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Serbia

Livestock and Products

Serbia Adopts New Veterinary Law

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Report Highlights:

Serbia adopted a new veterinary law that includes provisions for making and registration of cattle, reform of the veterinary inspection service, more transparent procedures of border control and internal inspection services and the introduction of internationally accepted programs for protection and treatment of animals. The implementation of this new law would help Serbia's efforts in the accession process to the WTO and joining the European Union.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Belgrade [YU1]
[SR]

After two months of intense debate, the Serbian Parliament approved a new veterinary law proposed by the Ministry of Agriculture. With the adoption of this law, the Republic of Serbia will implement a comprehensive system of control and surveillance for raising farm animals and the production food derived from animal origin. This will help expand the list of approved slaughterhouses and meat processing facilities that would be able to export to the European Union (EU) and other international markets. The new veterinary law is a part of Serbian's legislative reforms that could help pave the road for Serbia's accession process to the WTO and the EU. With the passing of the veterinary law, Serbia has completed about 30 percent of all laws required for harmonization under the stabilization and association process with the EU. Earlier this fall, a team from the EU Veterinary Inspection Service visited Serbia in order to review Serbia's veterinary and sanitary system and another review is scheduled to take place in January 2006. Following the second review, it is anticipated that that the number of Serbian plants approved for meat exports Serbia to the EU will increase from two (currently) to five plants.

The adoption of the new veterinary law will require the Serbian Veterinary Service to change a large number of "Rule Books" that regulate all activities currently performed by the veterinary service such as:

- Marking and registration of cattle
- Internationally accepted and standardized programs for the protection and welfare of animals
- Coordination of border and internal inspection and the introduction of new quality systems in food production and trade

In addition, the new veterinary law will hopefully enable Serbia to perform the following functions in the future:

- To have more efficient control and supervision of the whole food chain for products derived from animals and will be in accordance with EU regulations
- To privatize many of the Veterinary stations throughout Serbia so service will be more result oriented and cost effective. In the regions where there are no private veterinary stations available these services will provide by public stations
- To have more provisions for better conditions and treatment of the live farm animals
- The registration and tracking process of animal movement will reduced illegal trade and introduce mechanism for tracking products "from the farm to the plate"
- To form Serbian "Veterinary Chamber" that that will issue licenses to veterinary doctors and be in charge of regulating their work conduct
- To make employees at the veterinary stations eligible to work in some parts of veterinary inspection and state institutions to reduce its staff and budget

The drafting of the new Serbian "Rule Books" that are consistent with modern and internationally recognized standards provides USDA an opportunity to work the Serbian Veterinary Service to accept the USDA/FSIS export certificates for U.S. pork meat. It is worth mentioned that in June 2005, SIS (in coordination with FAS Office Belgrade) started the "Equivalency" process with the Serbian Veterinary Service. The first visit of an FSIS preliminary review team to Serbia is expected to take place in the first half of 2006.

The full English text of the new Veterinary Law is available in the FAS Office Belgrade.