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| |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | FRUCOM NEWSLETTER 25/09/2023  * ALL PRODUCTS   + [Peanut Butter, processed cranberry products, and kidney beans: EU – US Section 232 Coalition Final letter asking for the permanent removal of tariffs](javascript:void(0);)   + [European Parliament Trade Committee support GSP Regulation rollover](javascript:void(0);)   + [Review of Regulation on increased controls and emergency measures - products of interest to FRUCOM](javascript:void(0);)   + [Presentation of the preparatory work on the Farm to Fork monitoring framework](javascript:void(0);)   + [Spanish Presidency Priorities for Agriculture and Rural Development, International Trade and Fisheries](javascript:void(0);)   + [EU Parliament and Council reach provisional agreement on unfair practices and better information for consumers (UCPD)](javascript:void(0);)   + [Presentation of the EU's directive on corporate sustainability due diligence](javascript:void(0);)   + [Pesticides: EFSA genotoxicity studies](javascript:void(0);)   + [FRUCOM participates on EUFIC meeting on (ultra)processed foods](javascript:void(0);)   + [FRUCOM questions for the EU-Türkiye Agriculture Business Roundtable on 30 November 2023 in Brussels](javascript:void(0);)   + [RASFF NOTIFICATIONS: 2023/38 (18/09/2023 - 24/09/2023)](javascript:void(0);) * DRIED FRUIT & NUTS   + [Pests: Xylella fastidiosa on grapes](javascript:void(0);) | |  | | | |  | | --- | |  | | ALL PRODUCTS[PEANUT BUTTER, PROCESSED CRANBERRY PRODUCTS, AND KIDNEY BEANS: EU – US SECTION 232 COALITION FINAL LETTER ASKING FOR THE PERMANENT REMOVAL OF TARIFFS](javascript:void(0);) FRUCOM members can find below the final letter of the EU and US Section 232 tariffs coalition, which has been sent to the European Commission and to US Government contacts.  It contains a total of 85 signatures.  [Letter to Presidents Biden and von der Leyen EU-US disputes 25.09.2023](https://www.frucom.eu/component/attachments/attachments.html?task=attachment&id=2156)  Additionally, the Coalition has reached out to EUROFER (European Steel Association) for an exchange on the topic of the Global Arrangement on Sustainable Steel and Aluminium (GSA). The GSA is the basis for averting the restatement of the 232 tariffs, for which the EU has put in place an October 2023 deadline.  The products of concern to FRUCOM members under the EU’s 2018 rebalancing measures against the US Section 232 tariffs were: US Kidney beans (0713 33 90), Peanut butter (2008 11 10) and Concentrate cranberry (in codes 2009 81 11; 2009 81 19; 2009 81 31; 2009 81 59), which were subject to a 25% duty, and for the second rebalancing measures which would have been due in December 2021, the product of concern was dried cranberries (20089391).  Contact: Lebo Mofolo, [lmofolo@frucom.eu](mailto:lmofolo@frucom.eu) [EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT TRADE COMMITTEE SUPPORT GSP REGULATION ROLLOVER](javascript:void(0);) The European Parliament’s International Trade Committee (INTA) voted on 19 September to extend the Generalised Scheme of Preferences for developing countries, following the failure to conclude negotiations of the new GSP Regulation in June.  The European Commission had drafted legislation on 4 July 2023, for a regulation which would only amend the date of application of the GSP currently in place, extending it until 31 December 2027. No other changes to the current rules have been introduced. The current GSP regulation is set to expire at the end of 2023.  INTA’s report needs to be confirmed by the whole Parliament, possibly during the first plenary sitting in October.  More information: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20230918IPR05424/meps-want-to-extend-rules-on-relaxed-tariffs-for-developing-countries>  Contact: Lebo Mofolo, [lmofolo@frucom.eu](mailto:lmofolo@frucom.eu) [REVIEW OF REGULATION ON INCREASED CONTROLS AND EMERGENCY MEASURES - PRODUCTS OF INTEREST TO FRUCOM](javascript:void(0);) According to FRUCOM information, one of the proposals to be discussed by the Member States for the ninth review of Regulation (EU) 2019/1793 during the Working Group Meeting to be held tomorrow, 26 September 2023, would be listing the US almonds with the level of checks of 10%.  The Commission would  not intend to take a decision tomorrow since they have a regime of pre-export checks in place and having this new proposal adopted as well would be a legal contradiction. Instead, they would recommend the Member States no longer stick to random checks, would test and in time would evaluate the findings. However, this is up to MMSS to decide.  We will keep you informed of the outcomes and any additional information we receive.  Contact: Anna Boulova, [aboulova@frucom.eu;](mailto:aboulova@frucom.eu;) katri Saari, ksaari@frucom.eu [PRESENTATION OF THE PREPARATORY WORK ON THE FARM TO FORK MONITORING FRAMEWORK](javascript:void(0);) The second ad-hoc meeting of DG SANTEs Advisory Group on Sustainability of Food Systems (AGSFS) took place on 19 September where the Joint Research Centre presented the ongoing preparatory work for the monitoring framework of the Farm to Fork Strategy.  The AGSFS expert group was set up in 15 July 2022 to provide the European Commission with stakeholders' views on food systems’ sustainability, and related areas. The AGSFS understands food systems’ sustainability as including all aspects relating to health/ nutrition/ marketing, environmental/climate, agriculture/ agronomy/fisheries/aquaculture, and social science areas as well as in digital transformation, and finance areas pertaining to food systems.  The Commission put forward the proposal for a legislative framework for sustainable food systems (FSFS) as one of the flagship initiatives of the Farm to Fork Strategy, and this is expected to be adopted by the Commission by the end of 2023.  The Farm to Fork monitoring framework is the instrument of the Farm to Fork Strategy which “will monitor the transition to a sustainable food system so that it operates within planetary boundaries, including progress on the targets and overall reduction of the environmental and climate footprint of the EU food system.”  More information: <https://food.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-09/adv-grp_ad-hoc_20230919_pres.pdf>  Contact: Lebo Mofolo, [lmofolo@frucom.eu](mailto:lmofolo@frucom.eu) [SPANISH PRESIDENCY PRIORITIES FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT, INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND FISHERIES](javascript:void(0);) The European Parliament held numerous exchanges with Spanish Ministers on the priorities of the Spain during its tenure of its six-month the rotating presidency of the Council of EU Ministers, which began July 2023.  Beginning with the Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI) Committee on 19 September, MEPs heard from Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Luis Planas, whose focus was on the impact of the ongoing conflict affecting Ukraine. He also highlighted the intention of the Presidency to defend the so-called “mirror clauses”, whereby imported products from third countries would be produced using the equivalent of EU production methods.  The Parliament’s Committee for International Trade (INTA) heard from Spanish Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism Héctor Gómez on the same day, with an exchange that focused on signing the free trade agreement with Chile, finalising the EU-Mexico FTA and to concluding talks on the additional instrument for the Mercosur agreement.  With respect to fisheries, the Parliament’s Fisheries Committee (PECH) heard from Spain’s Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Luis Planas on 20 September who expressed one of the priorities of the Spanish presidency on fisheries was agreeing on the multiannual TACs (Total Available Catches) for those species where scientific data are needed to do so, while also improving the overall decision-making process on this issue. Mr Planas was also questioned on how the Presidency plans to handle the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between Morocco and the EU, explaining that the Commission had technical contacts and had meetings with the Moroccan officials. But as far as the Agreement, Mr Planas noted that this is the subject of an appeal before the European Court of Justice, and that the Spanish Presidency will wait for the outcome of this ruling.  More information: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20230904IPR04608/spanish-presidency-debriefs-ep-committees-on-priorities>  Contact: Lebo Mofolo, [lmofolo@frucom.eu](mailto:lmofolo@frucom.eu) [EU PARLIAMENT AND COUNCIL REACH PROVISIONAL AGREEMENT ON UNFAIR PRACTICES AND BETTER INFORMATION FOR CONSUMERS (UCPD)](javascript:void(0);) The European Parliament and the Council of Member States reached a provisional agreement on 19 September for the Directive on empowering consumers for the green transition, which amends the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive and the Consumer Rights Directive.  The UCPD Directive is complemented by the EU Green Claims Directive, with the latter obliging companies to substantiate claims about the environmental performance of their products, and the former empowering consumers, better protecting them against unfair commercial practices and providing better information to consumers.  Parliament and Member States agreed the following with respect to the revised UCPD Directive:   * + - Prohibition of generic environmental claims, e.g. “environmentally friendly”, “natural”, “biodegradable”, “climate neutral” or “eco”, without proof of recognised excellent environmental performance relevant to the claim;     - Prohibition of claims based on emissions offsetting schemes that a product has neutral, reduced or positive impact on the environment;     - Prohibition of sustainability labels not based on approved certification schemes or established by public authorities;   The provisional agreement will have to be voted on by the Parliament sitting in Plenary (expected in November) and also voted on by Member States. Once signed, the directive will enter into force, and Member States will have 2 years to pass national transposing legislation.  In terms of the Green Claims directive, in Parliament the consideration of the report of the joint Environment Committee (ENVI) and Internal Market and Consumer Protection Committee (IMCO) will take place on 6-7 November 2023, with the deadline for compromise amendments set for 4 December 2023. The vote on the Joint ENVI-IMCO report is expected mid-February 2024 and Plenary vote will take place in March 2024.  More information: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20230918IPR05412/eu-to-ban-greenwashing-and-improve-consumer-information-on-product-durability>  Contact: Lebo Mofolo, [lmofolo@frucom.eu](mailto:lmofolo@frucom.eu) [PRESENTATION OF THE EU'S DIRECTIVE ON CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY DUE DILIGENCE](javascript:void(0);) Dan Dionisie, Head of Unit Company Law, DG JUST, European Commission discussed the European Commission’s Proposal on the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD) as part of the panel organised by Euractiv titled “The EU's directive on corporate sustainability due diligence - Striking the right balance for business, consumers, investors?”.  The event, which took place on 21 September, looked at the CSDDD which is in the progress of trilogue negotiations between the Council, the Parliament and the Commission. Mr Dionisie highlighted the following points:   * + - Whilst international due diligence standards are important, the CSDDD is drafted in a way to allow businesses to adopt their own risk based approach, focusing instead on incentives for businesses to report in a way that makes a difference rather than as just a box ticking exercise.     - On the interrelation between CSDDD and the CSRD: the CSDDD is about the expectations, and the CSRD is about the definitions. The priority for the CSDDD is about having clear and actionable legislation, with a support framework, and a transposition period to allow the right tools to be adopted. COM is in touch with many actors on an exchange about the tools to put in place to support the CSDDD.     - There are indeed concerns in developing countries about a number of legislations adopted by the EU, and CSDDD is special in this landscape being unique in terms of its ambition to cover all sectors and value chains and the nature of engagement that it fosters. Due diligence is about investing and engaging in value chains, not about disengagement which is a very last resort; the trilogue discussions are taking place in this spirit. Third countries should not be concerned about disengagement, and CSDDD would apply to existing value chains and should not be an incentive for companies to disengage.     - Co-legislators are looking to ensure that the provisions are clear enough to ensure there is limited divergence in the interpretation by Member States, and there is already discussion in negotiations on enforcement to ensure interpretation is coherent. There will be a European network of supervisory authorities to ensure that all Member States are moving at the same pace. Incentives will also allow for Member States to achieve a harmonious approach, by creating a baseline, and not for Member States to go far beyond this. There is also a review clause, and so this could allow for more harmonisation or raising the floor.     - There is no de-prioritisation of the CSDDD by the Spanish Presidency, it remains one of the main priorities still, and the Commission is looking forward to the outcome within this mandate.   A recording of the event can be found here <https://www.euractiv.com/section/economy-jobs/video/the-eus-directive-on-corporate-sustainability-due-diligence-striking-the-right-balance-for-business-consumers-investors/>  Contact: Lebo Mofolo, [lmofolo@frucom.eu](mailto:lmofolo@frucom.eu) [PESTICIDES: EFSA GENOTOXICITY STUDIES](javascript:void(0);) EFSA published its report on harmonised approach for reporting reliability and relevance of genotoxicity studies. This technical report describes an approach developed by the EFSA cross‐cutting Working Group on Genotoxicity for the reporting of reliability and relevance of genotoxicity studies for example used in the active substance approval risk assessment. The scope of this document is to ensure harmonisation and transparency of the approach for evaluation of genotoxicity evidence among EFSA Units dealing with scientific assessments. It is recommended to be used as a template for the drafting of genotoxicity assessments in EFSA Opinions. In summary, evaluation of reliability and relevance in the context of assessing genotoxicity studies is essential for an appropriate application of the Weight of Evidence (WoE) approach.  More information: <https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.2903/sp.efsa.2023.EN-8270>  Contact: ksaari@frucom.eu [FRUCOM PARTICIPATES ON EUFIC MEETING ON (ULTRA)PROCESSED FOODS](javascript:void(0);) FRUCOM participated on Wednesday 20 September in a meeting on ultra-processed foods organized by EUFIC. The Agenda of the meeting can be found here: [EUFIC Meeting\_In person\_ 20 September\_2023\_Brussels\_ Afternoon agenda](https://www.frucom.eu/component/attachments/attachments.html?task=attachment&id=2154)  The meeting highlighted the fact that sometimes processed foods and ultra-processed food can be an important source of necessary minerals and vitamins even though those are classified as ultra-processed. According to Prof. Mike Gibney, University College Dublin, more research and education are needed for the population impact of processed and processed foods. It is noteworthy that the consumption of (ultra)processed food has increased due to price, availability and change of diet. In mainstream media (ultra)processed foods are often described as bad nutritional choices, however this is not always the case.  FRUCOM appreciates the invite to the meeting.  Contact: ksaari@frucom.eu [FRUCOM QUESTIONS FOR THE EU-TÜRKIYE AGRICULTURE BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE ON 30 NOVEMBER 2023 IN BRUSSELS](javascript:void(0);) FRUCOM’s Secretary General will participate by invitation in the EU-Türkiye Agriculture Business Roundtable on 30 November 2023 in Brussels, as part of the panel on dried fruit, nuts and vegetables. The draft agenda can be found here [EU - Türkiye Agriculture Business Roundtable](https://www.frucom.eu/component/attachments/attachments.html?task=attachment&id=2155)  **FRUCOM members are kindly requested to share any questions or input for this panel with Anna Boulova**[**aboulova@frucom.eu**](mailto:aboulova@frucom.eu)  The business roundtable serves as a forum for exchange of opinions between professional organisations from both sides about opportunities, challenges, and expectations regarding the agricultural trade between the European Union and Türkiye.  The EU Commission for Agriculture, Janusz Wojciechowski, will open the roundtable together with the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry of Türkiye, Mr. İbrahim Yumaklı. Representatives from the main Turkish agricultural organisations are expected to attend the roundtable.  Contact: Lebo Mofolo, [lmofolo@frucom.eu](mailto:lmofolo@frucom.eu) [RASFF NOTIFICATIONS: 2023/38 (18/09/2023 - 24/09/2023)](javascript:void(0);) Please find below a FRUCOM report compiling RASFF notifications of week 2023/38 (18/09/2023 - 24/09/2023).  Information provided in the report is based on RASFF notifications published on the DG SANTE’s online database.  [FRUCOMRASFF2023\_Week38](https://www.frucom.eu/component/attachments/attachments.html?task=attachment&id=2153)  Contact: Martina Zurli, [mzurli@frucom.eu](mailto:mzurli@frucom.eu) DRIED FRUIT & NUTS[PESTS: XYLELLA FASTIDIOSA ON GRAPES](javascript:void(0);) EFSA published its Plant Health Newsletter on horizon scanning September 2023. In the newsletter information on plant pathogenic bacterium is included. Xylella fastidiosa is a plant pathogenic bacterium regulated as a priority pest and listed in Annex II Β of the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/2072, subject of EU emergency measures (Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/1201. The scientific article included in this issue is about a detection and typing survey of the bacterium carried out in Virginia (USA). The study shows the wide distribution of Xylella fastidiosa in all the grape-growing regions of the state and shows for the first time the infection of grapevine by Xylella fastidiosa subsp. multiplex. The study also demonstrates two new host trees of Xf subsp. multiplex: chestnut oak (Quercus prinus) and American hornbean (Carpinus caroliniana).  More information: <https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.2903/sp.efsa.2023.EN-8273>  Contact: ksaari@frucom.eu | | |