Notices

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Office of the Secretary

Determination of Total Amount and Quota Period for Tariff-Rate Quota for Raw Cane Sugar

AGENCY: Office of the Secretary, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice sets forth the establishment of the aggregate quantity of 1,600,000 metric tons, raw value, of raw cane sugar that may be entered under subheading 1701.11.10 during fiscal year (FY) 1998, with 400,000 metric tons subject to possible cancellation. This notice does not affect the previously established aggregate quantity of 50,000 metric tons (raw value basis) for certain sugars, syrups and molasses that may be entered under subheadings 1701.12.10, 1701.91.10, 1701.99.10, 1702.90.10, and 2106.90.44 of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTS) during FY 1998.

EFFECTIVE DATE: May 6, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Inquiries may be mailed or delivered to the Import Policy and Programs Division Director, Foreign Agricultural Service, Room 5531, South Building, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250–1000.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Stephen Hammond (Division Director, Import Policies and Programs Division), 202–720–2916.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Paragraph (a)(i) of additional U.S. note 5 to chapter 17 of the HTS provides, in pertinent part, as follows:

The aggregate quantity of raw cane sugar entered, or withdrawn from warehouse for consumption, under subheading 1701.11.10, during any fiscal year, shall not exceed in the aggregate an amount (expressed in terms of raw value), not less than 1,117,195 metric tons, as shall be established by the Secretary of Agriculture * * *, and the aggregate quantity of sugars, syrups and molasses entered, or withdrawn from warehouse for consumption, under subheadings 1701.12.10, 1701.91.10, 1701.99.10, 1702.90.10 and 2106.90.44, during any fiscal year, shall not exceed in the aggregate an amount (expressed in terms of raw value), not less than 22,000 metric tons, as shall be established by the Secretary. With either the aggregate quantity for raw cane sugar or the aggregate quantity for sugars, syrups and molasses other than raw cane sugar, the Secretary may reserve a quota quantity for the importation of specialty sugars as defined by the United States Trade Representative.

These provisions of paragraph (a)(i) of additional U.S. note 5 to chapter 17 of the HTS authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to establish the total amounts (expressed in terms of raw value) for imports of raw cane sugar and certain other sugars, syrups, and molasses that may be entered under the subheadings of the HTS subject to the lower tier of duties of the tariff-rate quotas for entry during the fiscal year beginning October 1.

The Secretary originally established the FY 1998 raw sugar TRQ at 1,800,000 metric tons raw value. Of that quantity, the U.S. Trade Representative allocated 1,200,000 metric tons on September 17, 1997, and the remaining 600,000 metric tons was held in reserve for the allocation or cancellation of 200,000 metric tons in January, March, and May. The stocks-to-use ratio published in the January 1998 World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates report was 15.7 percent. Because this stocks-to-use ratio is greater than 15.5 percent, 200,000 metric tons of the reserved quantity for raw cane sugar has been canceled. The size of the raw cane TRQ is now being established at 1,600,000 metric tons. Of that quantity, 400,000 metric tons is being held in reserve for the allocation or cancellation of 200,000 metric tons in March and May.

Notice

Notice is hereby given that I have determined, in accordance with paragraph (a) of additional U.S. note 5 to chapter 17 of the HTS, that an aggregate quantity of up to 1,600,000 metric tons, raw value, of raw cane sugar described in subheading 1701.11.10 of the HTS may be entered or withdrawn from warehouse for consumption during the period from October 1, 1997, through September 30, 1998. Of this quantity, 1,200,000 metric tons was allocated by the United States Trade Representative, and the remaining 400,000 metric tons will be held in reserve.

If the stocks-to-use ratio published in the March 1998 World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) is equal to, or less than, 15.5 percent (rounded to the nearest tenth), an additional 200,000 metric tons of the reserved quantity for raw cane sugar will be available for allocation. If the stocks-to-use ratio published in the March 1998 WASDE is greater than 15.5 percent, 200,000 metric tons of the reserved quantity for raw cane sugar will automatically be canceled without further notice.

If the stocks-to-use ratio published in the May 1998 WASDE is equal to, or less than, 15.5 percent, an additional 200,000 metric tons of the reserved quantity for raw cane sugar will be available for allocation. If the stocks-to-use ratio published in the May 1998 WASDE is greater than 15.5 percent, 200,000 metric tons of the reserved quantity for raw cane sugar will automatically be canceled without further notice.

I will issue Certificates of Quota Eligibility (CQEs) to allow the Philippines, Brazil, and the Dominican Republic to ship up to 25 percent of each country's allocation at the low-tier tariff during each quarter of FY 1998. Australia, Guatemala, Argentina, Peru, Panama, El Salvador, Colombia, South Africa, and Nicaragua will be allowed to ship up to 50 percent of their initial allocations in the first six months of FY 1998. Unentered allocations, during any quarter or six month period, may be entered in any subsequent period. For all other countries, CQEs corresponding to each country's allocation may be entered at the low-tier tariff at any time during the fiscal year. Should country allocations result from the March, and May blocks, they may be entered subsequent to their allocation by the United States Trade Representative.

Signed at Washington, DC, on April 29, 1998.

Dan Glickman,

Secretary of Agriculture.

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