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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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**CHINA'S ACTIONS RELATED TO COVID-19 THAT AFFECT TRADE IN FOOD AND
AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS – [SPECIFIC TRADE CONCERN 487](#)**

SUBMISSION BY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The following submission, received on 11 November 2022, is the statement made by the United States of America at the 9-11 November 2022 WTO SPS Committee, and is being circulated at the request of the Delegation of the United States of America.

1. The United States is disappointed on the lack of engagement from China on this issue and again reiterates our concerns raised over the past three years with this Committee regarding the measures China continues to implement purportedly to mitigate the transmission of COVID-19. These measures include declarations, testing requirements on imported foods, port-of-entry rejections of imported products when positive nucleic acid test results are reported, and suspension of imports from specific facilities.

2. We join other Members in reminding China of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) guidance for preventing transmission of COVID-19 within food businesses, which states that "current data indicates that neither food nor food packaging is a pathway for the spread of viruses causing respiratory illnesses, including SARS-CoV-2. In other words, SARS-CoV-2 is not a direct food safety concern."

3. These measures appear to discriminate against imports while providing significantly more lenient pathways for the production, transportation, and sale of domestic food products. SPS measures, including unjustified measures, should not operate as a discriminatory barrier to trade that provides unfair advantages to a Member's domestic producers.

4. These unjustified trade restrictions adopted by China during the COVID-19 pandemic continue to increase food prices for consumers, threaten global food supply chains, slow global recovery efforts, unfairly disadvantage imported cold chain food products, and further challenge global food security.

5. We again urge China to immediately withdraw these measures and meaningfully engage with its global partners to support the guidance of international organizations, which is based on the body of scientific evidence on COVID-19. Collaborative engagement is essential as we collectively seek to respond to lasting impacts of the pandemic, avoid unnecessary barriers to trade on food and agricultural products, and maintain food security for all.
