



Required Report: Required - Public Distribution

Date: March 06, 2023 Report Number: CH2023-0032

Report Name: Livestock and Products Semi-Annual

Country: China - People's Republic of

Post: Beijing

Report Category: Livestock and Products

Prepared By: Alexandra Baych, FAS China Staff

Approved By: Adam Branson

Report Highlights:

The People's Republic of China (PRC) decision to end its zero-COVID policy restrictions is expected to improve demand for both pork and beef products in 2023. However, Brazil's decision to suspend beef exports to China at the end of February following a suspected bovine spongiform encephalitis (BSE) detection could impact supply as alternative origin suppliers may not fully bridge the potential supply gap in 2023. Pork production and imports, and beef production are all forecast to grow in 2023. Hong Kong remains the PRC's primary export market for pork and beef.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hog Production: Hog production (pig crop) in 2023 is forecast to decline by 2 percent year on year (YOY) to 700 million head due to, on average, lower sow inventories in 2022 compared to 2021.

Hog Imports: Imports of live breeding swine in 2023 are forecast at 5,000 head due to large domestic sow inventories. In early 2023, the domestic sow inventory exceeded China's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (MARA) targets. A large domestic sow inventory is expected to curb imports of breeding swine.

Pork Production: Pork production is estimated at 55.5 million metric tons (MMT) in 2023, a marginal increase. Producers are expected to respond to stronger consumer demand following the removal of domestic COVID restrictions (see **Pork Consumption** and **Policy Section** below). Further growth in pork production will be limited by the price of pork. In 2023, producers are expected to continue secondary fattening¹ when they expect prices to rise.

Pork Imports: In 2023, pork imports are expected higher by nearly 4 percent YOY to 2.2 MMT on stronger consumer demand following the end of COVID restrictions, but further growth will be curbed by higher domestic production.

Cattle Production: The cattle production forecast in 2023 remains unchanged at nearly 52.6 million head. Growth in the herd is expected to slow due to a marginal increase in the cow inventory in 2022 from 2021.

Cattle Imports: Cattle imports in 2023 are forecast to decline to 270 thousand head from 350 thousand in 2022 due to a large cattle inventory and supplier-initiated export prohibitions.

Beef Production: Beef production in 2023 is forecast to grow 3 percent to 7.4 MMT on stronger demand for beef products in the hotel, restaurant, institutions (HRI), and retail sectors following the end of domestic COVID restrictions.

Beef Imports: Beef imports in 2023 are forecast slightly lower at 3.4 MMT. In February 2023, Brazil self-suspended beef exports following the detection of a suspected BSE case. If the suspension endures and no other alternate origin suppliers materialize, beef prices could move higher and negatively impact beef consumption in 2023.

Policy: Since the last FAS China GAIN report covering the PRC pork and beef sector, the country has ended its COVID controls on imported cold chain products.

¹ Secondary fattening is the process of purchasing standard weight hogs for further fattening.

SWINE

Animal Numbers, Swine	2021		2022		2023	
	USDA		USDA		USDA	
China	Official	New Post	Official	New Post	Official	New Post
Total Beginning						
Stocks	406500	406500	449220	449220	440000	452560
Sow Beginning						
Stocks	39500	39500	42000	42000	42000	43000
Production (Pig						
Crop)	655000	655000	695000	712510	700000	700000
Total Imports	23	23	5	5	5	5
Total Supply	1061523	1061523	1144225	1161735	1140005	1152565
Total Exports	881	881	1050	1066	1135	1300
Sow Slaughter	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Slaughter	600000	600000	695000	699950	695000	701500
Total Slaughter	600000	600000	695000	699950	695000	701500
Loss and Residual	11422	11422	8175	8159	7870	7805
Ending Inventories	449220	449220	440000	452560	436000	441960
Total Distribution	1061523	1061523	1144225	1161735	1140005	1152565
All Units in 1,000 Head						

Table 1. China: Swine Production, Supply, and DistributionNot Official USDA Data

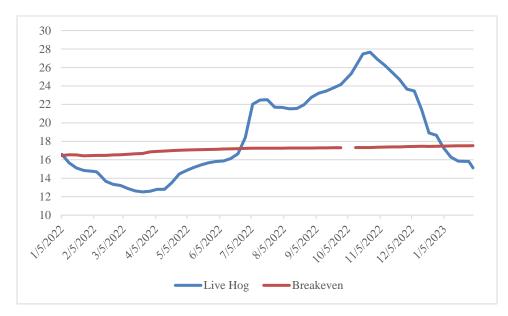
PRODUCTION

Hog Production to Slightly Decline

Hog production (pig crop) in 2023 is forecast to decline 2 percent to 700 million head due to a lower, on average, sow inventory in 2022 compared to 2021. In 2022, low hog and pork prices forced many producers to reduce their sow inventories due to financial difficulties. The sow inventory rebounded in late 2022 following a recovery in hog prices.²

Animal diseases, including African Swine Fever (ASF), are expected to be endemic, increasing production costs for the sector. However, the effect of ASF outbreaks on commercial production is limited as producers appear to have adjusted production practices to manage outbreaks.

² MARA estimates that the 2022 ending/2023 beginning sow stocks are around 44 million head. The ending/beginning inventory does not represent the whole-year level and is one of many factors impacting overall hog production.





Source: MARA and industry sources.

Note: "Breakeven" refers to estimated cost of farrow-to-finish

TRADE

Hog imports

Live Hog Imports to Remain Unchanged from 2022

In 2023, hog imports are unchanged from 2022 at 5,000 head due to a large domestic sow herd. Significant herd expansion is not expected due to sufficient domestic supplies and government policies aimed at a stable sow inventory.³

In 2023, the major live hog suppliers are expected to remain the United States, France, and Denmark.

Hog exports

Live Hog Exports to Continue to Recover Rapidly

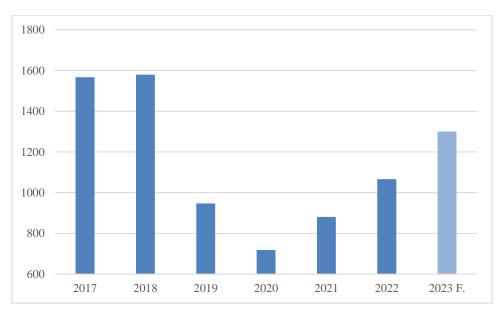
The live hog export forecast for 2023 is increased to 1.3 million head, 20 percent higher than last year (see **CHART 2**). Hong Kong and Macao are expected to remain the sole destinations for China's live hog exports. Hong Kong in late 2022 and Macao in early 2023 eased border controls and policies for

³ MARA has published notices stating its desired sow inventory is around 41 million head. In the beginning of 2023, MARA estimated the sow inventory at nearly 44 million head. The No. 1 Document - the PRC's annual agricultural policy – reiterated that sow inventories should be consistent with MARA's recommended levels.

international travel, which industry sources note is expected to boost pork consumption. Live hog exports are typcially used for immediate slaughter and consumed as fresh pork.

In 2022, live hog exports to Hong Kong grew 21 percent growth and accounted for over 90 percent of China's export volume. While exports to Hong Kong in 2023 are expected to grow, they remain below the pre-ASF and pre-COVID levels.

In February 2023, Hong Kong notified the World Organization for Animal Health of a case of ASF. Hog production in Hong Kong is limited and this notification is not expected to affect China's live hog exports to Hong Kong.





Source: Trade Data Monitor

PORK Table 2. China: Pork Production, Supply, and Distribution

Meat, Swine	202	21	2022		2023	
China	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post
Slaughter (Reference)	600000	600000	695000	699950	695000	701500
Beginning Stocks	0	0	0	0	0	0
Production	47500	47500	55000	55410	55000	55500
Total Imports	4328	4328	2050	2125	2100	2200
Total Supply	51828	51828	57050	57535	57100	57700
Total Exports	104	104	102	101	115	150
Human Dom. Consumption	51724	51724	56948	57434	56985	57550
Other Use, Losses	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Dom. Consumption	51724	51724	56948	57434	56985	57550
Ending Stocks	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Distribution	51828	51828	57050	57535	57100	57700

Not Official USDA Data

PRODUCTION

Pork Production to Rise on Higher Demand

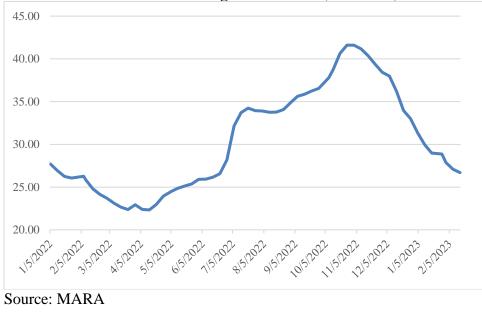
Domestic slaughter in 2023 is increased to 701.5 million head and pork production is revised higher to 55.5 MMT as demand for pork products is expected to strengthen in 2023 (see **Pork Consumption** and **Policy Section** below for more information). In 2023, pork production is expected to remain at pre-ASF levels as producers appear to be able to manage animal disease outbreaks without affecting overall production volumes. Slaughter weight in 2023 is expected to be similar to 2022 as certain producers continue secondary fattening.

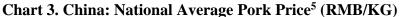
The PRC continues to emphasize and prioritize stable pork prices. The National Development Reform Commission announced frozen pork purchases in early 2023 to support declining live hog and pork

prices (see **CHART 3**).⁴ In 2023, government authorities are expected to continue to purchase and sell pork and hogs from the domestic market. The first batch of announced frozen pork purchases of 20,000 MT occurred on February 24, 2023, but the actual amount purchased was reportedly around 7,100 MT. Industry contacts suggest this indicates market expectations for higher pork prices in the near future.

In 2023, variability in pork and hog prices is expected to be less extreme than in prior years.

Estimated 2022 pork production is increased to 55.4 MMT based on official data released by the PRC's National Bureau of Statistics (NBS).





CONSUMPTION

Consumption to Grow from Improved HRI Demand

In 2023, pork consumption is increased to nearly 57.6 MMT due to improved demand from the HRI sector following the end of the PRC's zero-COVID restrictions. In December 2022, the PRC relaxed COVID restrictions in the HRI sector and on domestic and international travel. The PRC also removed COVID testing requirements for imported cold-chain products. These changes are expected to boost consumer demand for restaurants and hotels and allow schools and companies to resume full operations. However, recovery in the HRI sector (see <u>GAIN Report CH2022-0142</u>) is expected to be gradual.

⁴ For more information on the National Development Reform Commission through the Merchandise Reserve Management Center please see 2021 China: Livestock and Products Annual Report FAS <u>GAIN CH2021-0101</u>.

⁵ The pork price here refers to the average pork price collected by MARA from monitored traditional markets across China.

Overall pork consumption in 2023 is expected to marginally increase from a relatively high 2022 base year. Demand for pork products, through retail and HRI, is expected to strengthen in 2023, boost prices, and support stronger consumption of pork products. At the end of 2022 and beginning of 2023, China faced a surge in COVID infections across the country lowering demand for pork products. Additionally, industry sources reported that the endemic ASF outbreaks during the winter months may have caused panic selling and slaughter which increased supply and lowered pork prices. Due to these and other factors, prices remained low at the beginning of 2023.



Image 1. China: Pork Cuts in Modern Retail Market

TRADE

Pork Imports:

Pork Imports to Grow Together with Pork Production

Pork imports are expected to increase 4 percent YOY to 2.2 MMT (see **Chart 4**). In 2020 and 2021, China's pork imports reached historically high levels as production contracted due to ASF. In 2022, as production recovered, imports declined by 51 percent but remained just over 2.1 MMT. In 2023, with stronger consumer demand pork imports are expected to exceed 2022 levels.

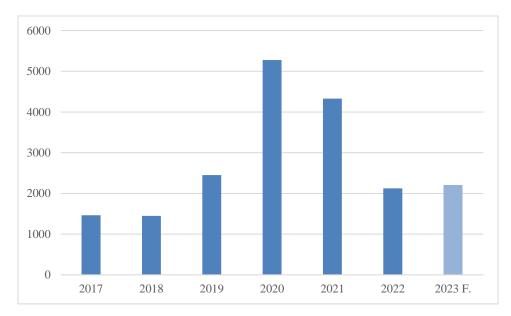


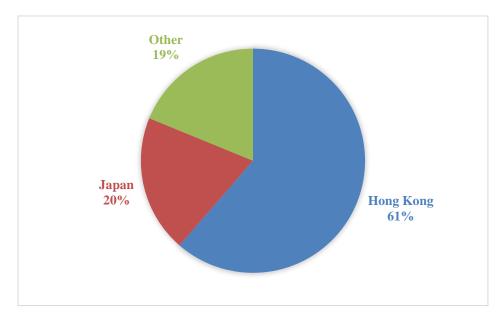
Chart 4. China: Imports of Pork Products (Unit: 1,000 MT)

Source: Trade Data Monitor

Pork Exports:

Pork Exports to Witness Rapid Recovery

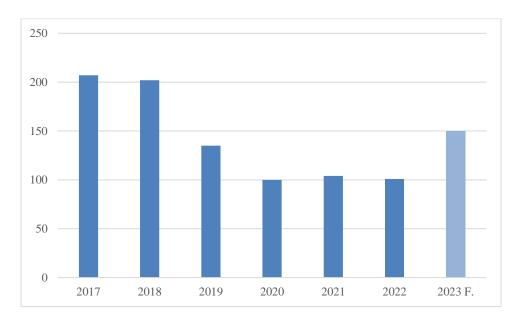
In 2023, China's pork exports are forecast to reach 150 thousand MT, with an increase of almost 50 percent over 2022. Industry sources note that the easing of border controls for Hong Kong and Japan in late 2022 is expected to support HRI recovery and higher pork exports from China. Hong Kong and Japan are expected to remain the two major export destinations for pork products from China (see **CHART 5** and **CHART 6**). Exports mainly consist of prepared, frozen, and fresh pork to Hong Kong and prepared pork to Japan.





Source: Trade Data Monitor

Chart 6. China: Pork Exports (Unit: 1,000 MT)



Source: Trade Data Monitor and Post Estimates

CATTLE

Table 3. China: Cattle Production, Supply, and Distribution

Animal Numbers, Cattle	2021		2022		2023		
China	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post	
Total Cattle Beg. Stocks	95621	95621	98172	98172	101500	101500	
Dairy Cows Beg. Stocks	13900	13900	14000	14000	14050	14050	
Beef Cows Beg. Stocks	53400	53400	53800	53800	54000	54000	
Production (Calf Crop)	50525	50525	52000	52000	52575	52575	
Total Imports	361	361	365	350	270	270	
Total Supply	146507	146507	150537	150522	154345	154345	
Total Exports	15	15	12	13	15	15	
Cow Slaughter	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Calf Slaughter	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Other Slaughter	47070	47070	47820	47820	49000	49000	
Total Slaughter	47070	47070	47820	47820	49000	49000	
Loss and Residual	1250	1250	1205	1189	1200	1200	
Ending Inventories	98172	98172	101500	101500	104130	104130	
Total Distribution	146507	146507	150537	150522	154345	154345	
All Units in 1,000 He	All Units in 1,000 Head						

Not Official USDA Data

PRODUCTION

Cattle Herd to Grow Slowly

In 2023, the cattle herd is expected to experience slower growth compared to 2022 due to an abundant cattle inventory. In addition, cattle operation costs are higher due to higher feed costs which lowered profits. Furthermore, the industry remains challenged due to a general lack of experience across the sector.

The calf production forecast in 2023 is expected to remain unchanged at nearly 52.6 million head. Cow inventory is expected to increase slightly in 2023, but producers are expected to be slower in restocking their herds due to an already large cattle supply. In 2022, the cattle herd experienced slower growth as cattle farms slowed restocking and, in some instances, slaughtered cows and calves due to lower profits. Consequently, beef cow beginning stocks in 2023 are only marginally higher than in 2022.

Overall efficiency per cow across the PRC's small and medium-scale farms, which dominate beef production, is not expected to improve. Large beef cattle farms are expected to remain the minority in 2023.

TRADE

Cattle Imports to Further Decline

Cattle imports in 2023 are forecast to decline to 270 thousand head from 350 thousand in 2022 due to a large herd and high input costs. Buyers mainly import from New Zealand, Australia, Uruguay, and Chile. Live beef cattle imports are mainly used to improve beef cattle herd genetics.

New Zealand and Australia mostly export dairy cattle while Uruguay and Chile mainly export beef cattle. As announced in July 2021, New Zealand will cease exports of livestock by sea by April 30, 2023⁶, which will lower the supply of available cattle imports unless the PRC provides market access to other suppliers.

⁶ <u>https://www.mpi.govt.nz/export/animals/live-animals-including-livestock/requirement-documents-for-exporting-live-animals/animal-welfare-export-certificates/live-sheep-and-cattle-export-voyage-reports/</u>

BEEF

Table 4. China: Beef Production, Supply, and Distribution

Meat, Beef and Veal	2021		2022		2023		
China	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post	
Slaughter (Reference)	47070	47070	47820	47820	49000	49000	
Beginning Stocks	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Production	6980	6980	7125	7180	7350	7400	
Total Imports	3024	3024	3450	3502	3525	3400	
Total Supply	10004	10004	10575	10682	10875	10800	
Total Exports	17	17	20	20	20	21	
Human Dom. Consumption	9987	9987	10555	10662	10855	10779	
Other Use, Losses	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Total Dom. Consumption	9987	9987	10555	10662	10855	10779	
Ending Stocks	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Total Distribution	10004	10004	10575	10682	10875	10800	
All Units in 1,00	All Units in 1,000 MT CWE, unless otherwise specified						

Not Official USDA Data

NOTE: In the end of February 2023, Brazil notified the suspension of exports following suspected atypical case of BSE. This suspension is expected to lower overall beef imports to China in 2023.

PRODUCTION

Beef Production to Reach 7.4 MMT

Beef production in 2023 is forecast to grow 3 percent to 7.4 MMT. The lifting of COVID restrictions is expected to boost consumer demand and encourage higher beef production.

In 2022, some cow and calves were slaughtered due to an abundant supply of cow and calves in the market. There will be sufficient market weight cattle to slaughter in 2023 with the high inventory of calves and market weight cattle from the past several years. In addition, finished cattle that were delayed from slaughter in 2022, due to COVID restrictions, will be carried over to 2023.

Beef production in 2022 is revised to 7.18 MMT with YOY increase of 3 percent based on official data from NBS.

CONSUMPTION

Beef Consumption Impacted by Brazil's Suspension of Beef Exports

In 2023, domestic beef consumption is expected to reach 10.8 MMT, only a marginal increase over 2022 rates, impacted by lower beef imports in 2023. At the end of February 2023, Brazil self-suspended beef exports to the PRC due to a suspected BSE case in northern Brazil. If the suspension endures and no other alternate origin suppliers materialize, beef prices could move higher and negatively impact beef consumption in 2023.

Demand from the HRI sector is expected to recover gradually as consumption resumes following the end of COVID restrictions. Additionally, the PRC government may institute policies to boost economic activity, which are expected to support increased consumption, including beef consumption. However, as many food service and HRI establishments closed in 2022 due to prolonged COVID restrictions, it will take time for normal operations to resume.

In 2022, despite the prolonged COVID restrictions, beef consumption grew by 7 percent. This indicates that continued beef consumption growth can be expected as the PRC's per capital beef consumption is much lower than major beef consuming countries.

Beef consumption is concentrated in affluent, large cities in eastern and southern China. Popular beef cuts in China include high quality muscle cuts for hot-pot, barbeque, and high-end restaurants. In 2023, beef consumption areas and product types are expected to remain similar.

Image 2. China: Beef Cuts in Modern Retail Market



TRADE

Beef Imports Growth Uncertain

The beef imports forecast for 2023 is lowered to 3.4 MMT due to Brazil's self-suspension of exports in February 2023. Brazil is China's number one beef exporter of frozen boneless beef products. Beef imports may also be curbed by traders' excess inventory from last year.

Demand for imported beef products is expected to be stronger in 2023 following the lifting of COVID restrictions. Frozen beef imports (bone and boneless) accounted for nearly 98 percent of China's total imports in 2022. Chilled and fresh beef, dominated by the United States, Australia, and New Zealand is expected to grow in 2023. The removal of COVID testing, disinfection, and segregation policies, which added significant costs and delays to imported and cold chain products (see the **POLICY** section) is expected to facilitate trade, particularly in fresh and chilled products.

Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, New Zealand, Australia, and the United States are expected to remain to be the dominant beef suppliers. Over the last three years, exports of beef products from the United States to the PRC grew rapidly after market access was regained. Beef exports from the United States are expected to continue to grow in 2023 as traders and consumers become more familiar with the specific U.S. cuts and beef quality.

In 2023, beef imports from Australia could witness growth if the bilateral relationship between the PRC and Australia improves. Under the China-Australia Free Trade Agreement Australian beef exports receive a preferential tariff quota under which the tariff rate has dropped to 1.2 percent in 2023.

Beef imports in 2022 are revised to 3.5 MMT with 16 percent growth YOY according to available trade data (see **CHART 7**).

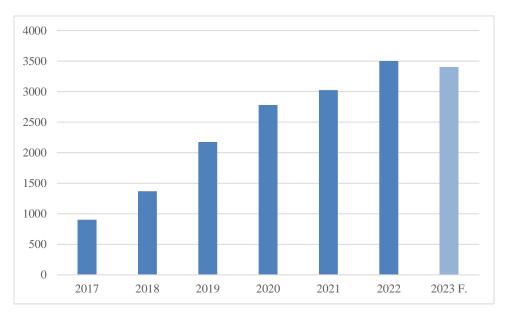


Chart 7. China: Beef Imports (Unit: 1,000 MT)

Source: Trade Data Monitor and Post Estimates

Image 3: A Social Media Marketing Event for U.S. Angus Steak



Exports:

Exports Volume to Rebound Back to Pre-Pandemic Level

Beef production is mainly for domestic consumption and only limited quantities of Chinese beef reach the export market. In 2023, Hong Kong is expected to remain the major export destination for PRC beef products. Hong Kong eased border controls and COVID restrictions in late 2022 which industry sources note may support increased PRC beef exports in 2023 (see **CHART 8**).

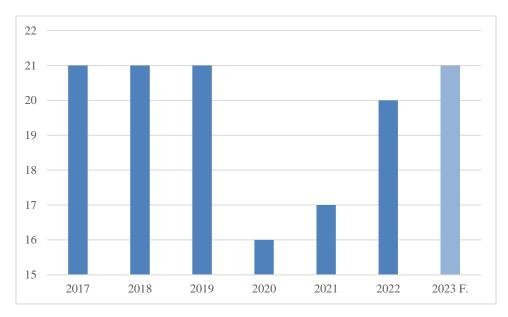


Chart 8. China: Beef Exports (Unit: 1,000 MT)

Source: Trade Data Monitor and Post Estimates

POLICY

PRC Removes COVID-19 Testing and Disinfection Measures

On December 28, 2022, the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China (GACC) published Announcement No. 131 of 2022, changing COVID-19 controls and management. The Announcement ended PRC-required testing and disinfection measures for COVID-19 on imported cold-chain foods and non-cold chain goods effective January 8, 2023. The announcement removed the PRC's non-science based COVID testing and disinfection measures.

Local industry welcomed the removal, noting the change should reduce costs and improve clearance times. The PRC had issued earlier requirements for testing and disinfection through GACC Announcement No. 58 of 2022 and emergency measures in GACC Announcement No. 103 of 2020 (see <u>GAIN Report CH2022-0136</u> for additional information).

No additional COVID restrictions are expected. Additionally, the removal of restrictions is expected to boost demand in the HRI sector.

Removal of Registration for Foreign Trade Operators

The requirement for foreign trade operators to register at local commercial authorities has also been removed (link in Chinese) effective since December 30, 2022. Market entities that apply for import and export permits, quotas, and state trading enterprises will no longer be required to provide a registration record.

Retaliatory Tariffs on U.S. products

The tariff exclusion process introduced by the State Council Tariff Commission (SCTC) in March 2020 (see GAIN report <u>CH2020-0017</u>) remains in effect. The program allows importers to apply for tariff exclusions from China's Section 301 retaliatory tariffs on U.S. products, including pork and beef products (see **TABLE 5** and **TABLE 6** for specific tariff rates).

However, the exclusion process does not apply to China's retaliatory Section 232 tariffs. U.S. pork products are among certain agricultural products that are still subject to China's Section 232 retaliatory tariffs.

		Tariff Type, Implementation Date, and Percent			
HS Code (8-digit)	Product Description	MFN Rate	232	301*	Total Applied Tariff
		Dec 15, 2021	Apr 2, 2018	Jun 1, 2019	Dec 15, 2019[1]
02031110	Fresh or chilled, suckling pig: whole or half-carcasses	20%		25%	45%
02031190	Fresh or chilled, other meat of swine: whole or half-carcasses	20%		25%	45%
02031200	Fresh Or Chilled Bone-In Hams, Shoulders & Cuts	20%	25%	25%	75%
02031900	Other Fresh or Chilled Swine Meat	20%	25%	25%	75%
02032110	Frozen, suckling pig: whole or half- carcasses	12%		25%	37%
02032190	Frozen Swine, whole or half- carcasses, Nes	12%	25%	25%	62%
02032200	Frozen Unboned Hams, Shoulders & Cuts Thereof Of	12%**	25%	25%	63%
02032900	Other Frozen Swine Meat	12%**	25%	25%	63%

Table 5. China: Tariff Schedule on U.S. Pork Products

Note: *Additional tariffs were adjusted on February 14, 2020, and additional exclusions granted March 2, 2020. ** Tentative tariffs effective on December 15, 2021 (See GAIN Report <u>CH2021-0169</u>).

		Tariff Type, Percent	Implementation	Date, and
HS Code (8- digit)	Description	MFN Rate*	301*	Total Applied Tariff
		Jan 1, 2020	Feb 14, 2020	Feb 14, 2020
02011000	Meat of bovine animals, fresh or chilled: whole or half- carcasses	20%	25.0%	45.0%
02012000	Fresh Or Chilled Unboned Bovine Meat (Excl. Carcasses)	12%	30.0%	42.0%
02013000	Fresh Or Chilled Boneless Bovine Meat	12%	30.0%	42.0%
02021000	Frozen Bovine Carcasses & Half Carcasses	25%	25.0%	50.0%
02022000	Frozen Unboned Bovine Meat (Excl. Carcasses)	12%	30.0%	42.0%
02023000	Frozen Boneless Bovine Meat	12%	30.0%	42.0%
02102000	Meat Of Bovine Animals, Salted, In Brine, Dried or Salted	25%	30.0%	55.0%
16025010	Preparations Of Bovine Animal Meat & Offal, In Air	5%	2.5%	7.5%
16025090	Preparations Of Bovine Animal Meat & Offal, Nes	5%	25.0%	30.0%

Table 6. China: Tariff Schedule on U.S. Beef Products

Note: *Additional tariffs were adjusted on February 14, 2020, and additional exclusions granted March 2, 2020.

Attachments:

No Attachments