



USDA Inspection of Catfish from Sep 1; U.S. FDA Accepts DUNS Number

FEATURES



USDA Inspection of Siluriformes fish, including catfish, full enforcement from Sep 1, 2017

After an 18-month transition period, full enforcement of USDA inspection of siluriformes fish, including catfish will begin on Sep 1, 2017. According to some Vietnam news reports, "the change will have potentially disastrous consequences for Vietnam catfish producers, because while the FDA does spot checks on a small sample of imports as they arrive, the USDA requires on-site inspections of production facilities. For countries like Vietnam, setting up an equivalent system could take years and effectively cripple the industry."



U.S., Australian Food Safety Systems are "comparable"

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has signed an arrangement with the Australian Department of Agriculture and Water Resources recognizing each other's food safety systems as comparable to each other. This is the third time that the FDA has recognized a foreign food safety system as comparable, the first being New Zealand in 2012 and Canada in 2016.



U.S. FDA accepts D-U-N-S® Number for Foreign Supplier Verification Program

The FDA issued guidance formally recognizing the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number as an acceptable unique facility identifier (UFI) for FSVP. The identification of importers will help the FDA effectively implement, monitor compliance with, and enforce the FSVP requirements, which are designed to help ensure that imported foods meet U.S. safety standards. ...



US\$265m for smart traffic operation centre

A smart traffic operation centre in HCM City will receive an investment of VND6 trillion (US\$265 million) from 2017 to 2020, the city's Department of Transport has said.

In the first phase of the project, about VND250 billion (\$11 million) will be allocated to upgrade the existing traffic operation system.



IMF, WTO, OECD vow to defend free trade against protectionism

The chiefs of the IMF, WTO and OECD vowed on Monday (Apr 10) in a joint statement to defend free trade against creeping protectionist trends, amid growing global alarm over US President Donald Trump's "America First" call.

Preparations on track for APEC Danang



Vietnamese President Tran Dai Quang lauded the work of government agencies and the authorities of Danang to prepare for the APEC Summit 2017 and asked that they ensure a secure and successful event that would show to the world a good image of Vietnam.

Decision paves way for solar power development



Opportunities to invest in Việt Nam's solar energy sector are abundant after Prime Minister Nguyễn Xuân Phúc issued a decision to encourage the development of solar power projects.

Under Decision 11/2017/QĐ-TTg, which takes effective from June 1, 2017, all output produced by solar power projects will be purchased for VNĐ2,086 (US 9.3 cent)/kWh (excluding VAT) - a profitable rate for investors.

Events, Meetings, Special Offers



Advanced Purchase Promotion to North America from HCM City

Korean Air, is one of the world's top 20 airlines and carried more than 24 million passengers in 2015. Korean Air operates over 460 flights per day to 132 cities in 46 countries on six continents with a fleet of 175 aircraft including ten A380s.

The airline is a founding member of the Sky Team airline alliance, which together with its 20 members, offers its 665 million annual passengers a worldwide system of more than 17,343 daily flights covering 1,062 destinations in 177 countries.



LE & TRAN Insight: What if a service contract is signed with an individual?

At present, in order to avoid the obligations of social insurance, health insurance and unemployment insurance towards the employees as well as to avoid being subject to liability as provided by the labour law, many companies propose the employees to sign contracts for service provision instead of labour contracts. So, whether or not the signing of a service contract between a company and an employee (an individual) is lawful.



Thai Culinary and Cultural Fair @ Windsor Plaza Hotel

Windsor Plaza Hotel is organizing "Thai Culinary and Cultural Fair" from 28 April - 7 May 2017 featuring authentic cuisine and culture from Thailand with Thai specialties prepared by guest Thai Chefs and traditional Thai dances. Prices of dinner buffet remains unchanged at 648.000+ +/person (Monday - Friday) and 738.000+ +/person (Saturday & Sunday).



Apr 26 AmCham Palooza Party at Hard Rock Cafe

AmCham will continue its series of monthly informal networking events at the coolest and latest nightspots in Ho Chi Minh City. The monthly Palooza Party is a platform to develop new friendships, networking opportunities and information exchange. Come and join us for a night of casual networking, meet other professionals, bring your business cards!

Dress code: Business Casual

The AmCham Palooza is a popular group that holds networking events and happy hours regularly to increase communication amongst membership and expats.



Apr 27 Cloud: Problem or Solution - Why the Top 10 C-Level priorities for 2017 repeatedly include Cloud?

Multiple articles looking at the Top 10 priorities for 2017 by CEO's, CFO's, CTO's, CIO's and even Sales all heavily feature Cloud. The need for speed to innovate or to cope with disruption or to address growing cyber security threats, Cloud is the common denominator. But do you know how Cloud is disrupting and innovating? Do you know whether cloud is making things more or less secure? Do you know how cloud is impacting your business? If you want to know more then join this event and learn the answers to these and many more questions around cloud. Our speakers will address these issues and reveal a whole new world of cloud.



May 9 Pensions, investments and savings planning - What Americans abroad need to know

The topic will be presented by Mr. Wayne Ellis representing the Tilney Group and Infinity Financial Solutions.

Part 1: Defining the problems and why Americans need to act.

This section will explore the background to why Americans overseas are facing difficulties effectively managing their pensions, investments and savings plans.

Part 2: How to make tax filing a piece of cake.

Part 3: Keeping your investments fully compliant.



May 10 The ABCs of Internal Labor Rules and Disciplinary Hearings

Vietnam's labor laws tend to be employee-friendly and formalistic, which can make discipline and dismissals of employees a very difficult process - even in cases of corruption or criminal conduct. As a counter-balance to this situation, it is vital for companies to have well-drafted internal labor rules and a solid understanding of employee disciplinary procedures.



May 24 Morning Briefing with Q&A: Visa Procedures for Business Travel to the U.S.

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July 1 23rd Annual AmCham U.S. Independence Day Celebration & Family Picnic

Join AmCham members, friends and family to enjoy a celebration of our traditional American holiday and cultural event that is celebrated all across the USA, in big cities and small towns. We are hoping to welcome over 1,000 people to the celebration for a great late morning/early afternoon of Fun, Food and Drinks, Live Music, Games and Great Prizes. Ticket price includes - A delicious "American Fare" Barbecue, Pizza, Cakes, Ice Cream ... and much more. ALSO included is unlimited, Beer, Wine, Pepsi & Coke Products, Coffees. PLUS...Live Bands performing throughout the afternoon and a terrific "Kids Corner" with fun activities, face painting and bouncy castles.



Sep 22-24 AmCham Family Weekend at JWMarriott Phu Quoc

The JW Marriott Phu Quoc Emerald Bay Resort & Spa is a 5-star luxury, quirky style and an unparalleled location. Famed Architect Bill Bensley has designed the resort to pay homage to the fictional historic Lamarck University, with a whimsical ambiance that is utterly unique. All of its 244 rooms and suites are extraordinary in their individuality; most feature breathtaking views of the bay, and all offer plush bedding and free Wi-Fi.

Join AmCham members of both chapters, HCMC and Hanoi, friends and family to enjoy a two night weekend stay at JWMarriott Phu Quoc. More details and registration form will be sent to you shortly. SAVE THE DAY!

JOIN US: Become a Member of AmCham Vietnam - HCMC

*Application fee will be waived for companies having a D-U-N-S® number.

Expand your business by joining us! We currently have almost 500 organizations represented by 1,000 representatives. They are multinational firms, small and medium enterprises and entrepreneurs. **Benefits include:** Networking, Information-Sharing, Advocacy and Problem Solving, visibility and Corporate Exposure.

Contact [Ms. Sam Hoang](#) for joining or additional information on membership.





Marketing Opportunities with AmCham HCMC

AmCham HCMC offers many opportunities to market your company's products and services to AmCham members, the business community and the general public. Our services include:

- Event Sponsorship
- Event Management Support
- Network (Advertise) on www.amchamvietnam.com: 720K views/yr; 360K visitors/yr (avg. 60K / 30K views/visitors per month) and **11.5K twitter followers**, 9.7K facebook fans (and 60K+ views/month) 5.7k LinkedIn followers.
- Announcement in Weekly Email: 4.8k AmCham company representatives and subscribers.

AmCham Companies are offered 3 complimentary announcements a year.

- Print advertising in AmCham Membership Directory
- Print advertising in AmCham Membership Discount Handbook
- Advertising on AmCham Discount Online



AmCham Premium Membership Packages

The AmCham Premium Membership comes with a range of membership dues, which include events, advertising, and other exclusive benefits. One all-inclusive Premium Membership annual, semi-annual, or quarterly billing simplifies your company's administration efforts. Premium Membership Benefits include:

- Logo on "Premium Membership" banner on AmCham website homepage
- Logo on "Premium Membership" banner in Weekly Update Email
- Company profile on the "Premium Membership" page on AmCham website
- Corporate profile on screen during cocktail reception at Members' Nights
- Special recognition/Thank You Page in Membership Directory
- Special recognition at all business events' backdrop/banner
- Special recognition in all email signatures

For full information on benefits of each package, please click [HERE](#) or contact [Cindy Tran](#).



2017 AmCham Discount Program

The AmCham Discount Program is a mutually beneficial opportunity for both Discount Partners and AmCham Members who are representatives of companies doing business and living in Vietnam.

By offering AmCham Members special discounts on services or products, Discount Partners can enjoy marketing opportunities through listing freely and/or placing an advertisement on the [Discount Handbook & Online](#).

News and Issues



Executive Order re Report on Significant Trade Deficits

The Secretary of Commerce, together with the U.S. Trade Representative and other agencies will prepare a Report on Significant Trade Deficits within 90 days, by the end of June. The study will look at the countries primarily responsible for the U.S. trade deficit, including China, Japan, Germany, Mexico, Ireland, **Vietnam**, Italy, South Korea, Malaysia, India, Thailand, France, Switzerland, Taiwan, Indonesia and Canada. Surprisingly, the U.S. trade deficit with Vietnam (\$32 billion) is larger than that with South Korea (\$28 billion).



Trump, China President Xi meet to chart a way forward for the U.S. s-China Relationship

A Background Briefing by Senior Administration Officials on the Visit of President Xi Jinping of the People's Republic of China focused on the opportunity for the two leaders to exchange views on each other's respective priorities and to chart a way forward for the U.S.-China bilateral relationship.



Trump, China's President Xi have "very candid, very positive" talks

President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping established a new framework for high-level negotiations on a range of issues and pledged to make progress on trade negotiations within the next 100 days, top US officials said. China Daily said both parties appeared "equally enthusiastic about the constructive relationship they have promised to cultivate.



Secretaries of State, Treasury, Commerce discuss Trump-Xi talks

Secretary of State Tillerson. I think what I would really want you to get a grasp of is that both the atmosphere, the chemistry between the two leaders was positive. The posture between the two really set the tone for our subsequent meetings between our high-level delegations. And I would tell you the exchanges were very frank. They were candid, they were open, and they were very positive. So I think all of us are feeling very good about the results of this summit in terms of what it did for setting a very constructive tone going



Decision on the Support mechanisms for the Development of Solar Power Projects in Vietnam

was signed by Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc on April 11, 2017. This Decision regulates the mechanisms for promoting the development of solar power projects in Vietnam.



Blog: Does U.S. medical research subsidize other countries?

Leading U.S. business and political leaders strongly believe that without adequate IP protection important U.S. industries would be undermined, and many high-technology jobs and companies would disappear. The U.S. produced 57% of the world's new medicines between 2001 and 2010, up from less than a third in the 1970s, the Milken Institute reported in 2011.



TPP may not be entirely dead

U.S. to pursue bilateral FTAs with key TPP partners. President Trump's USTR nominee, Robert Lighthizer, told the Senate Finance Committee in questions for the record following his confirmation hearing in mid March that "The President has made it very clear that he intends to promote American leadership in the Asia-Pacific through many channels, including by pursuing bilateral FTAs with our key TPP partners. I support that approach."



U.S., Vietnam renew trade dialogue during Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) Meetings

The United States and Vietnam met on March 27-28 under their Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) to discuss deepening trade ties between the two nations as well as address outstanding bilateral trade issues. The United States also used the meeting as an opportunity to reaffirm the Trump Administration's commitment to expanding ties with the Asia-Pacific region, including with Vietnam. Agriculture and Food Safety and other working groups were established.



A new paradigm for Asia-Pacific Trade ... ?

Wendy Cutler, vice president of the Asia Society Policy Institute and a former diplomat and negotiator in the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, tells us what to expect from the meetings in Chile. As Acting Deputy U.S. Trade Representative, Cutler played a major role in forming TPP - particularly with the bilateral negotiations with Japan.

Vietnam to apply extensive area code changes in 2017



Area code changes in Ho Chi Minh City, Hanoi, Dong Nai, Binh Duong, and a number of other provinces will take place on June 17, 2017. The new area codes will be applied for 59 cities and provinces in three phases, from February 11 to June 17, with steps taken to ensure the change will not confuse the public, the Ministry of Information and Communications announced. But there are other concerns, such as the need to reprint packaging or business cards once numbers are changed, costing quite a sum.

Weekly Updates Archive 2006 - 2016



Launched in August 2006 to answer many questions about Vietnam's accession to the WTO, the Weekly Update Emails provide news updates, upcoming events, explanations of details of trade and investment agreements, opinions expressed by business and political leaders on race and investment issues, and developments in laws and regulations affecting the business environment in Vietnam. Click the link for to visit the archives and look back over the years. Links to more than 10,000 documents providing background on a wide variety of topics, from Vietnam's WTO Accession in 2006-2007, revision of the Labour Code in 2008-2012, to the TransPacific Partnership and WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement from 2013 and ongoing.



Prime Minister's Certificates of Merit awarded to AmCham Vietnam - HCMC

At AmCham's 20th Anniversary Celebration Dinner on September 18, 2014, Vice Chairman of HCMC People's Committee Le Thanh Liem handed the Prime Minister's Certificates of Merit to AmCham Vietnam - HCM City and to Mr. Herb Cochran, Executive Director for their excellent performance in supporting and promoting trade and investment in Ho Chi Minh City and Vietnam.



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