

COMMUNICATION FROM COLOMBIA

The following communication has been received from the Permanent Mission of Colombia.

On behalf of the Government of Colombia, I have pleasure in informing you of the measures adopted for the implementation and administration of the Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures:

1. On 24 June 1996, the Colombian Government issued Decree No. 1112 Establishing a National Information System on Standardization Measures and Procedures for Monitoring Compliance.
2. This National Information System will centralize information in Colombia on sanitary and phytosanitary measures, technical standards, technical regulations and procedures for monitoring compliance, and it will be responsible for applying the WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures.
3. The Standardization and Quality Division of the Ministry of Economic Development will be responsible for implementing and coordinating the system. The Division will carry out the following activities:
 - (a) Centralize information on technical standards, technical regulations and procedures for monitoring compliance;
 - (b) provide relevant information to any person requesting it;
 - (c) notify competent bodies of any matters relevant to the establishment of technical standards, technical regulations and procedures for monitoring compliance, in accordance with the provisions of international trade agreements;
 - (d) deal with questions on standardization measures and procedures for monitoring compliance submitted to Colombia pursuant to the international agreements it has signed and take them up with competent national and international bodies.

4. Regarding notifications, the Decree establishes the following:

Competent bodies must inform the Standardization and Quality Division of the Ministry of Economic Development of any proposed sanitary or phytosanitary measures they wish to adopt. The Division will then transmit this information to the competent bodies of the international trade agreements at the latest 10 days after the notification has been received.

Draft standards will be published in the *Gaceta Oficial* (Official Journal) of the Ministry of Economic Development.

The bodies concerned may not put into effect the proposed measure until sixty-five (65) days from the date of the official notification to the competent body of the international agreement, in this particular case the WTO Secretariat.

If there are any real or threatened emergencies related to safety, environmental protection or national security, urgent or emergency technical regulations may be issued. These will be notified to the WTO Secretariat as soon as possible.

5. As from 24 June 1996, the sole enquiry point in Colombia is the following:

Ministry of Economic Development
Standardization and Quality Division
Address: Carrera 13 No. 28-01. Piso 8
Telephone: (57 1) 338 06 41
Fax: (57 1) 245 72 56
Santafé de Bogotá