

U.S.-Korea Beef Agreement To Benefit Industry

SEOUL (South Korea) — In a move that will benefit the U.S. beef industry, the governments of the United States and the Republic of Korea, have initialed an agreement on beef imports into Korea. The beef agreement culminates five rounds of negotiations, lasting more than a year, on increased access to the Korean beef market. "The agreement lays the

groundwork for the U.S. beef industry to make significant headway in the Korean market," said USMEF President & CEO Philip M. Seng. "Now, it's up to U.S. suppliers to become more aggressive in establishing substantive business relationships with Korean buyers."

The Republic of Korea is al-

ready the fourth largest market for U.S. beef exports, purchasing \$212 million (55,000 metric tons) of U.S. beef and variety meats in 1992. Despite rising beef imports, the Korean market continues to be undersupplied because of a lack of beef production capacity and growing consumer demand for beef.

The beef agreement provides for a rising quota level of 99,000 metric tons (mt) for 1993 with annual increases of 7 percent through 1995. The quotas are the minimum levels Korea is committed to importing — Korea imported more than double its beef quotas of 60,000 mt in 1991 and 62,000 mt in 1992.

The two sides also reached agreement to increase the amount which can be traded under the Simultaneous-Buy-Sell (SBS) system, and to increase the number of Korean organizations that can participate in the SBS. Through SBS, beef suppliers are able to bid directly with Korean buyers.

"The expansion of the SBS system is a key to increased market access in Korea," said USMEF Senior Vice President Technical Service Mark Gustafson, pointing out that the beef import market is tightly controlled by the Korean government and various producer

groups. Gustafson and USMEF Vice President International Programs Joel Haggard assisted the U.S. government with technical and market information throughout the five rounds of negotiations.

Currently, only 7 percent of the quota level is allocated to SBS. Under the new agreement, the SBS quota will increase to 10 percent for 1993, to 20 percent in 1994, and 30 percent in 1995.

Though Australia is currently the largest supplier of beef to Korea, Gustafson believes the expansion of the SBS system will point to increased market share for U.S. suppliers.

"As the Korean market evolves from a government purchaser of bulk, frozen beef to one driven by consumer demand and market preferences, U.S. suppliers will find increasing opportunities to do business in Korea," said Gustafson.

Conservation Featured At Ag Progress

ROCKSPRING (Centre Co.) — How are federal and state agencies helping Pennsylvanians to protect the state's natural resources? You can learn how by visiting the Conservation Education Tent at Penn State's Ag Progress Days, August 17-19.

You will see exhibits displayed by eight state and federal agencies, and agency representatives will be on hand to answer questions and discuss programs and services. You also can pick up free tickets to conservation-related tours offered all three days of the event.

Daily presentations at the tent include constructed wetlands at 9:45 a.m., intensive rotational grazing at 10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m., composting at 11:30 a.m., streambank stabilization at 12:15 p.m., and proper timber harvesting at 3:30 p.m. A video on sinkhole management will be shown at 1 p.m., and a video on Pennsylvania's black bear will be shown at 1:45 p.m.

On the general conservation tour, you can see practices that conserve soil and water. See agricultural practices such as a vegetated basin and contour stripcropping and learn how to construct a

waterway and cropland terrace using a mold board plow. Urban conservation practices, such as a sediment basin and a composting site, will be featured for the first time.

A special composting tour will demonstrate how to construct a composting facility. See equipment turn compost from agricultural and urban sources.

An added daily attraction will be an urban conservation tour. A special research project will show how soil movement and erosion from new construction are treated.

On the forest stewardship tour, farmers and other landowners can learn how to manage their woodland to increase wildlife habitat. Another tour features stream corridor management with stream-bank fencing, stream crossings and a constructed wetland.

The nutrient and crop management tour will focus on proper calibration of manure spreaders and injecting liquid manure into cropfields to protect groundwater.

The agencies represented in the Conservation Education Tent include the USDA Soil Conservation Service; Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service; Pennsylvania Association of Con-

servation Districts; Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission; Bureau of Forestry, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources; Pennsylvania Land Improvement Contractors Association; Environmental Protection Agency; and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Tax Credit Act Introduced

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A bill to be introduced today in the U.S. House of Representatives would provide some assistance to retail dealers struggling to comply with state and federal environmental mandates.

The bill, entitled "The Rural Environment Tax Credit Act," was introduced by Congressman Fred Grandy (R-IA) and Bill Brewster (D-OK). It would provide a tax credit of 15 percent for machinery, equipment and structures purchased for the primary purpose of complying with federal, state and local environmental

laws.

"Farmers and dealers are drowning under a flood of environmental laws that act as hidden taxes that reduce rural income," said TFI President Gary D. Myers. "This agriculture environmental credit will help offset the mounting costs of these mandates."

Myers said dealers could apply the credit to such items as load-out pads and containment dikes.

Myers also praised the sponsors of the bill who have worked with TFI for many weeks to craft the legislation.

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