WTO Agreement on Agriculture

Regular committee and its key functions

The Committee on Agriculture, meets three to four times a year, and oversees the implementation of the Agriculture Agreement.

KEY FUNCTIONS

Reviewing notifications

Members ask each other questions about their notified agricultural policies (notifications) and consult on any other matter relevant to the implementation of agricultural commitments.

All questions and answers are publically accessible on the Agriculture Information Management System: **AGIMS.wto.org**

Counter notifications

Members can submit counter notifications to the Committee if they feel that a member has neglected to submit its notification or where they have questions or comments pertaining to a member's notification. Five counter notifications have been made to date.

Monitoring of ministerial decisions

The committee monitors:

(i) the Marrakesh Decision on the possible negative effects of agricultural reform on poorer countries and on net food-importing developing countries.

(ii) agriculture matters forming part of the Doha Ministerial Decision on implementation issues.

(iii) the implementation of the Bali Decision on tariff quota administration, which establishes a mechanism to monitor TRQs with low fill-rates.

(iv) information submitted under the Bali Decision on Public stockholding for food security purposes.

(v) the elimination of agricultural export subsidies and disciplines on export measures with potentially equivalent effect, as agreed at the Nairobi Ministerial Conference in its Decision on export competition."

WTO 25 YEARS

WTO Agreement on Agriculture

Regular Committee and Transparency

Committee on Agriculture

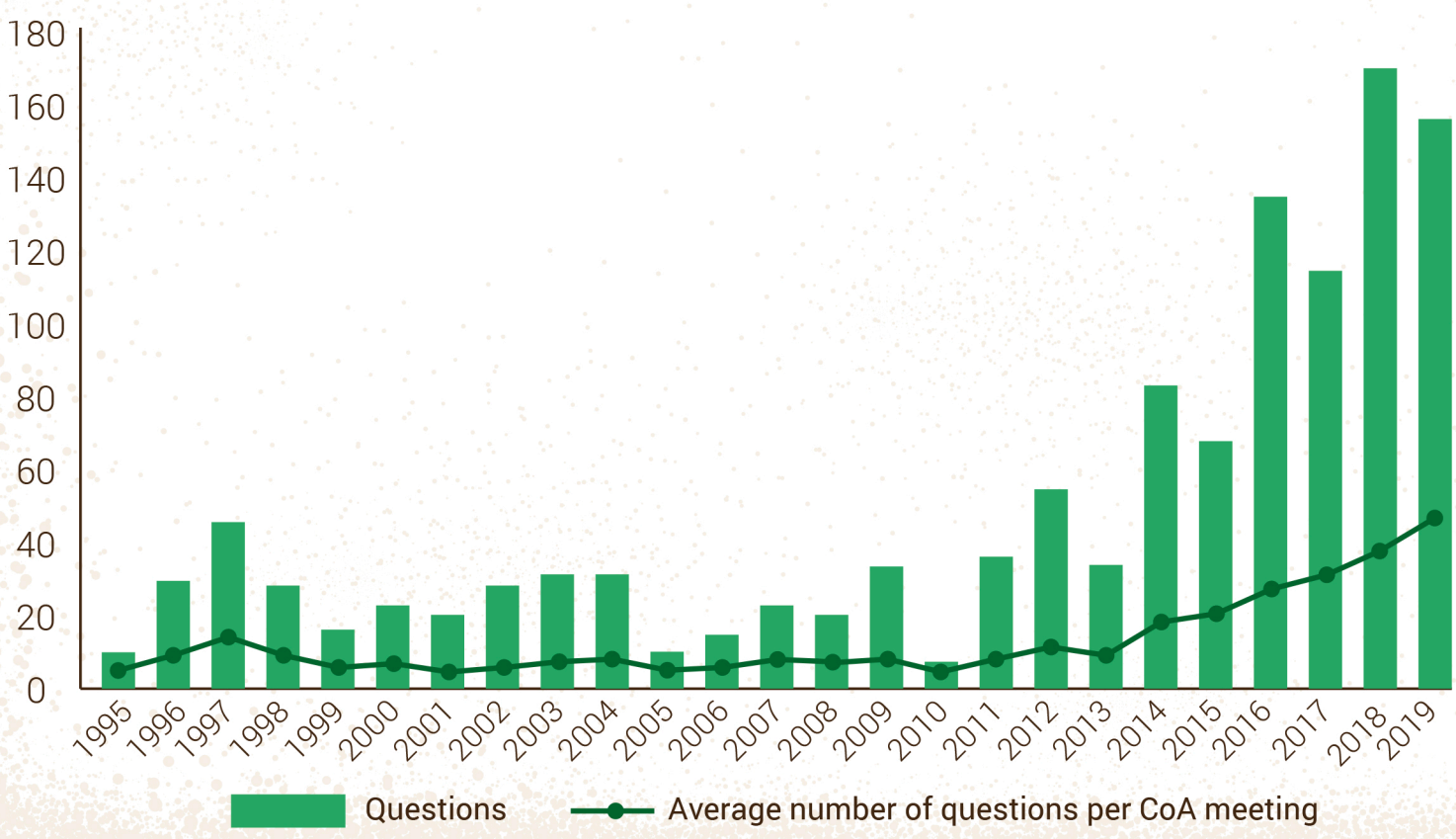
The Committee reviews agriculture policies and monitors members' compliance with WTO commitments:

> **"The review process shall provide an opportunity for Members to raise any matter relevant to the implementation of commitments under the reform programme as set out in this Agreement."**
>
> Article 18.6

WTO Agriculture Database
To access all the questions raised by members and responses thereto, visit the WTO agriculture database: **agims.wto.org/**

Increased use of the review function of the committee

Over the last 25 years, we can see an increased use by WTO members of the review role of the Committee on Agriculture to enquire about policies potentially impacting agri-food trade.



COVID-19 Agriculture measures

A variety of agricultural measures, including export restrictions and agricultural subsidies have been taken by members in response to the COVID-19 crisis; such measures may have an important bearing on the global agri-food markets.

The Committee on Agriculture is an important platform to facilitate an exchange of information and review members' agriculture policies in response to Covid-19.

WTO Agreement on Agriculture

Committees and sub-committee

The **WTO Agreement on Agriculture** provides a framework for the long-term reform of agricultural trade and domestic policies, with the aim of leading to fairer competition and a less distorted sector.



COA

Committee on Agriculture reviews agriculture policies and monitors members' compliance with WTO commitments;



COA SS

Committee on Agriculture in Special Session Continues the negotiations to strengthen the disciplines on agriculture;



Cotton

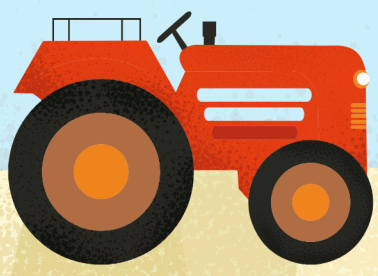
Sub-Committee on Cotton leads the trade reform and coordinates development assistance to the cotton sector.

WTO Agriculture databases

Agriculture Information Management System
AGIMS.wto.org

Agriculture Market Information System
(rice, wheat, corn and soybean)
AMIS-outlook.org

One-stop market information on cotton:
COTTONPortal.org



WTO | 25 YEARS

WTO Agreement on Agriculture

Regular Committee in numbers

Since 1995, the Committee on Agriculture (CoA) reviews member governments' agricultural policies and monitors their compliance with WTO commitments.

>4,900
Notifications

6700
questions were posed on agricultural policies; all notifications, questions and answers are publicly available on the AGIMS database

92
Meetings

>50%
Questions were focused on domestic support (subsidies) policies while the rest were relevant to market access and export competition policies

6 Main products of interest were identified in CoA meetings

- Dairy products
- Fruit and vegetables
- Live animals
- Sugar
- Meat
- Cereal

WTO Agreement on Agriculture

The Committee on Agriculture in Special Session (CoA SS)

The Committee on Agriculture in Special Session (CoA SS), the negotiation arm of the WTO agriculture committee, continues the negotiations to improve agriculture disciplines with the aim of establishing a “fair and market-oriented agricultural trading system”.

7 Main topics in agriculture negotiations



Domestic support

Members aim to further discipline the use of trade-distorting domestic support and level the playing field.



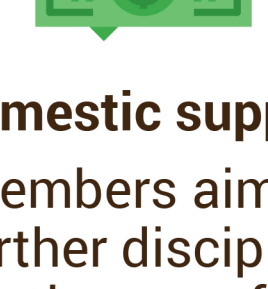
Market access

Members seek to bring down tariffs and other non-trade barriers to agricultural trade.



Export competition

Members committed to eliminate export subsidies on agriculture and continue monitoring export measures with potentially equivalent effect.



Export restriction

Especially since the 2007-2008 “Food crisis”, members are considering ways to improve existing disciplines and promote greater transparency in the administration of export restrictions.



Cotton

Following the Cotton 4 (Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali) cotton sectoral initiative, members aim at reducing trade distorting cotton specific domestic support and trade barriers on cotton trade and promoting cotton-related development assistance projects.



Special safeguard mechanism

Developing members continue asking for reaching an agreement on special safeguard mechanism in order to remedy the impact of import surge and price fluctuations.

Public stockholding for food security purposes

Building on the interim decision adopted at the Bali Ministerial Conference, members have been working to find a permanent solution to the public stockholding issue to address their food security concerns.



WTO Agreement on Agriculture

Women in the Committee on Agriculture



The Committee on Agriculture, since its inception in 1995, has supported women's engagement and leadership in its deliberations.



Mrs. Apiradi Tantraporn of Thailand was the **first woman to chair** the committee in 1996.



of all the **agriculture committee meetings** were chaired by women



of all the **agriculture committee chairs** were women

of **female chairs** came from developing countries: Thailand, Argentina, Guatemala, Barbados and Uruguay

