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SPECIFIC ISSUES OF INTEREST TO THE CCB:

United Kingdom Joins CPTPP

- The United Kingdom (UK) has been accepted into the [Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership \(CPTPP\)](#). The UK requested to join the CPTPP in February 2021. Some initial details of the UK's CPTPP accessions are available through a [policy paper](#) published by the UK.
- While the UK already maintains free trade agreements (FTAs) with most CPTPP members, this will be the first trade agreement between the UK and Malaysia.
- The CPTPP is currently in force in Australia, Canada, Chile, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, Malaysia, and Vietnam. Brunei is a signatory to the trade deal but has not yet ratified it. China, Taiwan, Ecuador, Uruguay, and Costa Rica have also officially applied to join the CPTPP. In April 2022, South Korea signed a resolution to join CPTPP, but has yet to formally apply (*BCI Monitors* 2-8-21, 6-8-21, 9-14-21, 9-21-21, 9-28-21, 4-19-22, 8-16-22, 10-11-22, 11-22-22).
- The UK applies a 12% Most Favored Nation tariff on fresh cherries (HS 0809.29), including U.S. cherries. CPTPP offers duty-free entry to the UK for Chilean and Canadian cherries; however, these countries already enjoy duty-free access under bilateral free trade agreements with the UK. In 2022, the UK imported 14,895 MT of cherries and the top five origins, in order, were Spain, Chile, Greece, South Africa, and Argentina. The UK imported 54 MT of cherries from the U.S. in 2022, but previously imported in larger quantities including a high of 3,736 MT in 2012.
- Entry into force will take place once both the UK and CPTPP Parties finish their legislative processes.

Hong Kong Introduces Disposable Plastics Ban Bill to Legislature

- On March 15, the Hong Kong government [announced](#) that it submitted its [Product Eco-responsibility \(Amendment\) Bill 2023](#) to the Legislative Council. The bill amends the [Product Eco-responsibility Ordinance](#) to prohibit the manufacturing, selling, and distributing of a number of disposable plastic products.
- According to Schedule 10, the bill will ban the manufacturing, selling and distributing of disposable plastic products over two phases. In the first phase, the following items of interest to CCB will be banned from sale and free distribution:
 - Oxo-degradable plastic products (regardless of disposability)
 - Food sticks.
- Oxo-degradable plastic products (regardless of disposability) will also be banned from manufacturing in phase one.
- According to the [bill-tracking website](#), the draft bill was published on February 10 and as of March 31 is under Committee consideration. The bill is expected to be passed and gazetted as an ordinance in late 2023 or early 2024 at the earliest. Phase one would begin six months after the ordinance is gazetted.

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GENERAL ISSUES OF INTEREST TO THE CCB:

South Korea Revises Resource Recycling Act

- On March 28, Korea's Ministry of Environment published amendments to the [*Law on Promotion of Saving and Recycling of Resources*](#) (in Korean – to view amendment, click on button below the title).
- According to machine translation, the amendments include the following changes:
 - Article 9-2 on Standards for Material and Structure of Packaging Materials, etc.: Obligated packaging producers must also comply with packaging parameters such as material, weight, color, ease of recycling, etc., as announced by the Ministry of Environment.
 - Article 9-4 (former Article 9-3) on Evaluation of the Material and Structure of Packaging Materials: Evaluation criteria shall include parameters for material, color, weight, and ease of recycling.
- Newly added is Article 33-2 on indications of recycled content on packaging. Labeling packaging with a recycled content mark is only permitted when use of recycled materials exceeds the ratio prescribed by the Ministry of Environment and when labels comply with the Ordinance of the Ministry of Environment.
- The amendments will enter into force on March 29, 2024.

Japan Announces Draft Amendments on Substances Allowed in Food Contact Materials

- On March 6, Japan's Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare (MHLW) [*announced*](#) multiple [*draft amendments*](#) to their *Positive List of Substances Allowed for Food Contact Utensils, Containers, and Packaging* regulation.
- The MHLW published *20230306 New draft of Table 1*, a compilation of base materials as of March 6, 2023, and *20230306 New draft of Table 2*, a compilation of food additives for contact materials as of March 6, 2023.
- The amendments include reclassification of polymers with adsorptive or ion exchange ability, expansion of the definition of a cross-linked polymer, classifying difficult-to-classify polymers used for coating, and revising usage limits for some substances.