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A REPORT FOR
THE CALIFORNIA
CHERRY BOARD

SPECIFIC ISSUES OF INTEREST TO THE CCB:

Indonesia Accepting Electronic Phytosanitary Certificates

- Indonesia has [notified](#) the WTO that its Agricultural Quarantine Agency (AQA) is accepting electronic phytosanitary certificates from all countries to facilitate trade. Exporting countries should inform AQA of their intent to utilize this option and share details regarding their certificate validation process.
- In the notice, Indonesia also requested reciprocal measures from trading partners. AQA has developed an [online portal](#) to allow for certificate validation of Indonesian products

Sri Lanka Temporarily Increases Duty on Cherries

- Sri Lanka's Ministry of Finance recently [announced](#) a temporary increase in the country's Special Commodity Levy (SCL) applied to a variety of imported fruit, including fresh cherries.
- The new levy is effective for two months as of April 17, 2020. The previous SCL on fresh cherries was Rs.250/kg, while the two-month temporary rate is Rs.315/kg.

GENERAL ISSUES OF INTEREST TO THE CCB:

United States and United Kingdom Start Free Trade Agreement Talks

- The U.S. and UK have formally launched negotiations for a free trade agreement, according to a [joint statement](#) by the two parties. The first round is being conducted virtually over two weeks.
- Bilateral trade between the two countries amounts to roughly \$270 billion annually. [U.S. negotiating objectives](#) are available via USTR; [UK negotiating objectives](#) are available via its Department for International Trade.

EU Clarifies Requirements Regarding Imported Organic Products

- In April, the EU published [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2020/479](#) regarding the certification of imported organic products.
- EU regulations require that a certificate of inspection be issued by the relevant authority before a consignment leaves the exporting country. The authority is to perform a documentary check, including a review of transport documents, before issuing the certificate.
- However, in cases where complete transport documents are not available to the relevant authority when issuing the certificate of inspection, Regulation 2020/479 specifies that the transport document information should be included in the certificate within 10 days following issuance and, in any case, before endorsement by EU authorities.

Taiwan Expands Flexibility of Company Registration Renewals

- The Taiwan Food and Drug Agency (Taiwan FDA) has changed the [requirements](#) (in Chinese) for annual renewal of food supplier registrations, stipulating that registration must be renewed within each one-year period, but need not be renewed specifically during July of each year.
- This affects food manufacturing and processing businesses, food service, import businesses, and retail businesses. Details regarding food business registration are available via the Taiwan FDA [website](#).

Nineteen WTO Members Move Forward with Alternative Dispute Settlement Option

- Nineteen World Trade Organization members recently formalized an [interim dispute settlement agreement](#) that will apply while the WTO Appellate Body remains non-functional. The agreement is called the Multi-Party Interim Appeal Arbitration Arrangement (MPIA).
- The agreement includes China, Australia, Mexico, Canada, Brazil, and the European Union, among others. The U.S., which prompted this development by blocking the appointment of new panelists to the WTO Appellate Body, is not a participant.
- Any WTO member can join the agreement by notifying the WTO. The parties are now in the process of selecting a pool of ten arbitrators who may be assigned to individual disputes. Both the complainant and defendant must be a participant in the agreement for the interim court to have jurisdiction.