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Report Highlights:

TH9102 "SAWASDEE THAILAND" provides the latest information on the Thai agricultural situation and U.S. export opportunities, including postponed changes to produce inspection requirements, developments on alcohol labeling, market access changes for potatoes, and information on upcoming events.

General Information:



SAWASDEE

THAILAND

Issue 7/2009

HOT NEWS FROM THAILAND

Thai FDA Change in Produce Inspection Postponed

On June 29, the Thai Food and Drug Administration notified vegetable and fruit importers that the planned July 1 implementation date of new measures for the inspection of imported fresh and vegetables was postponed. For additional details, please see our GAIN report, [“Thai FDA Change in Produce Inspection Postponed”](#).

MARKET ACCESS UPDATE

Warning Pictures on Alcohol Labels Initiative by the Thai Ministry of Public Health

The Office of Alcohol Beverages and Tobacco Control Committee has prepared a draft regulation on pictures and warning statements to be required on all alcohol beverage containers. According to local news sources, under the draft requirements half the alcohol container's label would be covered with images and messages including drinkers suffering from liver cancer, from cirrhosis and from the consequences of road accidents. The images and messages will be compulsory for all bottles and packaging. If this regulation is promulgated, the enforcement processes would be similar to those for tobacco control.

Thailand to Audit U.S. Export Certification System for Potatoes

New import protocols for U.S. seed potatoes, potatoes for processing, and potatoes for consumption, which are scheduled to be effective within the next few months, require an audit of U.S. production areas and export certification systems. USDA is working closely with the

U.S. potato industry to extend an invitation to the Thai Department of Agriculture to audit six states, including California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington. The visit is likely to take place in August or September.

USDA Senior Economist to Discuss Agricultural Policy

The Thai Department of Trade Negotiations has invited Ms. Carol Goodloe, Senior Economist, USDA Office of the Chief Economist, to present on U.S. farm policies and international agricultural trade issues on August 4, 2009. In addition to a one-day workshop, Ms. Goodloe will also meet with industry representatives and academics to discuss U.S. farm programs and WTO agricultural trade issues.

Agricultural Biotechnology Risk Communication Workshop

The Department of State and FAS/Bangkok are organizing an agricultural biotechnology risk communication workshop in Bangkok in September. The audience is expected to include Thai government advisors involved in biotechnology regulatory issues, members of parliament, decision makers from the private sector, science writers, members of the media, and persons involved in risk communications.

APEC Food Safety Meetings

APEC member economies will be looking at issues in risk analysis on August 1-2, 2009 in Singapore. APEC member economy officials, experts from international organizations, and industry representatives will discuss approaches to meeting food safety challenges throughout the APEC region.

Cochran Fellowship Program: Biotechnology

Two Thai Government officials will travel to the U.S. for a Cochran Program covering science-based rule making involving biotechnology and food safety. The participants will represent the Department of Agriculture, Biotechnology and Development Office and the Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning, Biological Diversity Division.

MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

DVC Product Presentations

FAS/Bangkok can help facilitate digital video conferences with Thai importers. Please contact us for more information at agbangkok@fas.usda.gov.

California Raisins in Thai Bakeries

The Raisin Administrative Committee and Au Bon Pain successfully introduced a special Au

Bon Pain promotion of “Oatmeal Raisin Cookie and Cinnamon Raisin Roll” using California raisins. This 3-month promotion generated monthly sales increases of 146 percent for these two items.

UPCOMING EVENTS

USGC’s DDGS Seminar in Bangkok in August

The U.S. Grain Council (USGC) will conduct a seminar on Distiller’s Dried Grain with Soluble (DDGS) on August 3, 2009 at the Conrad hotel in Bangkok. The seminar will provide an update on the global supply, demand and prices of DDGS. Also, the seminar will include a technical session on developments in DDGS nutrition from field trial in livestock and aquaculture across the region.

Thank you 4th of July Contributors!

FAS/Bangkok thanks the following organizations for their generous contributions to the Independence Day celebration: Ambrose Wine Limited, Bangkok Beer & Beverage Co., Ltd., Brown-Forman Worldwide, L.L.C., The California Wine Co., Ltd., Canpac Beverages Ltd., Global Premium Wine co., Ltd., The Great Prestige Co., Ltd., Siam Winery Trading Plus, Co., Ltd., V&K Inter Group Co., Ltd., Vanichwathana (Bangkok) Co., Ltd., Wine & Spirit Trading Co., Ltd, Northwest Cherries, and the Washington Apple Commission.

U.S. Beef, Seafood, and Wine Seminar

FAS/Bangkok, the U.S. Meat Export Federation, and importers of U.S. seafood and wines are hosting a U.S. food and wine seminar for chefs and F&B managers on August 31 and September 1, 2009 in Bangkok. Jagota Co., Ltd. (seafood), Canpac Beverages Ltd. (Oregon State wines), Great Prestige Co., Ltd. (Washington State wines), the California Wine Co., Ltd. and Vanichwathana Co., Ltd. (California wine) have joined to sponsor the event.

Food Ingredients Asia 2009 (Fi Asia 2009)

Food Ingredients Asia will be held in Bangkok during September 9-11, 2009. Confirmed U.S. exhibitors are the Dairy Export Council, Microthermics, US Potato Board and 6-8 companies from WUSATA. Fi Asia show is a USDA-endorsed show. U.S. company interested in participating should contact Sharon Cook at Sharon.cook@fas.usda.gov and more information about this show can be found at <http://fiasia.ingredientsnetwork.com/home>