



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

SUBMISSION BY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Addendum

The following communication, dated 8 November 2023, is being circulated at the request of the Delegation of the United States of America.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. In 1999, the World Trade Organization (WTO) Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Committee) initiated a process to gather information on technical assistance that Members have requested, received, or provided in support of the implementation of the SPS Agreement since it came into force on 1 January 1995 (see [G/SPS/W/101](#)). In response to this interest, the United States ([G/SPS/GEN/181](#) and addenda) as well as other donors, including Canada ([G/SPS/GEN/1426](#)), the European Union ([G/SPS/GEN/1139](#) and addenda), and Japan ([G/SPS/GEN/1160](#) and addenda), have submitted periodic reporting on technical assistance provided in support of implementation of the SPS Agreement. This submission marks the sixteenth such submission by the United States.

1.2. The compilation of US technical assistance provided to developing countries and newly acceding countries in this report shows the assistance between 1 October 2020 and 30 September 2021. In this report, the United States provides details on technical assistance projects in the fields of food safety, animal health, plant health, and agricultural biotechnology collectively valued at more than USD 14 million. Forms of assistance include regional trade capacity building workshops, hands-on training programs, fellowships and exchanges, and site visits to US research and academic institutions.

1.3. This reporting period, during which programming was heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, demonstrated our commitment to meeting the evolving technical assistance needs of developing and least developed countries. We invested resources and adapted activities to support new challenges to the application of the SPS Agreement, including moving to virtual and hybrid formats for trainings on topics ranging from transboundary animal disease, system-based approaches to audit, and pesticide registration for food safety. The United States also shared freely accessible online resources, including a suite of SPS distance learning courses at <http://www.spscourses.com/> and disseminated them publicly, including at a side event on the margins of the July 2021 SPS Committee meeting.¹ Global usership has expanded significantly since 2020 and now has reached more than 15,000 individuals in more than 240 countries.

1.4. The United States continues to value the provision of technical assistance in support of implementation of the SPS Agreement. This is a timely topic as the Committee prepares to report on the work program of the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Declaration for the Twelfth WTO Ministerial

¹ [G/SPS/GEN/1914](#).

Conference: Responding to Modern SPS Challenges ([WT/MIN\(22\)/27](#)) at the upcoming Thirteenth WTO Ministerial Conference.

1.5. US technical assistance programs assist developing countries, least developing countries, and newly acceding countries in building and implementing effective, transparent, and science-based regulatory systems to protect human, animal, and plant health while facilitating trade in agricultural products. These programs seek to foster a clear understanding of key SPS provisions in international and bilateral trade agreements. The United States continues to develop and implement demand-driven assistance within a framework of mutual respect and accountability which, from our experience, provides the strongest framework for delivering enduring results.

1.6. The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) implements many of these technical assistance activities in partnership with other US Government agencies, international organizations, US colleges and universities, agri-businesses, and private consultants. This report includes a list of the key US Government agencies involved in the provision of technical assistance to developing countries, least developing countries, and newly acceding countries, as well as a list of representative activities conducted in the specified reporting period. The lists are not exhaustive.

2 KEY US AGENCIES INVOLVED IN PROVIDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

2.1. **Animal Plant and Health Inspection Service (APHIS)** – APHIS is a lead US government agency in international SPS standard setting activities in the areas of animal health and plant health. APHIS international technical and regulatory capacity building activities are conducted on the basis of requests from other countries or from US government agencies involved in international technical assistance. APHIS has staff positioned globally in 46 overseas offices assisting in both import and export issues. APHIS partners with international agricultural organizations, such as the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH), the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA) to achieve and advance science-based SPS objectives globally.

2.2. **Commercial Law Development Program (CLDP)** – CLDP is a division of the US Department of Commerce that helps achieve US foreign policy goals in developing and post-conflict countries through commercial legal reforms. Partnering with the federal judiciary, other US government agencies, and international organizations, CLDP designs and implements conferences and workshops, utilizes long and short-term advisors, and trains foreign delegations in the United States and other countries to improve commercial legal frameworks. These frameworks strengthen standards, food safety, and animal and plant health agencies; utilize international best practices to reduce impediments to trade; increase transparency regarding specific SPS concerns; and develop early notification systems for emerging impediments to bilateral and regional trade.

2.3. **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** – EPA works closely with the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service and other US agencies to provide scientific and policy expertise for the establishment of standards and requirements regarding sound pesticide and chemical management practices based on science. EPA, considered one of the world's leading authorities on the regulation of pesticides, has worked extensively with other countries both bilaterally and through international fora to promote harmonized maximum residue limits.

2.4. **Food and Drug Administration (FDA)** – FDA is the agency within the Department of Health and Human Services responsible for protecting the public health by assuring the safety, efficacy, and security of domestically produced and imported foods, as well as human and veterinary drugs, food additives, and supplements. FDA maintains an international presence and works with many other US agencies to provide public health and food safety technical expertise to our trading partners.

2.5. **Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS)** – FSIS is the USDA's public health regulatory agency, responsible for ensuring that the nation's commercial supply of meat, poultry, and egg products, whether domestic or imported, is safe, wholesome, and properly labeled and packaged. FSIS has significant expertise in helping foreign governments understand the food safety regulatory system of the United States.

2.6. **Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)** – FAS has the primary responsibility for coordinating and implementing USDA's international trade policy, promotion, and capacity building activities. FAS provides technical assistance through fellowships and scientific exchange programs, such as the Cochran and Borlaug fellowship programs, as well as through the dispatch of USDA advisors and experts from other US food regulatory agencies to assist foreign policymakers, regulators, scientists, and the private sector to address complex, trade-related issues such as SPS compliance and applications of agricultural biotechnology.

2.7. **US Agency for International Development (USAID)** – USAID is the lead US government agency delivering development assistance worldwide. USAID provides assistance to support country, regional, and global strategies that facilitate trade and strengthen SPS systems. Technical assistance builds the capacity needed to support policy and systems change, enabling implementation of the WTO SPS Agreement and adherence to regional and international SPS standards.

**ILLUSTRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, LEAST DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND NEWLY ACCEDING COUNTRIES
BETWEEN 1 OCTOBER 2020 AND 30 SEPTEMBER 2021**

Sector	Activity Description	Form of assistance	Implementing Subagency	Provided to
Animal Health, Plant Health, Food Safety	Scientific Cooperation Research Program supports joint research, education, and extension projects between US and international agricultural professionals.	Advice, Subject Matter Expert, Training	Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)	Global
Animal Health, Plant Health, Food Safety	Engagement with Georgia on the adoption of science-based, trade-facilitating SPS regulations.	Advice, Subject Matter Expert, Training	Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)	Georgia
Animal Health, Plant Health, Food Safety	The Borlaug Fellowship Program promotes food security and economic growth by providing training and collaborative research opportunities to fellows from developing and middle-income countries. Borlaug fellows are generally scientists, researchers, or policymakers who are in the early or middle stages of their careers. Each fellow works one-on-one with a mentor at a US university, research center or government agency, usually for 8-12 weeks.	Advice, Subject Matter Expert, Training	Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)	Global
Animal Health, Plant Health, Food Safety	The Food Safety Network program is intended to strengthen impact, leverage resources, and improve coordination of capacity building for food safety, animal health, and plant health.	Advice, Subject Matter Expert, Training	Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), US Agency for International Development (USAID)	Global
Animal Health, Plant Health, Food Safety	Contribution to the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) support a variety of SPS activities worldwide.	Technical Assistance	Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), US Agency for International Development (USAID)	Global
Animal Health, Plant Health, Food Safety	Part of the Global Food Security Program (GFSP), the Feed the Future (FTF) initiative, the Initiative to End Hunger in Africa (IEHA), and the African Growth Opportunity Act (AGOA). The Sub-Saharan Africa Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) program includes capacity building in plant health, animal health, and food safety systems. The objective is to harmonize SPS regulations with international standards to enhance food security and increase export opportunities for horticultural, animal, and processed food products through scientific and regulatory capacity building.	Advice, Training	Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)	Sub-Saharan Africa Region
Animal Health, Plant Health, Food Safety	Engagement with Ukraine on the adoption of science-based, trade-facilitating SPS regulations.	Advice, Training	Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)	Ukraine

Sector	Activity Description	Form of assistance	Implementing Subagency	Provided to
Animal Health, Plant Health, Food Safety	The Faculty Exchange Program supports agricultural educators from institutions of higher learning in developing countries who come to the US for one academic semester to acquire new knowledge and enhance their ability to teach and build curricula at the university level.	Advice, Subject Matter Expert, Training	Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)	Global
Plant Health, Food Safety	Program focuses on increasing Bangladesh's ability to sustainably adopt and implement its obligations under the SPS Agreement. The program strengthens the National Plant Protection Organization's phytosanitary capacity and the government's function to comply with pesticide international trade standards.	Advice, Training	Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)	Bangladesh
Animal Health, Plant Health, Food Safety	The goal of the Trade Central Asia activity is to improve region-wide trade connectivity to accelerate economic growth and increase economic opportunity in Central Asia through harmonization of customs and border procedures, increasing public-private dialogue on trade and investment, improving cross-border firm-to-firm connectivity, and addressing gender-relevant trade issues.	Technical Assistance	US Agency for International Development (USAID)	Central Asia Region
Food Safety	The Global Maximum Residue Levels (MRL) Capacity Building Program focusing on harmonization of pesticide MRL standards and registration processes in Latin America, Africa and Asia	Advice, Training	Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)	Global
Animal Health, Plant Health, Food Safety	The Commercial Law Development Program (CLDP) organized and facilitated meetings of the Regional Working Group on Sanitary/Phytosanitary Measures; brought together Agriculture, Sanitary, Phytosanitary and/or Food Safety officials from each country in Central Asia to facilitate increased working-level communication and cooperation among officials and agencies in Central Asia, and to model and facilitate intergovernmental, inter-agency, and public-private cooperation.	Advice, Training	Department of Commerce	Central Asia Region
Animal Health, Plant Health, Food Safety	The Scientific Exchanges Program aims to educate a new generation of agricultural scientists and foster collaborative research internationally. The program can also help open markets and decrease or eliminate trade barriers, which ultimately creates new opportunities for US agricultural exports.	Advice, Subject Matter Expert, Training	Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)	Global
Food Safety	The Institutionalization of Food Safety in Bangladesh for Safer Food is aimed at providing necessary support by improving the integration of the national food safety control system and by enhancing inter-agency collaboration and cooperation. This is expected to lead to greater consistency in enforcement of risk-based regulations and a safer food supply.	Technical Assistance	US Agency for International Development (USAID)	Bangladesh

Sector	Activity Description	Form of assistance	Implementing Subagency	Provided to
Animal Health, Plant Health, Food Safety	The CLDP facilitates a capacity building workshop for Moldovan agriculture and trade officials on best practices in transparent and effective implementation of the WTO SPS Agreement.	Advice, Training	Department of Commerce	Moldova, Republic of
Plant Health, Food Safety	Engagement on trade related technical regulations to support bilateral and regional adoption of science-based, trade-facilitating regulations and practices.	Advice, Training	Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)	Latin America and Caribbean Region
Animal Health, Plant Health, Food Safety	The Cochran Fellowship Program supports short-term, US-based training opportunities for agricultural professionals from developing and middle-income countries.	Advice, Subject Matter Expert, Training	Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)	Global
Animal Health	High Containment Laboratory Practices and Techniques Seminar	Disease Response Investigation	Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)	Global
Animal Health	Emergency Poultry Disease Response and Regionalization Symposium and Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory Quality Assurance Symposium	Disease Response Investigation	Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)	Global
Animal Health	V RESUDIA Workshop	Disease Response Investigation	Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)	South America
Animal Health	Animal Health and Economics Seminar (Virtual)	Subject Matter Expert	Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)	Botswana, Nigeria, South Africa
Biotechnology	Biosafety Framework (Virtual)	Subject Matter Expert	Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)	Myanmar
Biotechnology	Gene Editing Workshop (Virtual)	Subject Matter Expert	Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)	Korea, Republic of
Biotechnology	International Food Safety Conference (Virtual)	Disease Response Investigation	Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)	United Arab Emirates
Food Safety	Implementation of US Food Safety Modernization Act - Identifying, Researching and Implementing Alternative Methods to Expand the Reach Across the Global Supply Chain	Technical Assistance	Food and Drug Administration (FDA)	Global
Food Safety	Improving water and soil quality to decrease the number of foodborne pathogens that could contaminate the food supply	Technical Assistance	Food and Drug Administration (FDA)	Global
Food Safety	Increasing the international food safety capacity building efforts in Latin America via the Joint Institute for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (JIFSAN) and the Latin American Water Study	Technical Assistance	Food and Drug Administration (FDA)	Latin America and Caribbean Region
Food Safety	Webinar: What to expect from a US FDA fish and fishery products facility inspection (Virtual)	Advice, Training	Food and Drug Administration (FDA)	India