

# WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

Original: English

## PROCEDURE TO MONITOR THE PROCESS OF INTERNATIONAL HARMONIZATION

### Submission by the United States

In accordance with paragraph 6 of the provisional procedure to monitor the use of international standards (G/SPS/11), the United States proposes that the Committee consider the attached issue.

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PROCEDURE TO MONITOR THE PROCESS  
OF INTERNATIONAL HARMONIZATION

Submission by the United States

<b>Commodities affected:</b>	Poultry and poultry meat
<b>Disease/problem/issue:</b>	Recently, several Members have imposed import restrictions, chiefly import prohibitions, on poultry and poultry products because of cases of low pathogenic avian influenza.
<b>Is international trade significantly affected because of this issue?</b>	Yes
<p><b>Does there currently exist an international standard for this disease/problem/issue with these commodities</b></p> <p><b>If so:</b></p> <p><b>Briefly describe the existing standard:</b></p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Chapter 2.1.14 of the International Animal Health Code of the Office international des Epizooties deals specifically with highly pathogenic avian influenza, and the Manual of Standards for Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines (Chapter 2.1.14) details procedures for determining pathogenicity. The Code does not identify the low-pathogenic strains as notifiable.</p>
<b>Is the International standard appropriate?</b>	<p>Differences in application of the standard and its scientific basis have resulted in some actions against poultry and poultry product imports which are more trade restrictive than necessary.</p> <p>The ability of the standard to contribute to the smooth functioning of international trade depends on its consistent application among Members. The applicability of the standard to low pathogenic strains of avian influenza needs to be clarified.</p>

**Description of how trade is affected by this issue and how the issue can be resolved through new or existing international standards:**

Several countries have recently begun to impose import restrictions, including import prohibitions, on poultry and poultry products because of concerns about low pathogenic avian influenza. This has resulted in severe trade disruptions. In addition, many of these new import restrictions reflect a change in the importing countries = treatment of low pathogenic avian influenza, creating considerable uncertainty about these import requirements, which hampers trade.

We strongly support the efforts of the OIE to review and clarify the existing standard with respect to low pathogenic avian influenza, including addressing the potential mutagenicity of certain low pathogenic strains. We believe that the standard can further contribute by addressing disease risk specific to the product in trade, such as poultry meat, poultry products, live birds or hatching eggs. As avian influenza is known to exist within migratory waterfowl populations globally, all Members have an interest in the work of the OIE regarding this standard. We encourage the OIE to address in the standard how Members can ensure that their measures are consistent and non-discriminatory.

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