

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Number: EG2021-0014

Report Name: Adopting A Risk Based Tolerance for Ractopamine in Beef Reduces Rejections by 90 Percent

Country: Egypt

Post: Cairo

Report Category: Country/Regional FTA's, Trade Policy Incident Report, Trade Policy Monitoring, WTO Notifications, Exporter Guide, Food Processing Ingredients, Food Service - Hotel Restaurant Institutional, Retail Foods, Competitor, Export Promotion Programs, Honey, Market Development Reports, Market Promotion/Competition, Product Brief, Promotion Opportunities, Sales Mission Evaluation, Snack Foods, Trade Show Announcement, Trade Show Closing, Trade Show Evaluation, Export Accomplishments - Events, Export Accomplishments - Other, Export Accomplishments - Trade Leads, Export Accomplishments - Marketing, Trade Events and Shows, Export Accomplishments - Market Access, Export Accomplishments - Border Facilitation, SP2 - Prevent or Resolve Barriers to Trade that Hinder U.S. Food and Agricultural Exports, SP3 - Build Demand in Developing Countries through Trade Capacity Building, SP1 - Expand International Marketing Opportunities, Country/Regional FTA's, Trade Policy Incident Report, Trade Policy Monitoring, WTO Notifications, FAIRS Subject Report

Prepared By: Shaza Omar, Senior Agricultural Specialist and Elizabeth Mello, Senior Agricultural Attaché

Approved By: Kurt Seifarth

Report Highlights:

THIS REPORT CONTAINS ASSESSMENTS OF COMMODITY AND TRADE ISSUES MADE BY USDA STAFF AND NOT NECESSARILY STATEMENTS OF OFFICIAL U.S. GOVERNMENT POLICY

For a decade, trade of beef and beef products to Egypt have been very disrupted. This was mainly due to the application of zero tolerance of ractopamine. The zero-tolerance level was not based on risk assessment and was not in line with Codex MRL guidelines. The zero-tolerance increased both cost of release and the time required to clear customs. In early 2020, the National Food Safety Authority (NSFA) conducted a risk assessment and changed the tolerance level of 20 parts per billion (ppb) for the residual of ractopamine in liver and adopted Codex MRL guideline for muscle cuts at 10 ppb.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On November 15, 2020 Egypt's National Food Safety Authority (NSFA) issued Decision No. 13/2020, which set new maximum residue limits (MRLs) for veterinary drugs including ractopamine. NSFA identified a tolerance level of 20 parts per billion (ppb) for the residual of ractopamine in liver and adopted Codex MRL guideline for muscle cuts.

The previous Egyptian standard regulating the imports of beef liver was based on European Union Regulation Number 2377/1990, which established a zero-tolerance level for many veterinary drug residues, including ractopamine. This became a major impediment to trade since 2012. The new decision of 20 ppb relaxes the zero-tolerance measure but is still lower than the Codex MRL at 40 ppb for beef liver. Decision No. 13/2020 does adopt Codex MRL for muscle cuts at 10 ppb. U.S. beef exports to Egypt, which mainly consist of offal, amounted to approximately \$76 million in 2019.

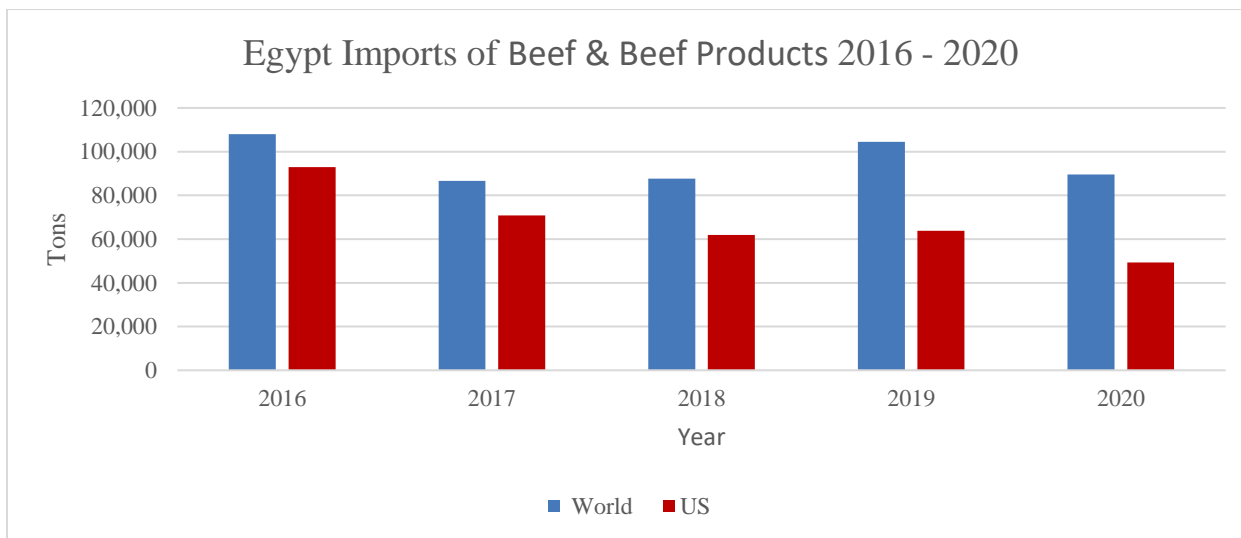
THE COST OF APPLYING ZERO TOLERANCE - BACKGROUND

Upon an initial detection of ractopamine residue, importers generally request subsequent tests on beef shipments which carry an additional cost. Each test takes a minimum of five days but results often take up to four weeks. Egyptian regulations require that all shipments be tested at port. The testing of each sample costs EGP 1500 (\$96) so in cases where three samples are tested, sampling alone may cost up to EGP 4500 (nearly \$300). The direct costs of sampling coupled with the indirect costs associated with delayed port clearance resulted in undue time and financial burdens that were ultimately passed on to Egyptian consumers.

RATES OF REJECTION BEFORE AND AFTER THE DECISION

Due to the application of zero tolerance, almost 20 percent of the total beef offal imports from the U.S, were rejected. Currently the rejections don't exceed two percent of the total imported quantities. In 2020, Egypt imported a sum of around 89 thousand tons, with almost 50 percent being from the U.S. Figure 1 illustrates the total world supply and the US share, from 2016 to 2020. Local importers report that trade is now easier due to the relaxed Ractopamine MRL. Shipments are now being released considerably faster than prior to the decision. Typically, shipments now are released in less than a week, and not more than 15 days at maximum. Before, shipments were being released in two or three months. The decision was a favorable turning point facilitating the trade of beef and beef products.

Figure 1



Reference: Global Agriculture Trade System - GATS and Trade Data Monitor (TDM)

Attachments:

No Attachments.