

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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TidBits - Israeli Agriculture and Food News

Report Categories:

Agriculture in the News

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Report Highlights:

The following developments in Israel's Agriculture and Food Sectors are summarized in this report:

- Temporary Removal of Imports Barriers of Beef, Sheep and Goat Meat to Israel
- Israel Approved Imports of Polish Beef Meat
- The Ministry of Agriculture Approved Import of Table eggs from Ukraine

Temporary Removal of Imports Barriers of Beef, Sheep and Goat Meat to Israel –

The Ministry of Agriculture took measures to prevent meat price increases ahead of the New Year Jewish holidays in September. In order to increase the supply of meat, the Minister of Agriculture has requested that the Finance Minister and the Tax Authority open ad-hoc quotas for importing 10,000 live sheep and 1,000 tons of frozen mutton duty-free, by the end of 2015.

In addition, the Ministry of Agriculture has requested importers of calves to increase their imports of large calves, which are suitable for immediate slaughter, and has also approached large beef importers to open their refrigerated storage and make maximum use of their stockpiles of frozen meat ahead of the holiday season, in order to help reduce prices. These are the current beef and calves import details into Israel:

Chilled - small quantities of chilled beef are imported from Latin America. During the first half of 2015 about 140 tons of chilled beef were imported from South America. In previous years, chilled meat imports to Israel were almost non-existent.

Frozen - Each year about 65,000 tons of frozen beef are imported to Israel mainly from South America: Uruguay, Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and small quantities from the Netherlands and France.

Live calves – Australia, Lithuania, Hungary, and Romania are the main sources for over 100,000 heads of feeder calves.

Israel Approved Imports of Polish Beef Meat – In a very quick process the Ministry of Agriculture approved in August 2015 imports of beef from Poland. A delegation on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture's veterinary services recently returned from Poland to arrange imports of meat from that country. Following the Ministry's successful inspection there, import from Poland has begun in September 2015. Tnuva, the largest wholesaler of agricultural produce, will sell fresh beef meat from Poland at the same prices as frozen meat, to compete with Shufersal's (Israel's largest food chain) new Angus private brand from Argentina. With the approach of Rosh Hashanah (the Jewish New Year), the meat market wars are escalating. One week after Shufersal, the largest supermarket chain launched its private brand of meat, Tnuva Food Industries, the main victim of Shufersal's measure, decided for the first time to import fresh meat from Poland, and to sell it at prices, similar to those of frozen meat.

The Ministry of Agriculture Approved Import of Table eggs from Ukraine – Due to a shortage in the table egg market, Ukraine has been approved to export eggs to Israel, following an audit carried out by the Israeli Ministry to inspect the standards under which the eggs are produced. In addition, negotiations are under way with Italy following an audit there. Israel produces the vast majority of all the eggs consumed domestically - totaling about 2 billion eggs per year. Israel imports about 100 million eggs per year. So far the eggs have been imported from three countries: The Netherlands, Spain and Turkey. However, following an outbreak of avian flu in Turkey, imports from that country have been halted. For now, Israel is importing eggs from three countries: The Netherlands, Spain, and Ukraine, and additional imports are expected from Italy.