

# GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

IMC/INV/12/Rev.5  
28 April 1986

Arrangement Regarding Bovine Meat

Original: English

## INTERNATIONAL MEAT COUNCIL

### Inventory of Domestic Policies and Trade Measures and Information on Bilateral, Plurilateral or Multilateral Commitments

#### Replies to Parts G and H of the Questionnaire

##### South Africa

##### Revision

The participants have agreed to provide information concerning their domestic policies and trade measures including bilateral and plurilateral commitments on the basis of Parts G and H of the Questionnaire (Rule 16 of the Rules of Procedure). The documents containing replies to these parts of the Questionnaire are circulated under the symbol IMC/INV; they will be partly revised as and when changes are notified.

This set of documents constitutes the inventory of all measures affecting trade in bovine meat, including commitments resulting from bilateral, plurilateral and multilateral negotiations, which the Council has instructed the secretariat to draw up and keep up to date, under the provisions of Article III of the Agreement (Note to Article III of the Arrangement and Rule 18 of the Rules of Procedure).

Note: This document has been revised in accordance with the three-year rule contained in Rule 18 of the Rules of Procedure, and replaces all previous IMC/INV/12/... documents.

## PART G

### Part G.1 Information on domestic policies and trade measures

#### I. Production

Except for the northern part of the Cape Province, the north western part of Transvaal, and certain parts of Natal where cattle farming is the main activity and the semi-arid shrub areas where farming is limited to sheep, beef production in South Africa generally forms an integral part of a mixed farming system. Income derived from this branch of farming contributes largely to the economic viability of farming enterprises and the sustainment of the rural population.

Beef represents approximately 68 per cent (1985) of all red meats produced in the country. Production decreased by around 4,0 % during 1985 while the slaughter rate declined by 5% and cattle numbers decreased by 1,2% over the same period.

Production is mainly dependent on natural and cultivated pastures although feed-lot operations have shown considerable growth in recent years. At present about one third of all slaughtered stock is marketed through these enterprises.

During 1984 beef production contributed approximately 20 per cent to the gross value of all agricultural production and approximately 65 per cent to the gross value of total red meat production.

Due to the mixed nature of farming a reasonable estimate of the number of cattle farms is difficult to establish. However, a typical beef farm is on average 3 800 hectares in extent with a beef herd of approximately 380 animals.

The total cattle population (August 1985) in the commercial sector of the country is about 7,8 million units. (Accurate figures for the subsistence and semi-commercial sectors are not available.)

As South Africa is generally a deficit beef producer, beef production is domestically orientated. Occasional surplusses are exported.

The neighbouring States normally supply all of the country's imports of beef in the form of frozen and chilled quarters as well as live animals.

(a) Factors influencing the evolution of the beef industry

1. Measures taken by the Meat Board to stabilize prices and to promote orderly marketing.
2. The economic implications of changing weather conditions.
3. Production costs.
4. Further growth in feed-lot operations.
5. Improved technology and managerial skills.
6. Competition from alternative farming enterprises.
7. Population growth which is currently 2,8 per cent per annum, affects demand.
8. General availability of other meats. Broiler production is at a high level and poultry meat is substituted for red meat by consumers.
9. Steadily rising income levels coupled with an income elasticity of demand substantially greater than unity among the lower income groups.

(b) Policies and measures of Government

1. Research by Government, the Meat Board and universities and

guidance to producers in respect of breeding and pasture management, disease control and general management practices.

2. Drought and flood schemes operated by Government.
3. The slaughtering of cattle and the marketing of beef are subject to strict health and sanitary regulations imposed by the Government. In the controlled areas governmental grading regulations and inspection services are also in force.
4. The Government is furthermore involved in schemes for the prevention and/or eradication of animal diseases, e.g. a mandatory dipping scheme and preventative measures in respect of the spreading of foot and mouth disease from adjoining territories.

(c) Support and stabilisation measures

South Africa's policy in regard to meat which is an essential foodstuff, coincides with the country's overall policy objective of price stabilisation for the major agricultural commodities; orderly marketing; and rationalization of the allied manufacturing and distribution industries.

In view of the generally unfavourable climatic and environment conditions prevailing in the greater part of the country as well as the fairly long production cycles, especially in respect of beef, it is considered essential to afford producers some measure of price stability by preventing excessive price fluctuations.

The Meat Board, established in terms of the Marketing Act, operates a marketing scheme in the nine main urban centres, i.e. the so-called controlled areas. All cattle marketed in these areas are slaughtered, graded according to prescribed standards and sold by auction on a cold dressed carcass weight basis. Guaranteed minimum producer prices which are fixed annually by the Board, with the approval of the Minister, apply in

these areas and carcasses not realizing the minimum price levels are purchased by the Board. These carcasses are stored for resale when market conditions improve or are exported. In determining floor prices the following factors are taken into account:

- Production cost
- Current market prices
- Buying power of consumers
- Trends in the demand and supply of meat

In July 1984 the Minister of Agriculture approved a tramline system for guaranteed minimum prices mainly to afford the Meat Board flexibility for short term adjustments in prices. The tramline system consists of lower and upper limits between which minimum prices may be adjusted. Only the limits are annually adjusted with the approval of the Minister of Agricultural Economics and of Water Affairs.

The minimum prices and grading system do not apply in the uncontrolled areas where cattle are sold mostly by private treaty and auctions on the hoof. The minimum prices applicable in the controlled areas, however, tend to influence the prices in the rest of the country where approximately 30 per cent of all commercial cattle slaughtering occurs.

Levels of the average minimum prices for 1984/85

Guaranteed minimum prices - c/kg

<u>Super AZ</u>	<u>Prime BZ</u>	<u>Grade C1Y</u>
235	216	192

The Meat Board operates a stabilisation fund, within the meat marketing scheme, which is financed from special levies paid by producers, i.e. distinguished from ordinary levies imposed to cover administration costs. A special levy is imposed on all cattle slaughtered and marketed in the controlled and uncontrolled areas. The levies are deposited in a special

levy fund, from which stabilization, product promotion, consumer development and advertising are financed as well as losses, if any, on exports of chilled or frozen beef. The present levy rate for controlled areas is as follows:

Cattle	- 9,00 c per kg cold dressed mass
Sheep and goats	- 4,70 c per kg cold dressed mass
Pigs	- 6,24 c per kg cold dressed mass

For the uncontrolled areas the following special levies apply:

Cattle	- R17,50 per animal
Calves	- R 2,90 per animal
Sheep and goats	- R 0,80 per animal
Pigs	- R 3,50 per animal

The Meat Board is the sole importer of chilled and frozen meat and on these imports no special levies are imposed.

Average returns to producers for 1985 (City Deep)

I. Controlled areas - average auction price c/kg

<u>Super A<sup>1)</sup></u>	<u>Prime B<sup>1)</sup></u>	<u>Grade C1<sup>1)</sup></u>	<u>Average all grades<sup>1)</sup></u>
259,9	236,2	218,3	240,6

Returns to producers comprise the above auction prices plus proceeds from the sale of offal and hides less marketing and transport costs.

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1) Average for all weight classes

## II. Internal prices and consumption

- (a) Meat consumption is stimulated by promotional activities of the Meat Board. Expenditure in this respect amounted to approximately R9,2 million during 1984/85. Furthermore, during periods of oversupply, the Meat Board may allow the trade to buy at prices lower than the guaranteed minimum. These deficiencies are borne by the stabilisation fund.
- (b) To prevent undesirable entering the trade and to enforce certain disciplines, entrants are required to register with the Meat Board. The Board has the power to refuse such registration.
- (c) Generally, the retail mark-up (average for cuts and bulk meat sales) is approximately 38% on wholesale prices.
- (d) Factors influencing local consumption
  - 1. Actual beef prices and their relationship to price levels of competing meats and other protein foods.
  - 2. General availability of beef and other meats. Broiler production is at a very high level.
  - 3. Changing levels of disposable income, especially in respect of the lower income groups.
  - 4. Income elasticity of demand of lower income groups is substantially greater than unity.
  - 5. Population growth. This currently exceeds 2 per cent per annum.
  - 6. Advertising. The Meat Board's expenditure on promotion of beef amounted to approximately R3,15 million during the period 1984/85.

### III. Measures at the frontier

#### (a) Customs duty

01.01	- Live animals of bovine species	- Free
02.01.10	- Beef : Fresh, chilled or frozen	- 730c/100 kg
02.01.90	- Edible offals	- 730c/100 kg
16.02.50	- Canned beef	- 30% or 100c/kg

(b) No measures exist whereby the level of exportation of beef and veal products, cattle and calves are affected except the arrangement between the Meat Board and the Minister referred to in paragraph (d) below.

(c) In terms of Act No. 13 of 1956, the Animal Disease and Parasite Act, all imports of animals and animal products into South Africa are subject to a permit issued by the Director of Veterinary Services of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Marketing. The purpose of this legislation is the protection of South Africa from a veterinary health point of view.

In terms of Act No. 87 of 1967, the Animal Slaughter and Meat Hygiene Act, any abattoir or meat plant in a country wishing to export meat to South Africa, must be approved by the Chief Meat Hygiene Officer in South Africa.

In addition, the same Act (No. 87 of 1967) lays down that any fresh meat imported into South Africa must be in the form of anatomically recognised cuts of meat.

(d) The neighbouring States normally supply all of the country's imports of beef in the form of frozen and chilled quarters and live cattle. These countries are traditional exporters to the



South African market and the quantities imported are determined through mutual arrangements between the Meat Board and the States concerned in consultation with the Minister. These imports are sold in the controlled areas on the same basis as domestically produced beef i.e. by auction and subject to the guaranteed minimum prices. Relatively small quantities of manufacturing beef cuts are also imported but sold by private treaty.

In order to ensure that the adjoining States are not deprived of their traditional markets, beef is only imported from other sources in the event of these states not being able to supply the necessary requirements. In such cases the Board undertakes the importation and allocates the quantities to interested concerns in the meat trade.

Supplies from the neighbouring States, all of which are developing countries, are imported duty-free.

Imports of processed beef are not restricted quantitatively.

Since South Africa is a net importing country of beef, the quantity of beef which may be exported, is fixed annually by the Meat Board in consultation with the Minister in the light of expected supply/demand conditions.

The quantity allowed for export is then allocated to commercial exporters on the basis of past performance and availability of approved slaughtering facilities.

Losses, if any, on exports of chilled or frozen beef are financed by the Board's stabilisation fund.

Exports of canned beef are not restricted and are sometimes assisted financially from the Meat Board's stabilisation fund.

PART H

Part H Information on bilateral or plurilateral agreements in the field of  
bovine animals, meat and offals

No formal bilateral or plurilateral agreement or commitments are in existence except for the understanding referred to under III(d).