

Mexico and Argentina strengthen food trade to fight against inflation

Last January, the National Agro-alimentary Health, Safety, and Quality Service (Senasica) issued the animal health requirements form for boned and matured meat imports from Argentina



The Chief Director of the Secretariat, Mr. Francisco Javier Calderón Elizalde, met with the Ambassador of Argentina in Mexico, Mr. Carlos Alfonso Tomada

The Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development reported that, in order to increase the number of sources of meat products in the Mexican market and have a positive impact on prices increase, the National Agro-Alimentary Health, Safety, and Quality Service (Senasica) issued on January 10th, the animal health requirements form for boned and matured meat imports from Argentina.

The Chief Director of the Secretariat, Mr. Francisco Javier Calderón Elizalde, met with the Ambassador of Argentina in Mexico, Mr. Carlos Alfonso Tomada. During the meeting, Mr. Alfonso Tomada highlighted the importance of the issuance of animal health requirements form as it is part of the actions undertaken both nations to increase trade exchange of agro-alimentary products, which benefit both producers and consumers.

The Mexican officer stated that there has been technical and scientific cooperation with the National Agro-alimentary Health and Quality Service (Senasa) of Argentina in several topics such as animal and plant health, which has enabled a safe and efficient trade exchange.

Moreover, he explained that, thanks to different protocols such as the Risk Analysis one, Senasica technicians can foresee in an agile and efficient manner the probability of stopping foreign plagues and diseases from entering, establishing or disseminating in Mexico, thus protecting Mexican fields and livestock farming.

He also stated that, under the current Mexican policy of facilitating trade exchange to reduce expenses when providing foods for the

people, all necessary measures to ensure an adequate livestock health protection level are taken.

By applying such measures the criteria for meat products import is standardized in countries with health status similar to the one of Mexico, such as the United States and Canada, said Calderón Elizalde.

Therefore, explained Calderón Elizalde, importing transaction costs are reduced and meat product sources increase, thus restraining the food price increase.

The South American diplomat agreed with Mr. Calderón by saying that both countries' different climates foster the exchange of healthy and safe products, thus benefiting the consumers.

He ensured that in the increasingly competitive trade environment, authorities require to strengthen the care provided so as to manage all trade protocols and, in that regard, Mexico and Argentina are internationally acknowledged due to their animal health work.

On plant health issues the Mexican officers mentioned to their counterpart that play rice, white corn and onion markets will be open.

As there are still some issues to address, both diplomats agreed on meeting on the following weeks so as to set the priority for trade products such as orange, mandarin, grapefruit, and kiwi.

Moreover, negotiations for animal feed, soy seeds and poultry products and sub-products are being held.

Argentina stated that they deem as a priority the conclusion of the analysis that Senasica is carrying out for importing mandarin to Argentina.

Monitoring of Health Emergencies

The Director in Chief of the Secretariat of Agriculture stated that one of the best strengths of Senasica is its health intelligence work, as it is the scheme under which hundreds of experts analyze, assess, and monitor and geo-locate health issues around the globe and which can pose a threat to agro-alimentary production in Mexico.

The Argentinian delegation visited the Animal Health Emergencies Center (COES, in Spanish) located in the main building. Such Center, along with the ones of Tecámac, State of Mexico, and Palo Alto, Cuajimalpa, provide a constant communication, coordination and information management channel, thus allowing them to access all required data to reduce plague entering to Mexico or plague population increase in already-controlled areas.

Senasica's sanitary intelligence experts explained the worldwide monitoring of economically important diseases such as *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *cubense* Raza 4 Tropical, which affects bananas,

African swine fever (ASF), highly pathogenic avian influenza AH5N1 and pests such as the Khapra weevil and the Mediterranean fruit fly, which affect vegetable production.

Also attending the meeting on behalf of the Ministry of Economy were the head of the Global Economic Intelligence Unit, Irais Barreto Canales, and the general director of Light Industries, Roberto Beltrán Ramírez, among others.

The Argentine delegation was also represented by the embassy's Counselor for Economic, Tourism and Cooperation Issues, Carolina Eymann, the Undersecretary of the Economic Section, Augusto Riva, and the Economic Counselor, Santiago Sinopoli.