

PRESS RELEASE

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TECHNICAL COOPERATION

Sweden gives CHF 1.96m for assistance on SPS standards

Sweden agreed on 14 December 2005 to donate 12 million kronor (approximately 1.96 million Swiss francs) to help developing countries analyse and implement international standards on food safety and animal and plant health — so-called sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) standards

The donation, spread over three years, is for the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF), a programme set up for the purpose jointly by the World Trade Organization, the World Health Organization, the World Bank, the World Organization for Animal Health, and the Food and Agriculture Organization.

"I thank Sweden for its generous contribution. It comes at an opportune moment as trade Ministers from the WTO's 149 Member countries sit down to discuss laying the foundation for a new 'Aid for Trade' package to address the developing world's supply side constraints," said WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy.

"Market opening opportunities can be of little use to countries if their exports are held back by a failure to comply with the demands of importing countries' rules on food safety, animal or plant health," he said.

"Keeping up with new SPS standards in export markets is a challenge for all, but in particular so for developing and least developed countries. By informing developing country governments of new developments in SPS standards and assisting them in their implementation, programmes like the Standards and Trade Development Facility have a direct impact on these countries' capacity to export."

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