

Self-sufficient in Milk, Brazil Boosts Exports

Contributed by Cristiane Ribeiro
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Last year Brazil produced 22.2 billion liters of milk and reached self sufficiency. The country's Southeast region produced 40% of the national total.

According to the president of the Milk Producer Association, Jorge Rubez, this year milk production should be up 15%, compared to last year.

Rubez says exports have given production a boost.

"With a solid balance between domestic supply and demand, prices have remained stable. And now we have more dairy products coming from the states of Roraima, Rondônia and Maranhão," explained Rubez.

1.3 Million Jobs

The target of creating 1.32 million jobs in the Brazilian agrobusiness sector in 2004 is quite feasible, said the president of the Rural Society (Sociedade Rural Brasileira) (SRB), João de Almeida Sampaio Filho, earlier this year.

According to Sampaio Filho, if the coffee and dairy sectors get the assistance they need, financing becomes easy and farm insurance is made available, there is no reason the target cannot be achieved.

The 1.32 million job target was set in a study by the Brazilian Development Bank (Banco Nacional de Desenvolvimento Econômico e Social) (BNDES).

In his radio program ("Breakfast with the President"), president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva talked about the capacity of the farm sector to create jobs.

There has been extraordinary growth in this sector, he declared. It is an area where Brazil will export more and invest better, with special attention to family farming and land reform, said the president.

Minister of Agriculture, Robert Rodrigues, explains that some 400,000 direct jobs should be created, plus another 340,000 indirect jobs in the farm productive chain, and an additional 580,000 as a result of sector revenue.

The Minister said he expects total grain production in Brazil to rise from 123 million tons in 2003 to almost 130 million tons in 2004.

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Translator: Allen Bennett