

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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## United Arab Emirates

**Post:** Dubai

### Trade Assistance in the GCC-5 Countries

**Report Categories:**

Export Accomplishments - Other

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**Report Highlights:**

This report highlights OAA Dubai export accomplishments during the first quarter of 2012. It includes 4 achievements that helped U.S. food products gain more grounds in this important market.

## **General Information:**

### **1. MARKET ACCESS: U.S. beef from cattle OTM of age is now allowed in the UAE**

On January 24, 2012, the UAE Minister of Environment and Water issued Ministerial Decree number 34, allowing the importation of beef from cattle over thirty months (OTM) of age. This ended the ban that was imposed in 2009 on U.S. beef imports from OTM cattle due to BSE concerns.

The market liberalization was made possible by the tireless efforts of the Office of Agricultural Affairs (OAA), Dubai staffs and FAS/W officials who provided technical information, as well as that of U.S. Ambassadors to the UAE who met with the UAE Minister of Environment and Water to lobby for the resolution of the issue.

U.S. beef is very popular among end users at the food service sector. The ban on OTM beef kept U.S. beef relatively expensive, making it difficult to introduce to the retail sector. Allowing U.S. beef from OTM cattle would help introduce wider range of different quality and grade beef at competitive prices into the market. UAE beef importers also estimate that the new decree would help increase U.S. beef exports to the country by 30 percent. 2011 U.S. beef exports to the UAE totaled \$ 40.9 million.

### **2. MARKET ACCESS: U.S. Confectionery exporter's new market in the UAE**

On January 9, 2012, a U.S. exporter of confectionery products contacted OAA Dubai 2012 seeking assistance to get his new products approved by health officials in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, as his potential distributor was unable to obtain the necessary approvals. The initial request was denied based on a “lips” shape figure embossed on the cover of the package which was judged to be a provocative label.

OAA Dubai met with the health officials in charge and convinced them that the label is widely accepted in several countries and there was no reason to reject it. Based on OAA intervention, the health officials approved the label on Jan 25.

Resolving this problem enabled the U.S. supplier to initiate business for products that are produced in Florida, USA. Initial export was valued at \$250,000.

### **3. MARKET ACCESS: Eased restrictions on U.S. table egg exports to Dubai, UAE**

The Gulf Standard governing the importation of table eggs to the GCC countries require that each individual egg should be marked with dates of production and expiry, as well as the country of origin.

After extensive discussions with UAE health officials, OAA Dubai secured approval in March 2012 from the Health officials at the Dubai Municipality, allowing the importation of U.S. table eggs destined for the food service sector without the marking of production and expiry dates and country of origin on each egg. The waiver allows U.S. egg supplies to the food service sector, to have production and expiry dates and the country of origin marks only on the cartons containing the eggs.

This compromise was initiated by OAA Dubai since U.S. table eggs are in great demand, but many of the U.S. exporters refrain from exporting their products as they see the labeling requirements complex, difficult to meet and expensive. The new requirement is expected to encourage many U.S. egg exporters to export their

products to the UAE which imported \$ 10.5 million worth of eggs in 2011.

**4. MARKET ACCESS: U.S. table eggs exported to the UAE**

In March 2012, OAA Dubai assisted a U.S. egg supplier to identify a UAE table egg importer, resulting in a deal of 2 shipments of U.S. table eggs valued at \$60,000, with strong possibility for additional imports.