

## Swiss Federal Council changes import regulations for consumption potatoes

The Swiss Federal Council agreed with changes to the agricultural import regulation system on 26 October 2016. The most important change is the new import regulations for consumption potatoes. In 2018 the import quota rights for consumption potatoes (6500 metric tons) will be divided by auctions and market shares. The consumer will profit from the additional competition between importers. In case of a temporary increase of the import quotas the shares shall be allocated by market share.

The Swiss Federal Council allows half of import quota rights for a limited quantity of potatoes (3250 metric tons) to be auctioned off so new importers can participate in the potato import. Without changing the import quota volume or the level of import protection, the competition on the potato market will increase.

The regulations are changing and a share of the import quota rights, for 6500 metric tons, will be allocated on a first-come first-served basis. This takes into account the comments regarding problems with predictability and trading planning activities. The Swiss consumption potato production is 180,000 metric tons.

After frequent requests to increase the share of the import quota rights of seed potatoes, the Swiss Federal Council permanently increased the quota from 1500 metric tons to 4000 metric tons. The system of allocation remains the same for Swiss farmers, while seed producers continue to have an effective import volume.

Furthermore, the Federal Council has reduced tariff rates for cooking oils, this way the Guarantee Fund contributions can be increased. The increased Guarantee Fund contributions compensate for the exceptions to a compulsory strategic stockpiling system, which allows for an exemption of imported cooking oil from developing countries.

Lien article : <http://www.freshplaza.com/article/165880/Swiss-Federal-Council-changes-import-regulations-for-consumption-potatoes>