

pharmaceuticals. In 2011, Israel and Canada concluded an MRA on conformity assessment procedures for telecoms equipment. Both agreements will enter into effect after the completion of internal approval procedures by the parties. Israel, through the SII, has also signed MRAs on test data with 45 certification and testing organizations in 20 countries. It has also signed memoranda of understanding for mutual recognition of ISO 9000 registration with nine foreign organizations.

(vii) Sanitary and phytosanitary measures

46. Israel has notified three new or revised SPS measures since its last TPR in 2006. The SPS notifications concern alignment of its phytosanitary import requirements with international standards, and an amendment of BSE-related import requirements. The Plant Protection and Inspection Service (PPIS) and the Veterinary and Animal Health Services of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) are the national enquiry points and notification authorities.

47. The main SPS-related legislation includes the Public Health Order (Food) of 1983; the Animal Diseases Order of 1995; the Law of Export Control (Animals and Animal Products) of 1957; the Plant Protection Law of 1956; the Plant Inspection and Marketing Law; the Control and Commodities Services Law; the Business Licence Law; and the Standards Law, the Consumer Protection Order, and the Free Import Order of 2012.

Food safety

48. Israel has 185 food standards, including 160 mandatory standards, of which 20 are equivalent to international, regional, and other foreign standards (Table III.9). The Government aims to harmonize all of Israel's mandatory food standards with overseas norms, by 31 December 2013.

49. All food importers must be registered with the Food Control Service (FCS) of the Ministry of Health. Applications for an official importer certificate (importer registration) include an importer declaration stating, *inter alia*, that the imports comply with Israeli laws and that the importer will act in accordance with the directives of the FCS, including procedures for recalling products from the market.

50. Each food import consignment other than fish, meat, and related products requires prior authorization from the FCS. Shipments are divided into "sensitive food" and "regular food" according to risk assessment with regard to aspects such as microbiology, chemistry, animal source, or foods intended for a particular consumer group. Food supplements, infant formulas, and foods for special dietary uses, dairy products, low-acid canned food, or baby foods are categorized as sensitive food; the list is revised periodically. About 3% of the shipments of regular food items are inspected by the quarantine station at Customs. In addition, the FSC takes samples of different types of foods depending, *inter alia*, on previous information, and country of origin. Israel does not require labelling of food containing GMOs.

Kosher certification

51. Under the Kosher Meat Import Law (1994), imports of non-kosher meat and meat products are prohibited. The import prohibition does not apply to live animals, beef offal, milk or dairy products. The Government permits some domestic production, sale, and consumption of non-kosher meat, for example bovine meat from dairy cows. Pig rearing is prohibited, except in a few villages.

52. Meat and meat products must be certified kosher to ensure compliance with Jewish dietary laws. Kosher certification is not mandatory for other food items. Kosher certificates may only be

issued by the Chief Rabbinate in Israel or designated Rabbis located abroad at the expense of exporters (Law for Prevention of Fraud in Kashrut).

Animal health

53. According to the authorities, the Israeli Veterinary and Animal Health Services are making use of international standards set by the OIE, FAO, and Codex Alimentarius as a basis for their SPS measures. Unprocessed and unpackaged meat requires an import permit from the Veterinary and Animal Health Services. Meat imports are allowed only from approved countries with authorized establishments and approved products. Risk assessment (e.g. upon a request to import a new product) normally takes a few months, depending on the cooperation by the exporting country. Israel recognizes disease-free zones within countries, for example Argentina with respect to FMD or Canada with respect to Avian Influenza. Israel has revised its BSE-related guidelines for imports of live cattle, sheep, and goats in accordance with recommendations of the OIE.²⁶

Plant protection

54. The Plant Protection and Inspection Service (PPIS) is responsible for issuing import permits for plants and plant products. Some, but not all, products requiring phytosanitary permits are listed in Annex 2 of the Free Import Order, 2012 (Chapter III(1)(iv)). The PPIS is also responsible for authorizing pesticides.

55. Israel's phytosanitary legislation for plant imports has been revised and, according to the authorities, virtually all standards have been aligned with the International Standards on Phytosanitary Measures (ISPM) of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). The new Plant Protection Regulations, in force since June 2009, improve the transparency of import requirements.²⁷ Some of the main changes are in the area of licensing, whereby a long list of plants and plant products has been exempted from import permit requirements.²⁸ Import permits for non-listed plants and plant products require, *inter alia*, a pest risk assessment by PPIS. As part of the revised phytosanitary measures, Israel has implemented the international standard for wood packaging materials (ISPM 15) since October 2009.²⁹ A pending amendment of the Plant Protection Regulations would allow for emergency measures.

(2) MEASURES DIRECTLY AFFECTING EXPORTS

(i) Registration and documentation

56. There is no registration requirement for exporters. The main documents for customs clearance include the export declaration,³⁰ commercial invoice; bill of lading (or airway bill); certificate of origin; packing list; and export licence/permit (if required).

²⁶ Terrestrial Animal Health Code, see WTO document G/SPS/N/ISR/9/Rev.1, 19 July 2011.

²⁷ Plant Protection Regulations (Plant Import, Plant Products, Pests and Regulated Articles), see WTO document G/SPS/N/ISR/7, 18 May 2009.

²⁸ Goods in the third schedule to the Plant Protection Regulations are exempt from import permits and phytosanitary certificates but require certificates of origin; goods in the fourth schedule, such as fruit and vegetables or seeds are exempt from import permits but require a phytosanitary certificate.

²⁹ WTO document G/SPS/N/ISR/8, 18 May 2011.

³⁰ Except for goods under US\$100 exported without financial compensation or sales transaction.