



USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agriculture Information Network

Template Version 2.08

Unscheduled Report – FAS internal use only

Date: 10/6/2004

GAIN Report Number: GR4024

Greece

Trade Policy Monitoring

New Minister of Agricultural Development and Food Administration appointed

2004

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Report Highlights:

The Greek Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Savvas Tsitouridis, resigned on September 22, 2004 after having served only half a year. Mr. Evaggelos Basiakos is the newly appointed Minister of Agriculture.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Rome [IT1]
[GR]

Greek Minister Resigns

Agriculture Minister Tsitouridis resigned September 22, 2004 evidently under pressure from the executive. He justified his resignation with a reason that few would deem sufficient for removal from office. Whatever the reasons, former Minister Tsitouridis made decisions that caused consternation in the strongest trade associations in Greece, the Grain Millers and Grain & Feed Trade Associations. Tsitouridis' actions had the effect of barring grain and feed imports from third countries based on overly stringent phytosanitary requirements. The impossibly tough measures were announced at a time when large stocks of unsold national wheat hung over the market. Although the grain millers had a generally good rapport with the New Democracy party and Prime Minister Mr. K. Karamanlis, the actions of the former Minister of Agriculture strained the relationship. Not surprisingly, some political analysts opined about various possible motives for PM Karamanlis' apparent request for the Minister's resignation.

Deputy Appointed as New Minister

Mr. Evaggelos Basiakos, the new Minister of Agriculture, was Deputy Minister of Agriculture under Tsitouridis. Basiakos graduated from the University of London specializing in international law and political science. He speaks English fluently. Basiakos was elected to the Greek Parliament in June 1989. He served as spokesman on agricultural matters for the then-opposition New Democracy party over the many years the PASOK party was in power. His district is the Prefecture of Viotia, an agricultural region where cotton is the dominant crop. Basiakos' former position as the Deputy Minister of Agriculture is still vacant at the time of this writing.