

# The Secretariat of Agriculture Undertakes Import of Polished Rice from Pakistan, in Favor of Mexican Consumers

The National Agro-Alimentary Health, Safety and Quality Service (Senasica) proposed to the Pakistani health authority the signing of a work plan containing eight phytosanitary risk mitigation measures to prevent the entry of exotic pests into Mexico



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The National Agro-Alimentary Health, Safety and Quality Service (Senasica) and the Department of Plant Protection (DPV) of Pakistan will sign a work plan with the purpose of opening the Mexican market to Pakistani polished rice, informed the Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development.

It explained that the plan consists mainly of eight risk mitigation measures to guarantee the phytosanitary condition of the product and prevent the entry into Mexico of quarantine pests, such as the khapra weevil (*Trogoderma granarium*).

At a working meeting, the agency's chief director, Francisco Javier Calderón Elizalde, and Pakistan's ambassador to Mexico, Najeeb Durrani, agreed that, if required, Senasica technicians will carry out a verification visit at source to rice and dry chili exporting companies for verifying the application of the risk mitigation measures offered by that country's DPV.

Calderón Elizalde pointed out that the Mexican government's aim is to streamline procedures to facilitate trade and thus reduce the cost of importing safe foodstuffs to supply the Mexican population with products that are in greater demand.

Senasica's Director General of Plant Health, Francisco Ramírez y Ramírez, indicated that the eight mitigation measures established in the work plan include issues such as epidemiological surveillance of the pest at source and the registration of facilities with the DPV of Pakistan.

Furthermore, containers must be cleaned before being loaded; additionally, specific traps for khapra weevils must be placed inside the maritime container in which the product is transported, thus speeding up the inspection at the point of entry, since it guarantees that if the pest is present, the official performing the verification will locate the pest immediately, he explained.

The grain must also be subject to phytosanitary treatment with methyl bromide at origin and destination, and a phytosanitary inspection will be carried out at the point of entry, during which samples will be taken for phytosanitary diagnosis.

The meeting was attended by Senasica's directors of Phytosanitary Regulation, Israel Cueto Espinosa, and Projects and Institutional Development, René Hernández Ruíz. The Pakistani ambassador was accompanied by the Trade and Investment Counselor, Shabana Aziz, and the Trade Development Officer, Juliana Guerrero.