

DECEMBER 15, 2020

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**A REPORT FOR
THE CALIFORNIA
CHERRY BOARD**

GENERAL ISSUES OF INTEREST TO THE CCB:

China COVID-19 Testing for Imported Foods Update

- The China General Administration of Customs (GACC) has provided to the U.S. Embassy a copy of [Joint Prevention and Control Mechanism Comprehensive Development \(2020\) No. 245](#) (in Chinese) to distribute to U.S. food safety officials and U.S. producers. The document includes guidelines for industry on prevention and control of COVID-19 in cold chain foods and disinfection technical guidelines.
- The USDA Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS) has also made available an [unofficial English translation](#).
- The guidelines apply to the prevention and control of COVID-19 in the production, loading and unloading, transportation, storage, and sale of cold chain foods.
- The guide also includes a list of commonly used disinfectants used in the production and transportation of cold chain foods and use-guidelines for each.
- USDA FAS reports that enforcement remains most consistent for imported frozen meat and seafood practices.

Hong Kong Conducting Food Safety Consultation

- Hong Kong [notified the WTO](#) it is [conducting a consultation](#) on proposed amendments regarding harmful substances in food. Specifically, [the amendments](#) address:
 - Updating and strengthening regulation over three types of mycotoxins (*aflatoxin, deoxynivalenol, and patulin*) in food
 - Setting maximum levels for *benzo(a)pyrene, glycidyl fatty acid esters, melamine, 3-monochloropropane-1,2-diol, and erucic acid* in edible fats and oils, condiments, and infant formulas
 - Labeling or prohibition of partially hydrogenated oils in food
- Comments are due by March 15, 2021 to harmful-sub-consultation@fehd.gov.hk. A public forum on the consultation will take place on January 17, 2021.

Vietnam COVID-19 Testing for Imported Foods Update

- The U.S. Embassy in Hanoi's Office of Agricultural Affairs (OAA) recently met with the Vietnam Food Administration (VFA) of the Ministry of Health (MOH) to seek further clarity on Vietnamese plans to implement COVID-19 testing for imported foods (*BCI Monitor 12-8-20*).
- At the meeting, VFA emphasized this was a 'monitoring' program only and it will not affect the customs clearance process nor trade.
- While VFA did not rule out testing of other products or packaging, they emphasized testing will be targeted towards the packaging of frozen meat and seafood products imported from countries deemed high-risk based on their COVID-19 status.

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Vietnam COVID-19 Testing for Imported Foods Update (continued)

- VFA stated they have not received any complaints from industry. If any concerns or issues arise, they recommend companies notify or discuss them with VFA.
- U.S. OAA staff will continue to monitor the implementation of the testing closely and welcome any questions or concerns.

UK to Suspend Retaliatory Boeing Tariffs but Maintain Steel-related Retaliatory Tariffs

- On December 8, the United Kingdom [announced](#) that it will suspend on January 1, 2021, select retaliatory tariffs imposed on the U.S. by the European Union. The tariffs to be suspended were implemented by the EU, including the U.K., on November 10 in accordance with the WTO's ruling that the EU could impose up to \$4 billion in retaliation for subsidies provided to Boeing (*BCI Monitor 10-13-20, 11-10-20*).
- Fresh cherries are not subject to the EU's retaliatory tariffs.
- In a [statement regarding the suspension of tariffs](#), the U.S. Trade Representative asserted that the UK did not have the authority to impose tariffs after they leave the EU, as they were party to the WTO dispute as a member of the EU, not as an individual country.
- The UK's announcement also states that the UK plans to continue applying retaliatory tariffs stemming from the U.S. Section 232 tariffs on aluminum and steel imports, but will launch a consultation to ensure the tariffs are "tailored to the UK economy." Revised tariffs could potentially include agricultural products.

USDA Provides Translation of Chinese Draft Administrative Measures on Import and Export Food Safety

- A recent [USDA GAIN Report](#) provides an English translation of Chinese Draft Administrative Measures on Import and Export of Food. The measures were [notified to the WTO](#) in November, but did not include a description nor attachment.
- The measures intend to replace the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ) Decree 144 of the same title, which entered into force on March 1, 2012. The measures apply to the inspection, quarantine, and regulation of food imports and exports.
- Several revised drafts have been published previously, including in 2017, 2018, and June 2020.
- Compared to measures currently in effect, the draft measures include several changes that are outlined in the GAIN Report.
- Comments are due before January 11, 2021 to sps@customs.gov.cn.

India Publishes Draft Notification on Licensing and Registration Rules for Food Business Operators

- The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) recently published [draft regulations](#) (English begins on pg. 70) amending the licensing and registration requirements for food business operators (FBOs), including importers.
- The notification outlines proposed revisions to the [Food Safety and Standards \(Licensing and Registration of Food Businesses\), Regulations 2011](#), specifying compliance rules for licensed and registered FBOs engaged in other businesses and how FBOs must conform to food safety and sanitary measures.
- Implementation will begin at least 180 days after publication in final form in the Official Gazette. Stakeholders may comment on the draft notification once it has been notified to the WTO.