

RECOGNITION OF PEST- AND DISEASE-FREE AREAS

Communication from Chile to the Committee Meeting of 24 and 25 June 2008

The following communication, received on 27 June 2008, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of Chile.

1. Further to the recent adoption of the Guidelines to Further the Practical Implementation of Article 6 of the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (document G/SPS/48), Chile wishes to proceed in accordance with those Guidelines and with the Committee's permanent agenda item on regionalization, which calls upon Members to provide information on their experiences. With regard to information from Members in particular, Chile felt that it should provide an update on its recognition of sanitary and phytosanitary status.

2. At the official request of the USDA, Chile recognized as a zone free from avian influenza the entire territory of the United States with the exception of the State of Arkansas, the only State affected, in which the H7N3 serotype of mildly pathogenic avian influenza was isolated. The decision was notified on 13 June 2008 on the basis of the preliminary background data sent by the USDA, and was ratified once the USDA provided the additional data needed to confirm the decision. The operational scope of the decision means that in the current marketing activities of establishments exporting to Chile, one-day chicks and fertile eggs are not affected.

3. As regards the State of Arkansas, imports into Chile of chilled or frozen poultry meat is prohibited. It is possible for Arkansas to export processed poultry meat to Chile, but only heat-treated deboned products, and subject to different considerations relating to minimum temperature and minimum processing time.

4. At the request of the competent health authorities in Brazil, the States of Paraná, Santa Catarina and Sao Paulo were recognized as Newcastle disease-free zones by Resolution No. 882 of the Agriculture and Livestock Service of Chile, dated 14 February 2008. This decision was taken on a basis of technical epidemiological information provided by the health authorities certifying that the mentioned states were free from Newcastle disease. An epidemiological evaluation of the background data and the results of a visit to the areas concerned confirmed the information provided by the Brazilian health authorities. In the end, the States of Paraná, Santa Catarina and Sao Paulo were recognized as Newcastle disease-free zones for the purposes of trade in poultry products and by-products.

5. It should be recalled that Chile is a country free from the economically important pests and diseases identified by the OIE and the IPPC respectively, and has a high Appropriate Level of Protection. Nevertheless, in conformity with the principles of the Agreement, it takes its decisions on the basis of scientific evidence.
