



TRADE FACILITATION AND THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY

CAHFSA Webinar
***Agricultural Health, Food Safety and
International Trade***
29 September 2022

PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

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1. SPS and international trade
2. Trade facilitation and CARICOM
3. Transparency, participation and international trading arrangements

SPS AND THE WTO

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Measures to ensure that food is safe for consumption

- are necessary, often case specific
- based on science and can seem complex
- can cause delays and uncertainty in international trade

SPS AND THE WTO

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Reducing this complexity and uncertainty:

- International cooperation
 - World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH formerly OIE - 1924)
 - International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC - 1929)
 - CODEX Alimentarius Commission (1963)

SPS AND THE WTO

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Reducing this complexity and uncertainty:

- International trade agreements
 - WTO TBT Agreement (1995)
 - WTO SPS Agreement (1995)
- Bilateral trading arrangements
 - CARIFORUM EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA – 2008)
 - CARIFORUM – UK EPA (2020)

SPS AND THE WTO

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WTO SPS Committee

- Raise and try to resolve specific trade concerns
- 64 raised in 2021, 27 for the first time
- >50% record for resolving or partially resolving specific trade concerns

SPS AND THE WTO

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WTO SPS Committee

- Relies heavily on work done at CODEX, WOHAI and IPPC
- Measures imposed by the State
- Higher standards used by private sector competitively being discussed as a trade concern

SPS AND THE WTO

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CARIFORUM EU/CARIFORUM – UK EPA_s

Raise specific issues arising in bilateral trade

- Private standards
- Cadmium in cocoa

European Food Safety Authority

<https://www.safefoodadvocacy.eu/efsa/>

TRADE FACILITATION AND THE WTO

WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (2013)

- the ongoing simplification, modernising and harmonizing of border measures
- primarily to expedite the movement, release and clearance of goods
- allows States in regional economic arrangements (e.g. CARICOM) to adopt regional approach to implementation

TRADE FACILITATION AND CARICOM

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2015 - Regional Trade Ministers (COTED):

- approved a Regional Implementation strategy and established Regional Trade Facilitation Committee (RTFC)
 - ensure coherence and consistency between national and regional trade facilitation priorities
 - facilitate public-private sector dialogue and co-operation on trade facilitation

TRADE FACILITATION AND CARICOM

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2021 - Regional Trade Ministers (COTED):

- Regional Trade Facilitation Committee and CAHFSA to harmonise and simplify import licensing regimes within the Region, particularly for trade in food and agricultural products

TRADE FACILITATION AND CARICOM

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2022 - Regional Trade Ministers (COTED):

- Special Ministerial Task Force on Food Production and Food Security (MTF)
- Intensify efforts to remove all Non-Tariff Barriers to intra-regional trade in the Community

TRANSPARENCY, PARTICIPATION AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS

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Small, open economies vulnerable to external shocks

- critical to participate actively in all fora that influence the evolution of the requirements for international trade
- decisions are made that will affect the uncertainty faced by and flexibility available to the CARICOM private sector

TRANSPARENCY, PARTICIPATION AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS

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CARICOM private sector to follow the meetings of these bodies

- ensure that their own issues are raised
- propose alternative and affordable methods for arriving at the same degree of food safety

CARICOM public sector to make WTO and EPA notifications easily and widely available

TRANSPARENCY, PARTICIPATION AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS

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The value of the notification requirements in trade agreements (EU and UK EPAs)

- **Earlier warning** of changes as science developing measures (before lawyers)
- **Rapid response** to concerns (before stultified by bureaucracy)

CONCLUSIONS

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1. Private sector to share factual (*not anecdotal*) information on challenges faced with national and regional representatives
2. Private sector to monitor entire food supply chain to ensure safe practices employed

CONCLUSIONS

3. National and regional representatives should collaborate to ensure representation and participation in all relevant fora
4. Information portals should be available to, accessed and contributed to by all stakeholders
5. Support all regional initiatives to simplify, modernise and harmonise the measures necessary safe food trade

**THANK YOU AND
STAY SAFE**

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