

## **Mexico and the USA operate a joint pilot inspection program to speed-up agricultural and livestock exports**

The passage of products through the Colombia, Nuevo Leon and Laredo, Texas crossing has been reduced by 3.5 hours.



To speed-up the crossing of Mexican agricultural and livestock exports to the USA, the Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development (SADER), the Tax Administration Service (SAT), and the Customs and Border Protection Office (CBP) operate a joint pilot inspection program.

The program consists in the crossing of transports that have the United States security certification of the Customs-Trade Partnership against Terrorism (C-TPAT) through the Mexican customs without the need for inspection, using a special fast lane called fast, which reduces the border crossing 3.5 hours on average.

It is worth remembering that in Mexico vehicles that pretend to exit the national territory pass through a security system called fiscal traffic light, which determines if a unit is to be inspected or not by the customs agents.

Afterwards, the load is inspected in United States customs by CBP and SAT personnel, with the intervention of the National Service for Agro-Alimentary Public Health, Safety and Quality (SENASICA) in case of goods regulated by the SADER, to determine its compliance with official regulations and verify that there are no pest and diseases risks.

The joint program aims to speed-up the inspections of Mexican exports; in case sanitary suspicions are detected in USA territory, the shipment is immediately returned to its place of origin through the same special lane.

Through this pilot program, from January 11 to August 25, more than 23 thousand tons of food (86% vegetables and 14% meat products) have crossed to the USA through the customs Fast lane of Colombia, Nuevo Leon - Laredo Texas, in an average time of 1.5 to 2 hours, compared with the five to seven hours it takes through the normal crossing.

The SENASICA is preparing a Memorandum of Understanding proposal with the customs authorities of both countries to expand the program at other border crossing of agri-food relevance, such as Tijuana and Mexicali, Baja California; San Luis Rio Colorado and Nogales, Sonora, Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, and Reynosa and Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas.

It is important to emphasize that the USA Department of Homeland Security, through the CBP, and the SADER, through the SENASICA, subscribed a Letter of Intent on the subject of agriculture, which in one of its objectives establishes the cooperation to facilitate commerce through joint inspection programs.