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CIAA Bulletin

**An Exclusive CIAA Member
Update**

CIAA Leadership Meets with USTR to Discuss Trade Policy Views

Cheese Importers Association of America (CIAA) President Dominique Delugeau, 1st Vice President Kenneth Olsson, Secretary Ralph Hoffman, and Government and Legislative Affairs Director Roger Szemraj, on December 8 held a very productive meeting with Ann Heilman-Dahl, Senior Director for Agricultural Affairs, Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, and Sharon Bomer Lauritsen, Assistant United States Trade Representative, Agricultural Affairs, to discuss [CIAA's trade policy statement](#) which emphasizes the reduction of tariffs and tariff rate quotas (TRQs), the importance of historical import licenses, and the need for harmonization of sanitary and phytosanitary standards in trade talks including the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). We emphasized CIAA's views on the economic importance of imports, including the jobs and other economic opportunities they create, and how they have resulted in increased US production and in turn further exports of these products to other parts of the world.

USTR officials said their goal is the elimination of tariffs and quotas, and expects that CIAA would support this goal. While USTR has not yet gotten into the negotiations on dairy, they do not agree with those who claim that agriculture will be overlooked in these trade negotiations. Their expectation is that the reductions and eventual elimination of tariffs and quotas would have to be done over time, so there is a need to develop a transitional system. While we emphasized CIAA's support for historical licenses, saying that the licenses provide certainty for business development and market maturation and USTR appreciated these concerns, they said that since the goal is the full elimination of tariffs and quotas, licenses ultimately become a non-issue. USTR urges CIAA to provide detailed recommendations regarding how a TRQ could be administered, looking at both a TRQ that is eliminated over time, and a TRQ that is a permanent TRQ. CIAA is encouraged to look at other Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) to see how TRQs are administered under those, with the [Panama FTA](#) suggested as a comprehensive example.

We also urged the harmonization of sanitary/phytosanitary standards, suggesting that some European producers are declining to export to the United States following FDA's action on microbiological surveillance in 2014, and concerns about FSMA requirements. We suggested that there is a need to recognize the historic production practices used in Europe that assure product quality and safety, and that these products have not been the source of safety concerns or recalls. USTR says that it will not override the scientific determinations made by FDA, and points out that the Europeans have imposed many of their own standards that make it difficult for the importation of US product, e.g. somatic cell count. USTR urged CIAA to work with the European Dairy Association (EDA) to identify specific concerns and bring them forward.

We were also asked CIAA's views regarding the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement, with specific references to the opportunities to increase dairy exports to Japan, Vietnam, and Canada. USTR's view is that TPA is very positive for US dairy interests. USTR expects that there will be some Canadian implementing regulations that USTR will be consulted about those regulations, and USTR told us that CIAA's view of these proposed regulations will be of interest to USTR.

CIAA was urged to stay in contact with USTR and to provide specific detailed recommendations, as noted above. If you have any questions, please contact Roger Szemraj at rszemraj@theciaa.org or (202) 789-1212.

DATES TO REMEMBER

December 22, 2015 (approximately)
FAS issues first notice of calendar year 2016 licenses to licensees.

December 31, 2015
Last day for licensees to make entries to fulfill the requirement to use 85% of their calendar year 2015 license amount. Last day for which calendar year 2015 licenses are valid.

January 1, 2016
First day of validity for calendar year 2016 licenses.

January 17, 2016
Winter Fancy Food Show Reception
5:00 pm - 7:30 pm
Thirsty Bear Pub, San Francisco, CA

March 15, 2016 (approximately)
FAS issues final notice of calendar year 2016 licenses to licensees

April 16, 2016
Raw Milk Cheese Appreciation Day

April 28, 2016
Member Meeting
9:30 am - 11:30 am

Saddle Brook Marriott, Saddle Brook, NJ

April 29, 2016
CIAA Dinner Dance
Macaluso, Hawthorne, NJ

May 1, 2016
Calendar year 2016 license fee payments must be transmitted no later than this date. Last transmission date for a licensee to notify FAS that it will not accept a calendar year 2016 license.

July 1, 2016
Last day for an exporting country that is not designating importers for calendar year 2016 to notify FAS.

August 31, 2016
Last day to Enter dairy products into U.S. Customs territory that may be used to qualify and establish eligibility for a calendar year 2016 license.

October 15-19, 2016
SIAL Trip to Paris, France

* If a deadline date falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or Federal holiday, the deadline will be the next business day (Section 6.36(a) of the Dairy Tariff-Rate Import Quota Licensing Regulation). This does not apply to dates of entry for eligibility.

Cheese Importers Association of America

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