



Amended Act Governing Food Sanitation Lifts Ban on Beef Containing Ractopamine

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Updated food safety act allows for new drug residue levels, Legislature passed amendments to the Act Governing Food Sanitation on July 25, lifting the ban on beef containing the leanness-enhancing drug ractopamine and authorizing the Cabinet-level Department of Health (DOH) to set a cap on the maximum residue levels based on local dietary habits, said the Council of Agriculture (COA). To fulfill the government's promise to hog farmers and to safeguard the quality of meat sold in the domestic market, the new amendments adhere to the government's policy of "safe tolerance, separation of beef and pork, compulsory labeling and the exclusion of offal," which forbids the sale of hog meat as well as pork and bovine organs that contain leanness enhancers, and prohibits the use of ractopamine feed for animals other than cattle.

Ban on ractopamine-enhanced feed lifted for cattle only

According to the COA, the passage of new amendments to the Act Governing Food Sanitation includes a revision on the 2006 Veterinary Drugs Control Act that states, "The manufacturing, concoction, import, export, distribution or public display of any veterinary drug that contains traces of the stimulant beta-agonist is strictly prohibited. The sole exception to this rule is the allowance of beta-agonists, specifically the drug ractopamine, to be used as a livestock feed additive for cattle." The separation of feed for cattle and hogs, as well as defining maximum residue limits (MRLs) for only beef products, reflect the government's zero-tolerance policy of the drug in pork products, the council added.

Enforcing testing & sampling work on local food productions

In accordance to the Veterinary Drugs Control Act, drugs intended for livestock and husbandry uses are required to undergo governmental inspections prior to receiving certification for commercial distribution, the COA noted. In the near future, domestic cattle stock will still be prohibited from using non-certified ractopamine products. Moreover, the agricultural council will be looking to strengthen its efforts in monitoring the nation's poultry, meats and animal fodder industries by partnering with the DOH to conduct more comprehensive product testing and sampling measures. Citing an example of the government's determination in guarding domestic food safety, the COA explained that upon detecting ractopamine residue in a non-beef products, it will track down the origin of the unsavory meat, investigate the instigator

and instruct him or her on what constitutes as unlawful practices and levy a fine suited to the magnitude of the committed crime.

(Data Source: Council of Agriculture)

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