

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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## **Thailand**

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**Report Highlights:**

TH3018 "SAWASDEE THAILAND" provides the latest information on Thai agricultural situation, market access for U.S. products, and upcoming events.

## **General Information:**

### **HOT NEWS**

#### USDA's Emerging Markets Program Successfully Facilitates Exports of U.S. Bovine Semen

M. Doyle Sanders, Co-Chairman of Beefmaster Breeders United (BBU) International Committee highlighted the success of bovine semen exports to Thailand under the USDA's Emerging Markets Program (EMP). In an article in the association's BBU Cowman magazine, Mr. Sanders indicated that the EMP program started with only a \$160,000 budget in 2009, which brought Thai farmers and Department of Livestock Development (DLD) officials to the United States. Today, the program enables Thai farmers to distribute top BBU bull semen to all provinces in Thailand. The first Beefmaster derived calves were born in December 2010 and are now very popular among large and small Thai beef producers. In addition, there are now two breeding associations in Thailand, the Thailand Beefmaster Breeders Union (TBBU) and the Beefmaster Breeders Association of Thailand. The first purebred Thailand Beefmasters have been registered with BBU and many Thai breeders are considering upgrading their crossed heifers.

### **MARKET ACCESS UPDATE**

#### Preventing the Disruption of U.S. Turkey Meat Exports to Thailand

Shortly after the Thai DLD strengthened its audit requirements for foreign countries exporting livestock and uncooked meat products to Thailand, several Thai importers informed Post that DLD officials refused to grant permits for U.S. turkey meat imports to Thailand. In response, Post met with Thai DLD interlocutors and successfully persuaded them to grant "grandfather" status to Thai companies already importing turkey meat to Thailand. The agreement enables U.S. businesses to continue exporting turkey to Thailand until DLD completes its audits of livestock production facilities in the United States. The successful negotiations prevented the disruption of U.S. turkey meat exports to Thailand, valued at about \$1.2 million per annum.

#### New Food Additives Allowed – Cyclamate and Steviolglycoside

On December 3, 2012 the Thai Food and Drug Administration (FDA) notified the WTO of proposed changes to Thailand's rules relating to Cyclamate (G/SPS/N/THA/210) and Steviol glycoside (G/SPS/N/THA/211) as food additives. U.S. companies exporting these substances and food products containing Cyclamate and Steviol glycoside are encouraged to review the proposed maximum use levels. Under the proposed rules, Cyclamate and Steviol glycoside can be used as food additives (sweeteners to ingredients in processed foods). Thailand's sweetener imports in 2011 totaled nearly \$140 million. Post estimates the market for consumer oriented products containing sweeteners to Thailand could reach \$33 million by 2015. More information is available in the [New Food Additives Allowed - Cyclamate and Steviolglycoside Report - TH2138](#).

## The 2013 Cochran Fellowship Program for Thailand

Since 1984, the USDA Cochran Fellowship Program has provided participants from middle-income countries, emerging markets, and emerging democracies with high-quality training that improves local agricultural systems and strengthens and enhances trade links with the United States. In 2012, USDA provided 13 Thais capacity building training in various areas. The 2013 Thailand Cochran Program will focus on four areas including: 1) Commodity Production and Trade Analysis Program; 2) Food Safety in U.S. Meat Products and Rendered Products Program; 3) U.S. Seafood/Frozen Ready to Eat Products Program; and 4) U.S. Softwood Program. Post is encouraging responsible government agencies/private sector representatives to nominate participants for these training activities. Program interviews are scheduled to take place in early March 2013.

## Thailand Seafood Safety Results-Oriented Management Workshop by U.S. Food and Drug Administration

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (U.S. FDA) held a one-week seafood management workshop with officials from the Thai Department of Fisheries and Thai Food and Drug Administration. The workshop was held during January 21-25, 2013 at the Centara Grand Central Plaza Ladprao in Bangkok. The pilot program focused on developing a results-oriented framework aimed at improving the safety of canned seafood in Thailand.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### Natural Products Expo West Trade Show

The Organic Trade Association has selected Mr. Case Hannon, Director of Global Business Development of Villa Market, to participate in one-on-one meetings with participants of the Natural Products Expo West trade show in Anaheim, California on March 6-10, 2013. The program is intended to help expand interests in various U.S. organic products like beans/peas/legumes, cereal, health foods, condiments, meat products, prepared meals, snack foods, vegetables, fruits, beverages, etc.

Villa Market has 18 outlets in Bangkok and additional stores in Phuket, Pattaya, Sriracha, and Hua Hin, which target middle-high income shoppers and expats in Thailand. Mr. Hannon plans to source more organic products for the American Food promotion in July. Any U.S. trade promotional groups and exporters that would like to participate in the promotion should contact Mr. Case Hannon, email. [case@villamarket.com](mailto:case@villamarket.com).

### The 5<sup>th</sup> American Hardwood Design Camp

Furniture designs created by Thai students have been finalized and distributed to 6-8 furniture manufacturers that are members of the Thai Furniture Industries Association (TFA). The final products will be displayed and marketed on March 13-17, 2013 at the Thailand International Furniture Fair (TIFF). For the first time, the Thailand Department of Industrial Promotion provided support to the American Hardwood Design Camp Project by inviting key professional speakers to discuss various topics such as Universal Design Concept, Eco Design Concept, Marketing for Designers, Branding &

Design Personality, etc. This annual design camp project has created product awareness for U.S. hardwood as an alternative wooden material for furniture, wooden products, and housing construction. Thai imports of U.S. hardwood during January-November 2012 totaled \$27 million, a 59% increase from 2011.

### VIV Asia 2013

22 U.S. companies have confirmed their participation in the USDA VIV Aisa Pavilion and 31 additional companies will be in other locations at the trade show. These companies are ready to showcase the latest developments in the feed ingredients supply chain, feed additives, animal genetics, milling equipment, etc. VIV Asia 2013 will be held at the Bangkok International Trade and Exhibition Center (BITEC) on March 13-15, 2013. FAS will provide support in trade leads, contact information, on-site interviews, and matching services. For more information about the show and participating fees, please contact Elliott Thomas, U.S. Representative for Imex Management, Inc. at [elliott@imexmanagement.com](mailto:elliott@imexmanagement.com).