



REMARKS

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service • Legislative and Public Affairs
4700 River Road, Riverdale, MD 20737-1234 • Voice (301) 851-4052 • Web: www.aphis.usda.gov

Remarks as Prepared for Administrator Dr. Gregory Parham APHIS and Servicio Agrícola y Ganadero (SAG) Bilateral Meetings

(RIVERDALE, MD, Mar. 20, 2012) Good morning to you all. It's a pleasure to welcome our Chilean friends to Riverdale today. I want to thank you, Mr. Ariztía, for bringing SAG's delegation here.

You are arriving just as we are celebrating a very special anniversary. One hundred and fifty years ago, President Abraham Lincoln established USDA.

President Lincoln was, as you know, one of America's great champions of freedom and democratic ideals. I think we are honoring that sentiment in a fitting way here today. We are working together to ensure that both our nations enjoy the prosperity that comes with hard work and fair trade—the prosperity that is fundamental to advancing those ideals.

Since 2004, our free trade agreement has done much to bring us to this point. Our cooperation and fundamental harmony on numerous important animal and plant health issues has benefited us both. As allies, the more we accomplish together, the stronger our relationship becomes.

Our last bilateral meeting took place in January 2010 in Santiago. Since that time, much has happened as we have continued to open avenues to trade—and safeguard our nations against foreign plant and animal diseases and pests.

Most recently, as you well know, APHIS announced the publication of our proposed BSE comprehensive rule. The rule brings our BSE import regulations in line with international animal health standards that call for countries to base their trade policies on the actual risk of animals or products harboring the disease. You will be pleased to note that Chile is listed as a negligible-risk country in our proposed regulation.

I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Ariztía for the first time last September, here in Riverdale, where we discussed our next bilateral.

As you know, APHIS and SAG enjoy strong collaboration and success under the Preclearance Program in Chile. Nearly 500 staff from APHIS and SAG work with more than 6,000 technical specialists at packing facilities around Chile to inspect more than 100 different products, including blueberries, oranges, apples, and cherries.

APHIS and SAG have also partnered to provide technical assistance and address capacity building needs in other countries.

At SAG's request, APHIS has shared experiences and technical assistance to eradicate tuberculosis and brucellosis in cattle and infectious salmon anemia in Chilean fisheries.

APHIS has worked hard to facilitate Chilean fruit exports to the United States during this time. In May 2010, we opened our markets for fumigated Chilean pomegranates and baby kiwis. In April 2011, we opened our doors to imports of fumigated fresh figs. And in December 2011, we allowed imports of cape gooseberries, or "golden" berries as they're known in Chilean grocery stores.

Just as Americans are now enjoying these fruits—literally—of Chilean labors, we would of course like to offer Chileans a broader range of U.S. products on the open market.

We were pleased that SAG and APHIS were able to agree on full market access for U.S. beef to Chile in March 2011. We anticipate even greater progress at this week's sessions.

I am hopeful, for instance, that today's discussions will expedite a technical agreement to lift emergency restrictions SAG placed on California fruit exports due to concerns about the spotted wing drosophila. We also want to resolve concerns about *Monilinia fructicola* and make progress on other plant-related issues such as eradication of *Lobesia botrana*, the European grapevine moth.

When it comes to animals, we hope to obtain SAG's approval to export U.S.-origin cattle to Chile. We also hope to obtain SAG's recognition of APHIS equivalency to inspect and certify bovine embryos, live swine, and porcine semen export facilities—and modify testing requirements for bovine semen.

In the interests of facilitating safe trade of animal products, such as pet foods with ruminant ingredients, we'd like to see how we can institute a new approval process for U.S. facilities that export pet food to Chile.

We also want to address issues of special interest to you. For instance, I know you've proposed adopting a systems approach for your exports of lemons, grapes, and pomegranates.

Let me say that APHIS fully supports systems approaches that can decrease the need for fumigation with methyl bromide. We're looking forward to constructive discussions on this and other matters you've raised.

I have no doubt that this bilateral meeting will be productive for both APHIS and SAG. And so, ¡Manos a la obra! Let's get to work.

Thank you.