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GENERAL ISSUES OF INTEREST TO THE CCB:

EU Announces Reinforcement of Controls on Imported Food

- On December 8, the European Commission [announced](#) several measures to strengthen controls at European Union (EU) borders and in third countries. This announcement comes as part of the EU's Vision for Agriculture and Food aimed at improving the safety and competitiveness of the EU. Announced measures of potential interest to the CCB include the following:
 - 50% increase in the number of audits carried out on non-EU countries over the next two years.
 - Closer monitoring of non-compliant commodities and countries, with frequency of checks increasing as required.
 - Establishment of an EU task force to make import controls more efficient with a focus on pesticide residues, food/feed safety, and animal welfare. This task force will consider coordinated EU monitoring action on specific products of interest.
- It is expected that the EU will release further details on these measures in the coming months.

Update on UK-EU Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agreement Negotiations

- Formal negotiations on a new United Kingdom (UK)-European Union (EU) sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) agreement have begun following the [EU's adoption](#) of its negotiating mandate on November 13, 2025, according to a recent U.S. Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service (USDA FAS) [GAIN Report](#).
- The agreement as currently formulated would require the UK to nearly fully align with current and future EU food safety rules, with only limited and non-absolute carve-outs.
- High-level engagement is underway, with EU Commission President von der Leyen pushing for immediate talks, and the head of the UK Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) Emma Reynolds holding informal negotiations in Brussels over November 17-18.
- Implementation will require both primary legislation (led by the UK's Cabinet Office) and secondary legislation (led by Defra), though legislative movement will only begin after conclusion of a political agreement on the broader "Brexit reset" negotiations.
- UK Cabinet Office Minister Nick Thomas-Symonds has set early 2027 as the target for implementing the SPS agreement, clarifying his earlier comments about "getting it done" by 2027.

**A REPORT FOR
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CHERRY BOARD**

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EU Notifies Amendment to Pest Regulation

- On December 8, the European Union (EU) [notified the WTO](#) of a [Draft Commission Implementing Regulation \(Annex\)](#) amending [Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2019/2072](#) regarding the regulation of quarantine pests.
- The amendment makes various changes to the Regulation, including the addition and removal of certain pests as well as revisions to import and internal movement controls. No changes directly applicable to U.S.-origin cherries were identified.
- The proposed dates of adoption and publication are March-April 2026. The Regulation will enter into force on the twentieth day following its publication in the EU's Official Journal, with certain measures applying six months after publication.
- Comments can be sent to the U.S. SPS Enquiry Point at us.spsenquiry@fas.usda.gov. The WTO comment deadline is February 6, 2026.