

SPS News

Welcome to the seventh publication of the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Newsletter which will report on SPS issues that were addressed at the National SPS Committee during the second quarter of 2015. During the period under review, the committee convened its last meeting for the year 2015 and held discussions on various issues as reported on below.

Update on market access issues

Indonesia – Jakarta port's closing affects the exports of South Africa's horticultural products (Notification No. G/SPS/N/IDN/48)

- A visit by the Indonesian Government took place during the week of the 22nd of August 2015. It was a field verification visit; specifically to discuss the future use of the Jakarta port again. The visit was for all the relevant control systems of South Africa (harbours, pack houses, and laboratories). After the visit the Indonesian experts gave their preliminary observation, verbally expressing their confidence in South Africa's system. South Africa is waiting for the official final report from the Indonesian government with regard to using Jakarta's port.

EU – Citrus Black Spot (CBS)

- The final formal report from the European Union Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) was received which included proposed changes made by South Africa. The DAFF's response to the two FVO recommendations was satisfactory. The report is positive and South Africa's systems were found to be significantly strengthened and fully compliant with the relevant legislation of the EU.
- The CBS's interceptions status on the date of the national SPS meeting in question stood at nine received. There is a significant decline in comparison to the 16 CBS interceptions received by the same time last year.

- The EU Standing Committee on Plant Health met on 28 August 2015 where the CBS situation was discussed and a decision was made to monitor the situation closely. The Standing Committee will meet again from 17 to 18 September 2015.
- There is no further movement with regard to the IPPC dispute settlement processes.
- A statement was made by South Africa at the previous WTO SPS Committee meeting in Geneva and another statement will be made at the meeting which will be held from 14 to 16 October 2015 in Geneva as a follow-up to the trade concern that SA previously lodged in that forum.

SPS trade concerns

World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE)

- South Africa is busy with the annual process of confirming freedom from Foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) and Peste des Petits ruminants (PPR) disease and is also in the process of compiling a dossier to apply for freedom from Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia (CBPP).
- There was another outbreak of the Epizootic Ulcerative Syndrome (EUS) disease in the Palmiet River area in the Western Cape shortly after the previous meeting. A report to the OIE has already been made. A management plan is being compiled that will be submitted to the National Aquatic Animal Health Working Group for approval. The approved management plan will be distributed to the provinces for implementation. The focus would be on the farm animal- wild animal interface and the biosecurity measures.
- There has not been much progress on the Koi Herpes Virus (KHV). The challenge is to try to establish the country's entire status.



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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Disease and/or pest outbreaks

Bactrocera dorsalis (BD)

• The fruit fly species which was known as Bactrocera invadens (BI) is now known as Bactrocera dorsalis, the Oriental fruit fly. The advantages in the shift in scientific classification and name is that there are a lot of documented information on the Oriental fruit fly, including information on phytosanitary cold treatment and other treatments for various fruit types which were still being developed for Bactrocera invadens. On the less positive side, the Bactrocera dorsalis' known host range is more extensive than what is known for Bactrocera invadens.

• Surveillances for exotic fruit flies, including the Oriental fruit fly, are ongoing. An update on the Oriental fruit fly status in SA will be provided once the results of the current quarter (July to September) have been analysed.

Foot-and-mouth disease (FMD)

• The OIE recognised FMD free zone without vaccination remains intact and as per recommendations from the OIE. The upgrading and strengthening of the FMD control measures in KwaZulu-Natal is nearing completion.

• A meeting was held between Zimbabwe, Botswana and South Africa regarding recent outbreaks of Foot-and-mouth disease in Zimbabwe. The Limpopo province, as well as the National Defence Force patrolling the border line fence to keep out any stray cattle, has been notified of the outbreak.

Regional coordination of SPS matters

Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA) agreement negotiations

- There are meetings to be held in the week of 21 to 25 September 2016 on the process of negotiations of the trade agreement in which South Africa will be represented.
- A legal scrubbing meeting was held from 24 to 27 August 2015 in Kenya where the SPS, NTB and TBT texts were adopted.
- Some differences were observed on the adopted SPS Annex in comparison with what the technical group concluded in Namibia in January 2014. Inputs and comments to address the concerns will be submitted through the dti.
- The SADC regional workshop on phytosanitary regulations' harmonisation was held from 9 to 11 June 2015 in Pretoria. It was a continuation of the Pest Quarantine list workshop which was held in Zimbabwe in 2014.

SPS/TBT issues


The Department of Trade and Industry (the dti)

- South Africa has submitted its comments on the EU GMO notification and an acknowledgement of receipt was received.


Fisheries

- Taiwan has agreed to import oysters from South Africa. Exports have to be accompanied by an official health certificate.
- The NRCS has submitted a letter of interest to the EU to export whole fish, as well as canned and frozen abalone.
- China conducted an audit on farms and fish processing facilities again in July 2015; it went well and a report from China is expected.





Hapag-Lloyd



National Regulator Compulsory Specifications (NRCS)

• The fifth step of the standard for fish oil was adopted at Codex. The progress from the NRCS is that the request to develop a national standard for fish oil which can later be made mandatory by a compulsory specification under the NRCS Act has been registered with the technical committee at the SABS standard writing committee. This will enable future Chinese certification completion. The Department of Health has been requested to grant permission for the drafting of compulsory specification after developing the standard.

WTO SPS notifications

- South Africa amended its import requirements for maize to address the risk of introducing Maize lethal necrosis disease on imported maize seed and grain. The emergency measures were notified on 21 August 2015.
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Upcoming meetings

- A SPS meeting between China and South Africa. No specific date has been set as yet, but the date will be communicated for 2016.
- The South Africa-Algeria joint management committee responsible for the implementation of bilateral cooperation agreements in the areas of animal health, plant health, agriculture and phytosanitary matters, will meet during October 2015 in South Africa.
- A WTO Workshop on Transparency will take place from 12 to 13 October 2015.
- A WTO SPS Committee meeting will take place from 14 to 16 October 2015.
- A visit by India to South Africa to take place in the week of the 10th of October 2015.

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