



**REPORT OF THE SPS EXPERTS MEETING OF 14 OCTOBER 2020
TO PREPARE FOR THE WTO SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY COMMITTEE OF NOVEMBER
2020**

The meeting was convened to prepare the upcoming regular meeting of the WTO Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures (SPS Committee) that will take virtually on 5 -6 November 2020.

I. GENERAL ISSUES

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

- The outcome of the virtual consultation of 16 September: the committee procedures during the virtual meeting, the inclusion of Covid-19 in the agenda of the next informal SPS meeting, the envisaged follow-up of the 5th review of the implementation of the SPS Agreement, the draft SPS Ministerial Declaration and the possible thematic sessions and workshops in 2021;
- The different events which will take place on the margins of the next SPS Committee meeting; SPS@25 half-day session to celebrate the anniversary of the Agreement, the thematic session on voluntary third-party assurance as part of the national SPS control systems, the OIE information session, launch of two new publications OIE *Scientific and Technical Review* on "Ensuring safe trade in animals and animal products" and OIE Technical Item 2020 on "Required competences of Veterinary Services for international trade" and the FAO information session "Understanding international harmonization of pesticide maximum residue limits with Codex standards - A case study on rice".
- The intended information point of the EU on African swine fever.
- The informal meeting envisaged to discuss the follow-up of the 5th review and COVID issues.

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 2 or 3 December 2020 in a virtual format. COM outlined the proposed agenda and invited the participants to comment on it.

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.