

ROLE OF STANDARDS IN WTO-SPS AGREEMENT

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HISTORY OF WTO-SPS

- 1944 - Bretton Wood conference established World bank, International Monetary Fund and International Trade Organization.
- 1974 - General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs was established.
- 1947 – 1993 – Contracting parties of GATT held 8 rounds of trade negotiations.
- 1991 – Dunkel Draft issued by DG of GATT included issues on SPS.

HISTORY OF WTO-SPS

- 1993 – Uruguay round held for conversion of GATT to WTO.
- 1994 – Marrakesh round on Agreement on Agriculture (AoA).
- 1994 – Establishment of WTO.
- 1995 – Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) entered into force.

REGULATIONS UNDER THE PURVIEW OF WTO-SPS AGREEMENT

- Protection of animal or plant life or health within a territory from risks arising from the entry, establishment or spread of pest, disease, disease-carrying organisms or disease-causing organisms.
- Protection of human or animal life or health within a territory from risks arising from additives, pesticide residues, contaminants, toxins or disease causing organisms in foods, beverages or feedstuffs.

REGULATIONS UNDER THE PURVIEW OF WTO-SPS AGREEMENT

- Protection of human life or health within a territory from risks arising from diseases carried by animals, plants or products thereof or from entry, establishment or spread of pests.
- Prevention or reduction of the risks of other damages within a territory from the entry, establishment or spread of pests.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- HARMONIZATION – encourages the adoption of measures that conform to international standards, guidelines, and / or recommendations of international agencies.
- EQUIVALENCE – mutual recognition of different but equivalent measures to achieve international standards.
- NON-DISCRIMINATION – treating imports no differently than domestic produce.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- **TRANSPARENCY** – notifying trading partners of changes in their SPS measures, especially when the measures differ from international standards.
- **REGIONALIZATION** – allows continued exports from disease-free areas of affected countries.

ROLE OF STANDARDS

- WTO member countries are encouraged to use international standards, guidelines and recommendations where they exist.
- Recognizes the following three international standard setting agencies
- Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) – Food Safety
- International Office of Epizootics (OIE) – Animal Health
- International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) – Plant Health

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

- Codex was created in 1963 by FAO and WHO to develop food standards, guidelines and related texts such as codes of practice under the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Program.
- The main purposes of this program are protecting the health of consumers, ensuring fair trade practices in food trade and promoting coordination of all food standards work undertaken by international governmental and non-governmental organizations.

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

- In pursuance of SPS agreement, CODEX established standards for food additives, veterinary drugs, pesticide residues, contaminants, methods of analysis, sampling, codes and guidelines of hygienic practice.
- CODEX standards are considered scientifically justified and are accepted as bench marks against which national measures are evaluated.
- While deciding the food standards, the codex will have regard for legitimate factors relevant for health protection of consumers.

INTERNATIONAL OFFICE OF EPIZOOTICS

- To guarantee the transparency of animal disease status world wide.
- To collect, analyze and disseminate veterinary scientific information.
- To provide expertise and promote international consensus for the control of animal diseases.
- OIE has four committees to develop standards viz., International Animal Healthcare Commission, The Standards Commission, The Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and other Epizootics and Fish Diseases Commission.

INTERNATIONAL PLANT PROTECTION CONVENTION

- To secure a common and effective action to prevent the spread and introduction of pests of plants and plant products and to promote appropriate measures for their control.
- The scope of IPPC is limited to pests viz., fungi, bacteria, viruses, nematodes and insects and weeds.
- Primary source of information on risk analysis
- Developed ISPM (International Standard for Phytosanitary Measures) No-2 guidelines in 1990s, which were agreed in 1993 and adopted in 1994.

IMPORTANT AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES REJECTED/ ALERT NOTICES ISSUED

Importing country	Agricultural product	Reason
UK	Chilli powder	Sudan Red – I
UK	Grapes	Methomyl, Acephate
UK	Extra hot chilli	Aflatoxin
Italy	Nutmeg	Aflatoxin
Italy	Chilli powder	Aflatoxin

IMPORTANT AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES REJECTED/ ALERT NOTICES ISSUED

Importing country	Agricultural product	Reason
Italy	Shelled sesame seeds	Salmonella
UK	Curry powder	Ethion
Spain	Pepper	Aflatoxin
UK	Coriander	Rat droppings
Germany	Curry powder	Cypermethrin
Spain	Chilli	Cypermethrin

IMPORTANT VETERINARY COMMODITIES REJECTED/ ALERT NOTICES ISSUED

Importing country	Agricultural product	Reason
Italy	Frozen cuttle fish	Salmonella
France	Frozen tiger shrimps	Salmonella
Holland	Frozen tiger shrimps	Nitrofurans
Holland	Shrimps	Chloramphenicol
Spain	Frozen Shrimps	Antibiotic residues

IMPORTANT VETERINARY COMMODITIES REJECTED/ ALERT NOTICES ISSUED

Importing country	Agricultural product	Reason
Italy	Frozen cephalopod molluscs	E. Coli
Spain	Frozen squid	Cadmium
Germany	Shrimp tails	Nitrofurans
Greece	Frozen octopus	Cadmium
Italy	Frozen dentex fillets	Vibrio spp.

PLANT DISEASES INTRODUCED INTO INDIA

Introduced from	Disease	Year
Srilanka	Leaf rust of coffee	1879
UK	Late blight of potato	1883
Australia	Flag smut of wheat	1906
Srilanka	Powdery mildew of cucurbits	1910
S E Asia	Paddy blast	1918

PLANT DISEASES INTRODUCED INTO INDIA

Introduced from	Disease	Year
Srilanka	Bunchy top of banana	1940
Netherlands	Wart of potato	1953
Europe	Onion smut	1958
Philippines	Bacterial leaf blight of paddy	1959
Europe	Golden nematode of potato	1961

NEED FOR STANDARDS

- Chilli products and grapes were rejected by European countries, simply not due to that the residues are above set limits, but because of lack of limits for the pesticides on these products as per the PFA act.
- European Union banned import of fish from companies in Gujarat which did not adopt HACCP System.
- Multinational companies like Nestlé (India) are planning to implement HACCP for coffee growing and processing.

NEED FOR STANDARDS

- Lead, an important contaminant found in India is selectively chosen for stricter regulations internationally, whereas contaminants like cadmium that are more common in western countries is conveniently ignored.
- For fishery products, though we have SPS standards for exports, we have no SPS standards for domestic fish processing industries as a result of which we are not able to demand conformity to any SPS standards in the imported fishery products entering our country.

TO CONCLUDE...

- Standards are required for
- Preventing dumping of low quality goods in our country
- Increasing competence of our manufacturers to compete in the international market
- Protecting our nation from introduced pests and diseases
- Overall welfare of the nation's economy and citizen.



THANK YOU

