

SA, US to discuss chicken issue

PRETORIA: South Africa and the United States have agreed to facilitate deliberations between the South Africa Poultry Association (SAPA) and the US Poultry and Egg Export Council towards the finalisation of discussions on market access for US chicken bone-in cuts into South Africa, says the Department of Trade and Industry (dti).



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According to the dti on Sunday, the meeting will take place from 4-5 June in Paris, France, on the margins of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) ministerial council meeting to be attended by Minister Rob Davies and Ambassador Michael Froman.

Last week, delivering the dti's Budget Vote speech in Parliament, the Minister announced that he will meet with US representatives, adding that the US Senate had now passed a Bill that provides for the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) to be extended for a period of 10 years with the inclusion of South Africa.

"Both governments remain committed to work with their respective poultry industry to find an amicable solution. A bilateral engagement between Minister Davies and Ambassador Froman is scheduled for 5 June 2015 to brief them on developments," said the dti.

The meeting is a follow-up to the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement Council meeting co-chaired by Minister Davies and the United States Trade Representative Ambassador Froman on 16 April 2015 in Washington D.C.

Why fix it, when it isn't broken?

Minister Davies told members of Parliament that he had been concerned about the terms of the US on South Africa's re-entry into AGOA. He said he had always argued that "why fix it, when it isn't broken".

"New provisions in the Bill however strengthen the conditionalities that will apply and clearly seek to chart a course to transform the relationship between the US and Africa from non-reciprocal concessions to reciprocal agreements," said Minister Davies.

However, Minister Davies said despite these challenges he is optimistic that next month's meeting in Paris could resolve the chicken impasse between the SAPA and the US Poultry and Egg Export Council.

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