

SPS News

Welcome to the ninth edition of the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Newsletter, which will report on the SPS issues which were addressed at the National SPS Committee during the second quarter of 2016. During the period under review, the committee convened its second meeting for 2016 and held discussions on various issues as reported on below.

Update on market access issues

Indonesia - Jakarta Port closure affecting the exports of South Africa's horticultural products (Notification No. G/SPS/N/IDN/48)

There are four food safety testing laboratories registered.

Thailand

- There is no further movement regarding market access to Thailand for apples, pears or stone fruit. South Africa is currently working on import requirements for mangosteen and longans.

EU - Citrus Black Spot (CBS)

THE APPLICABLE IMPORT MEASURES

- The European Commission has published revised import measures for citrus fruit on 11 May 2016 with respect to the CBS which came into effect on 1 June 2016.
- For South Africa, the import measures for fresh fruit for consumption are essentially the same as those that came into effect in mid-2014 and were applied since 2015. The commission still adheres to the CBS pest risk assessment of the European Fruit Safety Authority (EFSA) and thus considers commercial fruit as a phytosanitary risk.
- South Africa has opted, at this stage, not to make use of the juicing provisions in the revised measures as these are cumbersome to implement.

THE FOUR SIGNIFICANT CHANGES FOR SOUTH AFRICA:

- The current implementing decision (EU 2016/715) combines the EU's emergency measures for fruit from South Africa with those for Uruguay and Brazil—but interestingly not Argentina;
- The arbitrary annual five-interception threshold for CBS, that warned SA of an EU review “before the sixth interception is notified”, has been removed—although the commission has stated that emergency decisions may be reviewed whenever necessary;
- These measures have a designated “shelf-life” and will apply until 31 March 2019;
- The commission has included measures for fruit sent for commercial juicing in the EU (as opposed to consumption as fresh fruit). Fruit meant for juicing is subject to somewhat less stringent measures (no symptom expression testing), but EU member states have several responsibilities, including a need to designate ports of entry for fruit destined for juicing. Only the UK and Romania had done this at the time of reporting.

THE COMMISSION'S AUDIT VISIT TO SOUTH AFRICA

- The visit was from 13 to 24 June 2016 and the requested pre-visit documents were provided to the relevant EU Directorate (Directorate on Health and Food Audits and Analysis, formerly the “FVO”) in consultation with the industry and other role players by the due date (31 May 2016).
- The audit focus was on the implementation of the EU legislation as well as the SA CBS Risk Management System, particularly pre- and post-harvest checks and controls for CBS. Also the symptom-expression tests for CBS on Valencia oranges. Control measures for other harmful organisms besides CBS intercepted in the EU on citrus were also audited – mainly False Codling Moth (FCM).
- So far in 2016, there have been no interceptions for CBS on citrus from SA in the EU.

SPS TRADE CONCERNS


- Regarding the request for a third-party review of the import requirements of the EU with regard to CBS on commercial fruit in terms of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) process, there has still been no further movement.
- Regarding any other potential actions in this regard, a letter from the highest level of the dti and DAFF was recently sent to the relevant European commissioners (i.e. Trade,




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Hapag-Lloyd



Health and Food Safety) requesting technical talks to discuss the CBS issue.

Disease and/or pest outbreaks

Bactrocera dorsalis (B. dorsalis)

- The fruit fly species which was known as *Bactrocera invadens* (BI) is now known as *Bactrocera dorsalis*, the oriental fruit fly. It remains a pest of concern for South Africa.
- The surveillance for exotic fruit flies in general is ongoing. An updated national status report was posted on the 23 March 2016 on the International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP) which is the website of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC).
- The abovementioned fruit fly is considered to be actionable and under official control in some provinces in South Africa. It is considered to be absent in the following provinces:
 - Western Cape
 - Free State
 - Northern Cape
 - Eastern Cape.
- The surveillance report of the previous financial year would be shared with the provincial heads.

Foot-and-mouth disease (FMD)

- The FMD free zone is still being maintained and surveillance is ongoing.

Regional coordination of SPS matters

- The SPS Annex to the Tripartite Free Trade Agreement (TFTA) has been concluded. The Continental Free Trade Agreement negotiations have started. The negotiation mo-

dalities are being developed for the process. The Continental Free Trade negotiations will also include an SPS Annex.

- A SPS meeting organised by the African Union was held in Ethiopia in May 2016; inputs and comments have been provided on the terms of reference regarding the technical working group on technical barriers to trade and on SPS measures.
- The technical working group will be established and DITR will coordinate the process for the DAFF.
- The SADC SPS Coordinating Committee meeting was held from 25 to 26 May 2016 in the Seychelles. The Food Safety and Plant Health Implementation Development Plans were adopted during the meeting.
- A SADC workshop on the Harmonisation of Pesticides Regulations will be held in Pretoria on 15 and 16 June 2016.

WTO SPS notifications

South Africa made two notifications since the last meeting in February 2016 as follows:

- On 21 March 2016 the Compulsory Specifications for Live Lobsters was notified. The final date for comments was 20 May 2016.
- On 4 April 2016 the Draft regulations relating to the fortification of certain foodstuffs was notified.

Upcoming meetings

- Next WTO SPS Committee meeting will be held in Geneva 29 June 2016 to 1 July 2016.
- Next SPS/ TBT Committee meeting will be held on 21 September 2016.

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