

March 27, 2013

The Honorable Devin Nunes
Chairman
House Ways and Means Trade Subcommittee
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Submitted by: The National Pork Producers Council

RE: House Ways and Means Trade Subcommittee Hearing on U.S.-India Trade Relations: Opportunities and Challenges

The National Pork Producers Council (NPPC) hereby submits comments for consideration by the Ways and Means Trade Subcommittee with regard to the hearing on opportunities and challenges in U.S.-India trade relations. This document is submitted for inclusion in the printed record of the hearing.

NPPC is a national association representing a federation of 43 state producer organizations and the federal and global interests of 67,000 U.S. pork operations that annually generate approximately \$15 billion in farm gate sales and more than \$97 billion annually in total U.S. economic activity. The U.S. pork industry supports an estimated 550,000 domestic jobs, of which 110,000 jobs are generated directly by U.S. pork exports.

The U.S. pork industry is highly dependent on exports as a revenue source. Approximately 27 percent of the pork produced in the United States in 2012 was exported, compared with about 8 percent 10 years ago. In 2012 the United States exported 2.3 million metric tons of pork, valued at \$6.3 billion.

The United States is one of the lowest cost producers of pork in the world. It is no coincidence that the United States is also the No. 1 pork exporter in the world. The vast majority of demand for pork in the world today is outside the United States. To remain successful, the U.S. pork industry needs to continue to expand overseas sales by removing unfair barriers to U.S. pork exports.

India imposes a large number of technical and sanitary barriers on imported pork, and these barriers have effectively eliminated chilled, frozen and processed U.S. pork imports. These barriers keep the U.S. pork industry from realizing the potential of the India market, particularly in providing high-value processed products for the Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional sector. While the United States has been excluded from exporting to India, U.S. pork export competitors, including Spain and the Netherlands, have benefited from rapidly increasing demand for high-value processed meats such as dry cured hams and sausages.

Indian Barriers to U.S. Pork Imports

Residues of Veterinary Drugs

The India pork export certificate requires that meat not have any residues of pesticides, drugs, mycotoxins or chemicals above the maximum residue limits (MRLs) prescribed internationally. It is uncertain to which compounds and corresponding MRLs India is referring. India should recognize the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food Safety Inspection Service's National Residue Program as equivalent to its food-safety system for ensuring safe product. Compounds and slaughter classes of most public health concern are selected to be in the program. At a minimum, India should adopt Codex Alimentarius MRLs for those compounds with international standards.

Import Permit

One of the most onerous challenges to exporting pork to India is the country's import permit system. India's "International Sanitary Certificate for Import of Pork" contains vague and restrictive animal health requirements that are not based on science. India's animal health status requirements exceed those of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) and fail to recognize the authority of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to determine animal health status. India should bring in line its requirements for foreign animal diseases with that of the OIE or APHIS, which are consistent with the texts of other U.S. pork export certificates.

Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome (PRRS)

India should also remove any restrictions related to porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome (PRRS) since it is not an OIE listed disease, and there is negligible risk of transmission via pork. It is not a food safety issue.

Trichinae

India imposes trichinae risk mitigation requirements even though there is negligible risk from the U.S. commercial herd. Given the extremely low annual incidence of trichinosis – 1-in-300 million – in the United States and the very high level of biosecurity practiced by the U.S. pork industry, there is no legitimate science-based reason for this import restriction.

Feed Requirements & Packaging

The India pork export certificate also imposes, without any scientific basis, specific feeding requirements that do not allow the feeding of mammalian or poultry products to pigs. Additionally, the export certificate imposes packaging material specifications. These barriers to trade are not based on food safety or other relevant trading requirements and must be removed immediately.

Plant Approvals

India's pork export certificate is vague with regard to an establishment's eligibility to export. India should adopt the principle of equivalence, which is a fundamental World Trade Organization (WTO) Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) requirement that is based on a systemic audit process. NPPC strongly urges India to accept all USDA federally inspected plants as eligible to export to India.

Origin of Animals

India requires that all imported meat and live animals originate from the country of export. The United States is recognized worldwide as a country with strong pork industry ties to Canada, and in 2012 fed out and slaughtered approximately 5.65 million Canadian hogs. NPPC supports amended language in India's pork export certificate – similar to language accepted by other U.S. trading partners – that allows pork products to come from animals that are legally imported into the United States.

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