

Support to the Modernisation of the Mongolia's Standardisation System (SMMSS)



Modernization Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures to Expand Trade and Ensure Food safety

6 - 8 October 2014

Ulaanbaatar & Zamin-Uud, Mongolia



The background

The aim of the project is to support the initiative of the Government of Mongolia to adopt European principles, norms and standards relating to the first pillar “Free Movement of Goods” through institutional capacity building.

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- How resistance to reform was overcome
- Benefit from WTO membership



The Republic of Latvia

- **Area – 64,6 square km**
- **Inhabitants – 2,0 millions;** 62% Latvians, 27% Russians, 3% Belarusians, Lithuanians, Polish, Jewish and others.
- **The capital – Rīga (716 000 inhabitants)**
- **The state language – Latvian.**
- **WTO from 1999**
- **NATO from April 2004**
- **European Union from May 2004**

FOOD AND VETERINARY SERVICE

Official Competent Authority in the Republic of Latvia

Institute of Food Safety,
Animal Health and
Environment - "BIOR"

DIRECTOR GENERAL
Chief Food and Veterinary Officer

- Public Relations Division
- Division of International Trade
- Division of External Relations and International Projects
- Internal Control Division
- Division of Information Analysis and Emergency Response

DEPARTMENTS - A Central Level



B - Territorial Level

TERRITORIAL STRUCTURAL UNITS

BORDER CONTROL POINTS

Food and Veterinary Service of the Republic of Latvia

- Total number of staff – 615
- Central Office - 154
- Territorial units – 461
- Border control points – 90
- Assessment and registration - 18
- Support functions - 145
- *Veterinary experts* – 87 (slaughterhouses)

Operates as a single institution in Latvia responsible for the surveillance and official controls in all stages of food circulation “from farm to fork”



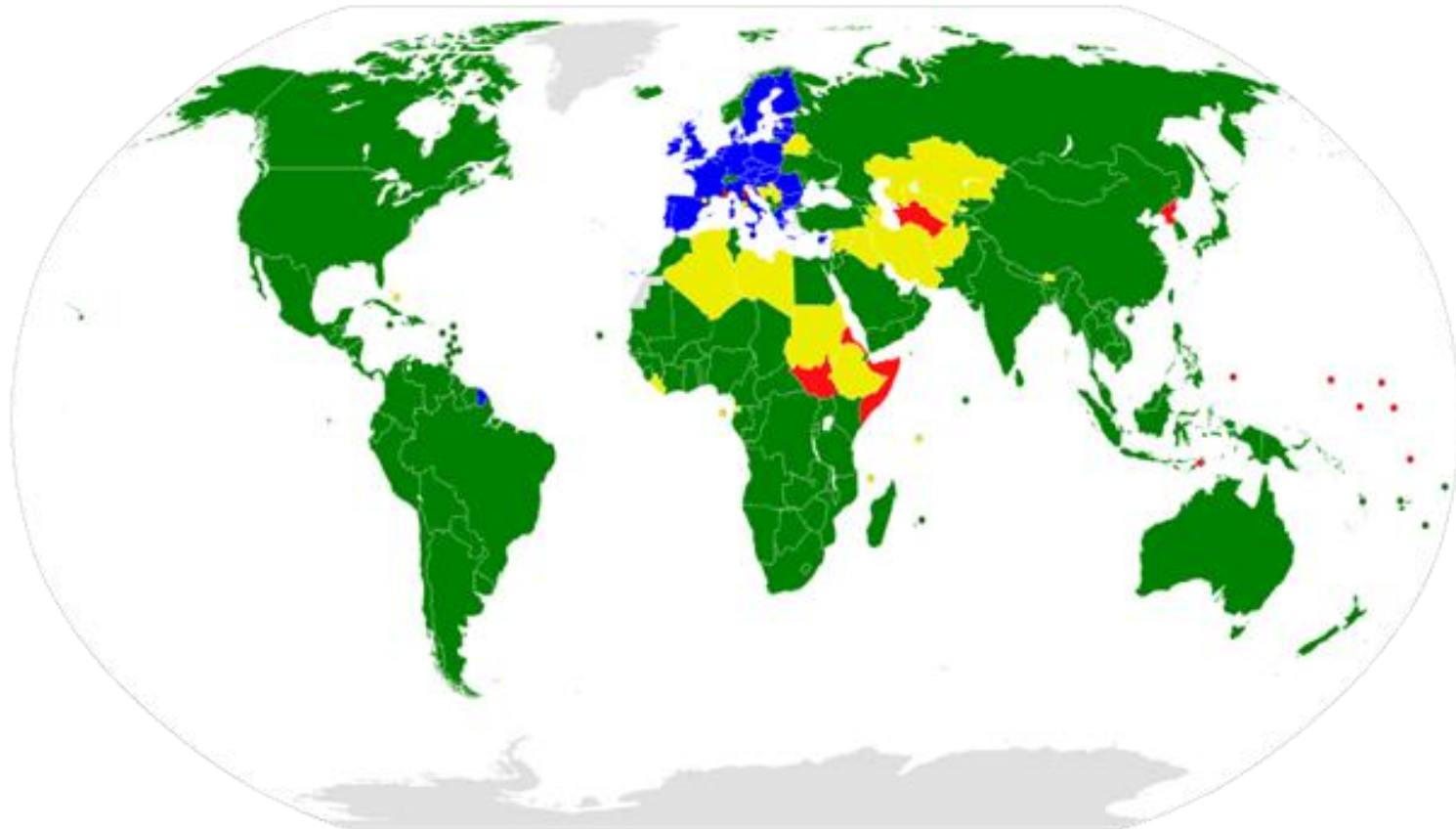
International relations





World Trade Organization (WTO) and Sanitary and Phytosanitary agreement (SPS)

△ Member states △ EU Members states
△ Observers △ Not Memeber states
Mongolia – January 29, 1997



Major changes in the standard control system

What was done with GOST standards

- » Situation after proclamation independency second time – 1990 4th of May:
 - √ to continues use previous legislation acts;
 - √ gradually drafted and put in force national legal acts;
 - √ thinking and calculating expenses for up-grading laboratories and necessary reorganization process;
 - √ thinking and negotiating about reorganization and strengthening inspection system;
 - √ Repeal all former legislation, including standards – 1991, August
(Constitutional Law)



Major changes in the standard control system

What was done with GOST standards

- » Latvian way to WTO — 1992 – 1998 → ratification 1999:
 - √ 1992 – observers → 1993 application for full membership;
 - √ 1995- 1998 → several negotiation rounds
(market accessibility; trade; support to agricultural sector, export subsidies and etc.)
 - √ 1998 – protocol signed in Geneva about membership;
 - √ 1999- officially Latvia becoming member of the WTO



- » 1995 Latvia submit application for EU membership

Major changes in the standard control system

What was done with GOST standards

» What was done with GOST standards:

- √ several years GOST standards have been used for laboratory analysis if ISO standards not yet implemented;
- √ difficulties raised when we willing to extended trade with countries out of former Soviet Union;
- √ important issue for laboratory was to get International accreditation in accordance with ISO 17 025;
- √ at present GOST standards not anymore used



Major changes in the standard control system

What was done with GOST standards

- √ First accreditation for laboratory was granted in 1996:
 - several field/areas was gradually added;
 - Last accreditation sphere granted in 2014 (ISO standards 15189:2008 on microbiological testing if sample is taken from human)
- √ Information:
 - at present in Latvia one State Reference Laboratory ;
 - four branches and two units

Major changes in inspection programs and laboratory system

» Reorganization inspection system – [why reforms?](#)

Several ministries involved in policy elaboration and drafting of legislation:

- ✓ Ministry of Welfare (food safety criteria, general hygiene requirements)
- ✓ Ministry of Agriculture (specific hygiene requirements for agricultural products of animal and plant origin,)
- ✓ Ministry of Economics (labeling)
- ✓ Ministry of Finance (excised goods)

Major changes in inspection programs and laboratory system

» **Several inspection institutions** responsible for food safety control supervised by:

1. Ministry of Agriculture:

- State Veterinary Service (raw materials and products of animal origin)
- Sanitary Border Inspection (veterinary border control)
- Plant production State Quality Control Service (products of plant origin)

Major changes in inspection programs and laboratory system

2. Ministry of Welfare:

- State Sanitary Inspection (food safety at retail and catering, production of beverages, bottled drinking water and mixed products)
- Public Health Agency (investigation of food borne diseases outbreaks)

3. Ministry of Economics

- Consumer Rights Protection Center (consumer complains)

Independent Conformity assessment centers (inspection within conformity assessment scheme)

Major changes in inspection programs and laboratory system

» Other factors that influenced decision – [why reforms?](#)

Political pressure due to enlargement process to EU:

- transposition and implementation of legislation,
- upgrading of food establishments
- Full and effective enforcement of the internal market control systems as a necessary condition -strengthening official food control

Major changes in inspection programs and laboratory system

» Other factors that influenced decision – [why reforms?](#)

Pressure from industry /business side:

- willingness to widen trade market (EU member states)
- dissatisfaction with existing food control system

Pressure from consumers:

- difficult to identify competent authority in a case of complains

Major changes in inspection and laboratory system

» Mentioned above “why reforms” resulted in:

- √ Unclear supervision structure and sharing of responsibilities
- √ Overlapping or absence of control
- √ Different criteria for carrying inspection, taking samples and training of inspectors
- √ Fragmental analysis of inspection data
- √ Chaotic crisis management
- √ Several laboratory networks
- √ Administration costs for management of numerous institutions involved
- √ Poor dialog between control institutions “blaming on each other” and food business operators

Major changes in inspection and laboratory system

- » [Political level](#) - Decision on **governmental level** to establish a unified service (April 2001)

Set up of **interministerial** working group

Working group report with proposals on:

- dividing of policy making responsibilities and transferring of surveillance functions to the Ministry of Agriculture
- inventory and proposals for changes in legislation and annual budget for ministries and institutions involved (September 2001)

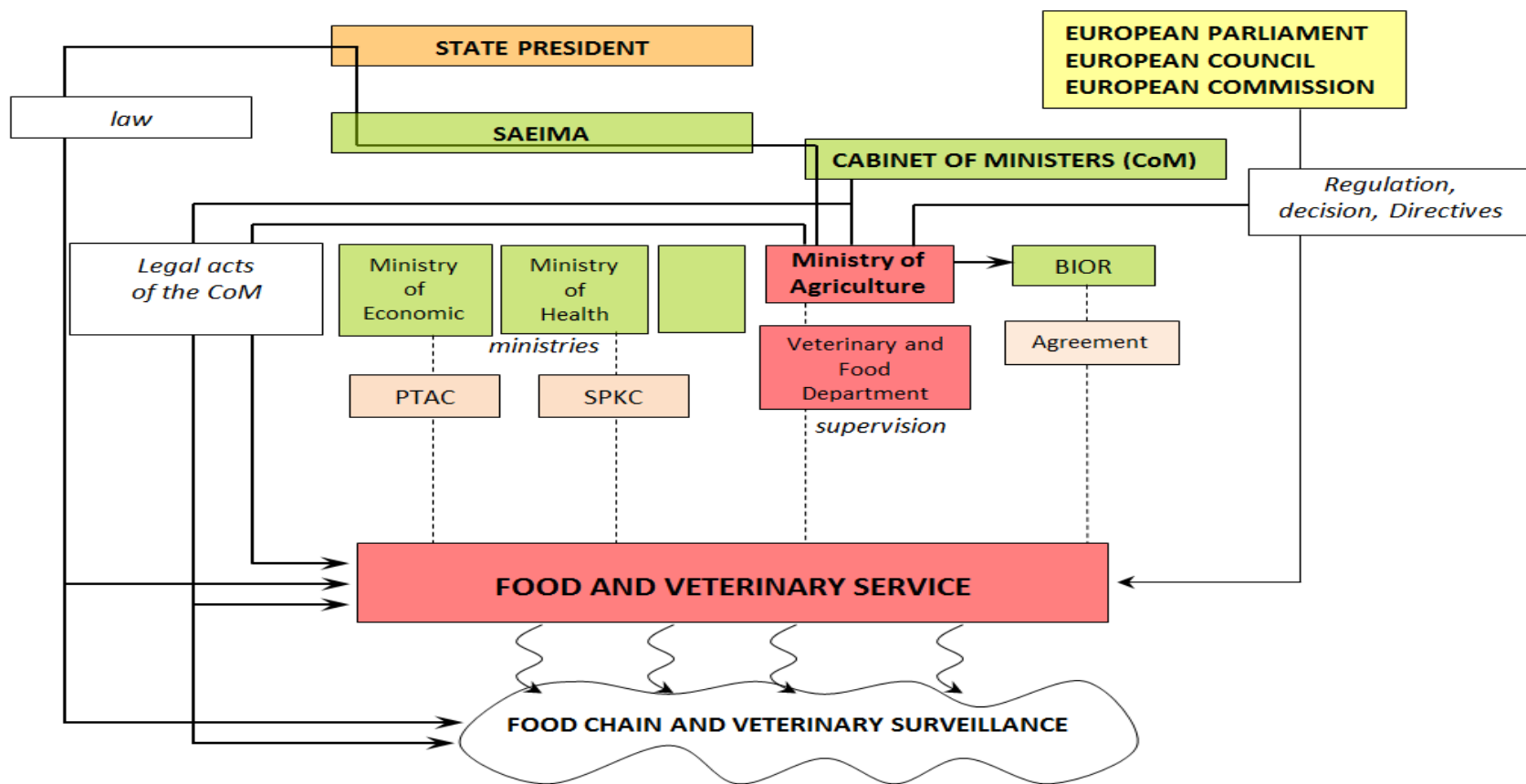
Major changes in inspection and laboratory system

» Results of reforms:

- ✓ Clear division of responsibilities between institutions involved in official food and veterinary control;
- ✓ Surveillance according to concept “from stable to table” → all food chain covered;
- ✓ Flexibility and quick response in emergency cases;
- ✓ Improved dialog with NGO and public awareness raised;
- ✓ Rational use of resources (human and technical → savings)

Major changes in inspection and laboratory system

FOOD CHAIN AND VETERINARY SURVEILLANCE



Major changes in inspection and laboratory system

» Transparency of FVS activities:

- surveillance and laboratory control programs approved by Minister of Agriculture (available on Internet);
- Standard working procedures (SOP) on inspection and sampling, uniformed inspection reports;
- Risk based inspection frequency for certain type of establishments;
- Comprehensive computerized database due to mandatory registration (by CA) of all food business operators;
- Appropriate training system introduced ;
- Annual report on FVS activities (Internet)

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Thank you for your kind attention

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Activities in the field of SPS and Standardisation

Most challenging aspects of the transition Extent to private sector involvement/consultation

Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) – **safety rules of food products, animal and plant health.**

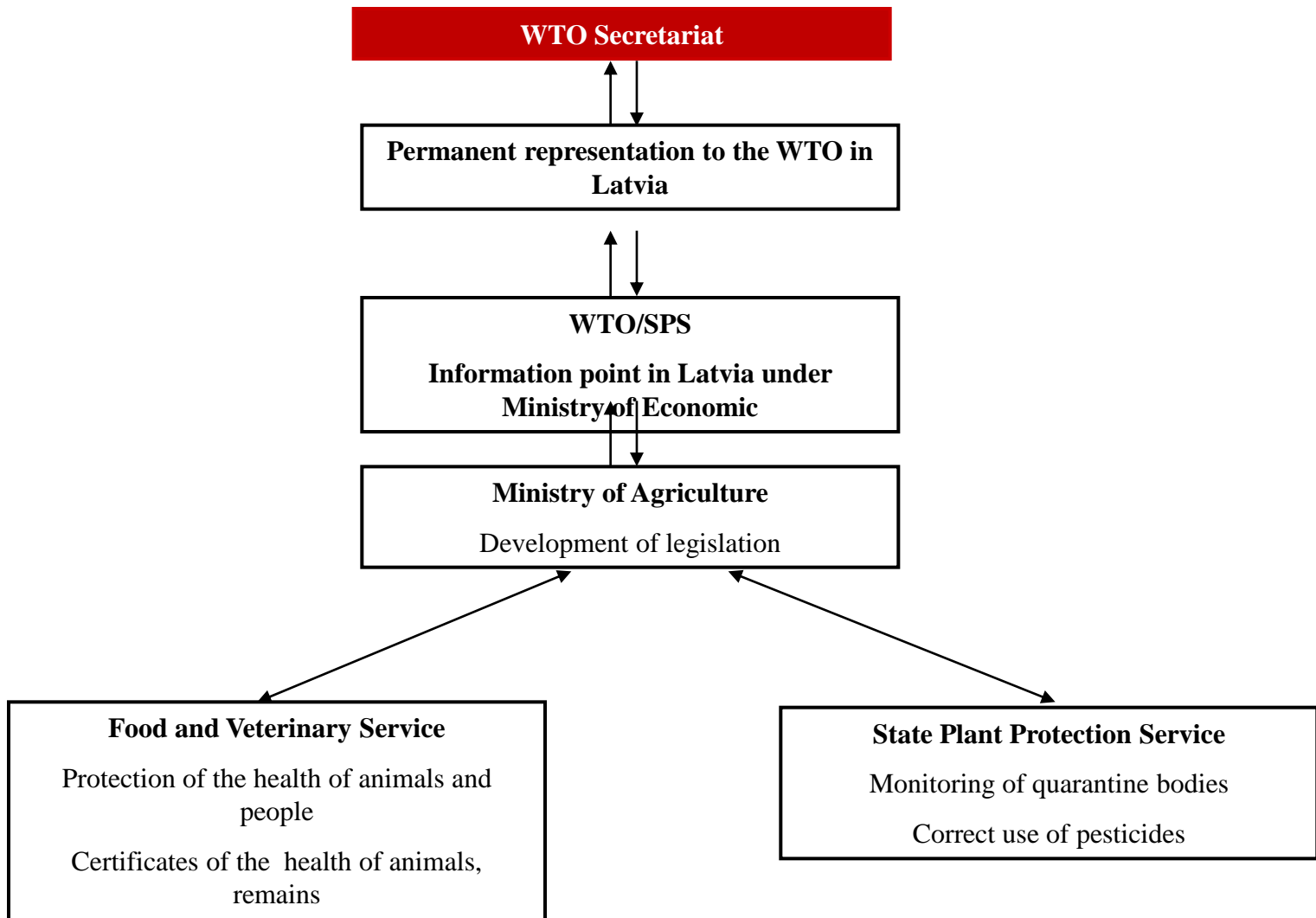
- The measures are based on:
 - international standards;
 - principles;
 - recommendations (if any);
- measures of higher standards may be maintained or introduced, if any:
 - scientific justification;
 - decisions, based on the risk assessment.

Public funding of the SPS system

Most challenging aspects of the transition

Transparency and the SPS Agreement:

- Fundamental principle of the WTO;
- Information point – in charge of the provision of answers and documentation to all motivated inquiries of interested members;
- National Notifying Authority(NNA) – a single central public authority in charge of implementation of the notification procedure.
- Notification for member States of the European Union are made by the European Commission (Latvia started - 2004)
- European Commission speaks for all EU member States at almost all WTO meetings



Public funding of the SPS system

Most challenging aspects of the transition

Obligations for ensuring transparency:

- notification;
- publication;
- information point, NNA (in Latvia);
- presentation of documents, work with comments.

Public funding of the SPS system

Most challenging aspects of the transition

What types of documents we are notified?

- Laws, decrees, orders, having common application and:
 - new or amended;
 - not based upon international standards;
 - able to leave a considerable impact on trade;
 - Discussion in the Committee regarding transparency.

During notification – printed copies must be sent to the mission in Geneva.

Public funding of the SPS system

Most challenging aspects of the transition

Participation in international standard – setting authorities:

The WTO itself does not and will not develop there own standards.

- OIE working groups – research of the documents prepared by the OIE;
- European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organisation (EPPO), International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC);
- Codex Alimentarius working groups (organized by the European Commission).

Public funding of the SPS system

Most challenging aspects of the transition

During negotiations for WTO membership main International standards, guidelines and recommendations have been discussed:

- Relation to food additives, veterinary drugs and pesticide residues;
- For animal health and zoonosis;
- Latvia accepted obligations:
 - in the field of agricultural grants – not allowed to support as exporting grants (some alternatives - grants cannot exceed a certain level of one certain products)
 - in the trade of services – non-discrimination of foreign investors;

Public funding of the SPS system

Most challenging aspects of the transition

- Market availability “ceiling” for import customs duties:
 - Products that are not produced in Latvia (and cannot be produced in our climate zone). The import customs duty for those is **0% or slightly larger**.
 - Agricultural products that are produced in Latvia, but in insufficient quantities and in a uniform assortment (the import customs duty **ceiling was set at 10-30%**).
 - Sensitive products that are produced in Latvia and that require market protection, for example, milk and dairy products, meat and meat products, sugar, eggs, vegetables, individual kinds of fish products, etc. For these products the import customs duty **ceiling was set at above 30%**.

Public funding of the SPS system

Most challenging aspects of the transition

» Standards in Latvia – present situation:

- in general there are not obligatory standards;
- each business operator establish there own technical receipt/standard for particular kind of products;
- some international standards becoming obligatory by making references in legislation (for example ISO standard 16140 on certifying alternative laboratory methods; ISO standard 18593 on sampling);
- companies use to pass accreditation process (ISO standards), but this is not establish by legislation – voluntary basis;
- [Latvian Food and Veterinary Service](#) – on voluntary bases accredited by ISO 9001 and ISO 17020



How resistance to reform was overcome

Benefit from WTO membership

Benefit from WTO membership:



» Attracting investment:

- in macro-economic terms – positive interests of foreign investor WTO membership means that the products produced in Latvia will not face discrimination in export markets (customs tariffs, grants, standards and other trade regulations) in other WTO member states.

» Reform implementation:

- WTO membership is an important stabilising factor for the transfer of countries to the market economy .

How resistance to reform was overcome

Benefit from WTO membership



» Legal stability:

- WTO is a kind of a “quality stamp” for a country that is integrating into the international labour distribution system.

» Economic cooperation:

- WTO is an alternative for the development of successful trade relations with countries in different stages of economic development. WTO provides guarantees for the stable development of trade relations without the influence of political considerations.



Information sources:

- Official contact persons
- Codex Alimentarius, O.I.E., IPPC
- Information points
- SPS/Informing authority
- Trade partners
- International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPM)
- Scientific literature
- Expert opinion
- Networks

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