

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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**Date:** 1/14/2010

**GAIN Report Number:** TH0005

## Thailand

**Post:** Bangkok

### **Bangkok Newsletter - January 2010**

**Report Categories:**

Agricultural Situation

Market Development Reports

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**Report Highlights:**

TH0005 "SAWASDEE THAILAND" provides the latest information on the Thai agricultural situation, market access, and upcoming events. See the latest updates on the ASEAN FTA, the 2010 TRQ for soybean and soybean meal imports, the lifting of Thai H1N1 requirements for pork and pork products, as well as information on upcoming events.

## **General Information:**

### **HOT NEWS**

#### ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (AFTA) Tariff Elimination

On January 1, 2010 under AFTA's Agreement on Common Effective Preferential Tariffs (CEPR), Thailand reduced its import tariffs for the ASEAN region for 8,031 items, which covers all agricultural products except four products under the highly sensitive list (coffee, coconut, fresh cut flowers, and potatoes). The Ministry of Commerce expects Thai exports to increase 10-15 percent in the region.

#### Soybean and Soybean Meal Importers are Now Eligible to Import for CY 2010

On December 28, Thailand's Minister of Commerce signed the Ministerial Notification Concerning the Tariff Rate Quota (TRQ) for Soybeans and Soybean Meal. For 2010 the Thai Cabinet approved an unlimited in-quota for both products. In 2008, Thailand imported \$98 million of soybeans and soybean meal from the U.S. See TH [9196](#) and TH [9175](#) for more information.

#### H1N1 Certification for Pork and Pork Products no Longer Required

On January 7, 2010, the Thai Department of Livestock Development (DLD) notified USDA that it had lifted its H1N1 virus-free certification requirement for shipments of pork and pork products originating from countries where H1N1 outbreaks had occurred. This does not change the status of U.S. market access, since the waiver only applied to products under existing protocols.

#### International Tourists Expect to Reach 16 Million in 2010

According to the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), the number of international tourists this year is expected to reach 16 million. TAT plans to attract tourists from ASEAN member countries and South Asia which it views as the most loyal. In 2009, Thailand received 14 million tourists. An update on the Thai tourism industry is available at [www.tourismthailand.org](http://www.tourismthailand.org).

#### FAS/Bangkok Congratulates President Bakery for the Opening of its New Facility

On December 14, 2009 FAS/Bangkok attended the opening ceremony of President Bakery's Bangchan Bangchan Industrial Estate facility. This state of the art facility, built at a cost of 1.2 billion baht (\$36 million), will assist in supplying the bakery needs of the more than 12,000 outlets it services. FAS/Bangkok congratulates President Bakery for its ongoing success and its unyielding effort to provide Thai consumers with quality products made from US wheat.

### **MARKET ACCESS UPDATE**

### Cold Stone Creamery Opens Its First Ice Cream Store in Thailand

Cold Stone Creamery, a US-based ice cream chain, has signed a franchise agreement with Central Restaurants Group to open ice cream stores in Thailand. The first ice cream parlor is expected to open on February 2010 at Central World Bangkok. More information about Central Restaurants Group is available at [www.crg.co.th](http://www.crg.co.th).

### Cochran Fellowship Program

The Cochran Fellowship Program provides training and support to help developing nations improve their agricultural systems in order to enhance trade with the US. This year Ag/Bangkok expects to conduct programs concerning food packaging, low-acid canned food production, remote plant disease diagnosis, and U.S. hardwood industry.

## **MARKET OPPORTUNITIES**

### DVC Product Presentations

FAS/Bangkok can help facilitate digital video conference with Thai importers. Please contact us for more information at [agbangkok@fas.usda.gov](mailto:agbangkok@fas.usda.gov).

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### U.S. Dry Beans: New Functional Ingredients for Healthy Extruded Snacks Seminar

On January 18, 2010 the USA Dry Bean Council will hold a seminar, "U.S. Dry Beans: New Functional Ingredients for Healthy Extruded Snacks" at the Novotel Lotus Bangkok Hotel. Over 30 delegates from leading snack manufacturing companies from Southeast Asia are expected to attend. Conducted by Dr. Mehmet Tulbek from the Northern Crops Institute at North Dakota State University. For information on U.S. dry beans visit [www.usdrybeans.com](http://www.usdrybeans.com).

### Pastry with California Raisins Workshop in Thailand

The Raisin Administrative Committee will conduct a pastry workshop using California raisins by an award winning pastry chef from Singapore, Chef Pang Kok Keong, winner of the World Gourmet Pastry Chef of the Year in 2007 and 2009. The workshop will be held at Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel on January 19. Over 100 pastry chefs and bakery shops owners are registered to attend.

### NRA Team Visit

A team from the National Renderers Association (NRA) will visit Thailand from January 24-26. The team's purpose is to meet with potential customers and explore the use of U.S. rendered products in the aquafeed industry. In addition, they will meet with officials in Department of Livestock Development (DLD) on market access situation for rendered products from bovine animals.

### Biotech Delegation Slated to Visit

Jack Bobo, Senior Advisor for Biotechnology, U.S. Department of State, will be leading a U.S. delegation to Thailand later this month. The team will be meeting with Thai officials in preparation for the Codex Committee on Food Labeling (CCFL) meeting in May 2010 and Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling in March 2010. The Codex committees are charged with developing international guidelines in the food regulatory area.

### Design Camp II. Prototype in the Pipeline

The American Hardwood Design Camp II is currently in the production phase of furniture prototypes designed by Thai students and professional designers. The prototypes will be displayed at the Thailand International Furniture Fair in March of 2010. For more information on this event contact [agbangkok@fas.usda.gov](mailto:agbangkok@fas.usda.gov).

### U.S. Wine and More Seminar

FAS/Bangkok is coordinating a series of marketing promotion events bringing together local U.S. wine importers, California wine producers and the Dairy Council of California. The events in Phuket and Bangkok hosted by the Ambassador targeting food and beverage players in Thailand. For more information on this event please contact [agbangkok@fas.usda.gov](mailto:agbangkok@fas.usda.gov).

### Food and Hotel Asia 2010

It's time to mark your calendar for the largest food show in Southeast Asia. Food and Hotel Asia 2010, will take place in Singapore on April 20-23. The show expects to attract 2,800 exhibitors from 70 countries. The 654 sqm USA pavilion will showcase AJC International, American Indian Foods, American Roland Food Corporation, Athena Marketing, Big Train, California Milk Advisory Board, Excel Trade, Food Export Midwest, French Gourmet, Geller International, General Mills, Global Export, Gold Medal, Independent Meat, Lamb Weston, McIlhenny Company and other U.S. companies. Additional information on this show please visit [www.foodhotelasia.com](http://www.foodhotelasia.com).