

EU beef exports to Korea resume after almost 20 years

After almost 20 years, the Republic of Korea lifted its import restrictions on beef and beef products from some European Union Member States. Producers from Denmark and the Netherlands are the first ones to be able to resume exports.

Commissioner for trade, Cecilia **Malmström**, said: *"Trade isn't just about doing trade deals. After many years of hard work this announcement means that Dutch and Danish farmers gain a new market to sell their beef. Once again the EU is delivering for our agricultural sector."*

Commissioner Vytenis **Andriukaitis**, in charge of health and food safety, welcomed this announcement, stressing that *"this is another sign that trade partners acknowledge that the battle against BSE has been won and that the quality of EU's beef and beef products is recognised around the world. Additional access to this important market is excellent news for EU producers!"*

Commissioner for agriculture, Phil **Hogan**, said: *"This is a very welcome development and an important statement of confidence by the South Korean authorities in the safety and quality of European beef. Following confirmation of access for Danish and Dutch operators, I hope that it won't be long before operators in other EU Member States are approved for export to this important and valuable market. Securing access for other EU Member States will continue to be a priority for the European Commission in bilateral trade relations with Korea."*

The opening of the Korean market has been possible thanks to consistent efforts undertaken jointly by the European Commission and EU Member States. The removal of the trade restrictions imposed in 2001 in reaction to the bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) outbreak is a sign of well-deserved trust in the EU's comprehensive, multi-layered and very efficient food safety and animal health control system. The Commission will continue to work closely with the Korean authorities to secure market access for the remaining Member States that are still awaiting export approval for beef and beef products. During a meeting held on 4 September 2019 on sanitary and phytosanitary issues, Korean authorities provided assurances that the pending applications from EU Member States (others than Denmark and the Netherlands) would be processed in due time.

The EU and Korea are since 2011 linked by a trade agreement and the European Commission looks forward to ensuring that both parties are able to realise the full potential of this agreement.

The EU-Korea trade agreement has helped intensify exchanges, resolve numerous trade impediments on both sides and increase bilateral agri-food trade by 10% per year. Now, that the sanitary restrictions on Danish and Dutch beef are

lifted, producers from those countries will finally be able to enjoy the tariff reductions available under the agreement.

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