

**MULTILATERAL TRADE
NEGOTIATIONS
THE URUGUAY ROUND**

RESTRICTED

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Group of Negotiations on Goods (GATT)
Negotiating Group on Agriculture:
Working Group on Sanitary and Phytosanitary
Regulations and Barriers

COMMUNICATION FROM THE UNITED STATES REGARDING
THE INTERNATIONAL OFFICE OF EPIZOOTICS

1. The CONTRACTING PARTIES have agreed on the importance of international standards or guidelines for any improved GATT approach to sanitary and phytosanitary measures. In the animal health area, therefore, the participation of the International Office of Epizootics (OIE) is vitally important for the Uruguay Round effort. So far, however, neither the Uruguay Round Negotiating Group on Agriculture nor the Working Group on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Regulations and Barriers has provided any specific guidance to the OIE in this regard.

2. The United States proposes that the Working Group request the OIE to begin the substantive efforts necessary to achieve the Uruguay Round objectives of the contracting parties in the area of animal health measures. At the February meeting the Working Group should formally request the OIE to develop guidelines for the use of trade restrictions intended to protect importing countries from Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD). The United States views this proposal as a first step to implementing the consensus of the contracting parties regarding the rôle of the OIE and international guidelines in the animal health portion of the Uruguay Round negotiations.

3. In this effort the OIE would be expected to develop the guidelines for evaluating the appropriateness of FMD import restrictions based on a determination of an acceptable level of zoosanitary risk. The risk assessment involved might include the following factors:

Economic impact - A methodology for evaluating the economic impact of an outbreak of FMD in a country.

Inspection systems - The effectiveness of the exporting country's infrastructure for animal health surveillance and reporting.

Free areas - The requirements for certification of an exporting country's sub-national area as free from FMD, based on an individual country's technical capabilities for quarantine and surveillance.

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4. For this work it is assumed that the OIE will be able to call upon the expertise provided by the following OIE groups: the FMD Commission, the International Animal Health Code Commission, the Norms Commission, and the various regional commissions.

5. The Working Group should request that the OIE report on the results of its efforts at the earliest possible date, preferably within six months.