



MARITIME EXCHANGE

for the Delaware River and Bay

Leading the Way to Port Progress

Richard E. DeGennaro, Chairman
John T. Reynolds, Vice Chairman
Dennis Rochford, President
Lisa B. Himber, Vice President
A. Robert Degen, Esq., Secretary / Solicitor
James F. Young, Esq., Assistant Secretary
Dorothy Mather Ix, Treasurer

March 21, 2007

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

RE: Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), Docket No. FSIS-2006-0030, Eligibility of Chile to Export Poultry and Poultry Products to the United States, 72 Fed. Reg. 8293

Dear Ms. White,

On behalf of the almost 300 members of the Maritime Exchange for the Delaware River and Bay, a not-for-profit trade advocacy organization representing the interests of the Delaware River maritime community, we write in full support of the FSIS proposed rule to add Chile to the list of countries eligible to export poultry and poultry products to the United States. Now that FSIS has completed reviews that show that Chile's slaughter inspection standards, procedures, laws and regulations are equivalent to the USDA's Poultry Products Inspection Act and its implementing regulations, it is imperative to finalize the rule as soon as possible.

Delaware River ports are home to the largest port of entry for meat in North America and primary handlers of imports of Chilean agricultural products. More imports into our regional ports will create additional jobs in the areas of transportation, warehousing and distribution, which in turn foster improvements in the overall regional economy.

Moreover, the United States is Chile's largest trading partner in agricultural products. Allowing Chile to export poultry products to the U.S. would enhance the free flow of trade between both countries. Additionally, with access to foreign markets increasingly critical to American agriculture, it is more important than ever that countries base trade decisions on sound science. By moving to allow imports of Chilean poultry, FSIS is setting a strong example to be used in persuading other countries to remove their unnecessary trade restrictions.

We urge FSIS to act on the conclusions of the Docket No. FSIS 2006-0030 upon close of the April 27, 2007 comment period and publish a final rule as quickly as possible. To do so is good science policy, good trade policy, and good economic policy.

Sincerely,

Dennis Rochford
President

JES - #482
RP 3/29/07