
Description: It should be noted that the UAE and Qatar are the two countries that have almost negligible imports of eggs for hatching. Both the UAE and Qatar owe it to low domestic production and high imports for consumption. The prices for these eggs used for hatching is higher than the ones used for general consumption. These prices are also on the rise due to the introduction of genetic breeding and other techniques to improve the yield of the chicken produced from these eggs.

There is a severe shortage of local poultry products, especially fresh chicken, resulting in consumers looking for imported products, which are not only more expensive but also less fresh compared to local produce. Supplies from Arab Qatari Company for Poultry Production, sole producer of poultry products in the country, used to cater only XX% per cent of local demand during normal seasons, but as a result of peak demand during Ramadan, supplies are able to meet only a fraction of demand. Local supplies are able to meet only X% per cent of daily demand for fresh chicken.

The Saudi poultry sector has experienced a major production growth in recent years. Broiler meat production is estimated at 640,000 MT in 2014, and expected to further increase 9 percent in 2015. Local broiler production currently covers about 42 percent of total Saudi Arabias consumption needs, estimated at 1.44 million MT. The soaring costs of poultry feed and the high mortality rates in Saudi poultry farms remain the major constraints to expand production.

In 2013, Saudi Arabia was one of the worlds largest importers of broiler meat, with a total of 875,259 MT. Broiler meat imports are forecast to decline by 10 percent in 2014, due to the large production of last year and reduced demand by food catering services, as the number of pilgrims visiting Saudi Arabia for Haj (8 million) is expected to be lower this year. Brazil dominated the Saudi poultry import market in 2013, with 79 percent market share, followed by France with 18 percent, and the U.S. a distant-third with 3 percent. Soaring poultry feed costs as well as the high chicken mortality rates in the Middle East poultry sector remains a major constraint to expanding broiler production in the Middle East. Endemic poultry diseases have increased chicken mortality rates in many poultry farms in recent years, which have been estimated at 25 per cent, on average, and reached 50 per cent in some individual farms. In an effort to halt soaring domestic poultry prices the Saudi Ministry of Commerce and Industry (SMOCI) issued a decree in 2012 banning the export of locally produced broilers.

Saudi Arabia poultry importers and local producers are blaming the price hikes to the rising cost of feed ingredients with some rising as much as 40%. The government has indicated there has been a significant decline in poultry production due to a higher than normal mortality rate and outbreaks of diseases on many farms. The customs duty on imported chicken is 5% ad valorem duty. In order to protect local food processors and production from competitively priced imports, Saudi Arabia ties import duties to the level of local production of similar products. As a general rule, the maximum import tariff rate of 40% is applied when local production of food or agricultural product exceeds self-sufficiency level.

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