

MARCH 24, 2026

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- **Vietnam Extends Suspension of New Food Safety Decree**
- **India Notifies Draft Amendments to Food Packaging, Food Contact Material Definitions**
- **EU-Mercosur Trade Agreement to be Implemented May 1**
- **EU, Australia Conclude Trade Agreement Negotiations**

GENERAL ISSUES OF INTEREST TO THE CCB:

Vietnam Extends Suspension of New Food Safety Decree

- On March 20, the Government of Vietnam [announced](#) (in Vietnamese) that it will extend the suspension of [Decree No. 46/2026/ND-CP](#) (in Vietnamese) beyond the original April 15 deadline.
- According to a recent U.S. Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service (USDA FAS) [GAIN report](#), *Decree 46*, issued January 26, 2026 with immediate effect, introduced significant new import inspection and product registration requirements, replacing Vietnam's *Decree 15/2018* and leading to disruption in food and agricultural trade. On February 5, Vietnam had initially [announced](#) (in Vietnamese) a suspension of *Decree 46* in until April 15.
- *Decree 46* will not be implemented until amendments to Vietnam's *Law on Food Safety* and a new implementing decree are finalized. Authorities also signaled a focus on strengthening inspections, post-clearance controls, and overall food safety management during this interim period.

India Notifies Draft Amendments to Food Packaging, Food Contact Material Definitions

- On March 23, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) [notified the WTO](#) of its recently published [draft Food Safety and Standards \(Packaging\) Amendment Regulations, 2026](#), which add additional definitions for food contact materials (FCM) and food packaging to the *Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulations, 2018* (*BCI Monitor 3-17-26*).
- As previously reported, the draft adds the following definitions to the regulation: food contact material, food grade contact material, modified atmosphere packaging, food packaging, non-intentionally added substances, and aseptic packaging.
- Comments can be sent to the U.S. SPS Enquiry Point at us.spsenquiry@fas.usda.gov. The WTO comment deadline is May 22, 2026.

EU-Mercosur Trade Agreement to be Implemented May 1

- The [European Union \(EU\)-Mercosur Trade Agreement](#) will enter into force on a provisional basis from May 1, according to a recent [report](#) on an announcement by the European Commission.
- Provisional implementation will only occur for the Mercosur countries that have completed ratification of the deal, currently Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay. Paraguay is expected to complete ratification soon.
- The agreement includes trade facilitation measures including tariff reductions on a wide range of products, as detailed in previous coverage (*BCI Monitor 3-3-26*).

**A REPORT FOR
THE CALIFORNIA
CHERRY BOARD**

Bryant Christie Inc. – Seattle
2033 Sixth Avenue, Suite 1030
Seattle, WA 98121
Phone: (206) 292-6340 Fax: (206) 292-6341

Bryant Christie Inc. – Sacramento
2005 "I" Street, Suite 200
Sacramento, CA 95811
Phone: (916) 492-7062 Fax: (916) 492-7061

EU, Australia Conclude Trade Agreement Negotiations

- The European Union (EU) and Australia have finalized negotiations on a comprehensive free trade agreement (FTA), according to a European Commission [press release](#).
- The agreement includes the elimination of tariffs on key EU exports such as cheeses, meat preparations, wine, some fruits and vegetables, chocolate, and sugar confectionery. Sensitive sectors (certain meat, sugar, dairy, and rice) will be protected through tariff rate quotas and a bilateral safeguard mechanism.
- The EU will publish draft FTA texts soon to be approved and adopted, after which point the EU and Australia may sign the agreement and complete their respective ratification processes.
- Both the [EU](#) and [Australia](#) have published summaries regarding the benefits of the agreement.