


Brazilian garlic producers were on alert Thursday as the nation's Foreign Trade Chamber (Camex) debated the possibility of removing the vegetable from the exceptions list for Mercosur's Common External Tariff (AEC) regime, *agricultura.ruralbr.com.br* reported. 

The move would seek to make room for other commodities, such as capital goods, among the 100 items listed. President of Brazil's National Garlic Producers Association (ANAPA), Rafael Jorge Corsino, warned the Brazilian publication that the sector could collapse without protection against volume from China.

ANAPA argued for the continuation of a 35% tax on garlic imported from outside of Mercosur, the Southern Common Market among South American nations.

Even with the tax in place, Corsino pointed out that Chinese garlic exports to Brazil have grown 400% over the past 10 years.

According to Brazil's Bureau of Foreign Trade, during the first eight months of the year, Brazil imported 15.8 million 10-kilo boxes of garlic - a 5% increase year-on-year. In comparison, Chinese garlic imports grew 26% to 5.1 million boxes during the period, while Argentina fell 9% to 4.7 million boxes.

Corsino said 65% of the Brazilian garlic market is currently supplied by imports, adding that the biggest obstacle to expansion of domestic production comes from "unfair competition" created by Chinese garlic. He accused China of dumping, as well as under invoicing upon arrival to Brazil.

Brazilian producers will be observing the government's actions on Chinese anti-dumping regulations over the coming months. A decision is scheduled to be made on Oct. 9 and set for review by Camex in December.

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