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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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**OECD SIDE EVENT
SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY (SPS) APPROVAL PROCEDURES: KEY ISSUES,
THEIR IMPACT ON TRADE AND WAYS TO ADDRESS THEM**

COMMUNICATION FROM THE OECD

The following communication, received on 1 March 2023, is being circulated at the request of the OECD.

1. Approval procedures are critical to Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) systems as they uphold countries' commitments to facilitate safe trade. However, they can create significant costs and act as non-tariff barriers if not properly administered. This report examines the costs and opportunities that are associated with seven of the most pressing issues related to the administration of approval procedures. The analysis reveals that countries have increasingly raised specific trade concerns (STCs) to the WTO about issues related to approval procedures. Furthermore, gravity analysis demonstrates that trading partners dealing with STCs related to approval procedures trade 26% less on average than those not dealing with any STC. An OECD survey specifically designed to evaluate how issues related to approval procedures can be addressed indicates that multiple solutions exist to enhance efficiencies in agro-food trade, such as digitalizing SPS systems, relying on international standards or simplifying SPS measures.

2. This report will be presented during a Side Event to the SPS Committee Meeting on 22 March 2023, from 14:00-14:50. The meeting will be held under a hybrid format and can be accessed online by registering at [this link](#) or attended in-person in Room S3.

3. The event agenda is the following:

14:00 Introductory remarks

Camille Fléchet (moderator), Dispute Settlement Lawyer, WTO

14:05 Presentation of the report

Annelies Deuss, Senior Agricultural Policy Analyst, OECD

Edith Laget, Agricultural Policy Analyst, OECD

14:35 Questions and discussion

14:50 Closing remarks

Camille Fléchet, Dispute Settlement Lawyer, WTO

4. This report has been published as an OECD Food, Agriculture and Fisheries Paper on 14 February 2023:

Deuss, A. and E. Laget (2023), "Sanitary and phytosanitary approval procedures: Key issues, their impact on trade, and ways to address them", OECD Food, Agriculture and Fisheries Papers, No. 192, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/35c3fd16-en>.

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