



**REPORT OF THE SPS EXPERTS MEETING OF 26 FEBRUARY 2020
TO PREPARE FOR THE WTO SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY COMMITTEE OF MARCH
2020**

The meeting was convened to prepare the 77th regular meeting of the WTO Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures (SPS Committee) that will take place at the Centre William Rappard, Geneva on **19 and 20 March 2020**. The SPS Committee meeting will be preceded by a thematic session on Third Party Assurances on 17 March 2020 and an informal meeting of the Committee on 18 March 2020.

I. GENERAL ISSUES

COM provided information to the Member States on the following issues:

- The ongoing WTO Trade Policy Review (TPR) of the EU;
- The draft EU Technical Assistance report containing all the technical assistance provided by the EU and the MS in 2017-2018 in the SPS area;
- The current state of play of the Fifth Review of the operation and implementation of the SPS Agreement and the EU position.

II. SPECIFIC ISSUES

A. Issues of possible interest to third countries.

The issues raised by third countries at the previous SPS Committee meetings were discussed and an update was given by COM on those topics, which were likely to be raised at the next meeting.

B. Issues of interest to the EU

B.1. Possible specific trade concerns (STCs)

The issues raised by the EU at the previous SPS Committee meetings were discussed and an update was given by COM on those topics, which were likely to be raised at the next meeting.

B.2. Monitoring of the use of international standards

COM informed the Member States on cases of third countries trade restrictions not in line with existing international standards (ASF, HPAI) and outlined its planned actions to remedy the situation.

B.3. SPS Market Access Working Group (MAWG)

The next meeting of the SPS MAWG is scheduled for **3 April 2020**, but due to the COVID situation it was cancelled.

B.4. SPS market access issues and possible bilateral meetings (in and outside Geneva)

COM informed MS about a number of SPS market access issues and its intention to request bilateral meetings with third countries on the margins of the next SPS Committee meeting and other upcoming meetings with third countries. To prepare the bilateral meetings with third countries, Member States were reminded to provide information on the latest developments on market access issues.

III. PRACTICAL INFORMATION

General SPS concerns and EU import related issues should be addressed to the EU SPS Notification Authority and Enquiry Point at sps@ec.europa.eu and general trade and SPS export related issues to TRADE-SPS@ec.europa.eu

Member States are kindly reminded that the Commission would appreciate being kept informed of any significant developments with respect to MS trade concerns particularly when the Commission has been involved in related multilateral or bilateral discussions.