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Turkey

Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards

Pet Food Dioxin Certification Issue Resolved

2006

Approved by:

Ralph Gifford, Agricultural Counselor
Ankara

Prepared by:

Cynthia Iglesias Guven, Agriculture Attache

Report Highlights:

The Turkish Ministry of Agriculture has informed the country's Provincial Directorate Offices that, effective immediately, imports of all feed and feedstuff (including pet food) from the United States will no longer require any accompanying dioxin certification. This change in policy will allow all U.S. pet food facilities to resume exporting their products to Turkey, something that only a limited number of pet food processing companies had been able to do since May 2006.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Ankara [TU1]
[TU]

Summary

After months of intensive negotiation between USDA and the Turkish Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (MARA) officials in Washington and in Ankara, on Tuesday, October 10, MARA sent a letter to the FAS/Ankara office stating that MARA will no longer require a dioxin statement on the veterinary health certificates accompanying U.S. pet food exports to Turkey. This change is effective immediately. Late last week, MARA informed the Provincial Directorate Offices of this change in policy explaining that a dioxin statement was not required to issue a control certificate for importing feed and feedstuff (pet food) from the United States. Therefore, Turkish importers of U.S. pet food are now able to import from all U.S. pet food companies instead of importing only from the ones who are approved to export to the EU, as had been the case since May 2006.

Resolution of this issue came about when USDA provided a letter to MARA from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) stating that regular testing shows that dioxin levels in the United States are below the levels required by Turkish regulations. MARA agreed to accept this letter in place of specific dioxin certification for each individual shipment of U.S. pet food as an interim solution until March 2007, when MARA will no longer require any dioxin certification from the United States, according to a letter dated September 6, 2006.

Background

In March, 2006, MARA began requesting a dioxin statement on the APHIS health certificates accompanying all U.S. pet food exports to Turkey. The requirement limited which U.S. pet food facilities were eligible to export their product to Turkey. Now, all are eligible to export.

Trade impact

U.S. pet food exports to Turkey have been growing rapidly in the last five years. In 2005, pet food exports reached a record \$4.6 million, twice as much as in 2001. Despite the restrictions that U.S. pet food exports faced this year, January to August exports were valued at \$3.7 million, a 33 percent increase from the same period last year. In terms of quantity, January to August exports were 43 percent higher than the same period last year (4,360 tons and 3,039 tons from January to August in 2006 and 2005, respectively).

A positive outcome of the dioxin certification issue is that ten Turkish importers of U.S. pet food together formed an organization called "The Pet Food Association" based in Istanbul and headed by the Food Importers Association Secretary General. The Association immediately became a lobbying force that helped convince MARA of the importance of U.S. pet food exports to Turkey.