

# ABC Global Update

## February Exports are still Down, but Looking Better

February export shipments are still down, but are looking better as shippers try to get consignments moving again. West Coast ports are slowly working their way through backlogs, and a few sporadic disruptions.

	Million Lbs. Aug-Feb 2013	% Change from Last Year
<b>W. Europe</b>	<b>255,335,543</b>	<b>-22%</b>
Spain	75,500,324	-31%
Germany	69,384,208	-15%
Italy	23,826,417	-28%
Netherlands	27,648,403	-6%
UK	15,328,341	-12%
France	11,763,242	-19%
Belgium	11,372,152	-12%
<b>Central/E. Europe</b>	<b>11,283,201</b>	<b>-71%</b>
<b>Asia-Pacific</b>	<b>282,024,043</b>	<b>-9%</b>
China/Hong Kong	93,438,181	-24%
India	83,952,631	19%
Japan	34,260,606	-24%
South Korea	28,030,392	-11%
Vietnam	19,761,141	41%
<b>Middle East</b>	<b>90,625,534</b>	<b>-23%</b>
UAE	55,250,564	2%
Turkey	20,299,720	-50%
<b>Total Exports</b>	<b>692,515,978</b>	<b>-18%</b>

## West Coast Port Labor Deal Reached

On Friday February 21<sup>st</sup> the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA) and the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) reached a tentative agreement, ending nine months of stalemate negotiations.

The agreement still needs to be ratified by both sides, which is reported to take 45 days from when the agreement was reached. And while there have been claims of a return to 'normal operations', according to some reports, as ports work to clear backlogged merchandise at terminals, there is still a question as to whether enough labor is being made available to all terminals.

How long it will take to fully clear the congestion remains to be seen with varying reports ranging from weeks to over three months; though many feel it will be longer.

On February 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, the Agriculture Transportation Coalition (AgTC) hosted two seminars, in Fresno and Sacramento. The purpose was to address a number of immediate and longstanding issues faced by agricultural shippers but the West Coast ports situation dominated the discussion. It is likely that more updates on the longer term effects of the West Coast port situation will be provided at AgTC's annual meeting in June.

ABC continues to monitor the situation and solicit feedback from industry as to past, present and future impacts.

Kelly Covello at AHPA also continues to welcome feedback as to impacts and continued obstacles; she can be contacted at [kcovello@ahpa.net](mailto:kcovello@ahpa.net).

In particular, it would be useful to know if there are handlers/shippers who are willing to share their

experiences with AgTC. For more information or questions, please contact Philip Finiello at [pfiniello@almondboard.com](mailto:pfiniello@almondboard.com).

## Phytosanitary Certificate Time Limit Challenges

One of several problems stemming from the West Coast ports situation has been delayed shipments surpassing importing countries' time limits from phytosanitary certificate issuance to when a shipment is exported.

This is specially the case for Turkey, which has a uniquely shorter time limit of 14 (fourteen) days and has been clear that it will not be flexible despite the logistical challenges.

In response, the Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has temporarily agreed to work with shippers on resolving situations where the original inspection date and shipping date exceed the time limit. For additional information, please contact the Export Certification Specialist covering your location, listed here: <http://1.usa.gov/1GzvQHQ>

## China's National Food Safety Standard on Nut and Seed Food

The U.S. Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) recently published a [GAIN report](#) on China's National Food Safety Standard on Nut and Seed Food.

China will implement its new national food safety standard for nuts and seeds on **May 24, 2015**. This

standard was published on December 31, 2014 by China's National Health and Family Planning Commission (NHFPC).

This new standard will replace the Hygienic Standard on Roasted Food (GB 19300-2003) and the Hygienic Standard on Food of Nuts (GB 16326-2005). Under this new standard nuts and seeds still must meet the existing provisions of other Chinese national standards, including: [GB 2762](#) (contaminants), [GB 2761](#) (mycotoxins), [GB 29921](#) (pathogens), and [GB 2760](#) (food additives). Additionally, this standard defines the sensory requirements, physical/chemical indexes and microorganism limits specific to nuts and seeds.

Tables with relevant limits, requirements, and methods are included within the report linked above.

#### Korea Implements Imported Food Safety Bill

On February 24, Korea's Ministry of Food and Drug Safety notified the World Trade Organization that its Imported Food Safety Control Bill is scheduled to enter into force on February 4, 2016.

This bill's introduction was part of the National Assembly's efforts to consolidate all imported food regulations which were previously separated into various acts.

The bill proposes the following actions:

- Registration of food importers prior to import. Registration of foreign food facilities (including the names, addresses, and food items) by the foreign food manufacturers or importers no less than seven days prior to the first import. Registration must be renewed every two years.

- Certification by MFDS or accredited third parties to inspect foreign food facilities. Foreign food facilities which refuse authorized inspection will face an importation ban.

- Authorization of the MFDS to utilize differentiated testing based on individual non-compliance history or other risk-based data.

- The submission of importer declarations and other documents to the MFDS and permitting the MFDS to conduct laboratory tests at the point of entry when necessary.

#### Increased EU Controls for U.S. Pistachios & Australian Almonds

On March 6<sup>th</sup> the EU Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed voted in favor to increase the frequency of controls, starting April 1, for Australian almonds and U.S. pistachios. Consignments will be subjected to 20% import surveillance for aflatoxins.

Furthermore, EU importers of these products would have to prior notify the estimated date and time of physical arrival of the consignment at the designated point of entry and of the nature of the consignment. For that purpose, they would complete Part I of the Common Entry Document set under Regulation 669/2009 and transmit that document to the competent authority at the designated point of entry at least one working day prior to the consignment's arrival.

It is unclear as to how long these additional controls would remain in place but would be anticipated to be at least three to six months. The full text of EU Regulation 669/2009 can be found here: <http://bit.ly/1KyF78K>

#### Morocco Establishes National MRL Standard

Morocco has implemented a new [national MRL standard](#) effective January 1, 2015.

The regulation establishes a national MRL list and revised deferral policy. Previously, Morocco did not have any national MRLs but instead deferred to Codex MRLs and then to EU MRLs.

Under the new policy, when there is no applicable MRL in the national Moroccan standard, Codex MRLs will be applied. If neither Morocco nor Codex has an applicable MRL, pesticide residues should not exceed 0.01 ppm.

Morocco's new MRL list will appear in [www.globalmrl.com](http://www.globalmrl.com) in the upcoming weeks.

#### Upcoming Travel

- **March 16-20, 2015**

Julie Adams in India for trade and government meetings, and to attend the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Food meeting.

- **March 23-27, 2015**

Julie Adams and Philip Finiello in Europe for meetings with trade and USDA/FAS offices.

- **April 11-18, 2015**

Gabriele Ludwig in Beijing, China to attend Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues meeting.