

Trade Notes...

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USDA Grants Trade Assistance to Catfish Producers in 18 States

In November, USDA certified a petition for catfish producers in 18 states under the TAA (Trade Adjustment Assistance) for Farmers program. The 18 states are Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Texas and Utah. Under the TAA program, USDA provides technical assistance and cash benefits to producers if an increase in imports of a like commodity has contributed importantly to a decline in price and a loss of income. FAS determined that in 2002, increased imports of catfish and imports of Vietnamese basa and tra fillets contributed importantly to a decline in domestic prices for catfish producers.

USDA Allocates \$2 Million Under Program for Specialty Crops

In November, USDA provided \$2 million to 16 organizations under TASC (the Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops) program to help open, retain and expand markets for U.S. specialty crops. The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 created the TASC program and authorized \$2 million of Commodity Credit Corporation resources in each fiscal year from 2002 through 2007 to address barriers that prohibit or threaten exports of U.S. fruits, vegetables and other specialty crops. These crops include all cultivated plants and their products produced in the United States except wheat, feed grains, oilseeds, cotton, rice, peanuts, sugar and tobacco. For further information on the TASC program, contact: USDA/FAS Marketing Operations Staff, Room 4932-S, Stop 1042, 14th and Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, DC 20250-1042; Tel.: (202) 720-4327; Web site: www.fas.usda.gov/export.html

Philippines Removes Newcastle Ban on U.S. Poultry

In October, the Philippines Department of Agriculture lifted its import ban on poultry products from California, Nevada and Texas. The import ban, due to the detection of Exotic Newcastle Disease, was lifted after USDA reported the total eradication of the disease in the three states. In fiscal 2003, the Philippines bought \$13 million in poultry meat from the United States. The United States is the largest supplier of poultry meat to the Philippines, holding a 40-percent market share.

China Fisheries and Seafood Expo Nets Opportunities for U.S. Exhibitors

In October 2003, the 8th China Fisheries and Seafood Expo Show was held in Shanghai. Ten exhibitors joined the FAS Agricultural Trade Office staff in the U.S. Pavilion, which featured products such as wild and farmed salmon; black cod; Dungeness, snow and king crab; geoducks; fresh oysters; squid; and halibut. The FAS service center provided U.S. exhibitors with market information and assisted in setting up appointments with local traders. This year, the seafood show will return to Qingdao, in Shangdong Province.