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Page: 1/2

Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

Original: English

**INFORMATION SESSION ON THE EU PLANT HEALTH IMPORT REGIME
28 SEPTEMBER 2018 - BRUSSELS**

COMMUNICATION FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION

The following communication, received on 13 September 2018, is being circulated at the request of the Delegation of the European Union.

As announced at the SPS Committee meeting of last July, the European Union would like to invite WTO Members to an information session on the planned changes in the EU's plant health import regime.

The meeting will take place on **28 September 2018** between 10:00 and 13:00 in the Centre Borschette (rue Froissart 36, 1040 Brussels); interpretation will be provided in English, French and Spanish.

For access to the conference building registration of participants is compulsory.

Please register via the following website:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_food-safety/dyna/meetings/form.cfm?id=926

Deadline for registration: **25 September 2018**.

Background

1. Regulation (EU) No 2016/2031 on protective measures against pests of plants¹ ("Plant Health Law") was adopted on 26 October 2016 and entered into force on 13 December 2016. It constitutes a new EU legal framework for plant health providing comprehensive and clear rules for the prevention of entry into, and spread within, the EU territory of pests injurious to plant health. These new rules will apply from 14 December 2019.
2. Article 42 of the Regulation introduced the concept of "high risk plants, plant products and other objects", commodities whose import will be prohibited into the European Union until a full risk assessment confirms their phytosanitary status. This list will take into account the specific criteria in Annex III to the Regulation.
3. According to the Regulation, all plants (namely living plant material such as plants for planting, fruits, vegetables or cut flowers) can only be imported into the European Union if accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate. This is important to ensure an appropriate level of phytosanitary protection as well as an effective overview of the import of plants into the European Union and the risks thereof.

¹ Regulation (EU) 2016/2031 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 October 2016 on protective measures against pests of plants, amending Regulations (EU) No 228/2013, (EU) No 652/2014 and (EU) No 1143/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council and repealing Council Directives 69/464/EEC, 74/647/EEC, 93/85/EEC, 98/57/EC, 2000/29/EC, 2006/91/EC and 2007/33/EC, OJ L317, 23 November 2016, p. 4-104.

4. A number of well specified plants, which are considered low risk, will be exempted from the requirement for a phytosanitary certificate. The listing of those plants will take into account the criteria of Annex VI to this Regulation.
5. The Commission is under legal obligation to identify both high risk and low risk plants and adopt an Implementing Regulation by 14 December 2018.
6. As announced at the last meeting of the SPS Committee, the European Union is acting in full transparency on these regulatory developments. In addition to the above information session, a 4-week long public consultation on the draft legal act was conducted in July and August. Also as announced, an SPS notification will be submitted during the last week of September with a 60-day comment period, giving the European Union's trade partners a second possibility to comment on the draft act.
