

WTO Commitments and Support to Russian Agriculture: Issues and Possible Solutions

Preliminary Workshop Concept and Programme

January 30-31, 2013

Kazan, Russia

The recent accession of Russia to the WTO has brought into focus the potential implications of the changes in border measures and domestic support on Russian agriculture and food systems. In order to assist the Russian government in understanding and coping with these changes and in designing policy and programs conducive to agricultural development, FAO is conducting a series of activities. The initial conference organized by FAO and the Government of Russian Federation in June 2012 provided a venue for discussing Russia's WTO commitments in agriculture and highlighted some of the main challenges that the Russian agricultural sector is facing upon WTO accession. In particular, the participants expressed concerns with the changes in domestic support to agriculture and the possible effects on the sector. The specific issue of compatibility of the domestic agricultural policy and the impending trade reform, as well as the classification of Russian subsidies by the type of AMS "box" were raised.

The main objectives of the follow-up workshop "WTO commitments and support to Russian agriculture: issues and possible solutions" – co-hosted by FAO and the Russian Ministry of Agriculture – is therefore to identify and discuss the main areas of concern facing the agriculture sector in relation to the commitments on agricultural subsidies made on accession to the WTO and to draw on lessons from international experience in fulfilling commitments on subsidies while providing the necessary government support to the development of agriculture. Invited speakers from a number of other WTO members will present and discuss how their countries have, in adapting agricultural and trade policies, addressed similar concerns and issues to those facing Russia. The workshop will serve as a basis for future capacity building activities in Russia and other CIS countries, identifying key capacity development and analytical support requirements. The target audience is a group of regional authorities with responsibility of development and implementation of agricultural support programs as well as representatives of producers and the Ministry of Agriculture.

Session I will briefly recap on the key areas of change bring agricultural and trade policy in line with the UR AoA and in particular with Russia's specific commitments. In addition it will introduce potential changes to future trade rules, specifically those providing flexibility in the application of support measures in the context of reduced tariff levels. Drivers of global trade and related new rules and facilities will also be introduced. Session II will identify the main issues of concern to agriculture sector stakeholders. Session III and IV will then seek to identify how other WTO members, including recently acceded countries have, in adapting their agricultural and trade policies, addressed similar concerns and issues. In Session V, participants will work to "map" experience from other countries to the issues facing Russian agriculture. Finally, Session VI will identify possible solutions and steps that need to be taken for their implementation.

Topic	Time	Speakers
Wednesday January 30	Day 1	
Registration	08:45 – 09.00	
Opening of the Workshop:	09:00 – 9:30	Mr. I. Shestakov, Deputy Minister, MoA, Russia Mr. Sedik and/or Ms. Serova, FAO
Session I. Introduction to WTO Disciplines and Russia's Commitments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction to WTO disciplines: Rationale and principles, tariff binding, tariffication, AMS boxes, etc. ▪ Specific Russian Commitments under the Accession Protocol 	09.30 – 10.30	<i>Chair: Ms. Eugenia Serova (FAO)</i> <i>-Mr. Cedrick Pene (WTO)</i> <i>-</i> <i>Mr.S. Kisilev (MSU, ECFS, RF)</i>
Coffee Break	10.30 – 11.00	
Session II. Russian agricultural policies and WTO Accession. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State Support to Agriculture and WTO Accession (Uzun) ▪ Central and Regional Budget Support to Russian Agriculture (Shagaida) ▪ Discussion 	11.00 – 13.00	<i>Chair: Mr. David Sedik</i> <i>- Mr. Vasilii Uzun</i> <i>-Ms. Natalja Shagaida (Russia)</i>
Lunch	13.00 –14.00	
Session III. Lessons from Country Experiences: Policy Change Compatible with the AoA (with special reference to sectors relevant to Russia) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ US ▪ Canada ▪ EU 	14.00 –16.00	<i>Chair: Mr. Cemal Atici</i> <i>- Ms. Agata Galinska (EU Commission)</i> <i>- Prof. Alan Matthews (Trinity College Dublin)</i> <i>-Ms. Anne Effland, USDA</i> <i>-Lars Brink, Canada</i>
Tea break	16.00 – 16.30	
Day 1 Wrap up	16.30 – 17.00	FAO
Thursday January 31	Day 2	
Session IV. Specific Experiences of Recently Acceding Members (with special reference to sectors relevant to Russia) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ukraine ▪ China 	09.00 –11.00	<i>Chair: Ms. Jahan Kurbanova</i> <i>-Ms. Irina Kobuta (Ukraine)</i> <i>-Wang Donghui (Ministry of Agriculture,China)</i>
Coffee Break	11.00 – 11.30	
Session V. Mapping International Experience to Identified Issues	11.30 – 13.00	Facilitators: Ms. Jahan

Session V. Mapping International Experience to Identified Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic Support Measures (de minimis, Blue, Green, Amber Boxes) in the context of support for Pigmeat, Beef, Poultry and milk products • Import competition 	11.30 – 13.00	<i>Facilitators: Ms. Jahan Kurbanova and Ms. Ekaterina Krivonos</i> <i>Group work</i>
Lunch	13.00 – 14.00	
Session VI. Possible Solutions and Next Steps	14.00 – 15.30	<i>FAO and invited</i>