



MARITIME EXCHANGE

for the Delaware River and Bay

Leading the Way to Port Progress

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June 7, 2005

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Ms. Sally White
Director
International Equivalence Staff
Office of International Affairs
300 12th Street, SW.
Room 102 Cotton Annex
Washington, DC 20250

02-019P
02-019P-3
Dennis Rochford

RE: Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), Docket No. 02-019P, Addition of Chile to the list of Countries Eligible to Export Meat and Meat Products to the United States, 70 Fed. Reg. 24485

Dear Ms. White:

On behalf of the almost 275 members of the Maritime Exchange for the Delaware River and Bay, we write to support the FSIS proposed rule that adds Chile to the list of countries eligible to export meat and meat products to the United States.

Now that FSIS has completed the necessary reviews revealing that Chile's meat inspection system includes requirements equivalent to all provisions of the Federal Meat Inspection Act and its implementing regulations, it is important to finalize this rule as soon as possible.

The Delaware River maritime community is key to the region's economic health, and the Port of Philadelphia is the largest importer of meat in North America. Clearly, more imports mean more jobs for the maritime community and its associated transportation infrastructure.

Listing Chile as eligible to export meat products to the United States would expand international markets and enhance the free flow of trade between Chile and the United States consistent with the U.S.-Chile Free Trade Agreement. Further, we should avoid using technical barriers to unfairly restrict trade. By moving to eliminate the existing trade barrier for Chilean red meat, FSIS is setting a positive example to be used in persuading other countries to remove their unnecessary trade restrictions.

We urge FSIS to publish a final rule as quickly as possible. Please feel free to contact me at dennis.rochford@maritimedelriv.com, or at 215-925-2615 with any questions.

Sincerely,

Dennis Rochford
President