

AGRICULTURE

All APEC participants have a vital interest in the successful outcome of the negotiations on agriculture because this is a pivotal element of a successful MTN package overall. Bringing agricultural trade within the GATT rules and disciplines is an integral element of a stronger multilateral trading system. If the Round is to succeed there will need to be undertakings for substantial and progressive reductions in trade distorting support and protection to agriculture.

Specifically,

1. APEC participants have agreed that the submission of information on a comprehensive basis by October 1 as envisaged by the Chairman of the Agriculture Group is critical to advancing the negotiations. This information needs to cover internal support, export subsidies and border protection levels.
2. They are committed to tabling by 15 October, offers on agriculture, in respect of internal support, export subsidies and border protection levels.
3. They have endorsed the Agriculture Group Chairman's proposal that export subsidies be reduced deeper and faster than other forms of support and protection. This focus is more important than ever given the recent increases in export subsidies which affect the livelihood of fair traders in agriculture. APEC countries also seek to ensure that food aid programs do not disrupt normal commercial food sales.
4. They are determined to intensify the negotiations on strengthened GATT rules to ensure they are fair and equitable to all.
5. They recognize that the TNC had agreed to take into account the legitimate concerns of net food importing developing countries and non-trade concerns such as food security to the extent possible.
6. They continue to reject rebalancing as part of the agricultural outcome.
7. APEC countries reiterated, in the context of the war against drugs, the need for support to be given to producers in areas in some developing countries to encourage diversification away from illicit narcotic crops.