

USSEC Continues to Monitor Market Access Issues in Turkey

USSEC continues to actively participate in the effort to convince officials in Turkey to develop and implement regulations on GM imports - including U.S. soybeans and soybean meal - that will maintain market access under new Biosafety Laws. International Marketing staff members in Istanbul, working with FAS and Turkish industry partners, have been monitoring the situation and meeting with and providing constant technical support on biotech science to Turkish animal industry and feed industry representatives over the past several months. USSEC is conducting activities in April designed to deliver a market access message to key Turkish government officials during important industry forums. As noted frequently by U.S. exporters, biotechnology has become heavily politicized in many countries, as consumers in those countries struggle from a lack of information. In Turkey, the Agricultural Ministry first released a Biotech Regulation on October 26, 2009. Imports of soybeans were suspended by end-users and traders immediately as a precaution against being in violation of the excessively restrictive regulations. Because the regulation was published without consideration that all oil seeds and other animal feed raw material imports would be blocked, the Council of State temporarily cancelled the regulation, noting that by blocking all oil seed imports it was blocking the import of soybeans, a major and irreplaceable feed material for the country's large poultry industry. The Council of State then announced that a Law must be adopted prior to publishing of a regulation. Turkey's Ministry of Agriculture quickly prepared the Bio Safety Law and sent it to the Grand National Assembly which passed the legislation in mid-March. Traders are cautiously optimistic that the regulations will permit all GM soybeans that are approved by the EU to be imported to Turkey without difficulty.

