

#### **EUROPEAN UNION**

Permanent Mission to the World Trade Organization

The Head of Mission

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**Precision Biotechnology** (14 Delegations)

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Geneva, 6 March 2018

### NOTE TO:

Ms Anne BUCHER, Director General, DG SANTE Mr Jean-Luc DEMARTY, Director General, DG TRADE Mr Jerzy Bogdan PLEWA, Director General, DG AGRI Ms Lowri EVANS, Director General, DG GROW

Subject: WTO-SPS Committee – Geneva, 30 October-2 November 2018 - Flash Report

### Summary

Once again, the EU policies dominated the Committee's proceedings. Two thirds of the formal meeting were devoted to discussing EU SPS measures. A total of **93 statements** were made by more than thirty Delegations to question, directly or indirectly, EU policies and measures in several areas, notably:

• [Out of Scope]	
• ECJ ruling on mutagenesis (3 Delegations	
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# <u>Detail</u>

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EU defensive interests
Seven STCs were raised against the EU.
Two new concerns were raised namely on
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and on the
recent <b>ECJ opinion on organisms obtained by new mutagenesis techniques</b> (by the USA, supported by Argentina and Paraguay).
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On the ECJ opinion, the EU was requested to explain the scientific basis of the decision and to provide clarification on how proper implementation would be insured.
Legal uncertainty caused to trade flows was also underlined. [Out of Scope]
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Under a different agenda item, Argentina presented an <b>international statement on agricultural applications of precision biotechnology</b> (G/SPS/GEN/1658/Rev 2). 12 other Members (Uruguay, Brazil, Paraguay, Jordan, Dominican Republic, Canada, the USA, Australia, Guatemala, Vietnam, Honduras, Colombia and an observer organisation (ECOWAS) spoke emphasizing the critical role of new mutagenesis techniques in agricultural innovation to address global environmental challenges, food insecurity, antimicrobial resistance, animal and plant health outbreaks and animal welfare issues. Some members expressed their concerns about different domestic rules which create asymmetry in trade. The USA called for a constructive dialogue between trade partners.
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Bilateral meetings  Twelve bilateral meetings were held in the margins of the SPS Committee namely with Argentina.
, Canada, [Out of Scope] [Out of Scope] and US [Out of Scope] . The EU strongly encouraged all these countries to process market applications faster, follow international standards and provide real market openings. In the case of Argenting Canada, [Out of Scope] and USA, the EU also responded to their concerns about their exports to the EU.

[Out of Scope] Highlights of the offensive issues discussed in these meetings include:

Argentina raised its concerns in relation to the ECJ ruling. [Out of Scope] Canada [Out of Scope] reiterated its concerns on Out of Scope the ECJ ruling and on [Out of Scope] The USA reiterated its concerns on

## **Next meeting**

The next SPS Committee meeting will take place on 21-22 March 2019 and will be preceded by a thematic session on Equivalence and on Fall Armyworm (19 March) and an informal meeting (20 March).

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Marc Vanheukelen Head of Mission

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, the ECJ ruling and

Copy: SPS distribution list