



# NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service • Legislative and Public Affairs  
4700 River Road, Riverdale, MD 20737-1232 • Voice (301) 734-7799 • Web: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov>

---

Workabeba Yigzaw (301) 734-7255

Lyndsay Cole (970) 494-7410

## **USDA Goes the Extra Mile for Producers, Helping to Meet Demand for U.S. Cattle**

WASHINGTON, February 24, 2012--The U.S. Department of Agriculture has been taking extra steps to meet the needs and ensure the success of some of its most important customers—U.S. exporters.

“Overall, U.S. farmers and ranchers are experiencing their best period in history in terms of agricultural exports, and USDA’s support is an important part of that success,” said Rebecca Blue, Acting Deputy Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs. “To ensure continued success, APHIS took a hard look at where it can improve processes to serve its many stakeholders, and facilitating exports was an obvious choice. Through flexible approaches, such as the approval of temporary export facilities, APHIS has adapted to meet the needs of animal exporters while maintaining its high standards for animal health and welfare.”

Responding to a surge in demand in 2011 from Russia, Turkey and Kazakhstan for live cattle exports from the United States, USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) approved seven temporary export inspection facilities, or EIFs, to supplement the work done at the Agency’s approved permanent facilities. These facilities reduce the distance animals have to travel prior to export and help exporters meet strict shipping deadlines.

With the establishment of EIFs, APHIS has been able to keep commerce moving, adapting to a level of cattle exports that doubled in 2011 on top of a 50 percent increase in 2010. Last year, APHIS processed 25 shipments—totaling about 17,000 head of livestock, mostly dairy cattle—through a temporary EIF in Turner, Maine. In December alone, APHIS’ new approach helped facilitate shipments of more than 7,100 cattle from Galveston, Texas, to Kazakhstan and Russia. The Agency is continuing to work with exporters on upcoming shipments of cattle.

Animals that are approved through temporary facilities are inspected by APHIS personnel and must meet the same animal health and welfare standards as animals exported through permanent facilities.

Yesterday, USDA forecast fiscal year 2012 agricultural exports to reach the second-highest level on record, maintaining a robust trade surplus and supporting more than 1 million jobs. The forecast for livestock, poultry and dairy was increased \$1.9 billion, paced by demand for cattle from Russia and Turkey.

The Obama Administration, with Agriculture Secretary Vilsack’s leadership, has aggressively worked to expand export opportunities and reduce barriers to trade, helping to push agricultural exports to record levels in 2011 and beyond. Last year, the United States exported an

all-time high of \$5.4 billion worth of beef and beef products, surpassing the previous record by more than \$1.6 billion and marking an important milestone in USDA's steadfast efforts to open and expand international markets. Overall, U.S. agriculture is currently experiencing one of its best periods in history thanks to the productivity, resiliency, and resourcefulness of our producers. Today, net farm income is at record levels while debt has been cut in half since the 1980s. Overall, American agriculture supports 1 in 12 jobs in the United States and provides American consumers with 83 percent of the food we consume, while maintaining affordability and choice. Strong agricultural exports contribute to a positive U.S. trade balance, create jobs, boost economic growth and support President Obama's National Export Initiative goal of doubling all U.S. exports by the end of 2014.

#

*USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).*