

For a greater access of Brazilian chicken to European consumers

Francisco Turra *

Brazilian Chicken

The history of Brazilian poultry began with the arrival to Brazil of the first birds coming from Europe, precisely from Portugal, in 1502. After five centuries the countries of European Union are important markets for Brazilian chicken exports. In 2008, those markets received 526 thousand tons of Brazilian chicken, representing revenue of US\$ 1.4 billion.

The trade with European Union, however, has been facing commercial barriers in a unilateral way, which the Brazilian Chicken Producers and Exporters Association (ABEF) together with the Brazilian government have been trying to eliminate. During many years, Brazilian exporters have been carrying on an intense work and investing a lot to meet the severe demands in order to access that demanding and sophisticated market.

The Brazilian poultry has an outstanding presence in the states of the Brazil's South Region (Paraná, Santa Catarina and Rio

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Grande do Sul) what gives European characteristic to that product. That was the region where the immigrants from many European countries, mainly the Poles, Germans and Italians, decided to go, choosing Brazil as their new homeland. Today, these colonies have a primordial participation in the Brazilian poultry production, mainly through the integration system, a model that gives a higher quality, sanity and sustainability to the product.

The national production meets

the most modern sanitary and handling standards, besides offering low environmental impact. All the production plants are located out of the Amazon Area, an environmental region that poultry producers and meat packing plants have interest in preserving it. In addition, studies prove that chicken raising demands low water consumption, lower than the ones of hog and cattle raisings, besides using less arable lands.

The animal well-being is another priority of the Brazilian poultry.

The qualification of the producer is one of the concerns of ABEF, which in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Supply offers courses of good practices in chicken production, in order to improve the technique of the integrated producers and their relatives in the pre-slaughter handling, transport of birds, environmental handling and bio-security in bird farms.

Another Brazilian producer's care is about the food for birds. It is based on corn and soy, what makes that we can supply as much the most demanding markets as the ones that have religious concepts in the food production like the Islamic Halal.

In spite of the work of the whole productive chain to offer a product with special attributes to the market, the Brazilian poultry faces difficulties to access the European market. The European authorities imposed tax barriers with pro-



tectionist characteristics that punish the Europe's consumers.

The system of quotas implemented by the European Union already determines restrictions that are to be enlarged. Those restrictions can already be in force in 2010 damaging millions of consumers. Another obstacle imposed to Brazilian exporters involves changes in the chicken trade rules in the block, the definitions of "fresh chicken" and "fresh chicken preparations", as well as the prohibition to use salty chicken in the

production of temperate chicken. The decision, which they allege to be to protect the consumer, means a technical barrier to a significant volume of Brazilian chicken in Europe a year.

It is important to point out that this search of Europe for the control of the Brazilian chicken entrance has no justification, since this trade accounts for only 6% of the European consumption. The measures that have been established will be the same ones for the 27 countries of the European Union, but they privilege only few European countries.

The restrictions of European Union to the Brazilian chicken will make that the European consumers stop having access to a high quality and sanitary product and with an accessible price. ABEF is aware and together with the Brazilian Government, has been undertaking actions to solve those demands in order to boost exports to that great market. 



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