

'Lift AP requirement for import of chilled pork'

PRESS DIGEST

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THE Malaysian Association of Pork Products Importers and Exporters (Mappie) wants the Agriculture and Agro-based Industries Ministry to immediately lift the approved permit (AP) requirement for the import of chilled pork, saying the policy has resulted in a shortage of pork belly and hikes in its prices.

According to a report in *Oriental Daily News* yesterday, Mappie vice-chairman Li Bao Zhong said the situation is getting worse, and may eventually affect the prices of other meat.

He claimed that the AP system has been seriously abused and not fair to most pork importers.

Mappie believes the system benefited only a group of newbies in the industry

who have close connections with ministry officials, he said. "Many start-ups obtained APs for the importation of pork through special channels. They then sell these permits for a profit," said Li in a statement on Tuesday.

He said this practice has caused the prices of pork belly to spiral upwards.

He said the association has evidence that most of those who were able to obtain APs were pork traders from Singapore, many of whom set up their companies less than three months ago.

"On the other hand, many industry players who have been in the frozen and chilled pork business for 20 to 30 years are denied these permits," he lamented.

In an immediate response, Deputy Agriculture and Agro-based Industries Minister Datuk Chua Tee Yong said the ministry would look into the matter.

He also said there will be enough supply of pork for the coming Chinese New Year festival.