

US rebukes SA over trade rules

By [Reitumetse Pitso](#)

17 Aug 2015

Constantly changing trade requirements imposed by SA on US goods undermine beneficial opportunities for agricultural producers and consumers in both countries, says a US government official.



©Neculai Carmen via [123RF](#)

The Avian Flu issue

Speaking at a conference on Thursday, US Deputy Agriculture Secretary Krysta Harden cited the avian flu issue as the latest excuse undermining efforts to move forward.

Last week sceptical US officials demanded further evidence that Pretoria was ready to lift disease-related bans on US poultry, beef and pork. This emerged at last Friday's public hearing in the US on whether SA should continue to receive African Growth and Opportunity Act (Agoa) trade privileges.

Citing outbreaks of avian flu in 20 US states, SA has prohibited imports of all US chicken, including the 65,000 tonnes of frozen bone-in portions it recently agreed to let in annually at normal tariff rates.

The US is demanding the ban be "regionalised" - limited to poultry from areas where outbreaks have occurred.

"It is almost like news, the latest reason, because when we talked poultry with trade officials in SA in 2013, we did not even have avian flu. Avian flu was a regional problem in the States," Harden said.

Losing out on Agoa

She said the trade barriers were not real problems but artificial issues that could be worked through. "The industry has been working on poultry and pork to be exported to SA and has answered to all requirements, but then another set of requirements is presented."

South African Institute of International Affairs researcher Christopher Wood said: "Regardless of what happens with the poultry dispute, US chicken will not enter the South African market for years because the American chicken industry suffered a recent outbreak of bird flu, which limits their ability to export."

The Obama administration has mandated the 30-day "out-of-cycle" review of Agoa trade privileges with SA, which could lead to the country losing some or all of its benefits under Agoa.

Source: BDpro

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>