

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

TBT/W/46
3 March 1982

Special Distribution

Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade

Original: English

COMMUNICATION FROM THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES

The following communication is being circulated at the request of the delegation of the United States.

Processes and Production Methods

The following definition of processes and production methods (PPM) and case studies of agricultural and industrial PPMs should be added to the information contained in TBT/W/33:

Definition of PPMs

Processes and production methods (PPMs) are any product related requirement which establishes design criteria for manufacturing, processing or production practices to ensure the acceptability of a final product. A PPM may be contrasted with the use of performance criteria to judge the acceptability of a final product.

Agricultural PPM Case Study

Description of Method

From time-to-time, legislation has been proposed in the United States to prohibit the importation of agricultural commodities from any country using agricultural chemicals not authorized for use in the United States. These proposals would not take into consideration whether or not the prohibited agricultural chemical can be measured in the final product. They also fail to recognize that conditions of production differ in different parts of the world and thus require the use of different agricultural chemicals.

Obstacle Created by PPM

The exporter would face the situation that (1) to not use a chemical prohibited by the United States may mean the loss of his crop, and (2) to use the same chemical would mean the crop could not be sold in the United States market.

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Industrial PPM Case Study

Description of Method

One importing country describes in detail the cleaning process that must be followed relative to the internal surfaces of copper tubing intended for use in potable water supply systems. Copper tubing manufacturers in the United States do not make use of this process and do not have the type of equipment it demands. However, the inside surfaces of U.S. tubing are cleaned in a manner acceptable to U.S. health authorities.

Obstacle Created by PPM

Because the U.S. cleaning process involved is not the same as the process required in the importing country, clean U.S. copper tubing must be recleaned in that country before it can be offered for sale. The cost involved in the handling, storing and rehandling of incoming shipments to this country, plus the cost of the recleaning process itself, constitute a serious trade barrier problem.