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## Mexico

### Agricultural Situation

### Weekly Highlights and Hot Bites #36

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**Report Highlights:**

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Includes Trade Matrix: No  
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Welcome to Hot Bites from Mexico, a weekly review of issues of interest to the U.S. agricultural community. The topics covered in this report reflect developments in Mexico that have been garnered during travel around the country, reported in the media, or offered by host country officials and agricultural analysts. Readers should understand that press articles are included in this report to provide insights into the Mexican "mood" facing U.S. agricultural exporters. Significant issues will be expanded upon in subsequent reports from this office.

**DISCLAIMER:** Any press summary contained herein does NOT reflect USDA's, the U.S. Embassy's, or any other U.S. Government agency's point of view or official policy.

### **PORK GROWERS SATISFIED WITH CONGRESS' DECISION**

Mexican pork growers celebrated the Mexican Congress decision to send a recommendation to the GOM to close the border for U.S. pork imports. Salvador Ortiz, President of a regional Pork Growers Association, commented that legislators realized the importance of the demands by domestic pork growers and carried out their desires to pressure the GOM to take measures to protect the domestic industry. (Source: El Sol De Mexico, 11/24/2007)

### **MEXICAN CHRISTMAS TREE PRODUCTION ON THE RISE**

Mexican production of Christmas trees has grown the past couple of years. In 2007, it is expected that 40% of the domestic demand will be covered by Mexican trees, according to the Mexican Forestry Commission (CONAFOR). One of the reasons for this increase is that tree plantations have grown more than 10% the past five years. A total of 1.3 million trees are expected to be "consumed" this year. At an average price of U.S. \$80, more than 800,000 trees are expected to be imported, mainly from Canada and the United States. (Source: El Universal, 11/26/2007)

### **INFESTED IMPORTED TREES REJECTED AT THE BORDER**

Inspectors from the Office of the Attorney for Environmental Protection (PROFEPA) announced that two trucks with more than 1,000 Christmas trees were detected and rejected at the Colombia border crossing point. The Oregon trees, of the Noble and Douglas Fir varieties, were infected with a type of mosquito that is dangerous for indigenous plants in Mexico. PROFEPA inspectors report that over 116,000 trees have been inspected so far at the Colombia border point of entry. (Source: El Norte, 11/26/2007)

### **PORK GROWERS' REQUESTS THREATENING THE MEAT INDUSTRY**

"The Mexican pork growers request to close the borders for U.S. imports is a serious protectionist measure that threatens the meat industry and consumer's pockets," stated Raul de la Paz, Director of the Mexican Meat Council (COMECARNE). "The pork growers' issues should be solved with other actions, not with protectionist measures, which could cause a 30% increase in prices paid by the consumer," added de la Paz. He also explained that this will drive the consumer to other products like beef and poultry, and it would not solve the pork industry's problems. He explained that they have tried to support domestic production but neither the volume nor the quality of the domestic production is satisfactory; hence, the need to import the products from the United States. (Source: Reforma, 11/29/2007)

## AGRICULTURAL WORKERS' ASSOCIATION SAYS NO TO NAFTA RENEGOTIATION

Contrary to the opinion of the majority of Mexican agricultural worker's organizations that have pressured the GOM to renegotiate NAFTA's agricultural chapter, the Mexican General Union of Industrial and Agricultural Workers (UGOCM) declared that renegotiating the trade agreement is not the solution. Instead, they stated that other measures like competitiveness-enhancement programs, credit and production support, and investments should be established by the GOM. Jose Luis Gonzalez, UGOCM Leader, explained there is no need to use political pressure. However, he stated that a real commitment from the authorities should protect and help the agricultural sector. (Source: Rumbo De Mexico, 11/29/2007)

## AT LEAST 1.4 MILLION GROWERS UNDER RISK BECAUSE OF NAFTA

According to Cruz Lopez-Aguilar, leader of the National Farmers Confederation (CNC), at least 1.4 million corn and dry bean growers could be out of business due to the trade opening under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 2008. He added the CNC will continue to push the GOM to exclude corn and dry beans from NAFTA. They will also request the GOM to establish a mechanism to control imports and exports of both commodities, and that the GOM should honor the addendum in the National Agreement in Agriculture. The CNC will insist that small and medium growers receive support from the Competitive Corn and Dry Beans Fund, which will allow them to have monetary support of at least 10 million pesos. Lopez-Aguilar stated that the CNC, along with other farmer organizations, will restart demonstrations to defend corn and dry bean growers. (Source: Excelsior & La Jornada; 11/28/2007)

## REPORTS RECENTLY SUBMITTED BY FAS/MEXICO CITY

NUMBER	TITLE	DATE
MX7082	Weekly Highlights and Hot Bites #35	11/16/07
MX7081	Mexico Trade Policy Monitoring Annual	11/23/07
MX7080	Fresh Citrus Annual	11/16/07
MX7079	Fresh Deciduous Annual 2007	11/17/07
<a href="#">MX7078</a>	Weekly Highlights and Hot Bites #34	11/9/07
<a href="#">MX7077</a>	Weekly Highlights and Hot Bites #33	11/2/07
<a href="#">MX7076</a>	Weekly Highlights and Hot Bites #32	10/26/07
<a href="#">MX7075</a>	Weekly Highlights and Hot Bites #31	10/19/07
<a href="#">MX7074</a>	Dairy Semi-Annual	10/20/07

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