

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON  
TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

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Arrangement Regarding Bovine Meat

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INTERNATIONAL MEAT COUNCIL

Inventory of Domestic Policies and Trade Measures  
and Information on Bilateral, Plurilateral  
or Multilateral Commitments

Reply to Parts G and H of the Questionnaire

SOUTH AFRICA

Revision

The participants have agreed to provide information concerning their domestic policies and trade measures including bilateral and plurilateral commitments on the basis of Parts G and H of the Questionnaire (Rule 16 of the Rules of Procedure). The documents containing replies to these parts of the Questionnaire are circulated under the symbol IMC/INV; they will be revised as and when changes are notified.

This set of documents constitutes the inventory of all measures affecting trade in bovine meat, including commitments resulting from bilateral, plurilateral and multilateral negotiations, which the Council has instructed the secretariat to draw up and keep up to date, under the provisions of Article III of the Agreement (Note to Article III of the Arrangement and Rule 18 of the Rules of Procedure).

PART G

Part G.1 Information on Domestic Policies and Trade Measures

1. Production

Except for the northern part of the Cape Province, the north western part of Transvaal, and certain parts of Natal where cattle farming is the main activity, beef production in South Africa generally forms an integral part of a mixed farming system. Income derived from this branch of farming contributes largely to the economic viability of farming enterprises and the sustainment of the rural population.

Beef represents approximately 66 per cent (1983) of all red meats produced in the country. Production increased by around 6,2 per cent during 1983 while the slaughter rate grew by 7% and cattle numbers decreased by 3% over the same period.

Production is mainly dependent on natural and cultivated pastures although feed-lot operations have shown considerable growth in recent years. At present about one third of all slaughtered stock is marketed through these enterprises.

During 1983 beef production contributed approximately 13 percent to the gross value of all agricultural production and approximately 65 per cent to the gross value of total red meat production.

Due to the mixed nature of farming a reasonable estimate of the number of cattle farms is difficult to establish. However, a typical beef farm is an average 3 800 hectares in extent with a beef herd of approximately 380 animals.

The total cattle population (August 1983) in the predominant commercial sector of the country is about 8,2 million units. (Accurate figures for the subsistence and semi-commercial sectors are not available.)

As South Africa is generally a deficit beef producer, beef production is domestically orientated. Occasional surplusses are exported.

The neighbouring States normally supply all of the country's imports of beef in the form of frozen and chilled quarters as well as live animals.

(a) Factors influencing the evolution of the beef industry

1. Measures taken by the Meat Board to stabilize prices and to promote orderly marketing.
2. The economic implications of changing weather conditions.
3. Production costs.
4. Further growth in feed-lot operations.
5. Improved technology and managerial skills.
6. Competition from alternative farming enterprises.
7. Population growth which is currently 2,8 per cent per annum, affects demand.
8. General availability of other meats. Broiler production is at a high level and poultry meat is substituted for red meat by consumers.
9. Steadily rising income levels coupled with an income elasticity of demand substantially greater than unity among the lower income groups.

(b) Policies and measures of government

1. Research by Government, the Meat Board and universities and guidance to producers in respect of breeding and pasture management, disease control and general management practices.
2. Drought and flood schemes operated by Government.
3. The slaughtering of cattle and the marketing of beef are subject to strict health and sanitary regulations imposed by the Government. In the controlled areas governmental grading regulations and inspection services are also in force.
4. The Government is furthermore involved in schemes for the prevention and/or eradication of animal diseases, e.g. a mandatory dipping scheme and preventative measures in respect of the spreading of foot and mouth disease from adjoining territories.

(c) Support and stabilisation measures

South Africa's policy in regard to meat which is an essential foodstuff, coincides with the country's overall policy objective of price stabilisation for the major agricultural commodities; orderly marketing; and rationalization of the allied manufacturing and distribution industries.

In view of the generally unfavourable climatic and environment conditions prevailing in the greater part of the country as well as the fairly long production cycles, especially in respect of beef, it is considered essential to afford producers some measure of price stability by preventing excessive price fluctuations.

The Meat Board, established in terms of the Marketing Act, operates a marketing scheme in the nine main urban centres, i.e. the so-called controlled areas. All cattle marketed in these areas are slaughtered, graded according to prescribed minimum standards and sold by auction on a cold dressed carcass weight basis. Guaranteed minimum prices which are fixed annually by the Board, with the approval of the Minister, apply in these areas and carcasses not realizing the minimum price levels are purchased by the Board. These carcasses are stored for resale when market conditions improve. Carcasses which do not meet the quality specifications are sold at best. In determining floor prices the following factors are taken into account:

- Production cost
- Current market prices
- Buying power of consumers
- Trends in the demand and supply of meat.

The minimum prices and grading system do not apply in the non-controlled areas where cattle are sold mostly by private treaty and auctions on the hoof. The minimum prices applicable in the controlled areas, however, tend to influence the prices in the rest of the country where approximately 30 per cent of all cattle are slaughtered.

Levels of the average minimum prices for 1982/83 (City Deep Abattoir)

Guaranteed minimum prices - c/kg

<u>Super A</u>	<u>Prime B</u>	<u>Grade C1</u>
229,8	214,8	185,9

The Meat Board operates a stabilisation fund, within the meat marketing scheme, which is financed from special levies paid by producers, i.e.

distinguished from ordinary levies imposed to cover administration costs. A special levy is imposed on all cattle slaughtered and marketed in the controlled and uncontrolled areas. The levies are deposited in a special levy fund, from which stabilization, product promotion, consumer development and advertising are financed as well as losses, if any, on exports of chilled or frozen beef. The present special levies for controlled areas are as follows:

Cattle:	5,8c per kg cold dressed mass
Sheep and goats:	6,4c per kg cold dressed mass
Pigs:	8,1c per kg cold dressed mass

For the uncontrolled areas the following special levies apply:

Cattle:	R11,00 per animal
Calves:	R 1,90 per animal
Sheep and goats:	R 1,08 per animal
Pigs:	R 5,00 per animal

The Meat Board is the sole importer of meat and on these imports no special levies are imposed.

The Meat Board also operates a support price system which is designed to stabilise prices in the short term. Support prices for any particular week are fixed at a certain percentage, varying between 6% and 12% below the average market price realised during the preceding week. Thus excessive price fluctuations are prevented. Quantities purchased by the Board in terms of this system, are not available for export and must be re-introduced to the local market.

Average returns to producers for 1982/83 (City Deep)

I. Controlled areas - average auction prices c/kg

<u>Super A<sup>1)</sup></u>	<u>Prime B<sup>2)</sup></u>	<u>Grade C1<sup>2)</sup></u>	<u>Average all grades<sup>2)</sup></u>
237,9	220,6	196,2	214,8

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1) Average for all weight classes

2) Average for all sub-grade and weight classes

Returns to producers comprise the above auction prices plus proceeds from the sale of offal and hides less marketing and transport costs.

II. Internal prices and consumption

(a) Beef consumption is stimulated by promotional activities of the Meat Board. Expenditure in this respect amounted to approximately R5,2 million during 1982/83. Furthermore, during periods of oversupply, the Meat Board allows the trade to buy at prices lower than the guaranteed minimum. These deficiencies are borne by the stabilisation fund.

(b) To prevent overtrading in the meat industry, entrants to the trade are required to register with the Meat Board. The Board has the power to refuse such registration.

(c) Generally, the retail mark-up is approximately 60% on wholesale prices.

(d) Factors influencing internal consumption

1. Actual beef prices and their relationship to price levels of competing meats and other protein foods.

2. General availability of beef and other meats. Broiler production is at a very high level.
3. Rising levels of disposable income, especially in respect of the lower income groups.
4. Income elasticity of demand of lower income groups substantially greater than unity.
5. Population growth. This currently exceeds 2 per cent per annum.
6. Advertising. The Meat Board's expenditure on promotion of beef amounted to approximately R5,2 million during the period 1982/83.

### III. Measures at the frontier

(a) Customs duty.

01.01	-	Live animals of bovine species	Free
02.01.10	-	Beef: Fresh, chilled or frozen	730c/100 kg
02.01.90	-	Edible offals	730c/100 kg
16.02.50	-	Canned beef	30% or 100c/kg

- (b) No measures exist whereby the level of exportation of beef and veal products, cattle and calves are affected except the arrangement between the Meat Board and the Minister referred to in paragraph (d) below.

- (c) In terms of Act No. 13 of 1956, the Animal Disease and Parasite Act, all imports of animals and animal products into South Africa are subject to a permit issued by the Director of Veterinary Services of the Department of Agriculture. The purpose of this legislation is the protection of South Africa from a veterinary health point of view.

In terms of Act No. 87 of 1967, the Animal Slaughter and Meat Hygiene Act, any abattoir or meat plant in a country wishing to export meat to South Africa, must be approved by the Chief Meat Hygiene Officer in South Africa.

In addition the same Act (No. 87 of 1967) lays down that any fresh meat imported into South Africa must be in the form of anatomically recognised cuts of meat.

- (d) The neighbouring States normally supply all of the country's imports of beef in the form of frozen and chilled quarters and live cattle. These countries are traditional exporters to the South African market and the quantities imported are determined through mutual arrangements between the Meat Board and the States concerned in consultation with the Minister. These imports are sold in the controlled areas on the same basis as domestically produced beef i.e. by auction and subject to the guaranteed minimum prices. Relatively small quantities of manufacturing beef cuts are also imported but sold by private treaty.

In order to ensure that the adjoining States are not deprived of their traditional markets, beef is only imported from other sources in the event of these states not being able to supply the necessary requirements. In such cases the Board undertakes the importation and allocates the quantities to interested concerns in the meat trade.

Supplies from the neighbouring States, all of which are developing countries, are imported duty-free.

Imports of processed beef are not restricted quantitatively.

Since South Africa is a net importing country of beef, the quantity of beef which may be exported is fixed annually by the Meat Board in consultation with the Minister in the light of expected supply/demand conditions.

The quantity allowed for export is then allocated by exporters on the basis of past performance and availability of approved slaughtering facilities.

Losses, if any, on exports of chilled or frozen beef are financed by the Board's stabilisation fund.

Exports of canned beef are not restricted and are not assisted financially in any way.

#### PART H

No formal bilateral or plurilateral agreements or commitments are in existence except for the understanding referred to under III(d).