

MONITORING FOREIGN SPS MEASURES TO EXPAND U.S. AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS

**By Roseanne Freese, Senior WTO SPS Affairs
 International Regulations and Standards Division
 USDA Foreign Agricultural Service**

Under the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Measures of 1995, U.S. companies enjoy the right to comment on the food safety measures of other countries before they go into effect. While all 153 Members of the WTO have the right to protect human, animal and plant life, this must be done according to scientific principles and implemented with the least amount of impact on trade.

GROWTH IN THE NUMBER OF FOREIGN SPS MEASURES SINCE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WTO SPS AGREEMENT

**SPS regulation has become an essential element of world trade.
 The Number of foreign SPS measures notified to the WTO reached
 7,240 in 2009.**



■ Number of Foreign WTO SPS Measures Reviewed by the United States

To ensure that foreign trade partners comply with these obligations, the International Regulations and Services Division of the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) publishes a list of the most recent SPS measures announced by other countries for review by U.S. stakeholders each week. Every day FAS works with U.S. exporters, USDA regulatory agencies, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Departments of Commerce and State, the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, and the private sector to evaluate and, when necessary, comment on trade restrictive measures before they are implemented.

FAS: Removing More SPS Barriers More Often

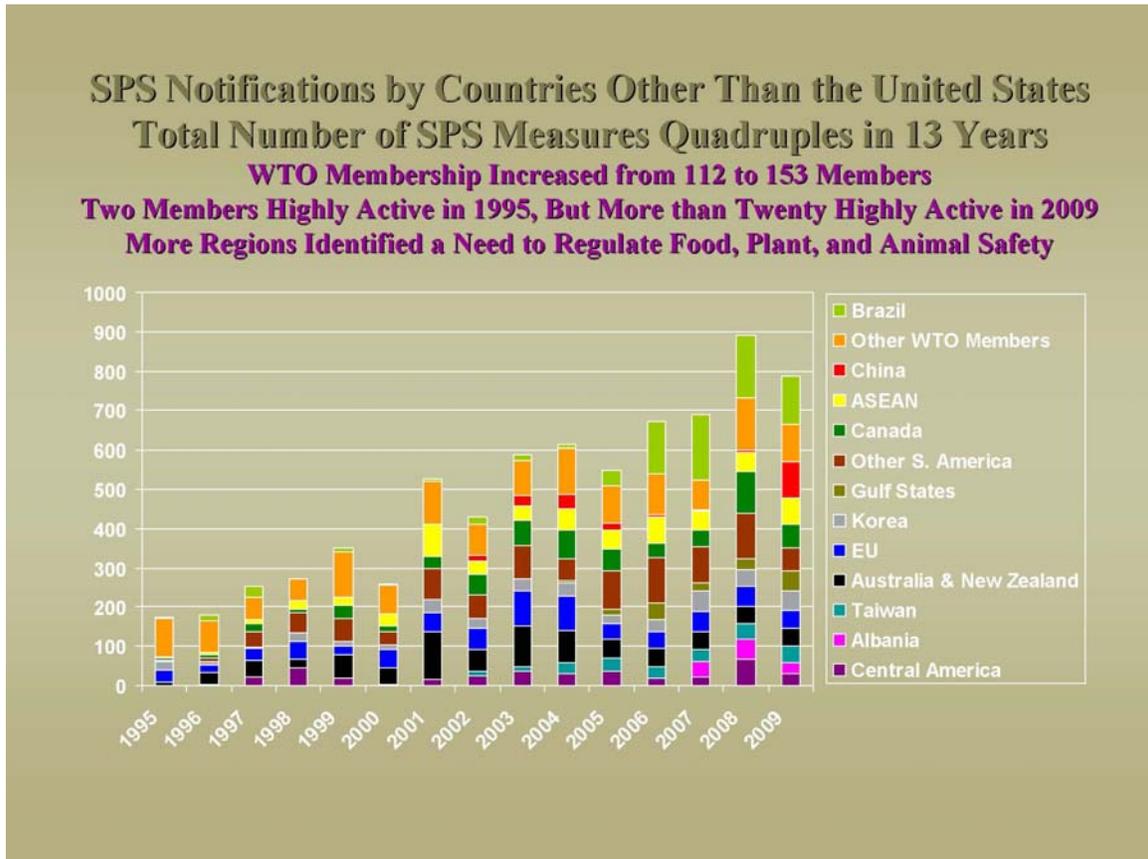
In 2009, the U.S. Government requested:
The removal of unscientifically-based tolerances on food additives, pesticides, and contaminants: 468 times
Submission of risk assessments: 134 times
Adoption of international standards: 117 times
Adoption of U.S. standards: 78 times
Changes to quarantine and inspection requirements: 22 times
Repeal of trade bans: 18 times



Note: Does not include comments by the private sector sent directly to the foreign government.

One of our goals is to prevent market disruptions before they occur. Some of our recent successes in 2009 include:

- ✓ Indonesia recognized the U.S. food safety system for fresh foods of plant origin and dropped its requirements for special certification of U.S.-origin products. Without it, Indonesia may have detained U.S. agricultural exports worth \$846 million.
- ✓ After negotiations, China granted the United States an exemption on several new requirements in its Food Safety Law. Without it, U.S. exports of meat and consumer-ready feed and feed ingredients could have declined by \$110 million.
- ✓ Canada proposed a maximum residue level (MRL) for trifloxystrobin on cherries that was only half the current level of 2.0 parts per million (ppm). Following U.S. comments to Canada, Canada agreed to retain its 2.0 ppm MRL. U.S. cherries to Canada, a \$100-million annual market, continued flowing without any new impediments.
- ✓ Following U.S. intervention, Bahrain in January of 2010 lifted its proposed ban on artificial sweeteners in fruit drinks by allowing new labeling terminology. Without it, U.S. exports of \$5 million of fruit juices and sweeteners could have come to a halt.



If you are interested in receiving our WTO Notifications Newsletter, please contact Ms. Deborah Thompson, Program Specialist, FAS International Standards and Regulations Division at IRSD@fas.usda.gov and she will add you to our email subscription list.

U.S. Comments on Foreign SPS Measures by Country
In 2009, the United States Raised 82 Market Access Concerns with China,
followed by Korea with 19, and Brazil with 18, and Taiwan with 15.

