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Work adopted by the SPS Committee in March 2002.<sup>7</sup> The Committee also adopted a procedure and format for the notification of recognition of equivalence.<sup>8</sup>

### **1.2.2 Concept of equivalence**

2. The preamble of the Decision on Equivalence notes that equivalence requires "acceptance of alternative measures that meet an importing Member's appropriate level of sanitary or phytosanitary protection", but not duplication or "sameness" of measures. Paragraph 1 of the Decision on Equivalence provides:

"1. Equivalence can be accepted for a specific measure or measures related to a certain product or categories of products, or on a systems-wide basis. Members shall, when so requested, seek to accept the equivalence of a measure related to a certain product or category of products. An evaluation of the product-related infrastructure and programmes within which the measure is being applied may also be necessary.<sup>9</sup> Members may further, where necessary and appropriate, seek more comprehensive and broad-ranging agreements on equivalence. The acceptance of the equivalence of a measure related to a single product may not require the development of a systems-wide equivalence agreement."<sup>10</sup>

### **1.2.3 Explanation of sanitary and phytosanitary measures taken by importing Member**

3. In order to facilitate the implementation of the provisions of Article 4 of the Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement), the Decision on Equivalence describes the elements to be included in an explanation of the sanitary and phytosanitary measures (SPS measures)





on Phytosanitary Measures to elaborate guidelines, as appropriate, on equivalence of sanitary and phytosanitary measures and equivalence agreements in the animal health and plant protection areas. The Codex Alimentarius Commission, the World Organization for Animal Health and the Interim Commission on Phytosanitary Measures shall be invited to keep the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures regularly informed regarding their activities relating to equivalence."<sup>19</sup>

### **1.2.7 Notification**

13. In accordance with paragraph 11 of the Decision on Equivalence, the SPS Committee revised its Code of Practice on Equivalence of SPS Measures (WT/SPS/W/19) (1996).