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U.S. Baled Cotton Now Can Enter Bangladesh Without Fumigation on Arrival

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Washington, June 1, 2023 – Bangladesh’s government has removed a significant trade barrier for U.S. cotton exports, no longer requiring upon-arrival fumigation of baled cotton coming into the country from the United States, the U.S. Department of Agriculture reports.

Removing the fumigation requirement is the result of decades of hard work by USDA and the U.S. cotton industry. This important U.S. export market was valued at more than \$475 million last year and has the potential to increase with this removal of the fumigation trade barrier.

Under the new regulations, U.S. baled cotton can now be exported to Bangladesh with a phytosanitary certificate and an additional declaration stating that the cotton is free from boll weevil.

Bangladesh is the world’s second-largest exporter of ready-made garments, and its garment industry relies on imported cotton, including high-quality, sustainably produced U.S. cotton. Bangladeshi importers were previously paying more than \$1 million annually for fumigation of U.S. cotton.

Bangladesh's removal of the upon-arrival fumigation rule results from strides in pest eradication and prevention developed and implemented by USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and the U.S. cotton industry. Cotton pests, like the boll weevil, have been a challenge since the late 1800s. USDA's national cooperative boll weevil eradication program is considered to be one of the most consequential agricultural programs in U.S. history due to its effectiveness, with federal and state agencies and the cotton industry successfully eradicating this pest from more than 98 percent of U.S. cotton acreage.

USDA formally requested Bangladesh remove the fumigation requirement in 2017, based on U.S. industry practices, supporting research, and risk analysis. Subsequently, representatives from APHIS' Plant Protection and Quarantine program and USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) in Dhaka and Washington engaged with Bangladeshi officials via meetings, letters, phone calls, and site visits to the United States, partnering with the U.S. cotton industry to provide scientific information and field demonstrations verifying that there is no risk of boll weevil on U.S. baled cotton.

The Bangladesh Ministry of Agriculture announced the change May 16, and it is effective immediately. The revised regulation was published May 17 and an unofficial translation from the FAS Office of Agricultural Affairs in Dhaka is available at: <https://www.fas.usda.gov/data/bangladesh-removes-fumigation-arrival-requirement-us-cotton>.

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