



Voluntary Report - public distribution

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Chile

Fishery Products

Market Access Restored for U.S. Salmonid Eggs

2001

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Report Highlights:

On February 9, the U.S. and Chile reached an agreement which effectively restores market access for exports of U.S. salmonid eggs to Chile.

Includes PSD changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Santiago [CI1], CI

Summary

This is an update on the trade issue concerning exports of U.S. fertilized salmonid eggs to Chile. For earlier reference, see FAS GAIN Reports CI1002 dated 1/8/01 and CI0038 dated 10/10/00.

After months of intense efforts by Post, U.S. Embassy/Santiago and several U.S. government agencies, especially USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Chile's National Fisheries Service (SERNAPESCA) and APHIS reached a one-year agreement on February 9, 2001 which effectively restores market access to Chile for exports of U.S. salmonid eggs. The same day, Chile's Under Secretariat of Fisheries issued its second revised import protocol ensuring this. As a result, exports of U.S. salmonid eggs are expected to resume the increasing pace of about \$2 million per year before Chile closed its market. Chile's entire market for imports of salmonid eggs is estimated at nearly \$9 million and growing.

Recent Developments

As a result of Post's initial joint efforts with APHIS to restore market access, Chile's Under Secretariat of Fisheries (of the Ministry of Economy, Energy and Mines) issued its first revised protocol for salmonid egg imports on December 21, 2000. This substantially reduced the quarantine time for imports established in the initial import protocol, but continued to maintain a quarantine and testing period which was still too long to allow trade. During the first two weeks of January 2001, further information exchanges were made between the two governments expressing the U.S. industry's ongoing concerns that Chile's revised import rules would continue to obstruct trade.

In response, the U.S. and Chilean governments worked together to reach an agreement which would recognize U.S. certifications on disease-free status for all U.S. salmonid egg shipments to Chile, thereby exempting the U.S. from Chile's new quarantine and testing requirements for all imported salmonid eggs. After several iterations, a final agreement was reached between APHIS and SERNAPESCA on February 9, 2001, valid for a period of one year.

The Agreement and Revised Import Requirements

The U.S.- Chile agreement establishes formal recognition by SERNAPESCA of APHIS' certification authority for live aquaculture species, noting that other U.S. government agencies also have jurisdiction over and perform inspection of live aquatic animals. The agreement states as its primary objective safe bilateral trade of aquatic animals and genetic aquaculture material. It also commits to bilateral disease notification, technical cooperation, and information exchange. The term of the agreement is one year, renewable, with either party having the right to terminate the agreement with 90 days notice. On trade, the essence of the agreement is SERNAPESCA's recognition of APHIS' national aquatic health certification and inspection program, in particular for the diseases of concern identified by Chile. SERNAPESCA agreed that it was premature for APHIS to recognize Chile's aquaculture health program until such time as Chile has established its own disease control and monitoring system, as well as having performed a thoroughly documented pest risk assessment, both of which would have to be reviewed by the U.S. prior to recognition of Chile's aquatic health and inspection system.

As a result of the agreement, Chile's Under Secretariat of Fisheries issued concurrently on February 9 the second revision of the import protocol for salmonid eggs, in accordance with Ministry of Economy Decree No. 730 of 1995. This revision specifies under Part III.2 that "for countries free of Infectious Salmonid Anemia (ISA), the quarantine will not be required and therefore, in accordance with Article 12 of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Law, imports will be approved on the basis of the sanitary certificates issued by the official authority of the country of origin, as long as there is an agreement or memorandum signed by that authority and SERNAPESCA regarding mutual accreditation of sanitary certification to facilitate safe trade in live aquaculture species." Under the newly revised rule, SERNAPESCA has verbally assured Post that import permits for U.S. salmonid eggs will be automatically authorized, and U.S. eggs currently in quarantine will be authorized for immediate release.