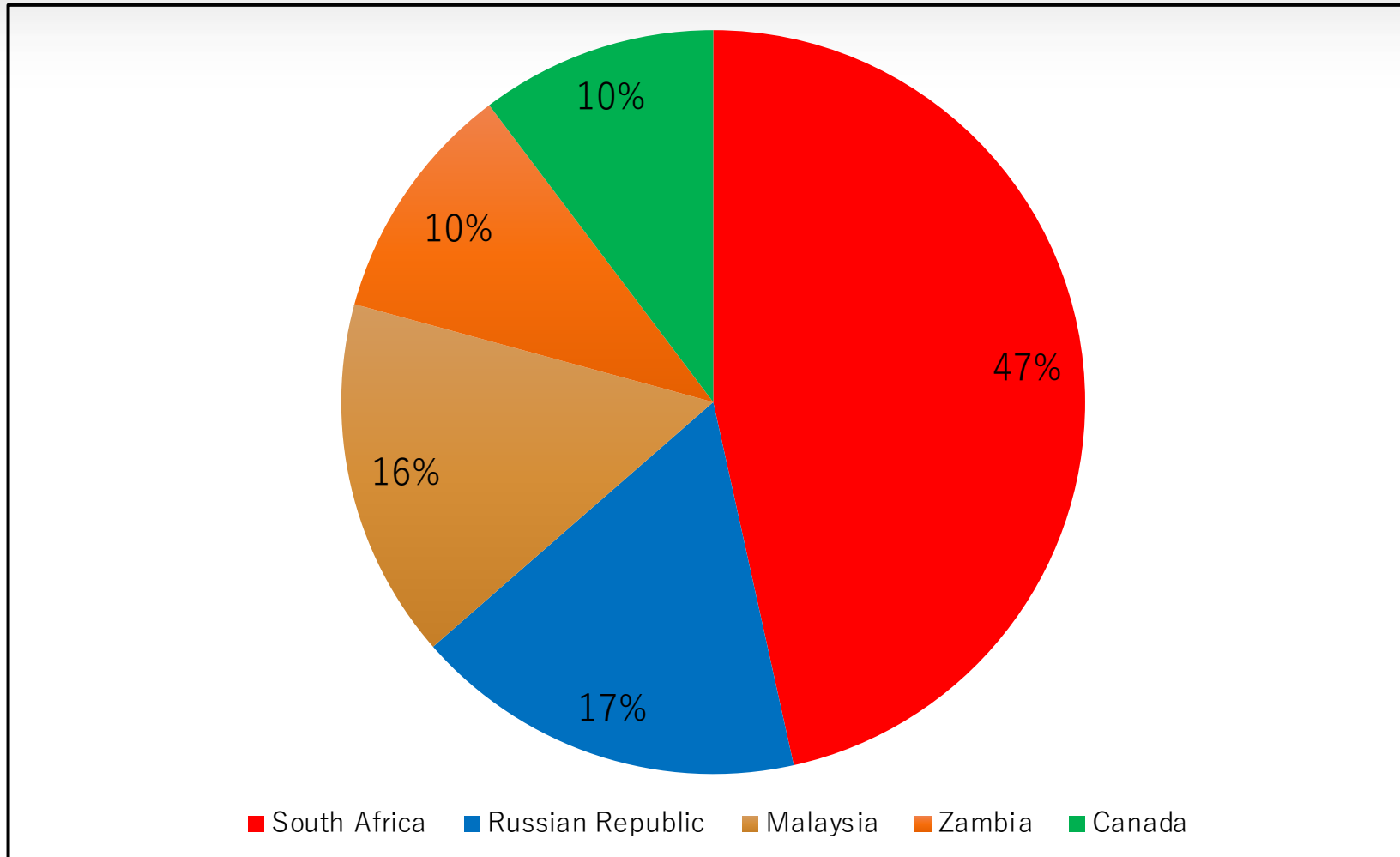
Source: NSO, External Trade

# Cereals, animal and vegetable fats, and oils dominate food imports



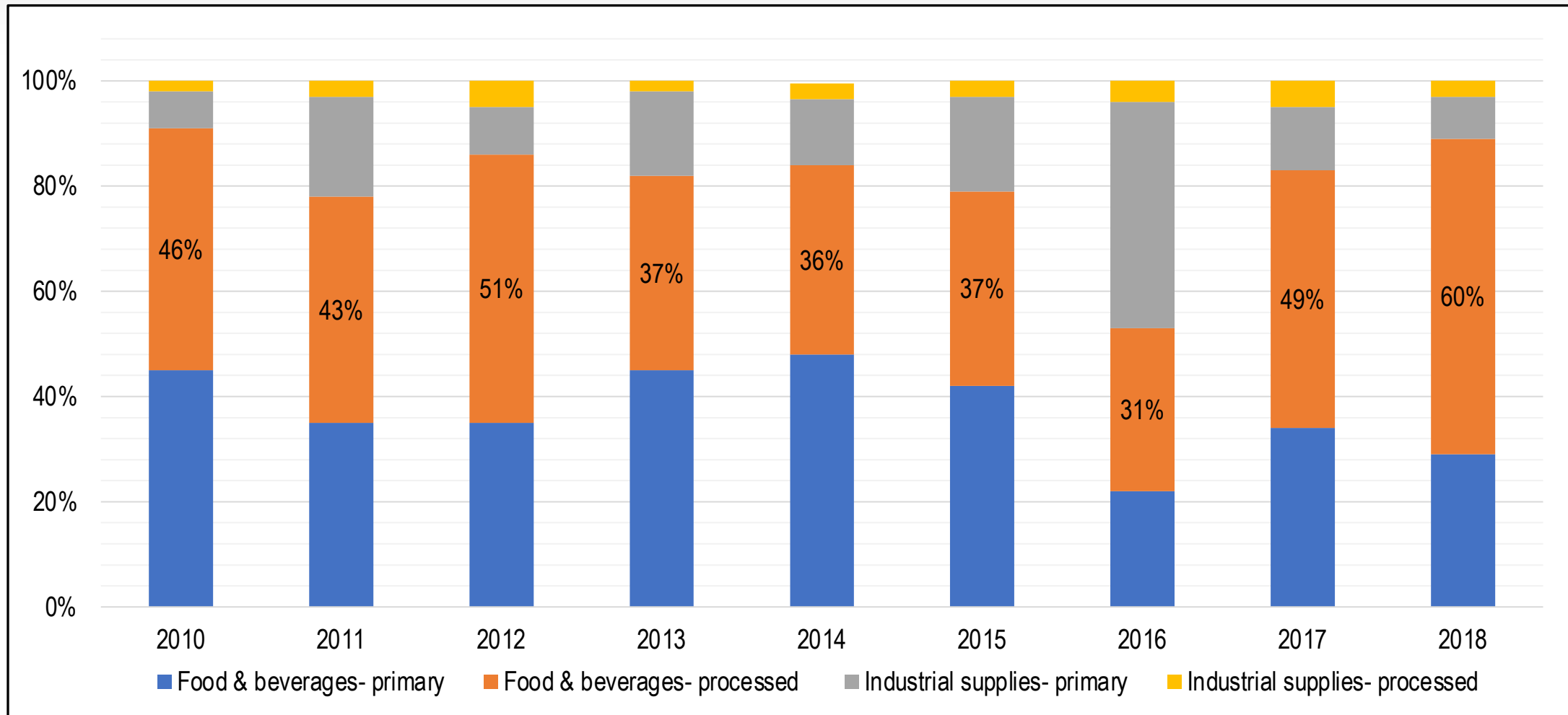
Source: NSO, External Trade

# Malawi food imports comes mainly from five countries



Source: NSO, External Trade

# Much of the food import portfolio is for direct consumption



Source: NSO, External Trade

# The increase in food imports is driven by:

- ☀️ Low agricultural productivity and production
- ☀️ Rising demand for processed foods due to changing diets
- ☀️ Low domestic industrial sector manufacturing competitiveness
- ☀️ Increased climate variability and natural disasters
- ☀️ Non-compliance to rules of origin in COMESA
- ☀️ Informal food imports from neighboring countries

# Possible policy interventions to minimise reliance on food imports

- ☀ Enhance agricultural productivity
- ☀ Improve the competitiveness of local agri-food industries
- ☀ Invest in agri-food processing to harness the changing diets
- ☀ Promote locally produced products (e.g.: Best Buy Malawi Strategy)
- ☀ Enforce compliance to rules of origin to curb possible “food fraud”
- ☀ Reform food aid to reduce market distortions
- ☀ Curb unregulated food importation



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