

**CASE STUDIES – ENQUIRY POINTS/NATIONAL
NOTIFICATION AUTHORITIES**

Presentation Made by Chile at the Special Meeting
of the SPS Committee on Transparency Provisions
Held on 9 November 1999

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. In compliance with the Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures of the World Trade Organization, in 1995 the Ministry of External Relations of Chile appointed the Agriculture and Livestock Service of the Ministry of Agriculture as the notification authority and the enquiry point for sanitary and phytosanitary measures, one of the reasons being that this Service was Chile's official authority for animal and plant health matters and its experts had taken part in the negotiations under the Uruguay Round as well as in meetings of the Committee on the aforementioned Agreement.
2. Chile's normative framework was circulated to the Committee on 6 December 1995 in document G/SPS/W/39, which identifies the bodies responsible for taking sanitary and phytosanitary measures in Chile. It should be noted, however, that in addition to the Agriculture and Livestock Service, which draws up plant and animal health measures, the Ministry of Health prepares measures on food safety and the National Fisheries Service of the Ministry of the Economy prepares health measures relating to hydrobiological products.
3. Within the Agriculture and Livestock Service, there is a Livestock Protection Department responsible for animal health measures, and an Agricultural Protection Department responsible for plant protection measures. The former has acted as the contact point with the International Office of Epizootics and the second has carried out the same role for the International Plant Protection Convention of the FAO. In order to implement the WTO Agreement properly, the Department of International Affairs was created within the Agriculture and Livestock Service to act as the notification authority and enquiry point.
4. Food safety measures are the responsibility of the Ministry of Health and there is a joint coordinating committee of the Ministries of Health and Agriculture, the latter being represented by the Agriculture and Livestock Service.
5. Other coordinating bodies have been set up through the National Commission and the technical committees of the Codex Alimentarius, which coordinate the regulations on food safety between public and private entities. The Agriculture and Livestock Service is currently responsible for coordinating five technical committees and also participates in the National Commission.

II. RESOURCES

1. Human resources:
 - A professional agronomist;

- An executive secretary.

Around 20 per cent of their time is taken up with this work.

2. Material resources:

- 2 Pentium computers with access to the Internet;
- Computer programmes used: - Word 97, Access, Excel;
- Other (photocopiers, telephones, fax, etc.).

III. FUNCTIONING

As the enquiry point and the notification authority are in the same place and their activities are carried out by the same persons, for greater clarity, the following are their different tasks:

1. Notification authority

1.1 Notifications by Chile;

1.1.1 Filling in the forms as they are received from the technical bodies and transmitting them to the Secretariat of the WTO's SPS Committee, keeping the register of documents sent out filed by date and subject.

1.1.2 Replies to requests for documents from other countries, keeping a register of those sent (country, address, entity) and the date.

1.1.3 Transmitting comments on measures notified by Chile.

1.2 Notifications by other countries;

1.2.1 Receiving or downloading from the Internet notifications from other countries and registering them. Classifying them by subject and ensuring their circulation to the competent bodies in the public and private sectors, keeping the corresponding register (of the recipient and the date).

1.2.3 Acting as a channel for requests by other bodies in Chile for information from abroad.

1.2.4 Responsible for transmitting remarks or comments on measures by other countries.

2. Enquiry point

2.1 Responsible for replying to or transmitting all other questions relating to sanitary and phytosanitary measures from other countries (regulations, risk analysis, agreements, etc.);

2.2 Responsible for transmitting questions relating to sanitary and phytosanitary measures from Chilean entities to be addressed to enquiry points for sanitary and phytosanitary measures in other countries.

IV. MAJOR CHANGES

Below there is a summary of the main changes in the operation of the notification authority since it started to function in 1995 up to the present.

Even though Chile promptly notified its notification authority and enquiry point to the WTO's SPS Committee, their activities have continued to increase as can be seen from the following information:

Number of notifications

Year	Number
1995	0
1996	1
1997	12
1998	18
*1999	16
Total	47

*To date

In 1999, Chile issued 16 notifications and received requests for transmission of sanitary and phytosanitary measures from 14 countries in relation to 58 measures.

The major changes have occurred as a result of computerization. A rapid comparison of activities from the beginning until now shows that human resources have remained the same in terms of numbers but communication by fax has been replaced by e-mail. The registers are no longer compiled manually but by computer.

Furthermore, the private sector of producers and exporters has recently been integrated and receives the notifications corresponding to their particular field.

V. FUTURE

It is intended to implement the following activities within the near future:

1. More comprehensive integration of the private sector (exporters, producers, importers, consumers);
2. establishment of a national sanitary and phytosanitary measures committee involving the public and private sectors for the purposes of applying the WTO's SPS Agreement, starting with notifications;
3. inclusion of sanitary and phytosanitary measures in the Web page of the Agriculture and Livestock Service;
4. operational changes in order to channel requests for information on notifications and observations to other countries through the notification authority, as well as comments received regarding notifications by Chile, in order to ensure satisfactory follow-up and registration;
5. ongoing participation in meetings of the WTO's SPS Committee.

Expected changes:

More rapid procedures and greater participation at the national level.
