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**Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures**

**SPS COMMITTEE THEMATIC SESSION ON APPROVAL PROCEDURES  
TUESDAY, 5 NOVEMBER 2019  
WTO, CENTRE WILLIAM RAPPARD, GENEVA**

PROGRAMME

In the context of the Fifth Review of the Operation and Implementation of the *Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures* (SPS Agreement), Canada submitted a proposal for the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Committee) to consider holding a thematic session on approval procedures in November 2019.<sup>1</sup> At the March 2019 meeting, the SPS Committee agreed to the proposal.

The session will explore concepts within Article 8 and Annex C of the Agreement, as they relate to approval procedures in the context of the current trading environment, and any related issues concerning the implementation of the Agreement. It will focus on – but not be limited to – approval procedures related to those products or categories of products that require approval as a prerequisite to their importation or placing on the market, including for approval of the use of additives or for the establishment of tolerances for contaminants in food, beverages or feedstuffs. This thematic session builds on the Workshop on Control, Inspection and Approval Procedures which was held on 9-10 July 2018.<sup>2</sup>

Further to Canada's proposal, Members were invited to submit any inputs on the programme and speakers by 3 May 2019. This draft programme is based on the structure suggested by Canada. Members are further invited to provide oral or written comments on this draft programme at the July 2019 meeting of the SPS Committee.

The thematic session will be held in Geneva, Switzerland, on Tuesday, 5 November 2019, beginning at 10 a.m.

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**1 THE SPS AGREEMENT, GUIDANCE AND RELEVANT JURISPRUDENCE**

Review of the provisions of the SPS Agreement (Article 8 and Annex C), Committee guidance and relevant jurisprudence related to approval procedures.

**Speakers:** *WTO Secretariat*

*Followed by Q&A session and discussion*

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<sup>1</sup> G/SPS/W/310.

<sup>2</sup> G/SPS/GEN/1613/Rev.2 (workshop programme) and G/SPS/R/91 (report of the workshop). Presentations are also available at: [https://www.wto.org/english/tratop\\_e/sps\\_e/workshop910718\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/sps_e/workshop910718_e.htm).

## 2 RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

Explore how the relevant international standards, guidelines or recommendations can inform approval procedures and assist in meeting the obligations related to approval procedures as outlined in Annex C.

**Speakers:** *International Standard Setting Bodies*

*Followed by Q&A session and discussion*

## 3 SHARING OF MEMBERS' SUCCESSES, CHALLENGES, CONSIDERATIONS, IMPACTS AND BEST PRACTICES RELATED TO APPROVAL PROCEDURES

### 3.1 Importing Members' perspective

Experiences related to completing approval procedures.

**Speakers:** *TBD*

- **Canada**
- **China** - System evaluation and enterprise registration in the SPS area

### 3.2 Exporting Members' perspective

Experiences related to approval procedures.

**Speakers:** *TBD*

*Followed by Q&A session and discussion*

## 4 APPROACHES TO FACILITATE APPROVAL PROCEDURES

Overview of initiatives that could facilitate effective, efficient approval procedures, enable access to tools and technologies, and facilitate international trade.

### 4.1 Alignment of regulatory approaches

**Speakers:** *TBD*

### 4.2 Regulatory cooperation – regional and global initiatives

**Speakers:** *TBD*

### 4.3 Regional/International perspectives

**Speakers:** *TBD*

- **International Grain Trade Coalition**

*Followed by Q&A session and discussion*

## 5 CLOSING REMARKS

- Key takeaways
  - Identification of possible areas for future work by the SPS Committee
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