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## A REPORT FOR THE CALIFORNIA CHERRY BOARD

### SPECIFIC ISSUES OF INTEREST TO THE CCB:

#### Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Signed

- The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) was signed on Sunday, November 15.
- RCEP includes 15 countries that are a part of ASEAN or have free trade agreements with ASEAN: Australia, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- India, which participated in the initial negotiations, announced in November 2019 it would not join the final agreement, but could join the deal later (*BCI Monitor 11-5-2019*).
- When implemented, the RCEP will represent approximately a third of the world's GDP and population.
- RCEP marks Japan's first free trade agreement with China or South Korea.

### GENERAL ISSUES OF INTEREST TO THE CCB:

#### China Notifies WTO of Administrative Measures on Import and Export Food Safety

- China recently [notified the WTO](#) of a document entitled the [Administrative Measures on Import and Export Food Safety of the People's Republic of China](#) (in Chinese). While the original notification did not include a copy of the document, a later [corrigendum](#) included the scanned copy.
- BCI is in active contact with the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) regarding the purpose of the WTO notification.
- FAS provided BCI with a [translation](#) of the previous draft version of the document, released in June 2020, and a [brief overview](#).
- The previous draft version modifies several current requirements including those around overseas facility registration, assessment and review of foreign country's food safety regulatory systems, lists of control measures in response to safety problems, and punitive measures for imported foods with food safety incompliances.
- FAS reports that a GAIN Report is in process, including an unofficial translation and comparison to previous drafts.

#### China Notifies WTO of Regulations on Overseas Manufacturers of Imported Food

- China recently [notified the WTO](#) of a new draft of [Regulations of the People's Republic of China on the Registration and Administration of Overseas Manufacturers of Imported Food](#) (in Chinese). A previous draft was translated in a [USDA GAIN Report](#) and was open for comments at the end of 2019.

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#### *China Notifies WTO of Regulations on Overseas Manufacturers of Imported Food (continued)*

- The regulations cover all aspects of registering as an overseas manufacturer of food imported into China, including applications, validity periods, and management of registration such as when it can be suspended, cancelled, or revoked, etc.
- Based on informal translation, changes between the two versions include, but are not limited to:
  - Overall reorganization of the document
  - Clarification of the scope, which does not include food additives and food-related products
  - Additional requirement for the overseas producer to establish an effective food safety and hygiene management and protection system to ensure food exported to China meets relevant Chinese requirements and national standards for food safety.
  - Additional requirement to submit legal qualifications of the enterprise, such as the home country business license.
- According to informal translation, the regulations will enter into force in January 2021.
- According to the WTO notification, comments are open for sixty days, which would be until January 16, 2021.
- The measures will replace the former General Administration of Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ) Decree 145, which was implemented on May 1, 2012 and amended by Order No. 243 General Administration of Customs on November 23, 2018.

#### **Australia Reviews In-Transit Cold Treatment Procedures for Fresh Produce**

- Australia's Department of Agriculture, Water, and the Environment (DAWE) is [undergoing a review](#) of placement requirements for sensor/probes used to conduct In-Transit Cold Treatment as a phytosanitary measure.
- Current sensor/probe placement will be accepted for the rest of the 2020/21 season while the review is completed.

#### **Nigeria to Ratify the African Continental Free Trade Area**

- Nigeria, one of Africa's largest economies and most populous country, [ratified](#) the [African Continental Free Trade Area](#) (AfCTA).
- The trade agreement aims to boost intra-African trade. It has been signed by 54 of 55 countries recognized by the African Union and ratified by 30. By 2030, when it is fully in effect, it is predicted to cover 1.2 billion people and a combined GDP of \$2.5 trillion.
- For the countries that have ratified it, implementation of the AfCTA Agreement will begin on January 1, 2021.

#### **USDA Releases Guidance on Shipping Food Samples to Japan**

- A recent [USDA GAIN Report](#) provides guidance on shipping individual, small-sized samples to Japanese buyers in the absence of trade shows due to COVID-19.
- Imports of agricultural products for public distribution, even if they are to be distributed for free, are subject to standard import requirements. However, exemptions do exist if a product is not meant for public consumption by an unspecified number of people and each shipment is less than 10 kilograms.
- The report provides additional information regarding eligibility for duty-free or simplified tax rates and key contact information.