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Report Highlights:

Volume of imports of wheat to Russia from Kazakhstan increases...Russian Government transfers responsibility for issuing pesticide import licenses...The Minister of Agriculture approves a development program for the bakery industry...The Russian Union of Milk Producers calls for restrictions on Ukraine...Rosselkhoznadzor and EU discuss pork trade issues...The Customs Union and Israel to consider signing FTA...and Kyrgyz-CU accession road map pending approval by Kyrgyz Parliament

General Information:

Welcome to the Russian Agricultural Policy and Situation Bi-Weekly Update, a summary of issues of interest to the U. S. agricultural community. The report includes information that has been garnered during travel within Russia, reported in the local media, or offered by host country officials and agricultural analysts. Press articles are included and summarized in this report. Significant issues will be expanded upon in subsequent reports from this office. Minor grammatical changes have been made for clarification.

DISCLAIMER: Any press summary contained herein does NOT reflect USDA's, the U.S. Embassy's, or any other U.S. government agency's point of view or official policy.

Russia has Increased Imports of Wheat from Kazakhstan

According to Rusagrotrans, Russia's major railway grain transportation company, in July 2013 through February 2014 Kazakhstan shipped 571,700 metric tons (MT) of wheat by train to Russia, which is 36 percent more than in the same period last year. Most of the wheat was shipped to Ural Federal District. Grain is also shipped from Kazakhstan to Russia by trucks, and Rusagrotrans estimate that shipments by trucks in some months were as large as those by train. The total wheat exports from Kazakhstan to Russia in MY 2013/14 is estimated at 0.9 million metric tons (MMT).

<http://agronews.ru/news/detail/132391/>

Russian Government Transfers the Responsibility for the Issuance of Pesticides Import Permits from the Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance (Rosselkhoznadzor) Directly to the Ministry of Agriculture

Russian Government Resolution No. 201 of March 18, 2014 "On Amendments to some acts of the Government of the Russian Federation on imports of plant protection means (pesticides) to Russian Federation and the territory of the Customs Union" transfers the issuance of permits for imports of pesticides from Rosselkhoznadzor to the Ministry of Agriculture. <http://government.ru/docs/11213> This Resolution No. 201 has completed the transfer of all authority on pesticides from the VPSS to the Ministry of Agriculture. The previous GOR Resolution No. 190 of March 6, 2013, transferred the registration of pesticides from Rosselkhoznadzor directly to the Ministry of Agriculture.

Russian Minister of Agriculture, Nikolay Fyodorov, Approves the Industry Target Program "Development of the Bakery Industry in the Russian Federation 2014-2016".

On March 19, Russian Minister of Agriculture Nikolay Fyodorov signed the order approving the industry target program "Development of the bakery industry in the Russian Federation for the 2014-2016". The document is part of the implementation of the Strategy of the Development Food and Processing Industry of the Russian Federation to 2020.

The goal of the program is to provide the population with high-quality bakery products, expand its product range, and increase competitiveness and financial stability of the local bakeries.

The Program calls for modernization of the sector as well as introduction of innovative technologies.

The total federal and regional budget allocation for the Program implementation is 33.120 million rubles. The Program sets production targets for bakery products, including dietary and products enriched with micronutrients from 110 TMT in 2014 to 130 TMT in 2016.

<http://mcx.ru/news/news/show/21766.355.htm>

The Russian Union of Milk Producers, Soyuzmoloko, Asks the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade to Consider Tariffs and Restrictions on Imports of Dairy Products from Ukraine

The Russian Union of Milk Producers, Soyuzmoloko, which unites Russia's major milk and dairy products producers advised the Russian Ministry of Economic Development to consider implementing customs tariffs on milk and dairy products imported from Ukraine since Ukraine is intended to leave the CIS and join EU. According to mass media the letter explaining the reasons for such measures was sent by the A. Danilenko, the head of "Soyuzmoloko" to Maksim Medvedkov, the Head of Department of Trade Negotiations in the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade.

<http://www.agronews.ru/news/detail/132381/>

Rosselkhoznadzor and EU Discuss Pork Trade Issues

The Russian Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance (Rosselkhoznadzor) reports that head of Rosselkhoznadzor, Sergey Dankvert, met with Isabel García-Tejerina, General Secretary of the Spanish Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Environment, and Paola Testori Coggi, General Director of the EU DG for Health and Consumers, to discuss pork exports from the EU to the Russian Federation and the Customs Union. For more information, see:

http://www.fsvps.ru/fsvps/news/9213.html?_language=en.

Customs Union and Israel to Consider Signing FTA

According to a news release issued by the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC), on March 18, 2014, the EEC Minister for Trade, Andrei Slepnev, and Israel's Economy Minister, Naftali Bennett, announced the establishment of a joint research group that will study pros and cons of signing a free-trade agreement between the Customs Union and Israel. For additional information, see:

<http://translate.google.com/translate?sl=ru&tl=en&js=n&prev=t&hl=en&ie=UTF-8&u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.eurasiancommission.org%2Fru%2Fnae%2Fnews%2FPages%2F18-03-2014-2.aspx>.

Kyrgyz CU Accession Road Map Pending Approval by Kyrgyz Parliament

According to Russian press reports, the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic will first seek approval of the Kyrgyz CU accession road map by the Kyrgyz parliament before the roadmap can be approved by the CU member-states. For additional information, see:

http://translate.google.com/translate?hl=en&sl=ru&tl=en&u=http://www.altaru.ru/ts_news/28875&sandbox=0&usg=ALkJrhg13-anWeJEddGoZ7PZ-hg0Q8bkzw.