

TARIFF RATE QUOTAS FOR PIGMEAT

Questions from the UNITED STATES to the EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES¹

The following communication, dated 8 November 2004, is being circulated at the request of the Delegation of the United States.

In May, the EU notified its licensing procedures with respect to agricultural TRQs, in G/LIC/N/3/EEC/6/Add.1, which included TRQs with respect to imports of pigmeat. In a recent official publication, however, 1458/2003, additional provisions were enacted addressing the administration of the TRQ system in the pig meat sector, e.g., a limit of ten per cent of the total quota on the amount for which each importer is allowed to request licenses. We are concerned that this practice imposes additional trade distorting effects on imports, is administratively burdensome, and appears to be more restrictive than necessary. Furthermore, its application discourages the full utilization of the quota. We have shared these concerns with the Committee on Agriculture.

For this Committee, we note that none of these provisions are included in G/LIC/N/3/EEC/6/Add.1, which does not reference 1458/2003 nor indicate any fixed limit for import allocations within the TRQ. We request that the European Communities provide information on the TRQ licensing procedures authorized by 1458/2003 as requested below and update its notification to the Committee:

- (1) How was the ten per cent limit calculated and why is it used as the ceiling for categories placed in group 2, particularly when that category is not being fully utilized?
- (2) How can parties seeking to export more than ten per cent of the quota volume be afforded the opportunity to do so?

¹ See Understanding on Procedures for the Review of Notifications (G/LIC/4).