

Japan Increases Beef Import Quotas

Japan will increase its 1987 fiscal year beef import quota by 37,000 metric tons (MT), a 21 percent hike, reports the U.S. Meat Export Federation (MEF). This move by the Japanese government, the first of its kind since the import quota was negotiated in 1984, is aimed in part at helping Japan meet its growing demand for high-quality beef.

An upturn in consumer demand for beef and recent changes in market conditions are the reasons behind the quota increase. "The Japanese consumer is becoming better educated about the quality of

U.S. beef, largely as a result of MEF's meat promotional efforts," says Phil Seng, MEF Asian Director. "With the help of recent Targeted Export Assistance funds, we've been able to explain the benefits of U.S. meat directly to the Japanese consumer."

Seng also said prices for Japanese cattle are at their highest levels. In order to bring a downward pressure on prices and to meet increased consumer demand, the Japanese government is importing more beef.

Although Japan did not specify which countries would fill the

additional quota, it is likely half of the amount purchased would be U.S. grain-fed beef. This move may be an attempt to help ease trade tensions between the U.S. and Japan.

The beef quotas were established 24 years ago when Japan

faced an unfavorable trade balance with the U.S. That situation no longer exists, and the U.S. Government wants the quota lifted when the trade agreement expires in March 1988.

The beef quota, which initially limited 1987 fiscal year import

levels to 177,000 MT, has been increased to 214,000 MT. "Many people have questioned the value of promoting U.S. beef in Japan," says Seng. "This recent quota increase is clear example of the success of promoting U.S. meat in a country where quotas exist."

Ephrata Fair Receives Funds

EPHRATA — The Ephrata Farmer's Day Association has received a \$1,515 matching grant as reimbursement for a land purchase made in 1980 which expanded the Ephrata Fair grounds, according to Sen. Noah W. Wenger, R-36.

"The Ephrata Fair is the largest fair held in Lancaster County and the largest street fair in the state," said Wenger. "This fair and others throughout the Commonwealth offer wholesome entertainment for people of all ages."

According to Wenger, sixty-three Pennsylvania agricultural fairs will receive matching fund

grants. The grants are to be used for a variety of projects which have been undertaken by fair sponsors to improve buildings and grounds, build new facilities, or purchase land.

Wenger said, this year \$2.5 million was allocated to the Fair Fund to be used to reimburse local fair, 4-H and FFA organizations for operating expenses associated with their annual events. The grants for the fair ground improvements were made available from balances remaining in the Fair Fund.

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