

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

RESTRICTED

G/SPS/W/96

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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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PROCEDURE TO MONITOR THE PROCESS OF INTERNATIONAL HARMONIZATION

Submission by the European Communities

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

PROCEDURE TO MONITOR THE PROCESS
OF INTERNATIONAL HARMONIZATION

Submission by the European Communities

Commodities affected:	Bovine semen
Disease/problem/issue:	Frequency of controls to be carried out on bulls in collection centres (brucellosis, tuberculosis, leucosis, IBR).
Is international trade significantly affected because of this issue?	Yes
Does there currently exist an international standard for this disease/problem/issue with these commodities?	Yes
If so:	
Briefly describe the existing standard:	Articles 3.2.1.4, 3.2.3.7, 3.2.4.4 and 3.2.5.7 and Appendix 4.2.1.1 of the International Animal Health Code.
Is the international standard inappropriate?	Yes, insofar as there is an inconsistency.
<p>Description of how trade is affected by this issue and how the issue can be resolved through new or existing international standards:</p> <p>Semen collection is carried out before the final destination of the semen is determined. In this field, serological tests must be carried out <u>before</u> the collection. This constraint is all the more difficult to manage as bulls used for artificial insemination are usually tested on descendants and a minimum of four to five years is necessary to carry out these tests. It is only at the end of the period of testing that the commercial and genetic value of the semen could be known and the possibilities of trade envisaged.</p> <p>It is important to harmonize this field as completely as possible in order to avoid the additional requirements by importing countries.</p> <p>The absence of consistency between the provisions of the annex concerning bovine semen and those of articles concerning the relevant diseases is the cause of disparities in requests by importing countries. While the articles are ambiguous regarding the frequency of the tests to be carried out, the appendix recommends annual reviews.</p> <p>Insofar as the Code in its Appendix 4.2.1.1 recommends that semen come from bulls of insemination centres that benefit from health isolation measures, the control frequency recommended in the chapters specific to each disease should take account of this characteristic and allow more homogeneous interpretation of this point. This is all the more important as the diseases in question are covered by the International Animal Health Code, where the frequency of controls is already established.</p>	