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SPECIFIC ISSUES OF INTEREST TO THE CPAB:

AMS Announces Offer to Buy Fresh Bartlett Pears and Canned Mixed Fruit

- The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) recently announced an offer to buy several horticultural products for delivery to various domestic nutrition programs from August 15, 2010 to September 15, 2010. Included on the list was an offer to buy 2,700 45-lb. cases of fresh Bartlett pears and 140,448 cases of #10 canned mixed fruit.
- For more information, please see: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC5084478>.
- In related news, AMS recently notified the trade of online learning courses to assist vendors and potential vendors in the use of its newly implemented Web-Based Supply Chain Management (WBSCM) System. To view the AMS notice on WBSCM, please see: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC5084434>.

FAS Reports on Pear Trades in Argentina, Chile, and New Zealand

- The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) recently published separate reports on the deciduous fruit trades in Argentina, Chile, and New Zealand.
- Argentinean pear production is expected to fall by 10.3% to 700,000 metric tons (MT) in marketing year (MY: beginning January) 2010 due to late frosts in spring 2009 that hampered early growth of the fruit in prime growing regions. As a result of this decrease in production, FAS anticipates that Argentinean pear exports will decrease by 8.9% to an estimated 410,000 MT.
- Of all Argentinean fresh fruits exports, pears were least affected by the global economic crisis. Pear exports in MY 2009 were calculated at 452,862 MT, representing over 35% of Argentina's total fruit exports in that year. Over 62 markets are currently open to imports of Argentinean apples and pears. The most popular pear varieties grown in Argentina are Williams/Bartlett (at 45% of total production), Packham's Triumph (30%), and Beurre D'Anjou (10%).
- To view the FAS report on the Argentinean pear trade in full, please see: http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Fresh%20Deciduous%20Fruit%20Semi-annual_Buenos%20Aires_Argentina_5-14-2010.pdf.
- Chilean production of pears is expected to decrease by 5% in MY 2010 (beginning January 2010) from the previous year as a result of poor weather conditions and the lingering effects of the severe earthquake that occurred in late March 2010. FAS revised its original estimate for Chilean pear production in MY 2010 from 278,000 MT to 264,000 MT. Export figures for MY 2010 were also revised from the previous estimate of 134,000 MT to 126,000 MT.
- To view the FAS report on the Chilean deciduous fruit industry, please see: http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Fresh%20Deciduous%20Fruit%20Semi-annual_Santiago_Chile_5-10-2010.pdf. FAS estimates that New Zealand pear production will total 14,000 MT in MY 2009 (beginning October 2009), a 5% decrease from the previous year. Exports are also expected to decline by 14.7% to 4,800 MT in MY 2009.
- To view the FAS report on New Zealand production of apples and pears, see: http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Fresh%20Deciduous%20Fruit%20Semi-annual_Wellington_New%20Zealand_5-13-2010.pdf.



EPA Receives Request to Establish MRL for Kasugamycin on Pears

- The EPA recently published a list of pesticide petitions proposing the establishment or amendment of maximum residue levels (MRLs) on certain commodities.
- Among the requests received by the EPA was a proposal to establish a tolerance for kasugamycin on pome fruit (Crop Group 11) at 0.25 ppm.
- Comments are due by June 18, 2010. For more information, please see: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-11978.pdf>.

GENERAL ISSUES OF INTEREST TO THE CPAB:**No Solution to Trucking Issue Proposed at Obama-Calderon Meeting**

- President Barack Obama met his Mexican counterpart Felipe Calderon in Washington D.C. this week to discuss several issues related to cross-border travel and trade. Despite several indications from Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood earlier this month that the meeting would produce a proposed solution to the long-standing trucking dispute, no specific plan of action was unveiled.
- Although President Obama did not specifically comment on the issue, Calderon broadly called for a resolution to the dispute in a joint press conference on May 19.
- The two presidents instead announced the creation of a new initiative to strengthen political cooperation on "border issues." The declaration, called "Twenty-first Century Border Management," will create a bilateral Executive Steering Committee to examine various issues related to cross-border trade and travel. However, at this point it is unknown whether the committee will specifically look at the trucking dispute.
- The committee, which is to be comprised of officials from the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR), and related Mexican authorities, will issue a 2-year plan of action to improve public safety and trade, among other issues.

USTR Kirk Meets With Korean Trade Minister Kim to Discuss KORUS

- On May 20, U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk met with Korean Trade Minister Kim Jong-hoon in Washington, D.C. At the meeting, USTR Kirk reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to implementing the signed Korea-U.S. free trade agreement (FTA), and pledged to work closely with Minister Kim to address the long-standing issues that have thus far prevented Congressional approval of the FTA, particularly in regards to the trade of U.S. beef and Korean autos.
- However, new sources indicate that Minister Kim has declined to renegotiate the FTA in light of the U.S. reluctance to address trade issues ahead of the politically-sensitive midterm elections in November. USTR must first finish its consultations with Congress before it can propose changes to Korea.
- Last week Senators John Kerry (D-MA) and Richard Lugar (R-IN) called on the Obama administration to resolve the outstanding issues and submit the deal "as soon as possible." The two Senators urged the implementation of the FTA before Seoul hosts the G-20 Summit in mid-November this year.

Study Links Pesticides Used on Produce with Higher Rates of ADHD in Children

- A new study suggests that children exposed to higher levels of pesticides commonly used on produce may be more likely to develop attention-deficit/hyper-activity disorder (ADHD).
- The study, which was published on May 17 in the research journal *Pediatrics*, measured the levels of organophosphate byproducts in the urine of 1,139 children aged 8 to 15. The results of the study showed that children with higher urinary levels of a certain pesticide metabolite were more likely to meet the diagnostic criteria for ADHD. In brief, children with concentrations 10 times higher than children who had the lowest levels of this metabolite were 55 to 75 percent more likely to have ADHD. However, the study's authors concluded that more research is needed to determine if this is a causal relationship.
- Organophosphates are one of the most common classes of pesticides used to protect U.S. fruit and vegetable crops. The major source of organophosphate exposure to children would thus likely be the consumption of commercially grown fruits and vegetables.
- Previous studies have linked both prenatal and postnatal pesticide exposure to behavioral and cognitive problems in children, yet this is the first study to analyze the effects of pesticides on the U.S. population at large. ADHD currently affects over 4.5 million children in the U.S.
- The full text of the study, which will appear in the June issue of *Pediatrics*, is available for review here: <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/reprint/peds.2009-3058v1.pdf>.