

Food Safety and the SPS Agreement

Symposium on Issues Confronting the
World Trade System

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Health Risks

- “All diseases are products of interaction between human-being and environment.”
- Human perception of risks
 - injury versus disease risks
 - hereditary vs. non-hereditary risks
 - voluntary vs. forced risks
 - pharmaceutical vs. food risks
 - old vs. novel risks

1. Precaution

Precaution

- Environment
- “Vorsorge” 1970s - 1980s
- Rio Declaration (1992)
 - National legislation and regulation
- Applicable to food safety ?
 - Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC)
 - Risk assessment or risk management ?
 - SPS Agreement Article 5:7

Precaution in human health issues

- Transportation speed exceeding 30 miles/hour
- Gas-light in the streets
- Blood donation and v-CJD ?
- Mobile phones and brain tumour ?

2. GMO

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GMO

- Definition
 - Recombinant DNA technology and cell fusion
- Naming - gene technology, biotechnology
- Plants, microorganisms, animals (fish)
- Characteristics
- Environmental concern
 - Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
- Food safety concern - CAC

**Human Health
Concerns**

**Environmental
Concerns**

**Agricultural
and Aquatic
Products -
Foods and
Feeds**

3. Developing Country Concerns

- Least developed countries - developing countries - industrialised countries
- Food importing countries - food exporting countries -
- SPS Agreement
 - Article 9 : Technical assistance
 - Article 10 : Special and differential treatment
 - Article 14 : Final provisions

Public Health Objective - Bridging Gaps between Perceived and Real Risks

