
Presidential Documents

Title 3—

Proclamation 7696 of August 27, 2003

The President

To Extend Duty-Free Treatment for Certain Agricultural Products of Israel

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

1. On April 22, 1985, the United States entered into the Agreement on the Establishment of a Free Trade Area between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Israel (FTA), which the Congress approved in the United States-Israel Free Trade Area Implementation Act of 1985 (the “FTA Act”)(19 U.S.C. 2112 Note).
2. On November 4, 1996, the United States entered into an agreement with Israel concerning certain aspects of trade in agricultural products, effective from December 4, 1996, through December 31, 2001 (the “1996 Agreement”), in order to maintain the general level of reciprocal and mutually advantageous concessions with respect to agricultural trade while acknowledging differing interpretations as to the meaning of certain rights and obligations in the FTA as to such trade.
3. Section 4(b) of the FTA Act provides that, whenever the President determines that it is necessary to maintain the general level of reciprocal and mutually advantageous concessions with respect to Israel provided for by the FTA, the President may proclaim such withdrawal, suspension, modification, or continuance of any duty, or such continuance of existing duty-free or excise treatment, or such additional duties as the President determines to be required or appropriate to carry out the FTA.
4. Consistent with section 4(b) of the FTA Act, President Clinton issued Proclamation 6962 of December 2, 1996, to provide to Israel through the close of December 31, 2001, access into the United States customs territory for specified quantities of certain agricultural products of Israel free of duty or certain fees or other import charges, consistent with the 1996 Agreement.
5. On December 31, 2001, the United States entered into an agreement with Israel to extend the 1996 Agreement through December 31, 2002, in order to allow for additional time to negotiate a successor arrangement to the 1996 Agreement. Consistent with section 4(b) of the FTA Act, I issued Proclamation 7554, of May 3, 2002, to provide to Israel through the close of December 31, 2002, access into the United States customs territory for specified quantities of certain agricultural products of Israel free of duty or certain fees or other import charges. Several rounds of negotiations were held in 2002 but did not result in conclusion of a successor arrangement to the 1996 Agreement.
6. On December 31, 2002, the 1-year extension of the 1996 Agreement expired. In order to allow additional time to conclude negotiations, the United States and Israel each have elected to extend through 2003 the tariff treatment provided for agricultural products in 2002 under the 1996 Agreement. Israel has already extended through 2003 the tariff benefits for United States agricultural imports provided in 2002 under the 1996 Agreement.
7. Consistent with section 4(b) of the FTA Act, I have determined that it is necessary, in order to maintain the general level of reciprocal and