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AMIE

ASSOCIATION OF MEAT IMPORTERS AND EXPORTERS



NEWSLETTER- OCTOBER 2010

31- 10-2010

This will be a shorter than usual newsletter as our AGM is to be held in a little over three weeks time, and many of the important issues, challenges and recent developments will be fully discussed at the meeting.

PRRS

As I write this, DAFF appear to be in the final stages of completing their VPN.

We have, together with the IWG (Industry Working Group), been involved in regular meetings and ongoing communications with the relevant authorities. We have given DAFF all our recommendations to try and ensure that the final product/regulations are practical and user friendly.

There is still a fair amount of bureaucracy ahead as well as formal notifications that are required, so we do not anticipate implementation before March of 2011.

This very important issue will be discussed in detail at AMIE's AGM on 25 November, and any relevant documentation, decisions and related matters will be distributed to all members.

Membership

AMIE now has 56 members, 31 local and 25 overseas.

This is a 50% increase over the last year, and we can accurately claim that we are truly representative of the industry.

Imports

As can be seen from the stats that we share with you, imports have not been very vibrant over the last couple of months.

While seasonal issues naturally played a part, as evidenced by past trends at this time of the year, current volumes are well below those of two and three years ago.

The current worldwide economic crisis is certainly affecting these numbers.

Market Access

We are continuing our efforts with senior trade officials at the Brazilian Embassy as well as the senior veterinarians at the Department of Agriculture, with a view to fast tracking the re-opening of all meat imports from Brazil.

While boneless beef has been reopened, we are pursuing the reintroduction of Brazilian pork with vigor.

Our efforts are naturally being hampered by the current PRRS issues.

Members are in regular contact with us regarding Access requests which we pursue with the relevant persons at DAFF.

Currently, there are a number of pending requests from EU countries for both meat and poultry imports.

We will keep members informed of developments.

Levies

All levy income claims are totally up to date, and detailed levy figures will be presented at the AGM.

As pointed out previously, lower imports over the last few months have produced lower levy income for us. Nevertheless, the income realized is still very meaningful to us.

Regular reconciliations of levy income with import stats and information received from various bodies proves conclusively that there is still a large measure of non compliance in this area. We have been fortunate to obtain more detailed statistics over the last few months, and we confidently expect these to lead to more accurate declarations as well as new registrations.

The new (third) levy, will replace the one that is due to expire over the next few days.

As you have seen, it makes provision for much improved collection mechanisms, and we look forward to higher yields.

There is likely to be a break between the expiry of the current levy and the commencement of the new one.

I will be in touch with members over the next few weeks to discuss interim plans.

Finances

All finances are still well controlled, and monthly financial reports are generated. Our books will be audited by next week, and the audited financials will be presented at our AGM.

MMA

We are still pursuing this issue in efforts to ensure a fairer situation.

We have been assured that the authorities are indeed taking our requests seriously and relooking at the current methodology with regard to a reallocation of some of the allowances from neighboring territories to “traditional exporters to SA”.

Compliance Issues

While there are still a number of compliance issues in the pipeline, we can see from information and statistics available to us, that much success has been achieved in the leveling of the playing fields.

Constant vigilance and follow up will continue.

RITs

This is a repeat from past newsletters, but we HAVE since rediscussed it with the vets and they have agreed to contact SARS to rectify the loopholes.

There is a concern that this process is used to illegally import or move banned products into or through SA, and also to avoid paying import duties.

To ensure proper control by the authorities, DOA (DAFF) was requested to ask SARS in writing to ensure all affected products which fall under the jurisdiction of DAFF, to be notified by SARS to DAFF.

Currently all meat and poultry items are flagged by SARS, where inspection is required. The intention is that all RIT entries for these tariff headings are also flagged for inspection.

Meat Import Monitoring Committee

Our next MIMC meeting is scheduled for 10 November and will be attended by DAFF, SARS, DOH, NAMC, APIS, DTI, and AMIE representatives.

It looks like alphabet soup, but it is an excellent forum to encourage healthy communication channels and level playing fields.

Anti Dumping Progress

There have been many developments regarding US Anti Dumping issues. Members, many of whom have generously contributed towards the costs of current actions, have been kept updated, but a detailed update will be given at the AGM.

AGM

There are a number of serious issues that need to be discussed urgently. The threats to our industry, as stated earlier, are many, and we are dedicating a huge amount of time and energy in this direction.

The guest speaker at this year's meeting will be Dr Tertius Berg of DAFF, so this will present us with a valuable opportunity to discuss issues with him.

It is really important that members get involved and assist by way of any input, advice and even criticism.

Please, where logistically possible, try and attend.

There are also some vacancies on the Executive Committee, and these will be filled from your nominations,

Regards,

David Wolpert

