

For Brazil's Minas State, Arabs Mean Big Business

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Bilateral trade between the Arab countries and the Brazilian state of Minas Gerais (known for its tutu, a traditional dish with beans and pork) grew 92.92%, from January to October, in comparison with 2007, having recorded a turnover of US\$ 1.204 billion as against US\$ 591.86 million last year.

The figures, provided by the Foreign Trade Secretariat of the Brazilian Ministry of Development, Industry and Foreign Trade, make it clear that Minas is one of the states in Brazil that export the most to that part of the world.

From January to October this year, foreign sales to the Arabs totaled US\$ 1.093 billion, a figure equivalent to growth of 84.78% compared with the twelve months of 2007.

Another factor that draws attention is the leap in imports from the Arab countries by the state of Minas Gerais: US\$ 110.53 million, growth of 242% in comparison with the whole year of 2007, when the state purchased US\$ 32.32 million from that bloc.

And even though imports have increased, the state posted a surplus of more than US\$ 982.47 million in the balance of trade with the Arabs from January to October 2008. In other words, it is an expansion of US\$ 422.63 million compared with the surplus recorded last year.

This year, the main products that Minas exported to the Arabs were iron, steel, ores, meats, sugar and milk, among others. Salt, cement, and machinery and devices were some of the most important items in purchases by Arabs from Minas.

According to the Ministry of Agriculture, Egypt was the main importer of wheat in the global market, with 7.8 million tons, followed by Algeria, with 5.6 million tons. Brazil ranked fifth, with imports of 5.4 million tons.

The leading producer states are Paraná, with 3.1 million tons, and Rio Grande do Sul, with 2.05 million tons. The leading buyers of Brazilian wheat are Pakistan, with 267,000 tons, and Morocco, with 129,500 kilograms.

Greenhouse House

The quantity of methane gas emitted per kilogram of meat produced has decreased by at least 30% over the last 18 years. The information was supplied by the Professor at the School of Veterinary Medicine at the University of São Paulo, Paulo Henrique Mazza Rodrigues, who attended a workshop on Sustainability in Beef Cattle held this Wednesday, December 10, in Brazilian capital Brasília. Methane is one of the main contributing gases to the greenhouse effect.

According to Mazza, one of the factors that led to that reduction was reducing the age at which cattle is slaughtered. "There was no need for changing anything regarding methane. We managed to reduce emissions of the gas by working with strategies for reducing the age of slaughter from five to three years of age," he says.

Anba