Arrangement Regarding Bovine Meat

INTERNATIONAL MEAT COUNCIL

For discussion under agenda item No. 6 of the draft agenda, the following questions have been submitted by Australia:

BRAZIL

Question

Over the last two years Brazil's beef exports have risen by almost 40 per cent and in 1984 it is reported that exports could be as high as 600,000 tonnes, carcass weight equivalent, making Brazil the world's second largest exporter. Could the Brazilian delegation indicate how this growth is expected to be achieved and in particular outline measures designed to encourage exports? Which markets does Brazil see as having the best growth prospects?

CANADA

Question

We note that there has been a steep rise this year in the level of subsidized EEC beef exports to Canada. It appears that about 5,000 tonnes have been shipped from the European Economic Community with the assistance of an export subsidy of as great as $A 1,248 per tonne. Could the Canadian delegation indicate its attitude towards this development which threatens to undermine the place of traditional non-subsidized exporters?

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY

Question 1

In view of the greatly increased production of beef in the European Economic Community in 1983 and the record level of intervention stocks, is consideration being given to the introduction of a system of production restraints similar to that currently applicable to some other CAP products, under which producers would not receive the full level of support for surplus production?

Question 2

In its report to the Council in July 1983 on the adoption of the CAP the EEC Commission states that "Europe's farmers must realise that if
production exceeds a certain threshold, they will have to accept lower prices or aids, or pay for the costs of disposal". At a time of surplus production, what measures are being considered to achieve this objective in the case of beef? Is it expected that the various aids and premium arrangements designed to encourage beef production will be phased out?

Question 3

In considering measures to bring about greater balance in the European Economic Community's beef market, will the EEC delegation provide assurances that the burden of adjustment necessary to achieve this objective will not be transferred to third country suppliers who already face greatly restricted access to the EEC market?

SWEDEN

Question

This year Sweden has exported 2,000 tonnes of beef to the Republic of Korea. This represents a five-fold increase over shipments from Sweden in 1982. Could the Swedish delegation outline the factors behind this increase and the level of subsidy (at the last IMC meeting the Swedish delegate referred to a "price-addition" grant) required to compete on the Korean market? How does Sweden reconcile this growth in beef exports with the stated government policy of reducing domestic production? Has consideration been given to reducing the level of "price-addition" grants to producers and to making Swedish beef production more responsive to market forces? In view of falling domestic consumption, what specific measures are being taken to bring about a better balance between Swedish beef production and beef consumption?

UNITED STATES

Question 1

Per capita beef consumption in the United States has declined by about 12 per cent since 1978 and according to the U.S.D.A. is expected to fall by a further 4 per cent in 1984. Could the United States delegation outline the factors contributing to this decline and whether it is likely to continue? Are any measures or policies under consideration to reverse this trend?

Question 2

What is the attitude of the United States Government towards the action by the Californian authorities to place a tax on beef, including imports in view of the fact that this tax will adversely affect beef consumption and appears to contravenes exporters' rights under the GATT? Does the United States delegation consider that this state law could set a precedent likely to be followed by other United States states?