



Written Reports from International Organizations: International Grain Trade Coalition (IGTC)

Report for CPM19

This report to the 19th Session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) provides a summary of the activities of the International Grain Trade Coalition (IGTC) as an External Cooperator of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) Secretariat during 2024 and outlines key priorities for the year ahead.

IGTC Purpose, Recent Developments and Alignment with the IPPC Mission

The International Grain Trade Coalition (IGTC) is committed to advancing the safe, efficient, and predictable trade of grains, oilseeds, pulses, and their derived products. By advocating for trade-enabling policies and practices grounded in science, the IGTC works to address challenges in the global grain trade while supporting the shared objectives of food security and sustainable agricultural practices.

IGTC participated in several global events related to the international grain trade in 2024. An IGTC delegation attended the WTO's 13th Ministerial Conference held in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. The theme of the ministerial, 'Delivering for People Through Trade,' defined the focus of the delegation's work during a challenging week of intense negotiations. On the sidelines, the IGTC delegation held numerous bilateral meetings with representatives of international institutions, other NGOs, and WTO delegations, as well as attended the World Economic Forum TradeTech Forum, WTO Business Forum, and sessions organized by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) at the Trade Hub.

IGTC members gathered in London in June 2024 to participate in an IGTC strategy session and the International Grains Council (IGC) Conference 2024. An IGTC-hosted session during the IGC Grains Conference on June 11th shed light on current and future challenges in ensuring food security through seamless execution, focusing on crop production, international transportation, and plant health.

During the week of June 24th, the IGTC actively participated in a series of events at the World Trade Organization (WTO) to promote digital tools in agriculture. On June 25th, Craig Fedchock, IGTC Innovation Emissary, delivered a presentation on the private sector perspective on ePhyto adoption and promotion at the SPS Committee Thematic Session on Digital Tools. On June 27th, IGTC participated in the ePhyto Industry Advisory Group (IAG) in-person meeting, where several strategic issues related to the IPPC's ePhyto solution were discussed. Key topics included updates on the sustainability funding mechanism and the progress of IAG and member initiatives related to ePhyto implementation and promotion.

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Avenue Krieg 40, Geneva CH-1208,

+41 (0) 22 789 34 66 | www.igtglobal.org | e: secretariat@igtglobal.org

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Building on these discussions, IGTC collaborated with the International Seed Federation (ISF), Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF), Trademark Africa, and Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation (GATF) during a jointly hosted session at the 2024 WTO Global Review of Aid for Trade. The session focused on advancements in digital connectivity that support sustainable agricultural practices, improve market access, and ensure food security.

On November 14, IGTC co-hosted a side event as part of the WTO's SPS Week in collaboration with the United States, Canada, and Australia. Titled "*Navigating Challenges in International Grain Trade: Sustainability, Innovation, and Policy*," the seminar featured engaging discussions on pressing global challenges and opportunities for innovative solutions.

Also in November, the IGTC's 2024 General Assembly elected new executive officers to serve two-year terms:

- ◆ President: [Pat O'Shannassy](#), Grain Trade Australia
- ◆ Vice President: [Erin Gowriluk](#), Canada Grains Council
- ◆ Secretary: [Rosalind Leeck](#), U.S. Soybean Export Council
- ◆ Treasurer: [Gerald Makau Masila](#), Eastern Africa Grain Council

Strategic Focus for the Future

Priority areas of work for 2025:

1. Advocating for Trade-Enabling Policies

A core priority for the IGTC is advocating for trade policies that enable the smooth movement of grains and related products across borders. This includes engaging with policymakers and regulators to ensure that trade practices and phytosanitary measures are grounded in sound science and do not create unnecessary barriers. Such advocacy is essential for reducing trade disruptions, enhancing predictability in supply chains, and supporting the broader goal of global food security.

2. Advancing Digital Trade Solutions

Digital innovation is central to the IGTC's efforts to modernize trade systems. The promotion of electronic phytosanitary certificates (ePhytos) remains a key focus, recognizing their transformative role in streamlining trade processes. By reducing the reliance on paper documentation, the grain trade can improve efficiency, lower costs, and enhance phytosanitary security. The IGTC is proud to continue playing a leading role with IPPC ePhyto Industry Advisory Group (IAG) and foundational support for the IPPC ePhyto solution. IGTC participants from around the world welcome the opportunity to continue to participate in ePhyto workshops co-sponsored by the ePhyto Industry Advisory Group and the IPPC Secretariat. The IGTC is also pleased that it was able to continue to contribute to the development of the ePhyto Solution sustainable funding proposal as an observer

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to the IPPC Focus Group.

The IGTC nevertheless continues to believe that the optimal solution to sustainably fund the IPPC ePhyto Solution remains direct funding from the FAO regular program allocation, as it is truly a public good. In 2025, the IGTC will continue supporting the global adoption and effective implementation of ePhytos, while also exploring additional opportunities to expand the use of digital tools in international trade.

3. Addressing Non-Tariff Barriers

Non-tariff barriers, including inconsistent regulations, technical restrictions, and asynchronous approvals, continue to present significant challenges to global grain trade. The IGTC is committed to working with stakeholders and regulators to identify and address these barriers. Particular attention will be given to regulatory harmonization in areas such as seed innovation and crop protection, where clear and science-based standards are critical to facilitating trade and ensuring consistent market access.

The IGTC is committed to collaboration and innovation in the pursuit of these priorities. Through collective action and ongoing engagement with stakeholders, the IGTC aims to ensure that the global grain trade remains resilient, efficient, and aligned with the evolving needs of a complex international market.

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