



ATF NEWS BRIEF

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Namibian Agricultural Trade Forum
Agricultural Boards' Building, 30 David Meroro Road
P.O. Box 5096, Ausspannplatz, Windhoek
E-mail: atfta@nammic.com.na / jurgen@nammic.com.na

Incorporated Association not for gain Reg. No.: 21/2003/690
Tel: (+264) (61) 379 508/507
Fax: (+264) (61) 225371
Cell: +264-812235743 / 811283637

WHAT IS NEW!!!

1. Word Trade Organisation

Doha! What Is Next?

No progress is made. Differences between rich and developing nations on issues like subsidies in agriculture and fisheries, tariff cuts in industrial goods and market access for services have been a stumbling block in the conclusion of WTO's Doha talks.

2. SADC

2.1 SADC

The SADC has gained more prominence in the last year or so, especially after the Tri-partite negotiations have gained momentum. There has been a Senior Officials meeting in Maputo, where the progress of the Tri-partite negotiations were discussed and the modalities were scrutinised and accepted. The issue of the tariff for wheat flour is still outstanding and it will be difficult to find an acceptable solution.

2.2 Tripartite Free Trade Area: COMESA, EAC & SADC

Two meetings of the technical working groups took place in Cairo, Egypt and in Livingstone, Zambia and also a senior officials meeting in Livingstone in the middle of February. The meetings decided on the format of the modalities and the negotiations will now start at the next meeting scheduled for May in the EAC, most probably in Rwanda.

2.3 SADC Economic Partnership Agreements

The EC-SADC EPA group of senior officials met with many obstacles on the 20th – 22nd March 2013, in Johannesburg, South Africa. The European Commission showed good progress in Rules of Origin provisions and also progress in agricultural market access regulations, but there was a definitive lack of progress in “market related” provisions such as trade in services, trade in investments, Government procurement, GI's (Geographical Indications) and other difficult issues.

As far as negotiations are concerned, market access negotiations are still the most controversial issue that has to be tackled, and both parties will have to show some restraint to come to a successful conclusion of the agreement. Meanwhile, the EC cautioned that the EC Regulation 1582 of 2007 which will end the duty quota free access to the European Union for Namibian agricultural and fishery products will end before the end of July 2013 irrespective of the status of the negotiation process. It seems now that the negotiations are ongoing and Namibia and Botswana will be left out, especially with the export of meat to the EU as the MFN tariffs are prohibitive at more than 90 %. A final decision on the deadline of the end of Regulation 1582 negotiations is the 1st of October 2014.

3.SACU

3.1 Summit, Council and Commission

A Commission and Council meeting is taking place in the first week of April, and is followed by a SACU summit on the 12th and 13th of April 2013. Of special interest was a follow up meeting on the increase of the rebated wheat quota for Namibia (from 50 000 to 80 000 tons of wheat per year), which could not be concluded because South Africa wanted further and better information.

This issue was now referred to the Commission of the SACU at its next meeting at the beginning of April for a final decision.

3.2 Technical Liaison Committees

Nothing to report

3.3 Negotiations and Agreements

3.3.1 SACU India Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA)

The SACU – India preferential trade agreement seems to have not much value at this point in time as South Africa is busy with bi – lateral negotiations which may deliver the anticipated results.

3.3.2 SACU Mercosur (PTA)

There is nothing new to report. Member states are being urged to complete the ratification process.

3.3.3 SACU EFTA Free Trade Agreement (FTA)

There was a preparatory meeting of the SACU member states where the possibility of the next Efta SACU meeting which will be a so called review meeting will be scheduled for June or July in a Southern African Member State. The agenda for this meeting is not as yet finalised but the possible increase of the Norwegian GSP and Efta quota for Botswana and Namibia will be discussed.

In preparation thereof, a meeting between Botswana and Namibia will be held in the week of the 25th of March in Namibia. However, because the Efta States and particularly Norway want to have increased market access to the SACU processed agricultural markets, South Africa as the major force in the SACU configuration will have to be a part of the negotiations

3.3.4 SACU-USA TIDCA

No progress is being made, the USA sent an observation team to Namibia in the beginning of February and the outcome of this meeting was not very positive for Namibia, there are some veterinary measures that are not yet in place and the publication in the Federal Register of the USA are held back until all measures are fulfilled, which means that another observation team will have to be come and inspect that the outstanding measures are complied with. It will most probably not happen in 2013

List of Acronyms

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific
BLNS	Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland
CET	Common external tariff (of the SACU)
COMESA	Common Market for East and Southern Africa.
DDA	Doha Development Agenda (current round of WTO negotiations)
DFQF	Duty and Quota Free market access to EU markets
DoP	Directorate of Planning at Ministry of Agriculture Water and Forestry
DVS	Directorate of Veterinary Services at MAWF
EAC	Eastern African Community
EC	European Council / Commission
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreements
EFTA	European Free Trade Area (Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Lichtenstein)
EU	European Union
FTA	Free trade Agreements/ Area
FSIS	Food Safety and Industrial Standards
FVO	Food and Veterinary Office – inspections from the EC
IPPC	International Plant Protection Council
ITAC	International Trade Administration Commission of South Africa
Mercosur	Latin American Common Market (Spanish translation) comprising Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay
MTI	Ministry of Trade and Industry
MAWF	Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry
NAMA	Non Agricultural Market Assess
NCA	Northern Communal Areas
NTBs	Non Tariff Barriers
OIE	World Organisation for Animal health
RoO	Rules of Origin
SACU	Southern African Customs Union
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary
SSM	Special Safeguard measures
TBT	Technical Barriers to Trade
T-FTA	Tripartite Free Trade Area: COMESA, EAC, SADC
WTO	World Trade Organisation

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