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Two Breakthroughs in U.S. exports to Europe

Report Categories:

Livestock and Products

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Report Highlights:

EU lifts ban on lactic acid on beef: Commission Regulation (EU) No 101/2013, published on February 5, 2013, allows the application of lactic acid (LA) as a pathogen reduction treatment (PRT) on beef. This approval is a major breakthrough breaching the 15-year-old EU ban on PRTs. It will allow U.S. beef exporters to better take advantage of the EU beef quotas, worth \$700 million, without forgoing customary food safety procedures.

EU allows imports of U.S. live swine: On February 5, 2013, Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 102/2013 was published, allowing the exports of U.S. live swine to the EU or for transshipment.

General Information:

EU lifts ban on lactic acid on beef

[Commission Regulation \(EU\) No 101/2013](#) [1] , published in the Official Journal on February 5, 2013, allows the application of lactic acid (LA) as a pathogen reduction treatment (PRT) on beef carcasses, half-carcasses and beef quarters in the slaughterhouse. This is a major breakthrough breaching the 15-year-old EU ban on PRTs. While the “hygiene” Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 already provided for the lifting of the ban from 1997, it took almost another decade before the political opposition decreased allowing this precedent. Still, the approval of the application of LA is restricted to the slaughter line only, while LA is an inherent component of all meat and is broadly used as a food ingredient worldwide. The approval of this USDA application finally succeeded after four PRT applications for poultry failed in 2008 after a 6-year struggle and despite a European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) report from 2005 found no food safety concerns [2] . This failure led the United States to launch a WTO complaint against the EU in 2009 ([DS 389](#) [3]).

The approval of LA as a PRT in Europe is a major victory for science-based food processing. It will allow U.S. beef exporters to better take advantage of EU beef quotas, worth \$700 million, without forgoing customary food safety procedures, which was the primary goal of the United States.

Ultimately, the European Union will be the biggest winner from this approval as it will avoid human casualties from food poisonings, while European meat industries will be allowed to market safer food and thus avoid economic damage from the negative publicity from such food safety incidents.

U.S. live swine also allowed into the EU

Also on February 5, 2013, [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) No 102/2013](#) [4] was published, allowing the exports of U.S. live swine to the EU or for transshipment. This regulation terminates the longstanding discussion about the risk of introduction into the Union of vesicular stomatitis from sporadic outbreaks in limited areas via imports of live pigs.

^[1] <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:034:0001:0003:EN:PDF>

^[2] For more details see GAIN report [E48148 – Final EC vote ends failed poultry PRT approval procedure](#).

^[3] http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/dispu_e/cases_e/ds389_e.htm

^[4] <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:034:0004:0011:EN:PDF>