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Olympics help curtail China pork consumption: USMEF

By [Janie Gabbett](#) on 8/14/2008

The Olympic Summer Games in Beijing are contributing to decreased pork consumption in China as citizens stay home to watch TV, avoid restaurants in Beijing and have fewer street hawkers from which to buy pork snacks as China attempts to put its best foot forward for the tourists.

"As a result, huge volumes of imported pork and poultry products have stacked up in Chinese cold stores, with some facilities reporting 100 percent capacity," according to Joel Haggard, vice president, Asia Pacific region, for the U.S. Meat Export Federation.

In a news release, Haggard said national distribution of imported pork also has been slowed by the Olympics, due to increased roadway security.

He noted the consumption lull is colliding with China's hog herd expansion, which has reached double-digit levels year on year, as producers responded to strong industry profitability over the past nine months.

Finally, falling domestic prices have narrowed the spread between the wholesale prices for imported pork and local products. Haggard said domestic boneless fresh pork prices in large urban areas have dropped between 15 percent and 20 percent from the high point reached in February 2008.