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EXTENT AND IMPACT OF FOOD IMPORT SURGES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: THE CASE OF POULTRY MEAT[1] IN CAMEROON

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[1] The study was on poultry meat, rice and vegetable oils, but because of the lengthy report, only poultry meat has been considered for the seminar

Abstract
The trade liberalization has resulted in massive food imports into Cameroon and this is affecting the livelihoods of the farmers, industries, traders, and service providers of the imported foods. Cameroon was selected by FAO as one of the 12 country case studies on the impact of food import surges in developing countries with the overall objective of studying and analyzing the impact of the most prevalent and frequent surge commodities (poultry meat, rice, and vegetable oils) on stakeholders. The methods and analytical approach used for this study are those for WTO Safeguards investigation as outlined in the FAO working document, "*Extent and impact of food import surges in developing countries: An analytical approach and research methodology for country case studies"*. Information for the study was obtained from both secondary sources and from primary sources (stakeholders' survey).

Quantitatively and qualitatively, import surges occurred and are occurring for poultry meat in Cameroon. There were relatively low levels of this commodity imports into Cameroon until 1999-2004 at which time the import of poultry meat increased by 286.7%. Domestic and exogenous factors contributed to the commodity import surge in Cameroon. A potentially negative correlation between the movements in import volumes and movement in domestic price, per unit import value, domestic production, and profits, key injury indicators were noted.

Factors other than imports contributed to the injuries.

Cameroon's policy responses to the surges and injuries were its main trade policy instrument, the tariff, partial ban on imports of poultry meat, and instituted reference price.

Introduction

The Republic of Cameroon with a surface area of 475,442 km^2 has a population of 16.3 inhabitants. Agriculture and forestry remain the leading sectors in the country, accounting for some 36% of the merchandise exports and for more than 40% of GDP in 1998/99. Agriculture alone accounts for more than 30% of GDP and provides employment for about 68% of the active population. In recognizance of this importance agriculture plays in the economy, the government promoted the use of farm inputs (fertilizers, pesticides, etc.) in the 80s by providing them to farmers at subsidized rates. The agricultural sector has, however, undergone thorough reforms since 1994 following the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) by IMF. .As a result, Cameroon did not only disengage from input marketing, but liberalized the economy. The trade liberalization has resulted in massive food imports and this is affecting the livelihoods of the farmers, industries, traders, and service providers of the imported foods. The Cameroon government and industry stakeholders have expressed continuing concern about the impact of these rising food imports on the local industries and the rural communities especially as poultry has a vital role to play not only as nutritional source for the Cameroon populace, but for their contribution to rural incomes and employment opportunities..

Data analysis by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, for food import surges into some developing countries for the period 1999 to 2003, Cameroon was one of the countries which witnessed the most prevalent and frequent surges with poultry meat, rice, and vegetable oils identified as the most affected commodities. Despite the widespread concerns and interests on the issue, there are no analytical studies on the impact of import surges on the commodities in Cameroon.
It was for this reason that Cameroon was selected as one of the 12 country case studies on the impact of food import surges in developing countries.

Objective

The overall objective of this study was to analyze the impact of poultry meat import surge on farmers, industries, traders, and service providers in Cameroon using the analytical approach and methods for a typical WTO Safeguards investigation. This is particularly important since recent reports on frozen chicken are mainly persuasive journalistic reports and lack the rigor of a WTO safeguards investigation.
More specifically, the objectives of this study are to:

- Identify the underlying reasons for poultry meat surge in Cameroon;
- Demonstrate the injury to farmers, industries, traders, and service providers (stakeholders);
- Establish the causal relationship between the surge and injury, ensuring that injury caused by factors other than imports has not been attributed to imports;
- Provide a broader understanding of the capacity of Cameroon to use enhanced trade surveillance and trade remedy measures.

METHODS AND ANALYTICAL APPROACH

The methods and analytical approach used for this study are those for WTO Safeguards investigation as outlined in the FAO working document, "*Extent and impact of food import surges in developing countries: An analytical approach and research methodology for country case studies"*. Briefly, the methodology involved

- Identification of the problem and collection and analysis of basic trade statistics and policy information;
- Analysis of competition, causal relations, injury and non-attribution issues;
- Analysis of the institutional capability for a trade surveillance system.

Information for the study was obtained from both secondary sources (reviewing of customs data processing report, National Statistics Institute reports, ministries of agriculture and livestock reports); and from primary sources (stakeholders survey). Quantitative data were analyzed using simple descriptive statistics and econometrics.

RESULTS OF THE SURGE STUDY

Poultry meat:

Identifying the occurrence of import surges

Stakeholders' survey for poultry meat

An informal survey of various poultry meat stakeholders (5 MINEPIA officials, 200 poultry farmers, 150 traders, 210 consumers, and 5 hatchery firms) was carried out to confirm the social relevance of the issue, and below is the summary of the perceptions of those interviewed.

Government officials of the ministry of livestock (MINEPIA)

Generally, the officials of MINEPIA do not consider recent poultry meat import trends as being surges. The Cameroon minister of livestock, fisheries and animals industry disclosed that local poultry producers can only produce 25,000 tons of poultry meat, about 10,000 tons short of national poultry meat demand and that importers were simply importing the deficit in domestic production. The MINEPIA officials, however, acknowledge that poultry meat import, to an extent, is negatively affecting local poultry farmers / traders. In that light, MINEPIA has held various meetings with poultry farmers, traders, importers, and NGOs to discuss the matter. The result of the consultation meetings has been the partial ban of imported poultry meat; as government claims total ban on poultry meat importation now will not be for the interest of consumers.

Poultry farmers and farm associations

The **poultry farmers and their association** consider the recent poultry meat import trends as serious surges and that it is the root cause of their production and marketing problems, especially declining profits. They ask for total ban on poultry meat imports. The **hatchery firms** are of the opinion that they too are capable of satisfying the local demand for day-old-chicks.

Poultry meat importers / traders

Most poultry meat importers / traders contacted are of the opinion that there is no poultry meat import surge since local poultry producers, from all indications, are not capable of satisfying national poultry meat demand quantitatively and qualitatively. They argue that with the serious economic recession in the country, the poor consumers need quality meat at cheap prices.

Poultry meat consumers / restaurants

The restaurant owners and consumers like local poultry meat because of its freshness. However, the imported chicken is consumed because it is cheaper and can be bought in small quantities as opposed to local birds.

"Like", "competitive", and "substitute" products for imported poultry meat

In order to identify the domestic industry affected by poultry meat imports, it is necessary to first identify the like, competitive, and substitute products. The identification of the affected products is important in identifying the various participants affected by the surge, and determines the scope of the study and subsequent data collection and analyses. Live birds and fish were identified as competitive products, and beef, fish, pork, goat meat, and mutton as substitute products for imported poultry meat. There were no like products since poultry meat is not being processed and packaged for sale in Cameroon.

PROOF THAT AN IMPORT SURGE HAS OCCURRED AND IS OCCURRING FOR POULTRY MEAT IN CAMEROON

Trade statistics for imported poultry meat

Import trends

From 1999 to 2004, the importation of poultry meat into Cameroon rose from 9,275 to 35,864 metric tons (Table 1, Fig 1), an increase of 286.7 % within the six years, while per unit import value increased by only 6 % during same period. This demonstrates a surge problem. The total import volume of 106,390 metric tones during the six years was valued at 54.820 billion FCFA. In figure 2, per unit import price was decreasing and the exchange rate CFA/US$ was decreasing at an increasing rate during the study period. And in fig 2(b) while the import volume was increasing at an increasing rate, per unit price was decreasing at an increasing rate. In fig 2(c), while imports are on a steady increase, local production is decreasing slowly.

Table 1: Import data for poultry meat into Cameroon, 1999 - 2004

Year	Volume of import (in Metric Tons)	3-years average of import (MT)	Value of imports (in '000 FCFA)	Per unit import price (in '000 FCFA)	Exchange rate CFA / US$
1999	9,275		4,364,423	471	652.95
2000	14,178	10,295	7,756,926	547	704.95
2001	7,432	12,722	4,399,152	592	744.31
2002	16,556	15,691	9,293,269	561	625.50
2003	23,085	25,168	11,103,958	481	519.36
2004	35,864		17,903,050	499	481.58
Total	106,390		54,820,778	515	

Source: Department of Statistics in the General Directorate of Customs, Douala, Cameroon

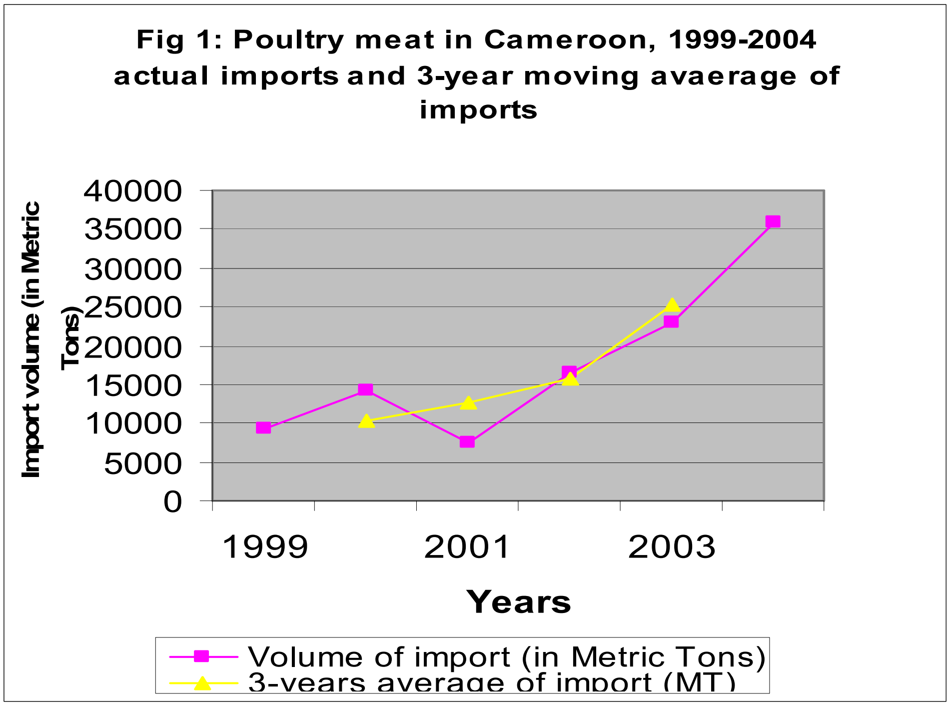


Fig 1: Poultry meat in Cameroon, 1999-2004 actual imports and 3-year moving avaerage of imports
Import volume (in Metric Tons)
40000
35000
30000
25000
20000
15000
10000
5000
0
1999
2001
2003
Years
Volume of import (in Metric Tons)
3-years average of import (MT)

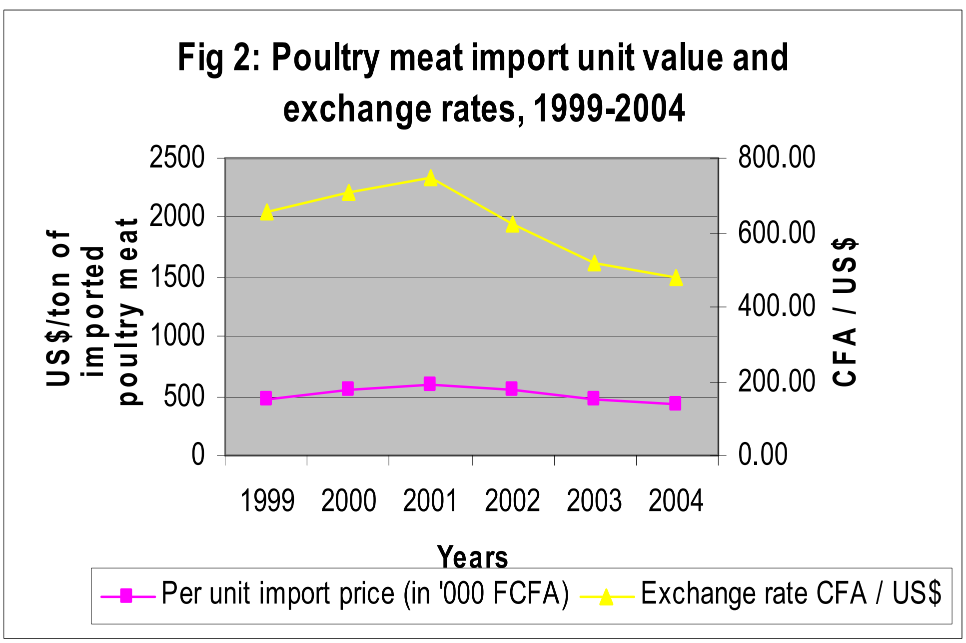


Fig 2: Poultry meat import unit value and exchange rates, 1999-2004
US $/ton of imported poultry meat
2500
2000
1500
1000
500
0
800.00
600.00
400.00
200.00
0.00
CFA / US$
1999
2000
2001
2002
2003
2004
Years
Per unit import price (in '000 FCFA)
Exchange rate CFA / US$

Fig 2(b): Poultry meat import volume versus per unit import price

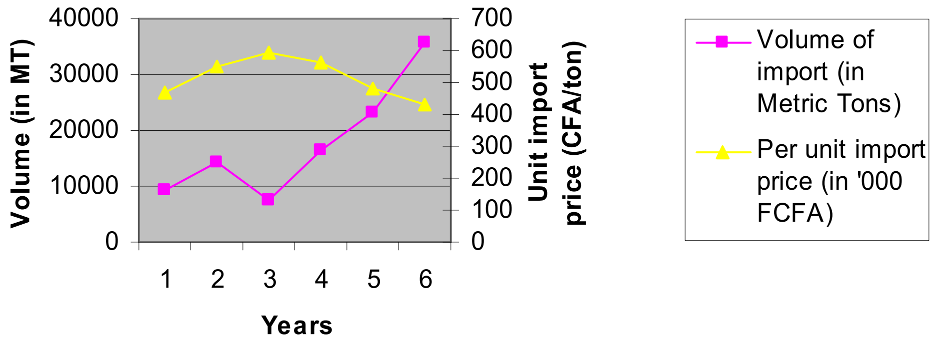
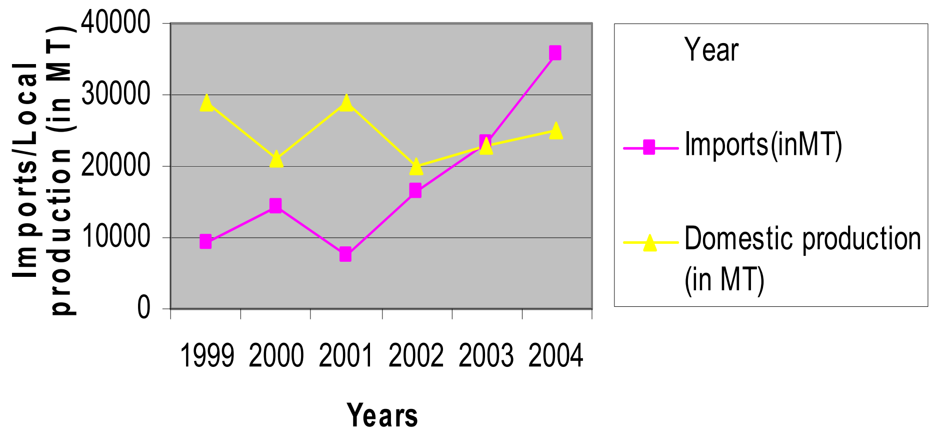


Fig 2(c) : Poultry meat import and estimated local production in Cameroon, 1999-2004



Import sources

Holland and Belgium were the major sources of poultry meat import into Cameroon during the period, accounting for 50 % of the total poultry meat imported (Fig. 3). During the period, imports from Holland increased by 82% while per unit import value increased only by 19 % (Table 2). For Belgium, whereas imports increased by 155 %, per unit import value increased only by 23 % (Table24). However, increases in per unit import value were witnessed from the two countries in 2000 and 2001 (Table 2).

Table 2: Volume and Value of poultry meat imports into Cameroon by country of origin, 1999-2004

Exporting country	**1999**		**2000**		**2001**		**2002**		**2003**		**2004**	
	Q (in MT)	**V (in '000 FCFA)**	**Q (in MT)**	**V (in '000 FCFA)**	**Q (in MT)**	**V (in '000 FCFA)**	**Q (in MT)**	**V (in '000 FCFA)**	**Q (in MT)**	**V (in '000 FCFA)**	**Q (in MT)**	**V (in '000 FCFA)**
Holland	4,025	1,801,508	4,602	2,561,250	1,748	992,994	4,394	2,202,131	8,213	3,735,120	7,307	3,887,192
Belgium	1,842	797,941	6,222	3,425,649	1,329	758,830	3,585	1,853,404	4,958	2,521,157	4,696	2,515,094
European Union	213	97,959	260	159,915	410	237,330	188	92,033	437	230,375	11,975	4,812,322
Brazil	0	0	145	85,291	1,428	914,768	3,094	1,680,216	2,577	1,243,200	4,580	2,495,134
France	1,665	773,400	1,103	532,136	406	230,798	1,181	640,351	1,472	759,728	1,055	857,430
Spain	24	11,879	100	42,336	49	24,515	326	186,077	1,521	847,619	2,864	1,552,887
USA	0	0	639	346,050	452	257,684	663	323,818	652	289,401	113	65,000
Italy	1,021	458,319	285	136,527	25	9,820	331	174,935	210	126,365	472	254,668
Germany	181	87,613	24	14,850	0	0	95	45,703	1,155	505,533	728	391,289
United Kingdom	42	19,932	335	197,358	0	0	521	238,396	266	123,560	521	266,964
Australia	0	0	46	26,932	145	81,470	453	238,933	218	101,977	188	103,070
Poland	0	0	0	0	0	0	75	30,750	205	101,744	684	376,421
Ireland	77	32,069	100	56,064	0	0	0	0	240	130,387	326	155,857
Others	185	283,803	317	172,568	1,440	890,943	1,650	1,586,522	961	387,792	355	169,722
Total	9,275	4,364,423	14,178	7,756,926	7,432	4,399,152	16,556	9,293,269	23,085	11,103,958	35,864	17,903,050

Source: Department of Statistics in the General Directorate of Customs, Douala, Cameroon

Composition of imports
Composition wise, 99 % of the poultry meat imported into Cameroon from 1999 – 2004 were in parts while only 1 % were whole birds. The import values for the whole birds were higher than those in parts. This is because there is a lower preference for chicken parts such as wings, drumsticks, and thighs in industrialized countries and those are the parts often exported to Cameroon.

Type of poultry meat imports
The type of poultry meat imported into Cameroon for the period was chicken meat - cock and hens (94%); turkeys (6%); and ducks, geese, guinea fowls, etc., close to 0 %.

Exports
Between 1999 and 2004, poultry meat exported from Cameroon stood at 31.05 metric tons, valued at 51.935 million FCFA. This is possibly the re-export of imported poultry meat since there are no indications from the industries that poultry meat was exported.

In concluding this section, quantitatively and qualitatively, an import surge has occurred and is occurring for poultry meat in Cameroon. There were relatively low levels of poultry meat imports into Cameroon until 1999 at which time the import increased by 286.7% by 2004. There have been positive deviations from a 3-year moving average of import data (Fig 1) between 1999 and 2004.
The stakeholder surveys conducted confirmed the social relevance of the surge.

POTENTIAL CAUSES OF THE SURGE
Many factors have contributed to poultry meat import surge in Cameroon. Some of them are domestic while others stem from third countries (exogenous factors).

External Factors

A. Export policies of third countries:

- Export subsidies: The European Union and the United States, exporting countries of poultry meat to Cameroon, are major players not only in export subsidies, but also export credit subsidies (reduced interest rates or longer terms)

B. Non policy factors in third countries:

- ***Sudden currency devaluation in exporting country, Brazil:*** When the Brazilian Real was devalued and lost one-third of its value relative to the US$ in 2001, this led to a sharp increase in Brazilian poultry exports and import surges in some destination countries including Cameroon. Table 2 shows Brazilian poultry meat imports increased by 885% from 2000 to 2001. With a further devaluation of the Real by 30 % in 2002, the imports to Cameroon increased by another 117 %. The observed rise in poultry imports from Brazil came along with a rise in import unit value (in FCFA) in 2001 and a decline in 2002 below 2000 level (Table 2).
- ***Sudden currency devaluation in importing country, Russia:*** After the Rubble fell dramatically against the Dollar in 1998, Russian poultry imports fell from 826 thousand tones in 1998 to 233 thousand tones in 1999 (FAO, 2005a). The US, at the time a major source of Russian poultry imports then directed its poultry exports to other countries including Cameroon which led to import

- ***Cost competitiveness:*** The exporting countries are comparatively advantageous than Cameroon in poultry production. According to *The World Poultry* publication by IFC, live broiler cost 52.2, 98.4, and 58.8 cents per kilogram live weight in Brazil, The Netherlands, and USA respectively, while it costs about 2US$ in Cameroon. Though the IFC figures are for 1994, these are indicative of broad trends.
- ***Changing consumption habits:*** There is the lower preference for chicken parts such as wings, drumsticks, and thighs in industrialized countries. As such, the export price for the low quality parts become very low as the alternative domestic use is limited to animal feed. On Cameroon market, imports of such low quality and low price products compete with domestic production and result in increasing imports.

Domestic Factors

1. ***Import policy regime:*** Cameroon's trade policies and practices are, to a large extent, determined regionally under CEMAC (Communauté Economique et Monétaire de l'Afrique Centrale).
2. ***Isolation of Cameroon poultry from international markets:*** The fact that Cameroon poultry farmers are not producing for international markets isolates them from these markets and this isolation prohibits Cameroon's domestic market from acting as a buffer for world market price volatility
3. ***Unmet domestic demand for poultry meat***; Cameroon's need for poultry meat is estimated at 62,000 metric tons per year, but local production is only 15,000 metric tons per year (*The Farmer's Voice no 122 September 2005*) and imports estimated at 35,000 metric tons/year. So there is still an unmet gap of about 12,000 metric tons per year.
4. ***Lower tariffs***; Import tariffs in Cameroon were generally below 25% for poultry products and this encouraged imports. It was only around 2004 that tariffs were increased to 42% for poultry products. The WTO bound rate for Cameroon for poultry is 80 %.
5. ***Consumer preference***: Most consumers and restaurants prefer processed imported poultry meat to live birds and whole chicken from local producers. Not only are local live birds not processed for easy cooking, they are also more expensive.

6. ***Declines in import prices: P***er unit import price has been decreasing and the exchange rate CFA/US$ also decreasing at an increasing rate during the study period. While the import volume has been increasing at an increasing rate, per unit price has been decreasing at an increasing rate.

7. High cost for domestic production: Input prices have been increasing, e.g. prices for maize which constitute 60-70% of production cost have been rising; same for feed and day-old-chicks.

INJURY ANALYSIS

MAPPING THE SECTOR

The following table summarizes the production areas, and major consumption centers for poultry meat in Cameroon, and hence points of competition.

Table3: Point of poultry meat import, consumption and production areas in Cameroon

Imported product	Port of import	Main consumption area(s)	Main production area(s)
Poultry meat	Douala	Centre province (Yaoundé) Littoral province (Douala) West province (Bafoussam) South province (Sangmalema) NW Province (Bamenda) SW province (Buea / Limbe)	The competitive product (live birds) are produced in Noun Division, around Bafoussam, all in the West province; Bamenda, Douala, Edea, Yaoundé, Sangmelima, Obala

INJURY FACTORS

Table 4: Injury indicators

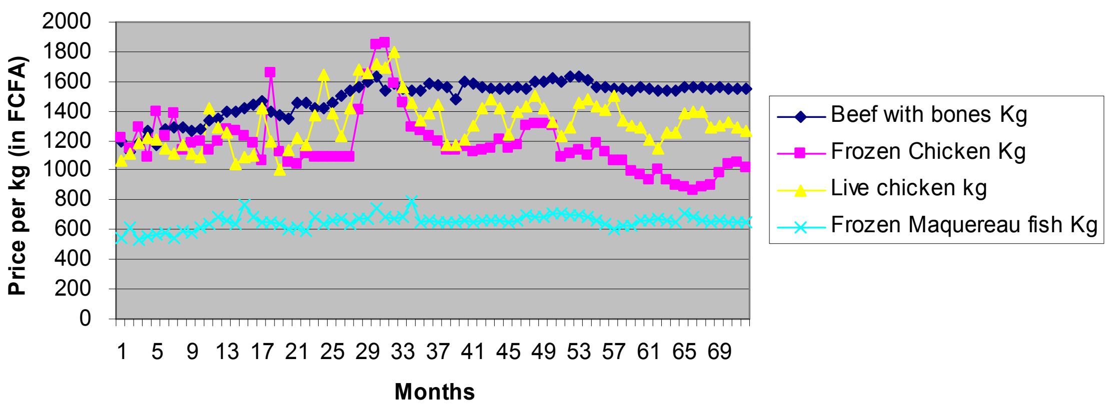
Market participant	Injury indicators
Large scale poultry producers	• Lower production and profits • Reduction in staff strength • Under utilized equipment / infrastructure
Small scale poultry producers	• 110,000 rural jobs lost each year (ACDIC 2004) • 92 % drop out rate in 6 years (ACDIC 2004) • Unemployment
Traders	• No business for live bird traders (unemployment)
Consumers	• High cost of local live birds

QUANTIFYING THE INJURY

Domestic market prices of imported poultry meat and affected commodities

Generally, the domestic market price per kilogram for imported poultry meat in the main towns of Yaoundé, Douala, Bafoussam, and Bamenda declined during the study period. Douala noticed a decline of 16% and Yaoundé 37%. Domestic poultry meat prices decreased during the period (Fig 5 and 7). Though frozen fish prices were generally stable, it witnessed a price increase of 1.7% in Yaoundé, 18% in Douala, and 8% in Bafoussam. Frozen fish prices were the lowest prices compared to imported poultry meat, local poultry and beef (Figs 5). Beef with bones also noticed a price increase during the period with 31% increase in Yaoundé, 30% in Douala, 20% in Bafoussam, and 62% in Bamenda. Maize (corn) which constitutes 60-70% of poultry feed also witnessed price increase especially in the domestic poultry production areas of Douala by 23% and Bafoussam 34% .

Fig.5: Monthly market prices per kg for beef, imported frozen chicken, live chicken, frozen imported fish in Douala, Cameroon, 1999-2004



Source: National Institute of Statistics (NIS), Cameroon

CAUSAL LINK BETWEEN IMPORTS AND INJURY

Looking at Fig 1and Fig 5 simultaneously, while the import volume for poultry meat is rising at an increasing rate; its sale price in the domestic market is drastically declining. Also, while import volume is increasing at an increasing rate, the per unit import value is declining (Fig 2b). Domestic poultry production in Cameroon is on the decline (Fig 2c) while imports are on the increase. Domestic poultry prices have also been on the decline during the period though not below those of imported poultry meat. With declining local poultry prices in the face of constant increasing inputs, proves that profits have been decreasing and even losses incurred as substantiated by the poultry farmers' interview above. This probably explains why there has been a 92 % drop out rate of poultry farmers and 110,000 rural jobs lost each year from 1994 to 2003 as reported by ACDIC (ACDIC March 2004).

There is, therefore, a potentially negative correlation between the movements in import volumes and movement in domestic price, per unit import value, domestic poultry production, profits, and employments, key injury indicators.

NON ATTRIBUTION FACTOR (Injury caused by other factors other than imports)

When factors other than increased imports are causing injury to domestic industry at the same time, such injury shall not be attributed to increased imports. As part of the causation analysis, a sufficient consideration of "other factors" operating in the market at the same time is conducted so that any injury caused by such factors are identified and properly attributed. In the Cameroon case, factors other than imports could have caused or contributed to the injuries. For example, MINEPIA restricted the importation of frozen chicken to 5000 metric tons from September 2005 through a ministerial order after consultations with stakeholders. This partial ban on poultry meat imports has led to higher domestic poultry prices. The domestic poultry farmers were unable to respond because of the following **non-attribution factors:**

1. The **price of corn**, which constitutes 60-70% of poultry feed has gone so high . Corn prices are high because of **high demand for corn as food** by the increasing population, brewery companies, livestock feed producers, and corn exportation to Nigeria.
2. Day-old-chicks are scarce and as a result the prices are high (from stakeholders' survey)
3. General increase in energy costs: The price of fuel increased twice in 2004 alone leading to increases in transport fare. Electricity prices increased from 50 FCFA per KWH in 1999 to 60 francs in 2003 and to 75 francs in 2004 resulting in increased bills for cooling systems;

Competitiveness of the domestic industry

Production cost for broilers

From a study on *Analyse de la filière avicole (* Ngandeu Emil, Mars 2002) contracted by MINEPIA in March 2002, to determine the production cost of broilers around the peri-urban areas of Bafoussam, Douala and Yaoundé, and in a related study in *La Voix Du Paysan* newspaper (annex 3), feed and day-old-chicks constitute 91 % of the total production cost of a broiler. Actually, the price of a broiler in Yaoundé is around 2000 FCFA. If the production is around Yaoundé, assuming there are no marketing costs incurred, the net return per broiler will be 407.64 FCFA. However, with the increasing costs of inputs and the declining market prices as shown above, the profit margins having been narrowing.

POLICY RESPONSE BY GOVERNMENT

Cameroon's main trade policy instrument is the tariff. All applied tariffs are ad valorem, applied on the c.i.f. value of imported goods. They apply throughout the year with no seasonal variation.

As result of the surge and injuries, the Government of Cameroon used mostly the tariff as policy measures.

The turnover tax was replaced by the Value Added Tax (VAT) in 1999 and in the years before 2005, the taxes paid for the importation of frozen chicken were 20% for customs duty and 3 % for Vet tax at the port. As from January 2005, importers of frozen poultry meat pay an additional Value Added Tax of 19.25 %. A Ministerial order signed on 28/12/04 also fixed the reference price for taxing all imported frozen meat at 1000 FCFA per kilogram. So the total tax paid per kg of imported meat is 42 %. This multiplied by 1000 = 420 francs per kg imported. To this is added the Vet movement tax of 1 franc per kg. The total tax an importer pays per kilogram of poultry meat is 421 francs CFA.

Finance law no. 2003/17 of 22 December 2003 of Cameroon for the 2004 financial year, institutes community integration tax, data processing fee, Ohada levy whose rates are respectively 1%, 0.45%, and 0.05% (Table 7)

Finance law no. 2004/26 of 30 December 2004 of Cameroon for the 2005 financial year, stipulates the new veterinary taxes for domestic and international trade. Domestically, fresh or frozen salted, smoked or canned products pay 12% of the amount for business license or discharge tax; while export or import of animal products has a 3% charge on the value. The Value Added Tax (VAT) of 17.5% was introduced by this law.
Decision no. 003/UEAC -110 CEBEVIRHA-CM03 of 14 December 2000 takes measures against the importation of canned animal products.

Presidential decision no.039/CAB/PR of January 1988 and renewed by decision no. 654/MINEFI /CAB of 28 December 2004, fixes the minimum import / reference prices for certain products. Poultry meat is 1000 FCFA / kg net while other meats are 100 FCFA/ kg net, with the exception of salted, dry or smoked pork or other such treated meats which are 1500 FCFA/kg net.

MINEPIA restricted the importation of frozen chicken to 5000 metric tons with effect from September 2005. This was put in place by a ministerial order to be executed by its agents at the port. MINEPIA was in charged of distributing the quota to be imported by the importers. This has led to **corrupt practices** noticed in the distribution, and this explains why in 2003, the quantity authorized by MINEPIA for importation was 8,500 metric tons but actual quantity imported that year was 23,085 metric tones.
Customs procedures have been streamlined through the opening of a single-window facility.
For customs valuation, Cameroon continued to use the Brussels Definition of Value until July 2001 when it started applying the WTO Customs Valuation Agreement
Cameroon has legislation regulating contingency trade measures (anti-dumping, countervailing and safeguards) but has not applied such measures to date.

TRADE SURVEILLANCE ISSUES

The ultimate goal of this project is to provide a broader understanding of the capacity of Cameroon to use enhanced trade surveillance and trade remedy measures with the objective s of identifying, analyzing, and responding to import surges, and critical to this is the institutional capacity of the government to develop and strengthen trade surveillance systems. To assess the current situation in Cameroon, the following information was gathered:

Institutions involved in trade monitoring:

The institutions involved in trade monitoring in Cameroon are the ministries of livestock, agriculture, environment, the customs, the police, the Port Authority, and the company for surveillance.

Number of Ports:
The Cameroon main port is the Douala port. At the institutional level, a number of new port entities (Kribi, Limbe, and Garoua) have been created and new independent port management companies. The full independence of the new port management entities is to be established in each port, and all industrial and commercial activities are to be transferred to private sector through competitive bidding. The Douala port has improved its performance significantly since September 2000, thanks to the vast program of restructuring supported by the World Bank. The establishment of a One-Stop Window for international trade formalities in August 2000 has reduced cargo-clearance delays to 15 days (from 21 days) for imports and four days for exports.

An assessment of constraints to effective trade surveillance:
Through a discussion with the staff of the institutions represented at the port, and with the importers, there is **generalized corruption** at the port. Infact, one of the staff confessed to me that if he works at the Douala port for 2 years, he can live a millionaire all his life. The institutions at the port have obsolete computers, no laboratories for analysis, lack of qualified staff in sufficient numbers, insufficient working materials, and lack of information flow within and among the services. In all, the institutions are not properly organized and coordinated for trade surveillance which requires good coordination, good database, trained and sufficient staff, analytical facilities and capabilities.
To build these capabilities, qualified staff in sufficient numbers have to be provided; material means (computers, analytical equipment, laboratories, etc.) for technical control have to be available; Continuous staff training, not only in their specialized fields, but also in area of policy and trade have to be implemented; and adequate information within and among services installed.
The One-Stop Shop (guichet unique) and members of the National Task Force of this study can be trained and used to strengthen the surveillance system.

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