

US closes gap as main supplier of fries to Australia

After three relatively poor months, Australia's imports of fries and other HS 200410 products surged back in September.

Although the import volume of 10,687 tonnes was close to the recent average for the month, higher prices meant that a new value record of AU\$ 13.459 million was set.

The US has made a concerted attack on the market and is close to overtaking New Zealand as the main supplier on a 12-month value basis.

Australian imports were heavy in the last three months of 2014, creating a bump in the 12-month totals, which peaked at more than 135,000 tonnes. The latest figure is 117,353 tonnes.

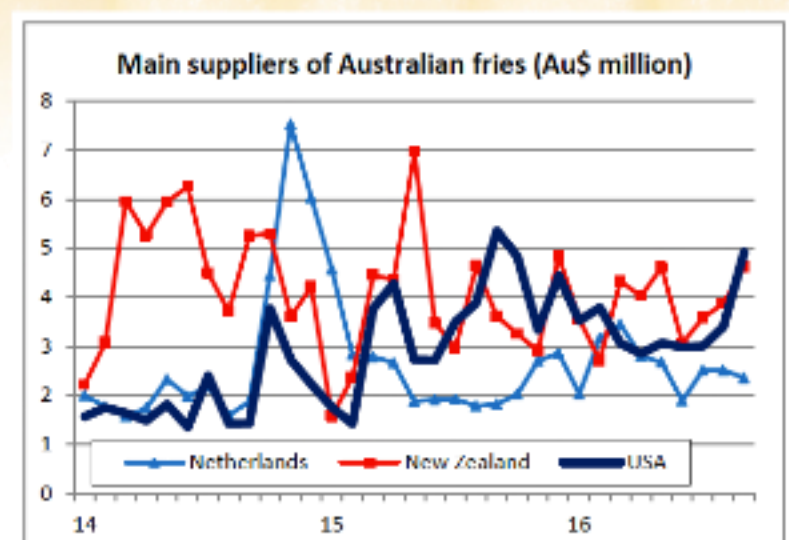
The 12-month value pattern is different, rising sharply in late-2014 and into 2015 but levelling out over


the past 12 months at close to AU\$ 140 million.

Although Australia paid more for its US fries in September than its imports from New Zealand, imports from the US had been exceptional in September last year.

The cost of Australia's purchases from New Zealand and the Netherlands rose by 27.9% and 29.5% respectively. Imports from Belgium rose by 12% in volume but fell by 4.6% in value.

The US fries were the most expensive, at AU\$ 1,426/tonne in September, and the Dutch supplies the cheapest,



at AU\$1,110/tonne. Cost of the New Zealand and Dutch supplies was almost 19% higher than in September last year. 

source: *World Potato Markets 291* – republished with permission

