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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

Original: Spanish

**MINISTERIAL DECLARATION OF THE SOUTHERN AGRICULTURAL COUNCIL (CAS)  
ON "THE LOW-LEVEL PRESENCE (LLP) OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED  
ORGANISMS NOT AUTHORIZED BY THE IMPORTING COUNTRY"**

COMMUNICATION BY ARGENTINA

The following communication, received on 25 June 2019, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of Argentina.

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**1 OVERVIEW**

1.1. The Agriculture Ministers of the member countries of the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS) - Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay – have highlighted the importance of innovation for agricultural production in order to address current and potential challenges.

1.2. Biotechnology, which has been used safely for over 20 years, has become a key tool for responding to such challenges. Approvals of products derived from biotechnology are based on science and risk assessment.

1.3. Asynchronous approvals foster situations in which there may be a low-level presence (LLP) of genetically modified organisms that are not authorized in the importing countries. LLP situations are part of the current and potential challenges experienced by countries, which include the effects of climate change.

1.4. To avoid LLP situations, countries must base their decisions on internationally harmonized criteria, and strongly promote collaboration to ensure science-based regulatory frameworks.

**2 TEXT OF THE "MINISTERIAL DECLARATION OF THE SOUTHERN AGRICULTURAL COUNCIL (CAS) ON THE LOW-LEVEL PRESENCE (LLP) OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS NOT AUTHORIZED BY THE IMPORTING COUNTRY"**

LOW-LEVEL PRESENCE (LLP) OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS  
NOT AUTHORIZED BY THE IMPORTING COUNTRY

SOUTHERN AGRICULTURAL COUNCIL (CAS)  
XXXVII ORDINARY MEETING

CAS/Council, Declaration III (XXXVII-2019)  
Santiago de Chile, Chile - 28 and 29 May 2019  
Original: Spanish

**Ministerial Declaration:**

The Agriculture Ministers of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay, member countries of the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS), meeting on 28 and 29 May 2019 in Santiago de Chile, Chile,

**Consider that:**

1. Agricultural reform is a way to improve the productivity of farmers in a safe and sustainable manner, and against a background of rising international demand for food and significant limitations, such as restricted access to arable land and freshwater, and climate change. In this regard, biotechnology continues to play a fundamental role in addressing these global challenges facing agricultural production.
2. The quantity of biotechnology-derived crops that are developed and produced throughout the world is increasing every year, which has led to a rise in the number of asynchronous and asymmetric approvals, despite the two decades of experience in assessing the safety of such products.
3. There is an immediate need to address the growing risk to trade arising from the low-level presence (LLP) of biotech products which have not been approved by some importing countries, and which affect trade and world food security.
4. Regulatory approaches related to products derived from innovative agricultural technologies must be based on science and risk assessment, demonstrate transparency, not be more trade-restrictive than necessary in order to meet legitimate objectives, and be consistent with the relevant international obligations, including the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade.

**Declare that:**

1. They recognize the need for commitment to developing practical approaches for the management of LLP which are based on science and risk assessment, are predictable and transparent, and foster cooperation with regard to internationally harmonized standards such as the Codex Alimentarius (CAC/GL 45-2003, Directrices para la realización de la inocuidad de los alimentos obtenidos de plantas de ADN recombinante (Guidelines for the food safety assessment of foods derived from recombinant-DNA plants)).
  2. They will work together to facilitate international trade in agricultural products, by addressing the general issue of asynchronous approvals, while reducing the impact of LLP situations.
  3. They will promote the application of functional and transparent regulatory approaches based on science and risk assessment, which foster innovation and ensure a global supply of safe and reliable food.
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