

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

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## Thailand

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**Report Categories:**

Agricultural Situation

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**Report Highlights:**

"SAWASDEE THAILAND" provides the latest information on the Thai agricultural situation and U.S. export opportunities. In this issue you will find information on market access for U.S. potatoes and pork, APEC events, market opportunities for U.S. exports to Thailand; and upcoming events.

**General Information:**



**SAWASDEE**

**THAILAND**

**Issue 6/2009**

## **HOT NEWS FROM THAILAND**

### Farewell to Corey Pickelsimer, Agricultural Attache

We bid a fond farewell to Corey Pickelsimer, Agricultural Attaché, as he completes his 3-year assignment in Bangkok. He will be returning to Washington, DC. We thank Mr. Pickelsimer for his many contributions to the Office of Agricultural Affairs and wish him and his family a smooth transition.

## **MARKET ACCESS UPDATE**

### New Potato Import Protocols Effective Soon

The Ministry of Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives has approved final import requirements for U.S. potatoes, including seed potatoes, potatoes for processing, and potatoes for consumption. The new import protocol requires an official audit of U.S. production areas and export certification procedures. APHIS is working with Thai authorities on an audit schedule. The import protocol for U.S. seed potatoes will be officially endorsed after the audits are completed; protocols for potatoes for processing and potatoes for consumption should be endorsed soon.

### Thai FDA Produce Inspection Revised

Effective July 1, the Thai FDA will implement new inspection procedures for fresh fruit and vegetable imports. Under the new procedures, shipments will no longer be released before confirmed test results for MRL's are available. Shipments accompanied by a lab analysis report or a certificate issued by a government-accredited or third-party laboratory will not be quick tested and shall be accorded entry immediately. See [TH9081](#) for additional information.

### New Import Regulation for Wood Packaging Material Under Development

Draft import regulations for wood packaging material (WPM) were recently released to the public. The draft as presently written requires both phytosanitary certificates and international-standard-approved marks. Also, the WPM must be bark free. This draft has not yet been notified to the WTO. See [TH8211](#) for additional information.

### d Lifts Outright Ban on U.S. Pork Products, but Additional Conditions Preclude Trade

On May 20, 2009, the Thai Department of Livestock Development lifted its suspension of imports of swine and carcasses from exporting countries with H1N1, including the United States. However, imports from these countries are now subject to additional import conditions, including certification that products are free of H1N1 and quarantine at the point of entry pending government testing for H1N1.

### APEC Food Defense Project

The third and final phase of the APEC Food Defense Pilot Project in Thailand, will be conducted June 23-26 and July 9-13 with individual companies. Phase 2 workshops included more than 300 participants mostly from the private sector. The goal of the Food Defense Pilot Project is to establish Thailand as a sustainable partner in providing regional outreach on food defense. The initiative aims to strengthen the security of food supplies and manufacturing processes.

#### APEC Round Table Biotechnology Discussion on Low Level Presence (LLP)

Participants from APEC member economies will discuss the implications of the recently adopted low-level presence Annex (LLP Annex) to the CODEX Guideline for the Conduct of Food Safety Assessment of Foods Derived from Recombinant-DNA Plants. The event will take place on July 13-14, 2009 in Singapore.

#### 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.

#### Biotechnology Risk Assessment and Communication in Bangkok

FAS/Bangkok will conduct a two-day workshop in August on risk assessment and communication for regulators from Thailand and Vietnam. Two experts in the field of biotechnology risk assessment and communication, will provide ideas for effective risk communication practices reflecting each country's environment.

#### U.S. Expert to Present on U.S. Farm Policy

A U.S. expert on U.S. farm policy will be sharing U.S. experience on agricultural policy development with Thai government officials. Tentatively scheduled for early August, topics are expected to center around the recent U.S. Farm Bill.

#### New Paddy Price Insurance Experiment

The Thai Government will experiment with a new intervention program starting with the MY2009/10 main crop in November 2009. The program will be different from past mortgage schemes as farmers participating in the program will receive compensation only if market prices are lower than intervention prices. The pilot project will focus on fragrant rice paddy in eight provinces in the northeast. Farmers eligible for this program are required to have their own warehouses. The program will extend to all types of rice within three years and hopes to lower government expenditure for support to the sector.

## **MARKET OPPORTUNITIES**

### New U.S. Frozen Fries Launched In Thailand

“Alexia”, one of the top selling U.S. brands of frozen potatoes in the natural and specialty foods market is now being introduced to Thailand by Midhaven Foods Company Limited. Products are available at Villa Market and being registered with other retail stores in Thailand. More information about this product can be found from [www.alexiafoods.com](http://www.alexiafoods.com).

### Thai Importers Looking for Following U.S. Products

- U.S. exporters supplying egg powder & dehydrated potato, should contact Mr. Yuthakorn Teerawutkulrag, Asst Purchasing Manager, Thai Nisshin Technomic Co., Ltd., Bangpoo Industrial Estate, 276 Moo 4, Sukhumvit Road, Praegsar, Amphur Muang, Samutprakarn 10280, tel. 66-2-323-0953/6, fax. 66-2-323-0955, email: [yuthakorn@nisshintha.com](mailto:yuthakorn@nisshintha.com).

- U.S. exporters supplying potato starch and marrowfats peas, should contact Mr. Somchai Charnpatanakom, Managing Director, Kuala Bangkok Co., Ltd., 889 Thai CC Tower, 22/Flr., Room 200, South Sathorn Road, Bangkok 10120, tel. 66-2-210-0243/45, fax. 66-2-210-0246, email: [kualabkk@samart.co.th](mailto:kualabkk@samart.co.th)

### 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](mailto:agbangkok@fas.usda.gov).

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### Taste of USA 2009 - “The Healthy Trendsetter”

Central Food Retail is organizing a month-long in-store promotion under the theme of “Taste of USA 2009- the Healthy Trendsetter” featuring U.S. food and beverage products at 38 outlets Central Food Hall, Tops Market and Tops Super. The promotion will run from July 1-28, 2009. This promotion aims to educate Thai consumers on a variety of U.S. health foods.

### Fourth of July Celebration

The American Embassy in Bangkok will be hosting the annual Fourth of July Celebration for nearly 1,500 diplomatic and business guests. The U.S. Embassy greatly appreciates any donation of wines for the event. Donating wine to the event may be an excellent opportunity to showcase your business. Please contact [agbangkok@fas.usda.gov](mailto:agbangkok@fas.usda.gov) for additional information.

### U.S. Beef, Seafood, and Wine Seminar

FAS/Bangkok, U.S. Meat Export Federation, together with 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. Ms. Sabrina Yin, U.S. Meat Export Federation, Mr. Lim Hwee Peng, a Singaporean wine expert, and a seafood expert will present on U.S. beef, wines, and seafood.

Food Ingredients Asia 2009 (Fi Asia 2009)

Food Ingredients Asia will be held in Bangkok, September 9-11, 2009. The show is endorsed by USDA. U.S. companies interested in participating should contact Sharon Cook at [Sharon.cook@fas.usda.gov](mailto:Sharon.cook@fas.usda.gov).