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Syria

Grain and Feed

Phytosanitary Restrictions to Imports of Corn and Barley

2009

Approved by:
Peter Kurz
U.S. Embassy

Prepared by:
Julio Maldonado

Report Highlights:
The Syrian Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian reform issued Decision No. 208 on November 16, 2008 and revised it as Decision 27 on February 4, 2009, stating that "all imports of plant products should be free from soil and foreign material, made up of dry and non-dry plant parts." According to this decision, all shipments to Syria should be totally free from weed seeds (see attachment A1) and permits only a small tolerance to the presence of certain weed seeds (see attachment A2). The latest decision, although less restrictive than the first, will still offer challenges to U.S. exporters of grain, primarily barley and corn. It does not affect shipments contracted prior to the decision date.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Trade Report
Cairo [EG1]
[SY]

The Syrian Minister of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform issued a decision (No. 208 of November 16, 2008) stating that all imports of plant products should be free from soil and foreign material (made up of dry and non-dry plant parts). The shipments should also be totally free from weed seeds of a certain list (see A1 list attached). The decision which gave a certain tolerance to the presence of weed seeds from a second list (A2 list attached) prohibited a second analysis for refused shipments. This very restrictive decision negatively affected imports of grains, mainly barley and corn. It did not affect grains that were previously contracted for shipments with an import permit dated before the effective date of the decision.

Since the publication of this decision last year, importers refrained from contracting for new quantities of barley and corn because they cannot guarantee zero tolerance for many weed seeds. This was one of the reasons prices for feed ingredients increased gradually in the local market.

Due to the pressure exerted by the grain importers and the instructions of the Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, the Minister issued a new decision (Decision 27) on February 4, 2009. This decision amended the previous one (and its two lists A1 and A2) but kept its zero tolerance for the presence of weed seeds of the amended A1 list and also kept a higher tolerance for the presence of weed seeds from the amended A2 list. With this new decision, the Minister allowed for a second analysis on grains from refused shipments with the conditions that the analysis be done at an alternate laboratory previously approved by the Ministry of Agriculture and that the importer pay a fee of 100,000 Syrian pounds (USD $2,105) to the government.

The A1 amended list of weed seeds includes weed seeds and seeds of parasitic perennial plants that are difficult to control. The amended A2 list of weed seeds includes weeds already present in Syria which should have controlled access to the country within limits to prohibit their spread on a wide scale. The scientific names of the weeds (genus-species Latin names) and the number of permitted seeds/kilogram for the A2 list are included in the decision.

The first decision caused panic among grain and feed traders. The second decision, although less strict, will still limit grain traders from acting as they did in the past. Many importers have refrained from contracting for barley at all and to a lesser extent corn, which has led to an increase in the prices of corn in the market by about 25 percent. Prices of barley have not increased any more as a result of this decision. The General Organization for Fodder has a high inventory of barley (from imports that occurred in 2008 when international barley prices were still high) and is already selling barley at higher prices.

If shipments of corn and barley are rejected in the near future, importers will refrain from contracting for new quantities, which will lead to a severe shortage of feed grains in the market (as was the case in 2001 when nine shiploads of American corn were refused due to blue mold problems). If the situation continues as is and the drought situation persists, then the Minister will be instructed to loosen the regulations and amend this decision once again.

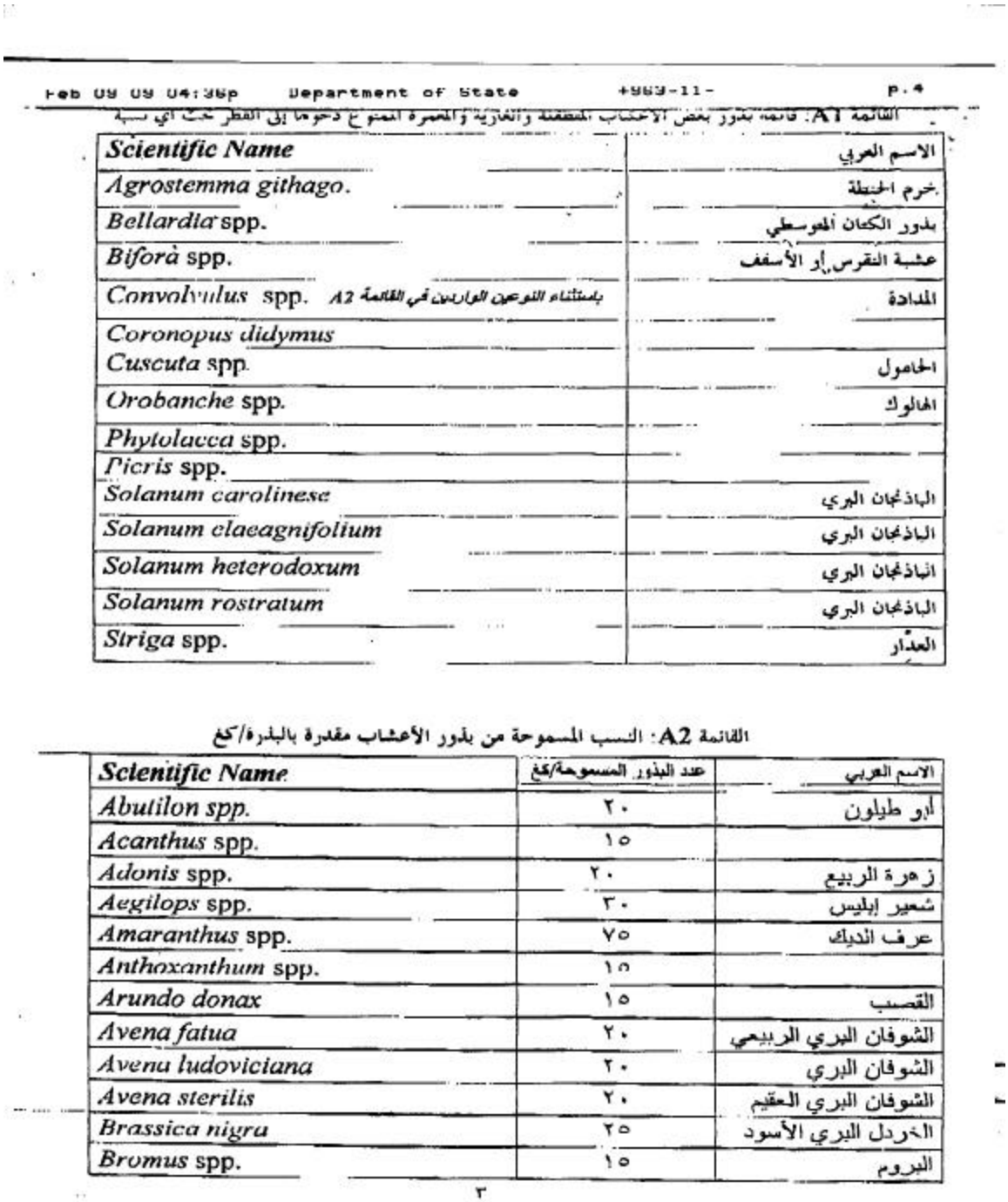
The American exporter will probably feel the immediate impact of the decision since the United States is the major supplier of corn and exports about 1.4 million tons of corn per year to Syria. However, Eastern European and FSU exporters who are starting to export

small corn shipments from Ukraine, Russia, and Bulgaria, will be more affected. According to trade sources, pre-cleaning feed grains for the removal of foreign material in the country of origin is not feasible in any of these exporting countries.

List A1: List of some parasitical, invading, and long-lived weeds seeds that are banned from entering the country with any percentage

List A2: Percentages of allowed weeds seeds (# of seeds/kg)

Scientific Name	# of seeds allowed/kg	Arabic Name



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القائمة A1: قائمة بذور بعض الاعشاب المتطفلة والغازية والمعمرة الممنوع دخولها إلى القطر عند أي نسبة

Scientific Name	الاسم العربي
Agrostemma githago.	خرم الحنطة
Bellardia spp.	بذور الكتان المتوسطي
Biforà spp.	عشبة القرس أو الأسفف
Convolvulus spp. باستثناء النوعين الواردين في القائمة A2	المداداة
Coronopus didymus	
Cuscuta spp.	الحامول
Orobanche spp.	الهالوك
Phytolacca spp.	
Picris spp.	
Solanum carolinese	الباذنجان البري
Solanum elaeagnifolium	الباذنجان البري
Solanum heterodoxum	الباذنجان البري
Solanum rostratum	الباذنجان البري
Striga spp.	العدّار

القائمة A2: النسب المسموحة من بذور الأعشاب مقدرة بالبذرة/كغ

Scientific Name	عدد البذور المسموحة/كغ	الاسم العربي
Abutilon spp.	٢٠	أبو طيلون
Acanthus spp.	١٥	
Adonis spp.	٢٠	زهرة الربيع
Aegilops spp.	٣٠	شعير إبليس
Amaranthus spp.	٧٥	عرف الديك
Anthoxanthum spp.	١٥	
Arundo donax	١٥	القصب
Avena fatua	٢٠	الشوفان البري الربيعي
Avena ludoviciana	٢٠	الشوفان البري
Avena sterilis	٢٠	الشوفان البري العقيم
Brassica nigra	٢٥	الخردل البري الأسود
Bromus spp.	١٥	البروم

٣

Calendula spp.	١٠	أقحوان الحقول
Capsella bursa- pastoris.	٥٠	كيس الراعي
Cardaria spp.	٢٥	الكارداريا
Centaurea spp.	٢٠	شوك الدردار
Cephalaria spp.	٢٠	الزيوان
Chenopodium spp.	٥٠	السرمق
Cirsium spp.	١٠	شوك الحقل
Convolvulus arvensis.	٢٠	المدادة
Convolvulus althaeoides	٢٠	المدادة
Cyperus spp.	٣٠	السعد
Datura spp.	١٠	الداتورة
Diplotaxis spp.	٥٠	
Echinochloa colonum	٣٥	أبو ركبة
Echinochloa crus- galli	٣٥	الذينبة
Erigeron spp.	٣٠	
Euphorbia spp.	٣٠	الحليبة
Fumaria officinalis	٢٥	بقلة الملك
Galium spp.	٢٥	الدبيقة
Heliotropium spp.	٢٥	ذيل العقرب
Hibiscus spp.	١٥	
Hordeum spontaneus	١٥	الشعير البري
Hordeum stristum	١٥	الشعير البري
Imperata cylindrica	١٥	الحلفا
Lolium multiflorum	١٥	الشيلم متعدد الأزهار
Lolium temulentum	١٥	الشيلم السام
Malva spp.	١٥	الخبيزة
Medicago spp. *M. sativa* إستثناء النوع	٣٠	الفصة
Melandrium album	١٥	
Melilotus spp.	٣٥	الحندقوق
Myagrum spp.	٢٠	
Ononis spp.	١٠	
Papaver spp.	٤٠	شقائق النعمان
Phalaris spp.	٢٠	ذيل الهر

[redacted]

Polygonium persicaria	٢٠	عصا الراعي الفارسي
Raphanus raphanistrum.	٣٠	الفجيلة
Rortppa spp.	١٠	
Rumex spp.	٣٥	الحماض
Schismus spp.	١٠	
Scolymus spp	١٠	
Setaria spp.	٤٠	اللزيق
Silene spp.	٤٠	عين البنت
Silybum spp	١٥	
Sinapis spp.	٣٥	الخردل البري
Stellaria spp.	٥٠	القزيزة
Thlaspi spp.	٣٠	
Vaccaria spp.	٢٠	فول العرب
Veronica spp.	٤٠	البهرجاية
Xanthium spinosum	١٠	شبيط الغنم الشوكي
Xanthium strumarum	١٠	الشبيط العادي

وعليه تم التوقيع أصولاً

دمشق في ٢٠٠٩/٢/٣.

م. محمد الحريري — م. خالد دياب — د. بهاء الرهبان — د. تيسير أبو الفضل

د. سمير طباش — د. أنور المعمار — م. محمد ديب دقوري — د. عبد الحكيم محمد

معاون الوزير/ رئيس اللجنة

الدكتور ابي رشيد عجد

مصدق: وزير الزراعة والإصلاح الزراعي

الدكتور [illegible] سفر

Notes on the Lists:

1. For the A1 list, zero tolerance for Solanum genus (the fourth weed species before the last) is rather difficult to meet. These weeds are present in Syria and already cause problems.

2. The Orobanche (A1 list) is a very dangerous parasitic weed. It has no chlorophyll and sucks the nutrients from the root system. It is also present in Syria.

3. Regarding the number of seeds permitted per kilogram of grain (list A2), and taking into consideration that grains are mechanically harvested, stored in bulk and shipped in bulk (leading to the strong mixing of the grains), the new tolerance limits of 10-50 weed seeds (of every kind) per kilogram are probably achievable unless the fields planted to the grains are badly infested with these weeds.

4. Feed grains (mainly barley) are not usually ground before feeding the sheep. They are in many cases not broken or digested by the animal and end up as a whole seed in the feces. They will be actually sowed in the soil for the next crop and future crops. Weed plants usually compete very much for the water, soil nutrients, and even sunlight with the planted crop.

5. The Papaver species (A2) is widely present in fava bean fields in Syria. Some fields have more of these weeds than the bean plants.

6. Setaria species (A2) is badly infested in areas where sheep graze. The seeds stick to the wool of sheep and move from one place to another with the sheep.

Key : Arabic to Western Numbers

٠	= 0	١٠٠	= 100
١	= 1	٢٠٠	= 200
٢	= 2	٣٠٠	= 300
٣	= 3	٤٠٠	= 400
٤	= 4	٥٠٠	= 500
٥	= 5	١٠٠٠	= 1000
٦	= 6	٢٠٠٠	= 2000
٧	= 7	٣٠٠٠	= 3000
٨	= 8	٥٠٠٠	= 5000
٩	= 9	٧٥٠٠	= 7500
١٠	= 10	٨٠٠٠	= 8000
١١	= 11	٨٢٥٠	= 8250
١٢	= 12	٨٥٠٠	= 8500
٢٠	= 20	٩٠٠٠	= 9000
٣٠	= 30	٩٥٠٠	= 9500
٥٠	= 50	١٠٠٠٠	= 10000