



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Foreign  
Agricultural  
Service

# FACT SHEET

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## *U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement* **Maryland Farmers Will Benefit**

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The United States concluded free trade negotiations with Korea on April 1, 2007. The U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement (KORUS FTA) is the most commercially significant free trade agreement the United States has negotiated in nearly 20 years.

The KORUS FTA provides immediate elimination of duties on more than 60 percent of current U.S. exports and gives U.S. exporters improved access to the Korean market for many of the products that have been highly protected. The U.S. International Trade Commission estimates that annual U.S. agricultural exports to Korea will increase by a minimum of \$1.9 billion upon full implementation of the agreement.

The agreement eliminates tariffs and other barriers on most agricultural products, increasing export opportunities for a range of Maryland's agricultural products, including poultry, dairy, and feed grains. Maryland's agricultural exports to all countries, estimated at \$358 million in 2007, supported about 3,815 jobs, on and off the farm. These export sales make an important contribution to the Maryland farm economy, which had total cash receipts of \$1.9 billion in 2007.

**Poultry and Egg Products.** Broilers are Maryland's leading agricultural export and top source of farm cash receipts with the latter estimated at \$732 million in 2007. Maryland's poultry producers and processors will benefit from this FTA.

- Korea's tariffs of 18 to 27 percent on frozen leg quarters, frozen breasts and wings, and frozen turkey cuts, will be phased out in 7 to 12 years.
- As the number 2 market for U.S. egg products, Korea's tariffs of 27 percent on egg products, including egg yolks, will be phased out in 12 equal annual reductions.

**Dairy.** Maryland's dairy industry accounted for 10 percent of the state's farm cash receipts with sales of \$207 million in 2007. This industry will benefit from this agreement.

- The FTA will provide immediate duty-free access for double the current export volume of total dairy products. Duty-free quotas will be established for cheese, skim/whole milk powder, food whey, and butter.

- Current annual U.S. feed whey exports of \$8 million will gain duty-free access to the Korean market immediately upon implementation.

**Feed Grains.** In 2007, corn contributed \$137 million in farm cash receipts, and the state's feed grains and product exports were estimated at \$42 million in 2007. Corn growers will gain from this FTA.

- U.S. exports of corn for feed will be duty-free immediately. Korea is currently the fourth largest market for U.S. corn for feed.
- The FTA includes a new 93,774-ton duty-free quota for corn for processing that grows quickly to 393,849 tons by year 7, after which quantities will be unrestricted.

**Soybeans and Products.** In 2007, soybeans and products were Maryland's fourth largest agricultural export at \$44 million. Maryland's soybean producers will benefit from this agreement.

- The greatest potential benefit for the soybean sector is likely to come from improved access to Korea's 300,000-ton market for food-quality soybeans. Korea has agreed to immediately eliminate its 5-percent tariff on food use soybeans.
- Korea will establish a duty-free quota starting at 10,000 tons for identity-preserved soybeans for food use (the production of soybean curd). This quota will operate outside the current state trading entity, which has charged a reported \$250 per ton markup on soybean imports supplied to soybean curd processors. (For comparison, based on trade data, Korea's average 2006 import price for soybeans used for food was \$330 per ton. This markup brings the price for imported quality beans to \$580.)
- Korean tariffs on imports of crude soybean oil (the majority of Korea's soybean oil imports) will decline from the current 5.4-percent tariff over 10 years. Refined oil tariff rates will decline from the current 5.4 percent in five equal annual reductions. Korea's 3-percent tariff on soybean flour and meal will immediately go to zero.

*For questions about the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement and its impact on U.S. agriculture, please contact FAS Legislative and Public Affairs Office at (202)720-7115 or [LPA@fas.usda.gov](mailto:LPA@fas.usda.gov).*

*For detailed information on how the Agreement benefits specific commodities, please visit:*

*<http://www.fas.usda.gov/info/factsheets/Korea/us-koreaftafactsheets.asp>*

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