



Colombia Free Trade Agreement

Background: In 2004, the U.S. entered into negotiations with Colombia, Peru and Ecuador. Negotiations progressed at different paces with each of the three countries, so the U.S. decided to pursue a separate FTA with each country as terms could be agreed to, rather than take the slower pace that would be needed to keep all three on the same time-table. Talks with Ecuador stalled and will not be concluded, although the U.S. reach separate agreements with both Colombia and Peru.

Talks with Colombia concluded in July 2006. The agreement has yet to be voted on by Congress. It is considered quite controversial in the U.S. for reasons unrelated to its agriculture provisions. Due to this, it is unknown when Congress will schedule a vote on the FTA.

The agreement provides beneficial new export opportunities for U.S. dairy exports of powder, cheese, whey and other dairy products. It would provide immediate open access for lactose and most whey products, as well as certain other dairy products. The Colombia FTA will provide 9,900 metric tons of new duty-free, in-quota access for cheese, milk powders and other dairy products.

USDEC has created a [Summary of the Colombia FTA's terms](#). Details of the Colombian agreement can be found at the following USTR website: http://www.ustr.gov/Trade_Agreements/Bilateral/Colombia_FTA/Final_Text/Section_Index.html

USDEC Position: The Colombia FTA would provide new export prospects to the U.S. dairy industry. As such, USDEC is supporting that agreement whenever Congress decides to move forward with consideration of it.