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A REPORT FOR THE CALIFORNIA CHERRY BOARD

GENERAL ISSUES OF INTEREST TO THE CCB:

2019 National Trade Estimates Report Published

- On March 29, the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative released the [2019 National Trade Estimate Report \(NTE\)](#). The NTE is an annual report on the barriers to trade, investment, and services that U.S. exporters face around the world.
- The 2019 NTE report cited tariffs imposed by Canada, China, the European Union (EU), Mexico, and Turkey in response to the U.S. section 232 and 301 tariffs as new trade barriers and flagged new digital trade barriers in the EU, India, Kenya, and Saudi Arabia. In the digital trade [fact sheet](#) issued with the report, USTR highlighted the EU's digital services tax proposal which would impose duties on advertising as well as online marketplaces and once again flagged China's digital trade policies that block certain web traffic and restrict cloud computing.
- Another [fact sheet](#) released with the report focuses on U.S. successes in removing trade barriers including the U.S. winning two WTO disputes against China, Israel no longer requiring a hard copy certificate of origin for U.S. exports, and the Philippines addressing several longstanding agricultural trade issues.

Brexit Withdrawal Deal Rejected for a Third Time

- The majority of lawmakers in the UK oppose a no-deal Brexit but agree on little else. Members of Parliament (MPs) on March 29 rejected Prime Minister Theresa May's withdrawal agreement for a third time and failed to secure enough support for any alternatives to the deal.
- After series of meetings, on April 2, PM May announced that she will ask the European Union to grant the UK another short extension to try to pass a withdrawal agreement.
- PM May has said she will meet with the head of the opposition party, Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn, to reach a new Brexit plan before the emergency April 10 EU leaders' summit.
- Unless MPs can approve a withdrawal deal, or garner enough votes in favor of any other outcome, the UK is scheduled to leave the EU with no deal on April 12, 2019.

Taiwan Notifies WTO of Supplementing Regulations to the Organic Agriculture Promotion Act

- On March 25, Taiwan notified the World Trade Organization (WTO) of two regulations supplementing the Organic Agriculture Promotion Act, which comes into force May 30, 2019.
- The [first](#) is proposing a certification standard for organic agricultural products as well as for allowable substances in their production, packaging, distribution, and sale.
- The [second](#) contains a list of agricultural products that are covered by the certification standards and activities. The list contains a variety of agricultural products including cherries.
- The two notified regulations will also come into force on May 30, 2019. Comments are due 60 days from the WTO notifications.

Brazil and Chile Formalize Organic Equivalence Agreement

- This month, Brazil and Chile will operationalize an equivalence agreement for organic products.
- Chile and Brazil will recognize and accept the organic certification from both countries and a common label, with official stamps, will be created to attest to the authenticity of the organic products.
- The equivalence agreement will remove the need for producers to hire accredited certifiers, which are typically private companies. The equivalence agreement is expected to reduce production costs and help increase organic trade between the two partners.
- More information on the organic equivalence agreement is available from the [Brazilian Ministry of Agriculture](#).

EU Rules on Uniform Practical Arrangements for the Official Controls on Plants and Plant Products

- On March 27, the European Union (EU) [notified](#) the World Trade Organization (WTO) of [rules](#) on uniform practical arrangements for the performance of official controls on plants, plant products, and other objects to verify compliance with EU rules on protective measures against pests.
- The Regulation outlines the conditions for an increase or reduction of official controls on professional operators authorized to issue plant passports, minimum frequency of official controls on plants and plant products from a particular origin, and frequency of control on professional operators authorized to apply the mark on wood packaging material.
- The Regulation will enter into force on December 14, 2019.

China Publishes Draft Measures on the Management of Chinese Food Safety Standards

- On April 2, China [notified](#) the World Trade Organization (WTO) of its draft [Food Safety Standards Administration Measures](#) (in Chinese).
- The Measures aim to standardize the management of food safety standards in China. The Measures include general principles and guidelines for drafting national food safety standards and soliciting public comments. Additionally, rules for the review and approval of national food safety standards as well as their numbering, publication, evaluation, and revision are outlined.
- Further, the draft standards outline treatment of provincial food safety standards and the handling of imported food with no national food safety standards.
- The final date for comments is June 1, 2019.

Codex Commission Committee Meeting on Food Labeling

- The U.S. Codex Office is [sponsoring](#) a public meeting to provide information and receive public comments on agenda items and draft U.S. positions to be discussed at the 45th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Labeling.
- Issues to be discussed include guidelines for front-of-pack nutrition labeling, internet sales, guidelines for the labeling of non-retail containers, as well as labeling of foods in joint presentation and multipack formats.
- The U.S. public meeting is scheduled for April 9, 2019. The Codex Committee Meeting on Food Labeling will be held in Ottawa, Canada from May 13-17, 2019.