

The United States and China have reached an agreement to reopen the Chinese market to U.S. pork and pork products, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack and U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk announced recently.

“When I traveled to China with U.S. Trade Representative Kirk in October, our discussions with Chinese officials laid the groundwork for reopening this market,” said Secretary Vilsack. “This resolution is excellent news for American hog producers.”

“This agreement is a win for America’s pork producers, whose safe and high-quality exports can now flow freely into China and support agriculture jobs here at home,” Ambassador Kirk said.

Kirk further stated, “I am also pleased that China affirmed in our meetings that they will base their decisions on international science-based guidelines. We look forward to working cooperatively to resolve additional issues, including a resumption of trade in beef.”

Twenty percent of U.S. pork production was exported in 2009. Prior to H1N1 trade constraints, U.S. pork and pork variety meats exports to China were valued at nearly \$275 million in 2008. China was the United States’ seventh largest market, accounting for six percent of U.S. pork and pork variety meat exports.

On March 17, the Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of the People’s Republic of China (AQSIQ) accepted the U.S. proposal to resume exports of U.S. pork, following meetings between Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services James Miller, Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Agricultural Affairs Jim Murphy and Chinese officials in Beijing earlier this week.

Pork trade will resume immediately once both sides finalize the export documentation.

In October 2009, Agriculture Secretary Vilsack, U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk and

Commerce Secretary Gary Locke participated in the meeting of the U.S.-China Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade (JCCT) in Hangzhou, China, where China agreed to remove its ban on pork products. Since that time, the United States and China have worked to implement this commitment.

The United States has repeatedly stressed the need for China to remove all restrictions on trade in pork products related to the H1N1 virus, given clear guidance from international bodies like the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), World Health Organization (WHO), and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), that there is no risk to humans from consuming properly prepared pork and pork products.