



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Foreign
Agricultural
Service

FACT SHEET

U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement **Nebraska Farmers Will Benefit**

September 2008

The United States concluded free trade negotiations with Korea on April 1, 2007. The U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement (KORUS FTA) is the most commercially significant free trade agreement the United States has negotiated in nearly 20 years.

The KORUS FTA provides immediate elimination of duties on more than 60 percent of current U.S. exports and gives U.S. exporters improved access to the Korean market for many of the products that have been highly protected. The U.S. International Trade Commission estimates that annual U.S. agricultural exports to Korea will increase by a minimum of \$1.9 billion upon full implementation of the agreement.

The agreement eliminates tariffs and other barriers on most agricultural products, increasing export opportunities for a range of Nebraska's agricultural products, including beef, corn, soybeans, and pork. Nebraska's exports to all countries, estimated at \$3.2 billion in 2006, supported about 41,000 jobs, both on and off the farm. These export sales make an important contribution to Nebraska's farm economy, which had total cash receipts of \$12 billion in 2006.

Beef. The cattle and calf industry accounted for \$6.6 billion in cash receipts in 2006, or 52 percent of the state's agricultural total. The state is also the nation's second largest exporter of live animals and meat. The industry will benefit from this FTA.

- For beef muscle meats, the FTA provides a 15-year straight-line tariff phase out with a safeguard that begins growing from 270,000 tons, a quantity that is 17 percent larger than our largest historical shipments.
- Technical consultations continue toward the goal of allowing imports to take place consistent with World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) guidelines.
- Following the May 2007 decision by the OIE classifying the United States as a controlled-risk country, Korea has announced that it will undertake in a timely manner its regulatory process toward expansion of market access for beef and beef products.

Feed Grains. Corn is the second largest source of state farm cash receipts with \$2.4 billion in 2006, and the state is the third largest exporter of feed grains in the nation.

- U.S. exports of corn for feed are guaranteed to enter at zero duty immediately. Korea is currently the fourth largest market for U.S. corn for feed.
- The FTA includes a new 93,774-ton duty-free quota for corn for processing that grows quickly to 393,849 tons by year 7, after which quantities will be unrestricted.
- An unlimited amount of U.S. wheat for milling can enter Korea duty free upon implementation of the agreement.
- Korea's imports of U.S. wheat will no longer be subject to Korea's 1.8-percent tariff or its autonomous tariff-rate quota (TRQ) of 1 percent.
- Although this tariff differential may be small, it provides a small tariff advantage when competing against Canada and Australia.

Soybeans and Products. As the nation's sixth largest exporter of soybeans and products at \$812 million in 2007, Nebraska's soybean producers will benefit from the agreement.

- The greatest potential benefit for the soybean sector is likely to come from improved access to Korea's 300,000-ton market for food-quality soybeans.
- Korea has agreed to immediately eliminate its 5-percent tariff on food-use soybeans.
- Korea will establish a duty-free quota starting at 10,000 tons for identity-preserved soybeans for food use (the production of soybean curd).
- This quota will operate outside the current state trading entity, which has charged a reported \$250 per ton markup on soybean imports supplied to soybean curd processors.
- For comparison, based on trade data, Korea's average 2006 import price for soybeans used for food was \$330 per ton. This markup brings the price for imported quality beans to \$580.
- Korean tariffs on imports of crude soybean oil (the majority of Korea's soybean oil imports) will decline from the current 5.4-percent tariff over 10 years.
- Refined oil tariff rates will decline from the current 5.4 percent in five equal annual reductions. Korea's 3-percent tariff on soybean flour and meal will immediately go to zero.

Pork. Hog farmers are the state's fourth largest source of farm cash receipts at \$728 million in 2006. The hog and pork industry will benefit from this FTA.

- Korea's tariffs on imports of more than 90 percent of U.S. pork products will become duty free on January 1, 2014. This includes all frozen pork products and processed pork products.
- Date-certain duty-free access allows for U.S. exports to compete on a level playing field with other Korean free trading partners.
- A transparent first-come first-serve safeguard quota for fresh pork bellies and other miscellaneous fresh cuts starts growing at 8,250 tons, nearly twice the current trade volume.

For questions about the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement and its impact on U.S. agriculture, please contact FAS Legislative and Public Affairs Office at (202)720-7115 or LPA@fas.usda.gov.

For detailed information on how the Agreement benefits specific commodities, please visit: <http://www.fas.usda.gov/info/factsheets/Korea/us-koreaftafactsheets.asp>.