

Vol. 11, Issue no. 34,
October 7, 2011

Geneva Watch

Charles Akande, Editor

An overview of the WTO negotiations on agriculture

GPA Procuring Hope for MC8

Key WTO ambassadors met on October 6th to continue their regular brainstorming on the agenda for the December 15–17 Ministerial Conference (MC8). The goal, as per usual, was to confirm decisions on possible elements to be tackled by ministers this year and to define a Doha work programme for 2012.

Countries who aim to save the WTO's credibility from the potential collapse of the Doha Round – the so called “Friends of the System” which includes countries such as Australia, Canada, Chile, Hong Kong, Korea, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway and Singapore – have floated ideas on topics that could be dealt with as priorities in December.

Among those are the current state and future work on the Doha Development Agenda, which needs guidance from Ministers, the so-called 21st Century issues and the Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA).

This last issue seems to be the only topic to have generated some progress as involved countries in the GPA negotiations pledged, on October 6th, to do whatever it takes to reach a deal on revised GPA at the MC8.

The group's next meeting is scheduled for later this week. The chair, Swiss official, Nicolas Niggli, hopes to finalise all market access offers by the end of November, in time for final review before submission to Ministers. Like most delegates, the Swiss official thinks an accord on GPA could help save an otherwise eventless Ministerial Conference.

All other topics discussed by ambassadors this past week have not produced any tangible progress, officials said. Differences still persist on what would be contained in an “early harvest” package for poorest Members, even though agreement seems to emerge on the need to have one in December.

Upcoming Events

- WTO General Council, October 26-27, December 1-2, 2011
- G-20 Summit, November 3-4, 2011, Cannes (France)
- APEC Ministerial Meeting, November 11, 2011
- Regular Agriculture Committee, November 17, 2011, March 21-22, June 20-21, September 26-27, 2012
- WTO Ministerial Conference (MC8), December 15–17, 2011

Geneva Watch is published by Dairy Farmers of Canada, Chicken Farmers of Canada, Egg Farmers of Canada, Turkey Farmers of Canada and Canadian Hatching Egg Producers to report on the various events occurring in Geneva, particularly on the WTO negotiations on agriculture.

For more information or comments, please visit:

www.dairyfarmers.ca, www.chicken.ca, www.eggs.ca, www.turkeyfarmersofcanada.ca, www.cbhema.com.

Legal Deposit: National Library of Canada, ISSN 1496-9254

