



**International Grains Council (IGC): 52nd Council Session**  
**Item 4. (ii) Statements from International Organisations and Participants**  
January 22, 2021

**About IGTC**

The IGTC's overarching objective is to serve the greater good by promoting and facilitating the performance of the supply chain for grains, oilseeds, pulses and derived products. The IGTC convenes significant expertise and representation to provide advice on the commercial requirements and economics of the world's food, feed and processing industries from a global perspective. More than 8000 companies or 'Corporate Stakeholders' in 85 countries participate in the Coalition. See [www.igtglobal.org](http://www.igtglobal.org) for more about us.

**1. IGTC participation in the IGC's 52<sup>nd</sup> Session and Grains Forum on Digitalization**

IGTC thanks IGC and its member governments for the continued cooperation and implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that was signed by both organizations in December 2018 ([here](#)). As per the MoU aims of communicating and promoting the relevance of the grains sector, the following members of the IGTC constituency will speaking at the IGC Grains Forum on digitalization on 21<sup>st</sup> January, and the IGC 52<sup>nd</sup> Session on 22<sup>nd</sup> January:

- Gary C. Martin, President, International Grain Trade Coalition (IGTC) (Council Session and Grains Forum)
- Gustavo Idígoras, President, CIARA-CEC (Council Session)
- Alejandra Danielson Castillo, Regional Director, US Grains Council (Grains Forum)

**2. Promoting safe trade: IGTC to attend the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) annual meeting – March 16, 18 and April 1**

IGTC strongly supports the IPPC's mission to protect the world's plant resources from the spread and introduction of pests and promote safe trade. IGTC is currently self-organizing its representation at the IPPC's 15<sup>th</sup> annual meeting (Commission on Phytosanitary Measures – CPM) that will take place virtually on three dates in March and April. Items on the agenda of CPM15 of interest for IGTC include:

- The financial sustainability of the ePhyto Solution
- Commodity-based standards for phytosanitary measures
- The positioning of the IPPC Secretariat position within FAO
- 2021 Focus Group on Strengthening Pest Outbreak Alert and Response Systems
- 2021 consultation on "Facilitating safe trade by reducing the incidence of contaminating pests associated with traded goods"
- Safe Provision of food and other humanitarian aid to prevent the introduction of plant pests during an emergency situation
- National Plant Protection Organization (NPPO) responsibility to implement the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)



### **3. Western Hemisphere Agricultural Group – IGTC received Ministerial responses to “LLP” letter**

IGTC has now received replies from ministerial leaders of all five countries of the Western Hemisphere Agricultural Group in response to its letter of September 2020 on Low Level Presence (LLP) of genetic material in grains and oilseeds. The letters received individually from Minister Luis Eugenio Bastera (Argentina), Minister Tereza Cristina Correa da Costa Dias (Brazil), Minister Marie-Claude Bibeau (Canada), Secretary Victor Manuel Villalobos Arambula (Mexico), and Under Secretary Ted McKinney (USA) acknowledge the IGTC’s work and agree on the importance of the issue for trade facilitation.

The IGTC letter emphasized the need to avoid unnecessary trade disruptions and reduce the potential for 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. The joint collaborative effort across the grain trade, explained the IGTC’s “hierarchy of policy options” which are:

- I. Synchronisation of approvals of new biotechnology products
- II. Mutual recognition of biotechnology safety approvals
- 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

IGTC messaging further elaborated that policies on LLP benefit the entire value chain when they:

- ensure the viable supply of raw materials at sustainable and affordable prices;
- minimize market disruptions; and
- recognize and respond to the reality of the international grain bulk handling and transportation systems, as well as the food and feed manufacturing processes.

### **4. Global Grain Trade Round Tables to continue in 2021**

In 2021, IGTC will continue its series of monthly “Grain Trade Round Tables”, designed to share information on an off-the-record basis, providing an open space for discussion and a unique benefit for participants. Themes currently being evaluated for February and March 2021 include: sustainability certification schemes applied to grains, oilseeds, pulses and other agri-bulks; and the future of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

The impetus for the Grain Trade Round Tables emerged in 2020 as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, during which specific elements of information including:

- Status of ports
- Status of borders for intra-regional trade such as in Eastern Africa and Europe
- Domestic sectoral information on grains, oilseeds, cereals, pulses and other agri-bulks
- National governmental policies impacting crop production and trade



# IGTC

International Grain Trade Coalition

More information about the IGTC's global information sharing effort can be found on the Global Alliance on Trade Facilitation (GATF)'s Covid-19 "repository" here: <https://www.tfafacility.org/covid19-trade-facilitation>

## **5. Current agenda- IGTC Policy Teams and Work Groups address:**

- Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) - Pesticide approvals & residue measures
- Innovation in electronic trading documentation
- Innovation in plant breeding
- Low Level Presence (LLP)
- Cartagena Biosafety Protocol (CBP)
- Harmonisation of phytosanitary control methods

2020 was an exceptional year of success for the IGTC. At our virtual General Assembly in November, we celebrated significant global expansion and diversification welcoming new Members and Stakeholders. Formal establishment of IGTC as a non-profit, tax exempt entity domiciled in Switzerland contributing to the greater good was completed. IGTC leadership and staff personnel now reside in Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America and South America.

We expect 2021 to be another year of growth and welcome public sector as well as private sector participation. For further information about how to participate in the IGTC please contact us at the Secretariat: [secretariat@igtglobal.org](mailto:secretariat@igtglobal.org)