

**Voluntary Report** – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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**Report Name:** More Restrictions on Live Cattle Exports to Turkiye

**Country:** Turkiye

**Post:** Ankara

**Report Category:** Agricultural Situation, Dairy and Products, Livestock and Products, Trade Policy Monitoring

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**Report Highlights:**

Türkiye is the second largest cattle importing country after the United States, with imports valued at \$1.6 billion in 2023 despite strict health and technical requirements. As of May 15, 2024, the Turkish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MinAF) enacted an unjustified trade embargo on U.S. cattle following the detection of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (H5N1) in some dairy herds in the United States. In addition, several European Union countries have seen sales of their dairy cows restricted over the past several months due to the spread of Bluetongue disease, including Germany, Austria, and Hungary. This month, MinAF has released additional restrictions for live cattle imports.

## **Background**

Türkiye is the second largest cattle importing country after the United States, with imports valued at \$1.6 billion in 2023 despite strict health and technical requirements. Türkiye generally imports feeder cattle mostly from Brazil and Uruguay, and breeding cattle from Germany, Denmark and United States. In 2023 the United States exported a record \$29 million worth of breeding cattle to Türkiye, however, as of May 15, 2024, the Turkish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MinAF) enacted an unjustified trade embargo on U.S. cattle following the detection of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (H5N1) in some dairy herds in the United States (see the GAIN report on the embargo [here](#)). In addition, several European Union countries have seen sales of their dairy cows restricted over the past several months due to the spread of Bluetongue disease, including Germany, Austria, and Hungary.

In February of this year, Türkiye's Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, Ibrahim Yumakli, unveiled the "[2024-2028 Livestock Roadmap](#)" with the goal of supporting domestic livestock producers following significant decreases in domestic inventories. These shortages were the result of a sizable increase in the number of slaughtered female cattle after domestic raw milk prices fell sharply. Historically, Türkiye has imported feeder and breeding cattle to regulate the domestic milk and meat markets. While lower quality live cattle imports continue, negative public sentiment surrounding prices of red meat and milk remains.

## **Türkiye Releases New Import Instructions for Breeding Cattle**

On November 9, 2024, MinAF released revised import instructions for breeding cattle imports, allegedly based on the latest domestic milk production situation and problems that were reported by one or two livestock importers. Interestingly, government projects and animals to be imported for government farms are exempt from most of the newly imposed restrictions. Prior to this, the import instructions were just updated in January 2024.

The most significant change is that only non-pregnant heifers will be allowed to be imported as of January 1, 2025, since MinAF alleges that there is a milk surplus in Türkiye; they refer to excess milk procured by the government to be processed as whey for export as an example of the situation. Although official Turkish data shows that the amount of milk collected by the dairy industry has increased, prices of dairy products in local markets have not fallen. Industry sources indicate that the reason for prices remaining stagnant or increasing is due to continually rising input prices. The increase in production and prices implies an increase in demand for locally produced milk.

As of January 1, 2025, farms and cattle to be imported shall comply with the following requirements:

- Farms in Türkiye where imported dairy cattle (including crossbreeds) will be residing need to be officially free from animal diseases, with certificates to be provided by MinAF. Imports for government farms or projects are exempt from this requirement.
- The origin and departing country need to be the same.

- Only non-pregnant dairy heifers aged between 4-12 months (including crossbreds) are allowed to be imported. Imports for government farms or projects are exempt from this requirement.
- Regarding feeder breeding cattle, only pregnant animals are allowed to be imported, and animals will be imported from South and North America and Australia. Imports for government farms or projects are exempt from this requirement.
- Live cattle importers have a responsibility at the time of loading of animals in the exporting country on the date of loading to ensure that the health conditions of the animals have not changed since they left their origin. Importers may need to obtain an official confirmation from the exporting country's competent authority.
- MinAF will appoint an official team consisting of MinAF veterinarians and zootechnicians to select animals in the exporting country according to the official instructions published on the [MinAF website](#).
- MinAF advises live cattle importers not to load animals for export unless a control document (pre-import permission) is obtained.

**Attachments:**

No Attachments.