



IGTC

International Grain Trade Coalition

IGTC policy priorities

Issues of importance for the improvement of trade and investment in grain trade

February 2019

Plant breeding innovation

SUMMARY: Crop production methods have a significant impact on trade and marketing of grains, oilseeds, pulses and derived products. Innovations in plant breeding may allow for faster and more precise results, with significant potential to help overcome limitations of traditional breeding and enlarge the portfolio of available and traded products worldwide.

Plant breeding innovation, like trade of the products it enhances, makes an important contribution to contemporary food security challenges such as the need to provide more food and energy for an ever-growing population in a sustainable fashion, using less land, water and resources in a changing climate.

In light of use and availability of new breeding technologies, the global grain trade faces new and expanded challenges largely related to regulatory coherence. For instance, while new plant varieties developed with the help of certain methods may be exempt from regulation in one country, they may be subject to regulation in another country or, as in most cases, there remains a significant level of uncertainty. This legislative uncertainty is of great concern for the agri-food supply chain. For the grain trade in particular, it is a threat to providing for trade and adequate fungibility of plant products needed to provide for global food security and economic well being provided for by world's food, feed and processing industries.

Grain trade leaders have agreed on an IGTC policy document which is being used to support national, regional and global discussions.

- Low level presence (LLP) of safety-approved biotechnology products in the supply chain

SUMMARY: The accommodation of safety-assessed GM events in the supply chain is one of the longest standing issues under discussion at the IGTC. Grain trade experts are working together to achieve a market and regulatory environment supportive of trade that avoids disruptions in the international trade of grain, oilseeds, pulses and derived products, via work with global governments and value chain partners. One such example is the advice provided by the IGTC to the Global Low Level Presence Initiative (GLI), a coalition of 15 like-minded governments working together to find trade facilitative solutions on LLP issues.

- Electronic trading documentation

SUMMARY: Grain trade leaders are working together at the IGTC to implement

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w : www.igtglobal.org e : secretariat@igtglobal.org



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communication activities on the digitization of documents necessary to carry out transboundary exchanges of grains, oilseeds, pulses and other agri-bulks. The grain trade is also exploring new tools to convey the evolution of industry innovation and uptake of electronic trade documentation. Some of these initiatives rely on cooperation with governments, such as the pilot project on electronic phytosanitary certificates (ePhytos) that is being led by the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC).

- **Phytosanitary control measures for grain**

SUMMARY: The grain trade convenes at IGTC to share expertise on issues such as pest risk analysis; availability of international guidance and pest lists; measures to mitigate pest risks along the value chain; and actions specific to individual exporting and importing countries.

The grain trade has been in a position to provide advice to governments on the impacts of policy decisions on commercial requirements and economics of the world's food, feed and processing industries in this regard. Specific outreach has been targeted via participation in the International Plant Protection Convention's efforts to establish an International Standard for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPM) on grain. Communication has been conducted in capitals around the world.

- **Cartagena Biosafety Protocol**

SUMMARY: The Cartagena Biosafety Protocol (CBP) is a founding issue for the IGTC and strongly implicates the grain trade, covering the international movement of products that may contain Living Modified Organisms (LMOs) derived from modern biotechnology. In February 2019, the 171 Parties to the Protocol cover more than 85% of the world's grain trade movements.

- **Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) of crop protection products in the supply chain**

SUMMARY:

Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for crop protection products are a growing cause of trade disruption for grains, oilseeds and agri-bulks. Barriers created by inconsistent, unjustified and unevenly applied MRLs create risk and can have negative consequences for farmers, exporters, importers and consumers. There has been increasing demand for a global collaborative effort to tackle this issue and create an environment that is more supportive of trade. Grain trade experts have shared their experiences via the IGTC's 2017-18 international survey on MRLs, and are seeking to use the IGTC's unique position as a global association to deliver actions that avoid disruptions to trade in the short and long term.