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**A REPORT FOR
THE CALIFORNIA
CHERRY BOARD**

GENERAL ISSUES OF INTEREST TO THE CCB:

Update on West Coast Port Discussions

- The West Coast longshore workers have completed voting on a three-year contract extension. The International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) has issued a [press release](#) stating that early voting indicates the contract extension with the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA) will pass by 67 percent. The ILWU represents longshoremen at all West Coast ports including Los Angeles, Long Beach, Oakland, Portland, Tacoma, and Seattle.
- The PMA offered the contract extension to the ILWU on April 28 with provisions including wage increases for workers, increases in employer contributions to pension plans, and no changes to the healthcare program (*BCI Monitor* 5-02-17). The current contract was scheduled to expire on July 1, 2019, but if the extension is ratified as expected, the contract will now expire on July 1, 2022.
- The ILWU's Coast Balloting Committee will announce the official results on August 4, 2017.

India to Issue Digital Phytosanitary Certificates

- India's Directorate of Plant Protection, Quarantine and Storage (DPPQS) published a notice regarding the issuance of digital phytosanitary (e-phyto) certificates. Beginning immediately, DPPQS will issue digital phytosanitary certificates to all countries.
- India has placed an emphasis on simplifying and standardizing its regulations to improve the ease of conducting business. Earlier this year, India introduced its biggest tax reform that consolidated the convoluted system of state, interstate, and local taxes into a single nationwide tax system (*BCI Monitor* 3-07-17). The allowance of digital phytosanitary certificates is yet another step India has taken to simplify doing business in the country.
- The circular from the Government of India can be found in the following U.S. Department of Agriculture Foreign Agriculture Service [GAIN report](#).

World Trade Organization Approves Amendment to Trade Policy Review Mechanism

- The General Council of the World Trade Organization (WTO) [approved](#) the first-ever amendment to the Trade Policy Review Mechanism (TPRM) on July 26.
- The TPRM allows for the evaluation of WTO members' trade policies and their impact on the multilateral trading system.

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- This amendment will reduce the frequency of trade policy reviews. Currently, WTO members must undergo a trade policy review every two, four, or six years depending on the size of their economy. When this amendment goes into effect, trade policy reviews will have to be conducted every three, five, or seven years, with the largest economies reviewed most frequently. The U.S. is scheduled for its 14th trade policy review on December 17-19, 2018.
- The change in trade policy review frequency will be phased in beginning January 1, 2019.

Canada Nutritional Labeling Requirements

- As part of the Healthy Eating Strategy, Health Canada has made amendments to the “*Food and Drug Regulations – Nutrition Labeling, Other Labelling Provisions and Food Colours.*” The amendments were finalized in December 2016, but Health Canada recently published [templates](#) and a [guide](#) for the changes to the nutrition facts table and the ingredients list on food labels.
- Changes to the regulation of serving sizes is intended to make comparing similar food products easier. A simple rule of thumb, “5% or less is a little, 15% or more is a lot”, has also been added as a footnote to the Nutrition Facts Table to help consumers use the percent daily value (%DV) to better understand the nutritional composition of a single product, or to better compare two food products.
- More information on sugars will also be made available, including a % DV for total sugars in the Nutrition Facts table, and the grouping together of sugar-based ingredients under the name “sugars” in the list of ingredients. In addition, all food colors will be declared by their common name rather than the generic term “color” and the list of ingredients and allergen information will be easier to read.
- A new health claim will also be allowed on fruits and vegetables, informing Canadians about the health benefits of these foods.
- The food industry has a transition period of 5 years to make these changes.

U.S. International Trade Commission Publishes 2016 Trade Report

- On July 25, the U.S. International Trade Commission (USITC) published [The Year in Trade 2016](#).
- The annual report provides comprehensive information about U.S. trade policies and relevant developments in 2016, with sections detailing: 1) the administration of U.S. trade laws and regulations; 2) activities at the World Trade Organization (WTO); 3) bilateral and regional trade activities; 4) the status of U.S. free trade agreements (FTAs); and 5) changes in U.S. trade relationships with selected trading partners.
- The report underscores the continuing challenges faced by U.S. exporters as a result of global economic trends, a slowdown of U.S. GDP growth, and an appreciation of the U.S. dollar by 1.1 percent against a broad trade-weighted index of major foreign currencies including major emerging market currencies such as the Chinese yuan and the Mexican peso.