

Electronic Trading Documentation (eDocs) Working Group

**IGTC**

International Grain Trade Coalition

Briefing Document
November 2022

Modernization and innovation in trade documentation practices are a priority for IGTC and its E-Documentation Working Group. 123 Grain Trade Professionals from around the world are currently working to:

- Provide informational guidance regarding requirements and advice related to the innovation of paperless document exchange.
- Assist in the innovation of a transparent, secure, cost-efficient electronic system for all parties to benefit from productivity improvements while resulting in better management and more sustainable, reliable, predictable, and responsive logistics.

The e-Documentation working group objectives include –

- 1 Leadership to provide for innovation that is compatible with a transition and comprehensively addresses the entire electronic document management innovation opportunity.
- 2 Comprehensive global application and use.
- 3 Improved security, efficiency, and transparency.
- 4 Collaboration between stakeholders including the supply chain (buyer, seller, brokers, banks, agencies, vessel owners, etc.)
- 5 Communication to raise industry and government awareness, expand dialog and learning, and target key thought and decision leaders as well as practitioners.
- 6 Engagement of a broader set of stakeholders including additional support from Customs agencies and Port authorities to recognize and adopt e-documents.



The e-Docs working group is currently supporting advancement of the digitalization of trade documentation with information collection and sharing and direct involvement with the UN International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) related to the IPPC ePhyto Solution. This work includes:

- 1 Surveys on adoption of electronic trade documentation in grain trade. A survey in 2022 followed one in 2016. Progress in adoption and identification of opportunities for additional IGTC actions are identified.
- 2 Leadership of the cross-sector global effort to support the IPPC ePhyto solution. Accomplishments include:
 - Successfully formed and co-chairs in the IPPC ePhyto Industry Advisory Group (IAG).
 - Revealed findings of a new survey on Electronic Trading Documentation. The Working Group on measured progress and developments in the adoption of electronic trade documentation. Plans to deploy IGTC regional efforts in Asia, South America, Africa, and the Middle East are ongoing as the Working Group is seeking volunteers to serve as vice chairs from each of these regions.
 - IAG participation in ePhyto workshops with Korea, Bahamas, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, China, Guatemala, Australia and New Zealand, Philippines. Several more workshops are planned.
 - Cross-sector, international communication campaign on ePhyto, including the provision of outreach materials to be used by the grain trade. At present, IGTC members and stakeholders can access a template “letter” to use in outreach with governments, as well as flyers in French, Spanish and English to describe the activities of “Industry and ePhyto”.
 - Providing grain trade case studies to test ePhyto. The “case studies” evaluate of the impacts of implementing ePhyto on trade flows by examining from a commercial perspective individual shipment documentation. Since 2018, more than 40 case studies have been conducted, with plenty of enthusiasm from plant product sectors but limitations owing to the small number of countries that are fully enabled to both send and receive ePhytos. The case studies have mainly been in the grains sector (USA-Mexico, Argentina-USA, Argentina-Chile, USA-New Zealand) but there have also been a limited number in cotton, seeds, and fresh fruit and vegetables.
 - Supporting and testing a “Channel” component to allow for interoperability with industry and government-led digital platforms. IGTC has promoted the need for interoperability of ePhyto with other digital platforms for a number of years. This is important for use alongside government-led platforms such as single window automated systems. Equally important for smooth trade is interoperability with industry digital platforms. That’s why IGTC has volunteered to coordinate tests of an ePhyto “Channel” that will link up with the private sector. A number of companies have expressed an interest in testing and the door is open for more to be involved if they meet the baseline technical specifications.
 - Addressing the long-term sustainability of the IPPC ePhyto Solution.

REFERENCES

1. IPPC ePhyto adoption global map: <https://bit.ly/3G3mb26>
2. Flyers describing the activities of “Industry and ePhyto” in French, Spanish and English – <https://bit.ly/3Nj6yWo>
3. Industry Advisory Group (IAG) press release September 2020 “calls on governments to support the adoption of ePhyto to facilitate international agricultural trade” – <https://bit.ly/3lqsDqo>
4. IGTC 2016 survey on electronic trading documentation in the grain trade – <https://bit.ly/3Lnoqv8>
5. IGTC 2022 survey on electronic trading documentation in the grain trade: <https://bit.ly/3hpF32Y>
6. Working Group members: 123
7. Working Group Chairs: Maurice Hurt, Cargill Incorporated and Shawna Enz-Cross, Bunge
8. IPPC ePhyto Industry Advisory Group (IAG) Chair: Shawna Enz-Cross, Bunge

International Grain Trade Association (IGTC) ©

Avenue Krieg 40, Geneva CH-1208,

+41 (0) 22 789 34 66 | www.igtglobal.org | e: secretariat@igtglobal.org

All users of IGTC Information and Services Expressly Understand and Agree to indemnify and hold harmless, IGTC, its Participants (Members and Stakeholders) Officers, Employees, and Agents from any and all liability including claims, demands, losses, costs damages, and expenses of every kind and description, or damages to persons or property arising out of or in connections with or occurring during the course of interaction with IGTC. The accuracy of the information reported and interpreted in this communication is not guaranteed. All contents are subject to correction and revision.

