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Manure – Not Your Average Success Story

Report Categories:

Export Accomplishments - Market Access

Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety

Special Certification - Organic/Kosher/Halal

Trade Policy Monitoring

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Report Highlights:

St. Lucia's establishment of certification requirements for dehydrated manure opened the door further for exports of U.S. animal products, cemented positive relations with multiple USDA agencies energized through the Cochran program, and afforded its Ministry of Agriculture opportunity to become knowledgeable on the USDA National Organics Program and breath of U.S. organic products on the market. U.S. animal product exports represent nearly 60 percent of the \$30 million U.S. agricultural products exported to the island annually.

Executive Summary:

In March 2015, the Veterinary and Livestock Services Division (VLSD) of the St. Lucia Ministry of Agriculture approached the Caribbean Basin Agricultural Trade Office (CBATO) in Miami regarding its interest in establishing export certification requirements for dehydrated cow manure being imported into St. Lucia from the United States. On March 27, 2015, VLSD set new import conditions for dehydrated manure which, on September 7, 2015, it updated to include other animal sources.

Although in and of itself dehydrated manure is not a large ticket item in terms of U.S. agricultural exports to St. Lucia, it is a component of the broader animal products category which represents nearly 60 percent of total U.S. agricultural trade to St. Lucia. VLSD and CBATO cooperative efforts in recent years have enhanced transparency and predictability for U.S.-St. Lucia bilateral trade through application of science-based health-safety regulatory requirements.

General Information:

In early March 2015 the VLSD of the St. Lucia Ministry of Agriculture approached the CBATO in Miami regarding its interest to establish export certification requirements for dehydrated cow manure sourced from the United States. Although the market for organic fertilizer in St. Lucia was deemed to be relatively small, growing interest from local importers prompted such request from the St. Lucia veterinary authorities.

The CBATO consulted with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Import/Export Services on requested USDA certification and the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) for information on the National Organics Program (NOP). As the USDA interface, CBATO guided VLSD through the NOP, its requirements and criteria for use of the official logo, and through negotiations of certification requirements which resulted with adoption of the APHIS Form 16-4 (Export Certificate for Animal Products) with no additional attestations for dehydrated cow manure. On March 27, 2015, APHIS posted the negotiated result of the new certification requirement on its International Animal Product Export Regulations (IREGS) St. Lucia site.

In April 2015 the VLSD approached the CBATO about expanding the USDA certification to include dehydrated poultry and equine manure in response to local trade interest in those other types of organic fertilizer. Given the onset internationally of the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) virus, VLSD and APHIS engaged in protracted negotiations over specific safeguard requirements covered by the USDA certification on poultry manure. On September 7, 2015, APHIS posted the negotiated attestation language on its IREGS St. Lucia site. The new IREGS entry can be seen at

https://www.aphis.usda.gov/regulations/vs/iregs/products/downloads/st_dehyd_b_manure.pdf.

Although in and of itself dehydrated manure is not a large ticket item in terms of U.S. agricultural exports to St. Lucia (from January-November 2015, U.S. exports of mixed/organic fertilizers totaled \$33,000), it is a component of the broader animal products category that represents roughly 60 percent of the average \$30 million U.S. agricultural products exported to St. Lucia annually. The VLSD certification action also represents awareness of the growing organics movement on the island thus the need to afford consumers greater

protections in its wake. USDA's support of efforts by the VLSD and the St. Lucia Ministry of Agriculture should ensure confidence in U.S. agricultural products thus should ensure a continuum in the flow of trade with that country.

For this past year these two events revealed the effectiveness of the excellent collaboration between the CBATO, on behalf of USDA agencies: Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) in Washington, D.C., APHIS, Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) and AMS, and the St. VLSD.

- On February 16, 2015, the St. Lucia Veterinary Service granted full market access to U.S. beef and beef products, ending 12 years of restrictions in place since the U.S. reported in 2003 its first case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). (See GAIN Report CB1504 dated 3/2/2015, St. Lucia Lifts BSE-related Restrictions on U.S. Beef)
- On March 27, 2015, the St. Lucia Veterinary Service and USDA agreed to sanitary certification for dehydrated manure which the parties amended September 7, 2015, to include by-product from additional animal sources.