

3-20-23-DR-Pork

SPEAKERS

John Herath, Lucia Ruano

John Herath 00:00

U.S. pork exports to the Dominican Republic reached new heights last year and haven't missed a beat in 2023. U.S. Meat Export Federation Regional Representative Lucia Ruano says consumer education efforts funded by USDA and the National Pork Board have helped bolster demand for U.S. pork.

Lucia Ruano 00:15

Dominican Republic is our major market at this moment in the region. And for us education is key. We are trying to teach everyone that pork is for the center of the plate, that is not only an ingredient to make processed products. And people are starting to enjoy the versatility of the products. And now they have the availability of these products, not only in supermarket, but also in these meat boutiques, little stores that have premium cuts. They also have side dishes, the charcoal, the wine, the beer, and it's very easy for them to step in the store and make a meal.

John Herath 01:00

Pork demand has also benefited from a rapid rebound in tourism.

Lucia Ruano 01:04

Before the pandemic they were working on this plan for getting 10 million tourists in a year. And in 2019, they had around 7.4 million, and then came the pandemic. And they started doing a very good job last year in promoting local and international tourists and they closed 2022 with 8.4 million tourists during the year.

John Herath 01:31

The DR's domestic pork industry is still struggling with African swine fever.

Lucia Ruano 01:35

It's going to be difficult to eradicate African swine fever over there because they have around 400 producers that have biosecurity standards, but there are around 20,000 producers that raise backyard pigs, so it's still affecting them. Their production has declined for more than 30% and it is expected that their production keeps decreasing in 2023.

John Herath 02:03

For more please visit USMEF.org. For the U.S. Meat Export Federation, I'm John Herath.