

Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

INFORMATION TO BE SUBMITTED BY OBSERVER GOVERNMENTS

Note by the Secretariat

1. At its meeting of 29-30 March 1995, the Committee briefly discussed the issue of requesting Observer Governments to submit specific relevant information for its consideration. Some WTO Committees request information from Observer Governments, such as the Committees on Anti-Dumping Practices, on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures, and on Safeguards, while other WTO bodies encourage Observer Governments to provide technical, background information. With respect to the SPS Committee, the objective of requesting information from Observer Governments would be to increase the transparency of SPS measures and to avoid, to the extent possible, potential trade difficulties arising from SPS requirements.
2. The Committee may wish to encourage Observer Governments to establish and identify an Enquiry Point which could respond to requests for information concerning specific SPS measures, and to provide advance notice, whenever possible of proposed new SPS regulations or changes in SPS regulations which might have a significant effect on trade.
3. The Committee may also wish to consider inviting Observer Governments to submit the following information:
 - (a) identification of those relevant international and regional standards-developing organizations in which they participate;
 - (b) their actions or planned action to implement the obligations of the SPS Agreement, including the adaptation of their existing procedures and SPS requirements; and
 - (c) a description of their regulatory procedures for the development of SPS standards and measures.