

15 April 2020

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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

Original: Spanish

**MEASURES CONCERNING PHYTOSANITARY CERTIFICATES AIMED AT THE
FACILITATION OF TRADE IN VIEW OF ISSUES ARISING
FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

COMMUNICATION FROM ECUADOR

The following communication, dated 3 April 2020, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of Ecuador.

1. The challenging time that the world is going through has led to governments taking increasingly drastic measures to ensure public health.
2. As a result, the Ecuadorian Government has restricted movement as far as possible across the whole country, with a view to keeping new COVID-19 infections under control. Under these measures, there are times when movement is fully restricted, and other times when it is limited and controlled. Moreover, commercial flights are limited, and postal services therefore suspended, meaning that exporters are unable to send physical copies of phytosanitary export certificates (CFEs) to their importers.
3. In light of this, and in order to prevent the spread of this dangerous virus through physical contact and public gatherings, the Ecuadorian Agency for Plant and Animal Health Regulation and Control (AGROCALIDAD) has deemed it necessary to seek alternatives so that Ecuadorian shipments can reach our trading partners without any documentation-related difficulties.
4. We therefore request that WTO Members, in cases where it is not possible to send physical copies of CFEs, accept CFEs from Ecuador issued in digital form (as a scanned document). These will be issued to the exporter following the inspection, in compliance with internal controls. The scanned certificate will be sent to you via the email address that each Member has notified as its contact point.
5. With a view to facilitating the verification of CFEs, AGROCALIDAD has developed an online platform for viewing and verifying CFEs. The platform can be accessed at:

<https://sistemas.agrocalidad.gob.ec/sizse/publicAgr/publicCertFitSvAgr.aspx>
6. Officials from NPPOs can follow this link and enter the certificate number. A digital copy of the certificate issued by AGROCALIDAD can then be viewed on screen, which proves its authenticity. As always, AGROCALIDAD guarantees the conducting of phytosanitary inspections as well as the proper issuance of the CFEs.
7. The platform is available in Spanish and English. Attached is a user's guide in both languages, which outlines the process for carrying out verifications.
8. We are aware that similar measures are being implemented in other countries and are therefore confident that exports will be able to reach their destination. Ecuador greatly appreciates Members' understanding and positive response to this special request.

9. We would be grateful if Members could inform the authorities carrying out border controls of this matter, so as to ensure that the processes necessary for the release of shipments are carried out.

10. AGROCALIDAD's international relations unit is available for any questions or information or verification requests that your authorities may have. These should be sent to the following email addresses:

relaciones.internacionales@agrocalidad.gob.ec
agrocalidad.rrii@gmail.com

11. AGROCALIDAD reiterates its thanks to its fellow plant health bodies worldwide for accepting digitalized versions of the CFE via email while the health emergency persists across the globe. Once the situation becomes less severe and conditions improve, physical copies of the document will once again be issued.
