



IGTC

International Grain Trade Coalition

International Grains Council (IGC): 53rd Council Session

Item 5. Dialogue with international organisations on major policy issues affecting grains trade

June 7, 2021

About IGTC

The International Grain Trade Coalition Association (IGTC) is a federation of non-profit organizations formed to serve the greater good by promoting and facilitating the performance of the supply chain for grains, oilseeds, pulses and derived products. More than 8000 companies or 'Corporate Stakeholders' in 85 countries participate in the Coalition. See www.igtglobal.org for more about us.

1. Join us! IGTC's participation at the IGC 2021 Conference

IGTC is pleased to be the *International Grains Industry Sponsor* of the IGC Grains Conference 2021. We hope to see IGC members and observers at the sessions we are leading (times local to London):

- Tuesday 8 June 1.10pm-1.50pm: IGTC live panel "Official practices, trade and resilient food systems"
- Wednesday 9 June 1.45pm-2.15pm: IGTC-IGC live break-out session "Benefits and Challenges of ePhyto in Africa"

2. Updates on IGTC's trade facilitation files

- a) Harmonisation of phytosanitary control methods and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)** IGTC welcomed new Chair of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) Mr Lucien Kuamé Konan (Côte d'Ivoire), and Vice Chair John Greifer (USA APHIS) upon their election at CPM15 on 18 March. For the grain trade, a key milestone of their work will be the approval of a draft ISPM on "Commodity-based standards for phytosanitary measures (2019-008)", and further steps towards an Industry Advisory Group to accompany the broader mandate of IPPC's work. In addition, IGTC is nominating grain trade experts to join the IPPC Focus Group on Communications and the Sub-Group on Dispute Settlement.
- b) "Low Level Presence" (LLP)** information videos are available on YouTube in English and Portuguese as part of a Global Alliance on Ag Biotech Trade (GAABT) initiative and will soon be available in Spanish and Chinese. IGTC continues to work towards the avoidance of unnecessary trade disruptions owing to Low Level Presence (LLP) of safety-assessed GM events in the supply chain that occur when there are gaps in timing of product approvals between exporting and importing countries. IGTC's "hierarchy of policy options" on LLP are: i) Synchronisation of approvals of new biotechnology products; ii) Mutual recognition of biotechnology safety approvals; and iii) LLP management approaches including process controls and a policy model recommending a threshold of 5% for the presence of a safety-approved biotech product.
- c) Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs)** and related pesticide approvals and residue measures continue to take precedence at international venues such as Codex Alimentarius and World Trade Organization (WTO). At Codex, the number of MRLs that are pending evaluation and adoption will have more than doubled from the approximately 430 pending the Joint Meeting of Pesticide Residues (JMPPR) in 2019 to

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possibly around 1,000 (for 41 pesticide active ingredients and more than 240 crops, scheduled for JMPR in 2020 and 2021). IGTC is in favour of an initiative tabled at the WTO's SPS Committee which calls for Ministerial backing of "harmonized SPS measures, including on maximum residue limits for veterinary drugs and pesticides" at the MC12 WTO conference in December 2021.

- d) Innovation in electronic trading documentation** 94 countries have signed up to the IPPC's ePhyto Solution with around half of those actively exchanging in daily operations. Success stories have included the integration of the ePhyto Solution with EU TRACES, USA's active exchanges with 48 countries; Argentina's 100% paperless implementation with four countries; and the onboarding of Korea and China. IGTC sees the ePhyto Solution as an important part of the drive to streamline border processes, reduce time for cargo clearance, and reduce unnecessary cost burdens in trade. Bearing in mind the government-to-government nature of phytosanitary certificate exchange, anecdotal reports from USA APHIS show an NPPO cost saving of around 25USD per ePhyto case study.
- e) Innovation in plant breeding** IGTC's work in 2021 is characterised by increased information sharing among the grain trade as well as with partners. Policy Team members are sharing insights on national and regional developments with grain trade colleagues, for example the European Commission's study on New Genomic Techniques (NGTs) as published on 29 April, and new provisions in regulatory frameworks in Canada and Japan. The work with the plant breeding community has narrowed to focus on specific, tangible issues that impact the grain trade.
- f) Cartagena Biosafety Protocol (CBP)** is again under the spotlight at the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD – known as @UNBiodiversity on social media networks). In May and June 2021 governmental Parties to the Convention are discussing the potential for further action to protect the environment and enhance risk assessment frameworks for Living Modified Organisms (LMOs), as well as seeking definitions of new and emerging issues such as Synthetic Biology. A global IGTC delegation is following all the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) meetings. Among the vocal government delegations so far have been Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Ethiopia, European Union, Finland, France, Germany, Indonesia, Italy, Republic of Korea, Portugal, Mexico, Malaysia, Morocco, Norway, Peru, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Uganda (Africa Regional Group) and United Kingdom.

3. IGTC Global Grain Trade Round Tables continue in 2021

IGTC's series of monthly "Grain Trade Round Tables" are designed to share information on an off-the-record basis, providing an open space for discussion and a unique benefit for participants. The following events have taken place so far in 2021 and IGTC welcomes guidance from IGC member governments for future meetings.

- **May "United Nations Food Systems Summit (UNFSS), an industry association perspective"** with speakers from Gafta, CropLife International and Global Dairy



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- Platform". Topics included the relevance of the UNFSS to industry associations, and an examination of the potential outcomes as relevant for the grain trade.
- **April "Future of the World Trade Organization (WTO)"** with speakers from the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and Argentina. Topics included the impact of the new Director General Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala; the integration of environmental sustainability frameworks into the global rules-based trading system; and the expected outcomes of this year's 12th Ministerial Conference (MC12).
 - **March "An introduction to the Global Stewardship Group with Chris Holdgreve, Excellence Through Stewardship"**. Topics included the need for transparency and information sharing on plant breeding innovations; and the supply chain's work to meet consumer demands and official regulations at the same time as enhancing the environmental sustainability of agricultural production methods.
 - **February "Sustainability certification schemes applied to grains, oilseeds, pulses and other agri-bulks"** with speakers from the SAI Global Platform and IGTC members from USA, Brazil and Australia. Topics included the level of consumer and grain trade customer awareness of sustainability certification schemes; mechanisms to communicate the environmental sustainability of grains; and a discussion about whether certification schemes facilitate or impede safe trade.
 - **January "Covid 19 update for the IGTC global constituency"**, an information sharing session led by the IGTC's global constituency. As 2021 began this was an important opportunity to assess any ongoing supply chain impacts of Covid 19, and provide updates on travel restrictions and access to vaccination.

For further information about how to participate in the IGTC please contact us at the Secretariat: secretariat@igtglobal.org