

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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## Netherlands

**Post:** The Hague

### Release of containers with dairy products

**Report Categories:**

Export Accomplishments - Other

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**Report Highlights:**

The port of Rotterdam is an important entry point into Europe for U.S. agricultural products. Due to the volume of trade, and often complex import requirements, USDA/FAS staff in the Netherlands are frequently called upon to assist in gaining the release of detained shipments from the United States. This report describes recent instances in where U.S. goods were released as the result of intervention by USDA/FAS staff. USDA/FAS advocacy prevented direct losses to U.S. firms of over \$900,000.

## **General Information:**

The port of Rotterdam is an important entry point for U.S. dairy products shipped to the EU. A number of these shipments are held by the Dutch veterinary authorities (VWA) because of irregularities on the Health Certificates. Below are two incidents described in which the Foreign Agricultural Service Office (FAS) in The Hague assisted in releasing detained containers with U.S. dairy products.

### Release of Detained Dairy Shipment

On December 3, 2010, the Foreign Agricultural Service Office (FAS) in The Hague was informed that the Dutch Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (VWA) had detained a container with food products containing U.S. dairy ingredients. The product was produced by a Michigan-based company. The reason for detainment was that the Health Certificate was issued after the departure date of the vessel carrying the container. This error was made because of unfamiliarity of the exporter with the new Health Certificate model. FAS The Hague drafted an addendum for USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) to issue in which the reason for the error was given and release of the container was requested. On December 22, the importer informed FAS The Hague that the VWA released the detained container. The shipment of the U.S. product represents an estimated value of \$100,000.

### Release of Detained Dairy Shipment

On January 17, 2011, FAS The Hague was informed by the U.S. exporter that the Dutch Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (VWA) held two containers with food products containing dairy ingredients. This product was produced by a Michigan-based company. The reason for detainment was that the product description in box I.18 of Health Certificate was not clear. FAS The Hague drafted an addendum for AMS to issue, in which the product description was clarified namely "food preparations not elsewhere specified or included, contains dairy, Protein Hydrolysate" and release of the containers was requested. On January 28, the exporter informed FAS The Hague that the VWA released the detained containers. The shipment of the U.S. product represents an estimated value of \$ 135,000.

### Release of a container with hamburgers

On January 20, 2010, FAS The Hague was informed by a Kansas beef company that the Dutch veterinary authorities (VWA) held a containers of with hamburgers made with U.S. beef. This was the first time this product had been exported to the EU and the shipment lacked a USDA Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) Meat Preparations Health Certificate. FAS The Hague informed FSIS of the problem, and the steps needed to obtain the shipment's release. On January 28, the importer informed FAS The Hague that the containers could enter the EU. The shipment of the U.S. product represents an estimated value of \$ 30,000.

### Preventing Detainment of Containers with Hamburgers

On January 15, 2010, FAS The Hague was informed by the U.S. Army that two health certificates for a shipment with hamburger patties had been lost and that the containers, destined for U.S. troops, had been detained. FAS The Hague contacted the Dutch veterinary authorities (VWA) to inquire which in lieu certificate would be required. FAS The Hague informed USDA/FSIS of the problem, and the necessary action to release the container. On January 26, the U.S. Army informed FAS The Hague that they received the required certificates and the containers were released.

#### Release Shipment of Milk Powder

Dutch veterinary authorities (VWA) held a shipment of U.S. milk powder because USDA/AMS' amended Health Certificate (HC) did not correctly reference a previously issued certificate for the same shipment. The VWA requested USDA/AMS to provide them with a statement indicating that an amendment to the first HC should have been made instead of issuing a second HC. FAS The Hague facilitated in this. The shipment was cleared for importation, representing a value of \$39,500.

#### Release of Eight Containers with Cheese

On August 25, 2010, FAS The Hague was informed by a Dutch importer that the Dutch veterinary authorities (VWA) were holding eight containers of U.S. cheese. Eight other containers were expected to arrive two weeks later. The reason for detainment was the absence of container seal numbers on the Health Certificates. FAS The Hague mailed the text including specific format requirements for the needed declaration to AMS. On September 2, the importer informed FAS The Hague that all eight containers were released by the VWA. These shipments, organized by a Waltham, MA -based exporter, were valued at \$500,000.

#### Release of Parrot Feed

On September 6, 2010, FAS The Hague was informed by a Dutch importer that the Dutch veterinary authorities (VWA) held a container containing about 5 MT of feed for parrots and about 100 kg of mink feed. The reason for detainment was that three places of origin were mentioned on the Health Certificate. FAS send a message including the USDA/APHIS declaration to Dutch authorities, requesting an exemption for the parrot feed in the container. On September 10, the VWA informed FAS The Hague that they would release the parrot feed.

#### Release of a Four Containers with Animal Protein

On October 18, 2010, FAS The Hague was informed by APHIS that the Dutch veterinary authorities (VWA) held four containers with animal protein. The reason for detainment was that the Health Certificate was issued after the departure date. FAS The Hague requested an addendum from APHIS. On November 2, the customs agent informed FAS The Hague that the VWA would release the detained containers. The shipment of four containers with U.S. product represents an estimated value of \$ 100,000.