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Poultry

Poultry Annual

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Annual Report
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Executive Summary

Korea's economic difficulty in CY 1998 is resulting in a sharp decline in production and consumption of poultry and poultry products. Producers across the spectrum are confronted by rising input costs, diminishing credit facilities and shrinking consumer demand as vegetarian diets become an economic necessity in many households. Poultry operations of every size are experiencing financial difficulty. The latest government forecast for the economy is not promising. The outlook now is for a multi year recovery period.

Per capita consumption is down in 1998 as consumers have reacted to the economic turmoil by reducing discretionary expenditures on luxury activities, such as dining at restaurants. The vast majority of poultry meat is consumed in restaurants. Consumption of competitor meats has dropped dramatically during the first half of 1998. The outlook for poultry meat consumption during the remainder of 1998 and through 1999 is guarded. How consumers react to the economic restructuring currently underway will determine whether the nation's per capita consumption level increases or not. Though the Korean government has taken a more active role supporting consumption of beef, it does not plan to initiate a similar promotion effort for poultry.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry's (MAF) efforts to spur development of the poultry industry's infrastructure were starting to bear results before the country's economic slowdown commenced last fall. Cooperative and private company brands labeled products were starting to become readily available on the market. Consumers were willing and able to sample new products. Further development in this area has not occurred since the public onset of the country's economic difficulties. Given the lucrative return generated by branded products, when the economic situation settles, this sector is expected to regenerate itself more quickly than other sectors.

Trade has been curtailed since the fall 1997. Continued low consumer demand coupled with a general lack of affordable capital for importers should dampen trade for the remainder of 1998 and into 1999. Normally, a fall in domestic production of the magnitude experienced this year would generate a rapid expansion in trade to fill the void. However, weak consumer demand and high import prices due to the devalued currency effectively have neutralized thoughts to expand import trade now.

On December 20, 1997, Korean government passed the Livestock Processing Control Act. The act, effective as of June 14, 1998, transferred inspection authority for meat, dairy and egg products from the Ministry of Health & Welfare (MHW) to the Ministry of Agriculture & Forestry (MAF).

The next two years are expected to bring a period of contraction in the poultry industry in reaction to the country's economic downturn. Once the economy has settled, over the next 3-5 years, the industry is expected to resume its modernization program resulting in an expansion in production and increased supply availability. Further, the industry is expected to adopt a more aggressive marketing strategy to capitalize on consumer awareness of the healthy properties of poultry meat. Domestic production during this period is not expected to be sufficient to meet rising consumer demand, necessitating imports to fill the supply void.

PSD Table						
Country:	Korea, Republic of					
Commodity:	Poultry, Meat, Total					
		1997		1998		1999
	Old	New	Old	New	Old	New
Calendar Year Begin		01/1997		01/1998		01/1999
Inventory (Reference)	0	38	0	35	0	37
Slaughter (Reference)	0	364	0	335	0	354
Beginning Stocks	8	8	5	5	5	5
Production	473	450	492	405	0	425
Whole, Imports	1	1	1	0	0	1
Parts, Imports	38	40	39	29	0	34
Intra EC Imports	4	3	4	1	0	2
Other Imports	0	38	0	28	0	33
TOTAL Imports	39	41	40	29	0	35
TOTAL SUPPLY	520	499	537	439	5	465
Whole, Exports	0	0	0	0	0	0
Parts, Exports	0	0	0	0	0	0
Intra EC Exports	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Exports	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL Exports	0	0	0	0	0	0
Human Consumption	515	494	532	434	0	460
Other Use, Losses	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Dom. Consumption	515	494	532	434	0	460
TOTAL Use	515	494	532	434	0	460
Ending Stocks	5	5	5	5	0	5
TOTAL DISTRIBUTION	520	499	537	439	0	465
Calendar Yr. Imp. from U.S.	0	21	0	17	0	20

PSD Table						
Country:	Korea, Republic of					
Commodity:	Poultry, Eggs					
		1997		1998		1999
	Old	New	Old	New	Old	New
Calendar Year Begin		01/1997		01/1998		01/1999
Layers	53	53	52	51	0	52
Beginning Stocks	40	40	40	40	40	40
Production	8806	8790	8718	8458	0	8624
Hatch Eggs, Imports	0	0	0	0	0	0
Shell Eggs, Imports	5	6	5	3	0	4
Other Imports	108	59	113	40	0	50
Intra EC Imports	7	8	8	4	0	5
TOTAL Imports	113	65	118	43	0	54
TOTAL SUPPLY	8959	8895	8876	8541	40	8718
Hatch Eggs, Exports	0	0	0	0	0	0
Shell Eggs, Exports	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Exports	0	0	0	0	0	0
Intra EC Exports	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL Exports	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hatch Eggs, Consumption	450	450	450	422	0	435
Shell Eggs, Human	8351	8336	8263	8029	0	8183
Shell Eggs, OT Use/Loss	10	10	10	10	0	10
Other Dom. Consumption	108	59	113	40	0	50
Total Dom. Consumption	8919	8855	8836	8501	0	8678
TOTAL Use	8919	8855	8836	8501	0	8678
Ending Stocks	40	40	40	40	0	40
TOTAL DISTRIBUTION	8959	8895	8876	8541	0	8718
Calendar Yr. Imp. from U.S.	0	30	0	24	0	30

Production

Korea's economic difficulty in CY 1998 is resulting in a sharp decline in production of poultry and poultry products. Producers across the spectrum are confronted by rising input costs, diminishing credit facilities and shrinking consumer demand as vegetarian diets become an economic necessity in many households. Poultry operations of every size are experiencing financial difficulty, such that a growing number are now technically bankrupt. The latest government forecast for the economy is not promising. The outlook now is for a multi-year recovery period. The Ministry of Agriculture and the country's largest farmers cooperative share this view for the poultry and products sectors.

Given this forecast, producers are anticipating weak demand for poultry and products through 1999 and are attempting to adjust production accordingly. Earlier this spring the broiler industry attempted to coordinate production to nudge-upward sagging farm-gate prices. The effort failed. Individual's financial interests came into play. Too many producers of broilers and layers have built state-of-the art facilities in recent years which carry high overhead costs. The layer industry, on the other hand, adhered to a resolution not to produce replacement chicks for a month. Estimates are the effort should drop CY 1998 egg production by 6 percent. A non-factor in the planning process is poultry feed supply. When feed grain imports effectively stopped during the December - February period, users of compound feeds panicked. As it turned out domestic stocks were, and still remain, sufficient to meet demand. Turkey production remains insignificant (7,600 birds in CY 1997) as there is no current market for large-size birds. Competitor meats, both beef and pork, even with government support programs in place, are experiencing more significant declines in production and consumption than has poultry. Those sectors will take longer to recover as they are considered by consumers to be "luxury" meats.

The outlook for CY 1999 is somewhat more optimistic. The government forecasts positive growth next year. Production of poultry should show signs of recovery in advance of the two major competitor meats as flock sizes can easily be expanded. Producer's optimism for CY 1999 is precarious though. The country's economic restructuring program could lead to significantly higher unemployment over the next six months. If unemployment exceeds 2 million people, roughly 8 percent of the workforce, by year's end as several private forecasts now predict, the market would not justify expanding production until the end of CY 1999, at the earliest.

Historically, the summer season brings the highest demand and highest price for poultry and products. This year is no different, except that the highest current price remains below the break-even point for the average producer. Reportedly, some broiler integrators are sacrificing employee salaries to meet fixed cost commitments as returns decline. Such reports are causing consternation within the industry. Fears are the financial crisis is now eroding the industry's infrastructure. If too many companies fold due to cash flow problems, the infrastructure will become inadequate for supporting the industry when consumer demand rebounds.

Domestic egg producers, as poultry meat producers, are suffering from low farm-gate prices resulting from weak end-user demand. Production is declining as producers scale back in this environment. Production data for CY 1997 was officially adjusted downward. The economic downturn in the fourth quarter 1997 were noted as for why production did not achieve expectations.

Import of shell eggs for human consumption are down slightly in CY 1998, though data reflected in the Poultry,

Eggs PS&D table would indicate otherwise. Previous data calculations aggregated both liquid products and dried egg products without converting the former to its later equivalence. The new figures reflect the aggregate converted products. Note: For CY 1996, the revised “other imports of egg” total is 73 million eggs. Demand for imported eggs for human consumption is expected to increase in line with the baking industry’s recovery. The baking industry, the major consumer of imported eggs, is experiencing significant ongoing difficulties with the country’s recession.

Consumption and Stocks

Per capita consumption is down in 1998 as consumers have reacted to the economic turmoil by reducing discretionary expenditures on luxury activities, such as dining at restaurants. The vast majority of poultry meat is consumed in restaurants. Consumption of competitor meats has dropped dramatically during the first half of 1998. Oddly enough, consumption of some high quality beef and pork has actually increased during this period on account of drastically falling prices for those products. In terms of total meat consumed and impact on poultry consumption, this represents a very small part of the market. The overall shift in meat consumption patterns is away from meats all together, and not towards the red meats. The outlook for 1999 is for a slight recovery in poultry consumption in line with a recovery in the economy.

Poultry prices at retail and restaurants have maintained a constant level, despite the economic downturn and producer price declines. Some restaurants have actually raised prices for poultry dishes, to cover rising operating costs. Though the Korean government has taken a more active role supporting consumption of beef, it does not plan to initiate a similar promotion program for poultry. Poultry meat does have a distinct advantage over its red meat competitors, as it is viewed as a healthier meat. Because of its image, demand for it should recover sooner when the economy strengthens.

Per Capita Consumption of Livestock Products

Unit: g, boneless basis

Year	Total Meat	Beef	Pork	Chicken	Egg
1995	27,447	6,720	14,750	5,977	10,130
1996	28,800	7,136	15,402	6,262	10,384
1997	29,297	7,930	15,300	6,067	10,375

Source: National Livestock Cooperative Federation

Price Table: Wholesale Price for Chicken Meat

Prices Table					
Country:					
Commodity:					
Year:	CY 1997				
Prices in (currency)	KRW	per (uom)	1 KG		
Year	-1		% Change		
Jan	2294	2449	6.8%		
Feb	2774	2674	-3.6%		
Mar	2909	2394	-17.7%		
Apr	2844	2324	-18.3%		
May	2119	1921	-9.3%		
Jun	1940	1886	-2.8%		
Jul	2127	2163	1.7%		
Aug	2122	2221	4.7%		
Sep	1564	2187	39.8%		
Oct	1727	2390	38.4%		
Nov	1710	2002	17.1%		
Dec	1730	2387	38.0%		

Source: National Livestock Cooperative Federation

Price Table: Farm Price for Egg

Prices Table					
Country:					
Commodity:					
Year:	CY 1997				
Prices in (currency)	Krw	per (uom)	10 eggs, large size		
Year	-1		% Change		
Jan	650	743	14.3%		
Feb	744	738	-0.8%		
Mar	718	758	5.6%		
Apr	732	742	1.4%		
May	675	698	3.4%		
Jun	545	608	11.6%		
Jul	617	579	-6.2%		
Aug	629	653	3.8%		
Sep	788	767	-2.7%		
Oct	685	759	10.8%		
Nov	657	796	21.2%		
Dec	712	729	2.4%		

Source: National Livestock Cooperative Federation

Price Table: Farm Price for Chicken Meat

Commodity	Chicken Meat, Farm Price			Unit: Krw/Kg
Year	1996	1997	1998	% Change
Month				comparing to previous year
Jan.	1329	1243	1248	0.4
Feb.	1663	1434	1441	0.5
Mar.	1861	1277	1662	30.0
Apr.	1632	1210	1363	12.6
May	1147	982	1294	31.2
Jun.	974	870	1167	34.1
Jul.	1086	1100		1.3
Aug.	1095	1146		4.7
Sep.	791	1028		30.0
Oct.	809	1242		53.5
Nov.	841	969		15.2
Dec.	865	1158		33.9

Source: National Livestock Cooperative Federation

Monthly Average Foreign Exchange Rate

Unit: Krw / 1U\$

Month	1996	1997	1998
January	787.27	849.88	1706.80
February	780.28	866.85	1623.06
March	781.25	879.41	1505.28
April	780.43	893.56	1391.97
May	780.16	892.05	1394.62
June	797.96	889.49	1397.18
July	812.76	890.50	1300.77

August	816.81	895.90	
September	821.76	909.53	
October	827.61	921.85	
November	828.18	1025.58	
December	831.51	1484.08	

Marketing

To develop the poultry industry's infrastructure, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) has been encouraging producer cooperatives and integrated companies to develop brand name products and to diversify into processed poultry products. MAF's efforts were starting to bear results before the country's economic slowdown commenced last fall. Cooperative and private company brands labeled products, for whole birds to further processed products, were becoming readily available on the market. Consumers were willing and able to sample new products. The infrastructure was developing. Producer cooperatives were establishing retail outlets for marketing of their membership's products. Larger integrated companies controlled production and distribution from farm to retail. And, because of the higher quality of their products, those companies were capturing a larger share of the high-return branded market. Further development in this area has not occurred since the public onset of the country's economic difficulties. Given the lucrative return generated by these products when the economic situation settles, this sector is expected to regenerate itself more quickly than other sectors.

During this period of economic depression consumers have reverted to window shopper status. Interest in new-to-market products exists, but because of uncertainty with the economic situation, consumers are refraining from extending beyond that status. Last fall, the market for further processed products was expanding at the highest rate. When the economy recovers, such products should, again, drive the market.

Market access for imported poultry and poultry products is not a problem. However, access to capital resources is. Firms across the spectrum still are having difficulty accessing to affordable capital. The problem stems from new capital reserve requirements imposed by Korea's Financial Supervisory Committee, a regulatory body created in response to the country's financial crisis. Creative financial arrangements between importer and exporter will be necessary to facilitate large volume trade over the near-term.

Competition between domestic and imported poultry and poultry products for the consumer purse are being guided mostly by the economy these days. Until consumers attain some level of confidence in the near-term economic situation, price will determine the origin of purchases. Note: Imported poultry meat usually is consumed as a further processed product or as fast food in Western-style restaurants. Of imported poultry meat, the U.S. product holds the reputation for being both safe and of high quality, but typically requires further manual processing. China and Thailand, the main competitors, have been eroding the U.S. retail market share in recent years. Their success is attributed to their willingness to supply smaller birds and well-trimmed parts, characteristics highly sought for by the Korean household where storage space is a premium. To counteract competitor inroads, U.S. producers will need to tailor their products more for this market, meaning address better consumer preference for a smaller bird and well-trimmed parts. An active promotional campaign will

need to be undertaken to convey the message to Korean consumers that the U.S. product has been revamped.

Trade

The economic and financial problems gripping Korea since fall 1997 have had the biggest impact on trade. Continued low consumer demand coupled with a general lack of affordable capital for importers should dampen trade for the remainder of 1998 and into 1999. Normally, a fall in domestic production of the magnitude experienced this year would generate a rapid expansion in trade to fill the void. Weak consumer demand and high import prices vis-a-vis the devalued currency effectively have neutralized thoughts to expand imports now.

The Hong Kong Avian Influenza outbreak led to China's banishment from Korea's live and processed poultry markets in December 1997. Despite their ban, China still ended CY 1997 as the top foreign supplier of poultry in the Korean market. To date, Korean quarantine authorities have not lifted China's import ban. In 1998, the U.S. holds the largest share in these Chinese-less, economically depressed, poultry markets. Thailand has effectively filled the China-void in the customized product market. In the current economic state, price determines the ultimate competitiveness of U.S. products.

Efforts by the Korean government to increase poultry exports are having a positive effect. Exports to Hong Kong during the January-June 1998 period were 348 MT. Such trade to Hong Kong totaled 290 MT during all of CY 1997.

Trade Matrix

Import & Export Matrix: Total Poultry Meat

Import Trade Matrix			
Country:		Units:	Metric Tons, RTC Basis
Commodity:			
Time period:	CY 1997 and Jan. - Jun., 1998		
Imports for	1997		1998
U.S.	20376	U.S.	5652
Others		Others	
P.R.C.	15026	P.R.C.	1520
Thailand	1403	Thailand	1888
France	2846	France	158
Australia	15	Canada	213
Canada	194		
U.K	60		

Total for Others	19544		3779
Others not listed			
Grand Total	39920		9431
Export Trade Matrix			
Country:		Units:	Metric Tons, RTC Basis
Commodity:			
Time period:	CY 1997 and Jan. - Jun., 1998		
Exports for	1997		1998
U.S.	0	U.S.	0
Others		Others	
Hong Kong	149	Hong Kong	243
P.R.C	63	P.R.C	65
Japan	43	Japan	38
France	34		
Total for Others	289		346
Others not listed			
Grand Total	289		346

Source: Korea Customs Service

Import Matrix: Total Eggs

Import Trade Matrix			
Country:		Units:	Million pieces
Commodity:			
Time period:	CY 1997 and Jan. - Jun., 1998		
Imports for	1997		1998
U.S.	29.8	U.S.	12.1
Others		Others	
India	11.6	India	5.5
P.R.C	6.6	P.R.C	1.3
Belgium	6.3	Belgium	1
Canada	5.7		
Israel	3.1		
U.K	1.7		
Japan	0.4		
Total for Others	35.4		7.8
Others not listed	0		1.1
Grand Total	65.2		21

Source: Korea Customs Service

Import Matrix for Chicken Meat

Import Trade Matrix				
Country: Korea				
Commodity: Chicken Meat			Unit: MT & U\$1,000, RTC basis	
Imports for	CY 1997		Jan. - Jun., 1998	
Country	Vol	Val	Vol	Val
U.S	7,272	9,566	3,007	3,486
Others				
P.R.C.	8,153	16,254	1,013	1,849
Thailand	1,265	2,563	1,173	2,107
Canada	24	23		
France	20	27	23	23
Total for Others	9,462	18,867	2,209	3,979
Grand Total	16,734	28,433	5,216	7,465

Source: Korea Customs Service

Import Matrix for Turkey Meat

Import Trade Matrix				
Country: Korea				
Commodity: Turkey Meat			Unit: MT & U\$1,000, RTC basis	
Imports for	CY 1997		Jan. - Jun., 1998	
Country	Vol	Val	Vol	Val
U.S	12,800	20,441	2,605	3,805
Others			135	137
France	2,823	2994	213	212
Canada	170	156		

U.K	60	57		
Total for Others	3,053	3,207	348	349
Grand Total	15,853	23,648	2,953	4,154

Source: Korea Customs Service

Import Matrix for Other Poultry Meat

Import Trade Matrix				
Country: Korea				
Commodity: Other Poultry Meat			Unit: MT & U\$1,000, RTC basis	
Imports for	CY 1997		Jan. - Jun., 1998	
Country	Vol	Val	Vol	Val
U.S	304	908	40	132
Others				
P.R.C.	6,873	14,852	507	906
Thailand	138	504	715	1,624
France	3	76	-	18
Australia	15	26		
Other	-	2		
Total for Others	7,029	15,460	1,222	2,548
Grand Total	7,333	16,368	1,262	2,680

Source: Korea Customs Service

Import Matrix for Cooked Poultry Product

Import Trade Matrix				
Country: Korea				
Commodity: Cooked Poultry Product			Unit: MT & U\$1,000, RTC basis	
Imports for	CY 1997		Jan. - Jun., 1998	
Country	Vol	Val	Vol	Val
U.S	842	2,558	66	279
Others				
Thailand	95	416	57	235
France	4	261	2	69
Other	13	69	7	3
Total for Others	112	746	66	340
Grand Total	954	3,304	132	619

Source: Korea Customs Service

Import Matrix for Breeding Eggs

Import Trade Matrix				
Country: Korea				
Commodity: Pure Bred Egg			Unit: Kg & U\$1,000	
Imports for	CY 1997		Jan. - Jun., 1998	
Country	Vol	Val	Vol	Val
U.S	21,624	273	6,623	81
Others				
Other	132	-	538	6
Total for Others	132	-	538	6
Grand Total	21,756	273	6,801	87

Source: Korea Customs Service

Import Matrix for Cooked Egg in Shell

Import Trade Matrix				
Country: Korea				
Commodity: In Shell, Cooked			Unit: Kg & U\$1,000	
Imports for	CY 1997		Jan. - Jun., 1998	
Country	Vol	Val	Vol	Val
U.S	2,080	25	0	0
Others				
P.R.C.	325,065	463	70,468	87
Total for Others	325,065	463	70,468	87
Grand Total	327,149	488	70,468	87

Source: Korea Customs Service

Import Matrix for Egg Yolk

Import Trade Matrix				
Country: Korea				
Commodity: Egg Yolk, Dried & Other			Unit: Kg & U\$1,000	
Imports for	CY 1997		Jan. - Jun., 1998	
Country	Vol	Val	Vol	Val
U.S	946,874	2,343	462,795	1,105
Others				
Belgium	82,400	489	13,000	79
India	22,500	99	30,000	112
Other	47,669	167	14,100	63
Total for Others	152,569	755	57,100	254

Grand Total	1,099,443	3,098	519,895	1,359
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Source: Korea Customs Service

Import Matrix for Other than Yolk

Import Trade Matrix				
Country: Korea				
Commodity: Dried & Other Egg, (excl. Yolk)			Unit: Kg & U\$1,000	
Imports for	CY 1997		Jan. - Jun., 1998	
Country	Vol	Val	Vol	Val
U.S	33,655	117	-	-
Others				
India	127,500	484	42,100	151
Canada	52,000	178		
U.K	22,000	88		
Israel	40,000	145		
Other	28,108	48	35	6
Total for Others	269,608	943	35	157
Grand Total	303,263	1,060	42,035	157

Source: Korea Customs Service

Import Matrix for Egg Albumin

Import Trade Matrix				
Country: Korea				
Commodity: Egg Albumin			Unit: Kg & U\$1,000	
Imports for	CY 1997		Jan. - Jun., 1998	
Country	Vol	Val	Vol	Val
U.S	0	0	0	0

Others				
Belgium	2,051,110	1,835	575,030	451
France	737,280	764		
Germany	378,000	312	18,000	15
Netherlands	709,080	1,037	231,970	312
India	151,000	132		
Denmark	69,000	478	13,000	84
Sweden	55,110	334	31,080	190
Brazil	90,720	70	108,864	84
Other	89,539	628	61,126	113
Total for Others	4,330,839	5,278	1,039,070	1,249
Grand Total	4,330,839	5,278	1,039,070	1,249

Policy

On December 20, 1997, Korean government passed the Livestock Processing Control Act. The act, effective as of June 14, 1998, transferred inspection authority for meat, dairy and egg products from the Ministry of Health & Welfare (MHW) to the Ministry of Agriculture & Forestry (MAF). MAF has issued the Presidential Decree, the Ministerial Ordinance and the labeling standards for livestock products. MAF is in the process of developing its "livestock code" which will contain the official standards and specifications for livestock, poultry and dairy products. Until the Code is completed, meat, dairy and poultry products standards & specifications published under the Korean Food Code will be adhered too. In June 1998, the sections under the Korean Food Code concerning the standards and specifications for meat, dairy and egg products were brought more in conformance with the CODEX Alimentarius. Note: The standards for live animals, including poultry, had been established by MAF previously. Those standards, too, will be revised and published in the new unified "livestock code."