

THIS REPORT CONTAINS ASSESSMENTS OF COMMODITY AND TRADE ISSUES MADE BY USDA STAFF AND NOT NECESSARILY STATEMENTS OF OFFICIAL U.S. GOVERNMENT POLICY

Voluntary - Public

Date: 10/22/2018

GAIN Report Number: EG18026

Egypt

Post: Cairo

Egypt's 2018-19 Seed Potato Import Requirements

Report Categories:

Agricultural Situation, Agriculture in the Economy, Agriculture in the News, FAIRS Subject Report, Potatoes and Potato Products, SP2 - Prevent or Resolve Barriers to Trade that Hinder U.S. Food and Agricultural Exports

Approved By:

Ali Abdi, Minister-Counselor for Agricultural Affairs

Prepared By:

Shaza Roshdy Omar, Senior Agriculture Specialist and Mariano J. Beillard, Senior Regional Agriculture Attaché

Report Highlights:

Ministerial Decree No. 1202/2018 (September 12, 2018) amends the previous decree in terms of pest tolerance levels, adds and removes certain pests from the quarantine list. Egypt notified the World Trade Organization (WTO) on October 9, 2018, of its new "Import Phytosanitary Requirements of Seed Potatoes" – G/SPS/N/EGY/87. Egypt is a major exporter ware potatoes, the country largely relies on seed potato imports for domestic production. Imports commence in September and run through November. Based on industry estimates, U.S. seed potato exports could reach \$15 million annually, once market access issues are resolved.

General Information:

Egypt is largely dependent on seed potato imports for its domestic potato production. Imports in calendar year (CY) 2018 (January-October) reach roughly 120,000 metric tons (MT). Imports originate mainly from the European Union (EU): the Netherlands (40,500 MT or 33.6 percent), United Kingdom/Scotland (40,400 MT or 33.5 percent), and France (18,900 MT or 16 percent).

Imports commence in September and run through November. Local seed potato production occurs during the summer season. In Egypt, the agricultural year is divided into three planting seasons; summer (February to May), *nili* (July to August), and winter (September to November). Ware potato plantings commence toward the end of the *nili* season. The winter season cultivation commences in November and runs through January. Production occurs throughout the country, but is largely concentrated in Behaira, Monefya and Menya governorates.

Seed potato imports must comply with Egypt's phytosanitary import regulations. A ministerial decree issued annually indicates the technical specifications. Ministerial Decree No. 1202/2018 (issued on September 12, 2018), amends the previous decree in terms of pest tolerance levels, adds and removes certain pests from the quarantine list (see Appendix I). Egypt notified the World Trade Organization (WTO) on October 9, 2018, of its new "Import Phytosanitary Requirements of Seed Potatoes" – G/SPS/N/EGY/87 (see Appendix II).

Based on industry estimates, U.S. seed potato exports to Egypt could reach \$15 million annually once market access issues are resolved. U.S.-origin varieties competing with those of EU suppliers would be price competitive. Egypt's yearly imports of seed potatoes average \$85 million (CY 2015-17).

Egypt's phytosanitary regulations require laboratory testing against potato brown rot (*Ralstonia solanacearum*) and ring rot diseases causal agents in all imports and exports of potato. Egyptian exports of ware potatoes to the Russian Federation, EU, Lebanon, and Jordan are permissible only if produced in Pest Free Areas (PFA), in accordance with the [International Standard for Phytosanitary Measure \(ISPM 4\) of the International Plant Protection Convention](#).

The Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation has designated the Potato Brown Rot Project (PBRP) as the exclusive entity responsible for PFA establishment, inspection, monitoring, and maintenance, as well as for laboratory testing against brown rot disease's causal agents.

Egypt's Dependence on Seed Potato Imports

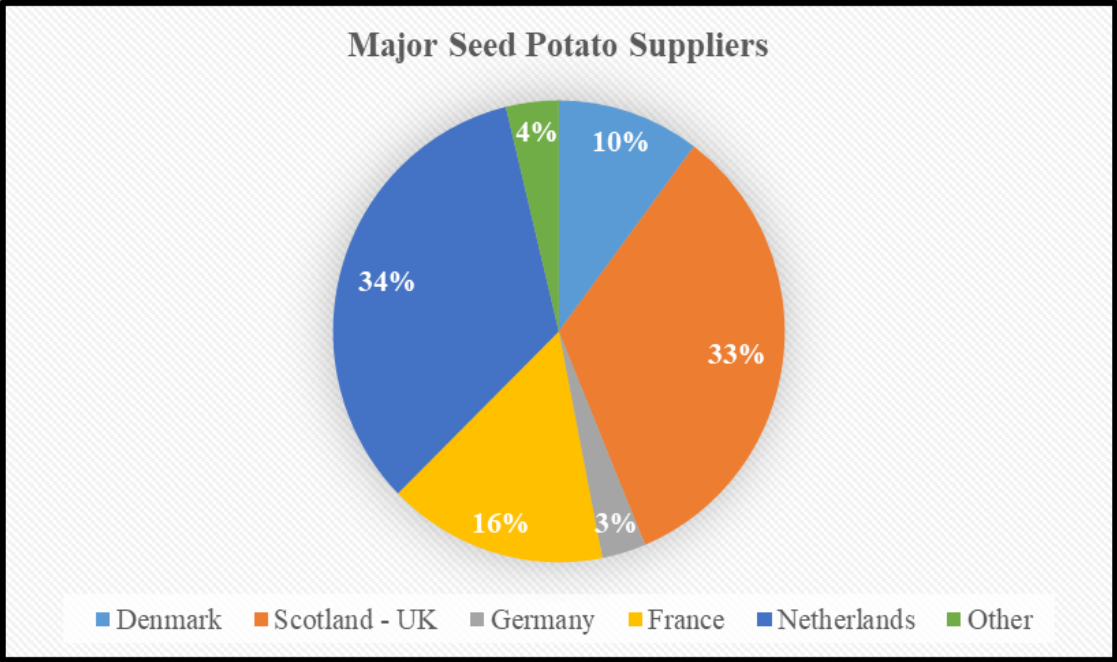
Egypt is largely dependent on seed potato imports for its domestic potato production. Imports in calendar year (CY) 2018 (January-October) reached roughly 120,000 metric tons (MT). Imports originate mainly from the European Union (EU): the Netherlands (40,500 MT or 33.6 percent), United Kingdom/Scotland (40,400 MT or 33.5 percent), and France (18,900 MT or 16 percent).

From seed potatoes imports, Egypt produces about 5 million MT of ware potatoes (i.e., destined for human consumption in potato form). Egypt is Africa's largest potato producer, and ranks 14th in the world in terms of ware potato production. It also produces about 700,000 – 800,000 MT of local seed potatoes from imports which go into crop production the following season.

Imports commence in September and run through November. In Egypt, the agricultural year is divided into three planting seasons; summer (February to May), *nili* (July to August), and winter (September to November). The summer planting season, which commences in late February early March runs until May. Local seed potato production occurs during the summer season. Ware potato plantings commence toward the end of the *nili* season. The winter season cultivation commences in November and runs through January. Production occurs throughout the country, but is largely concentrated in Behaira, Monefya and Menya governorates.

Egypt does occasionally import limited quantities of seed potatoes for trial and research purposes. It prohibits the commercial use and distribution of seed intended for research.

Figure 1: Egypt, Seed Potato Import Origins, 2017/18



SOURCE: Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation\Central Administration for Plant Quarantine (CAPQ) – Statistical Unit and FAS Cairo office research.

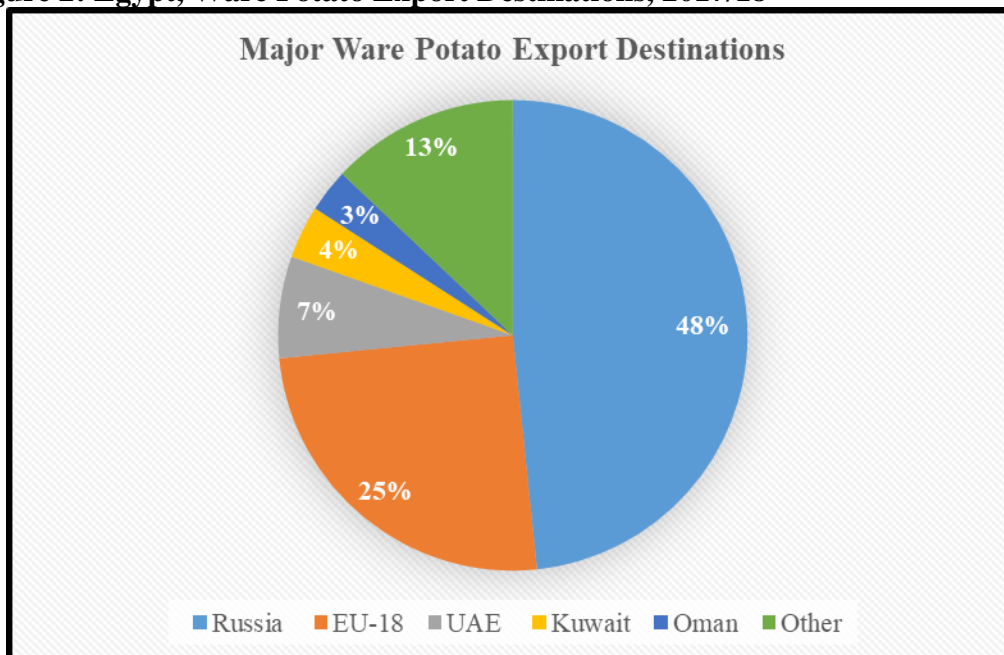
Seed potato imports must comply with Egypt’s phytosanitary import regulations. A ministerial decree issued annually indicates the technical specifications. Ministerial Decree No. 1202/2018 (issued on September 12, 2018), amends the previous decree in terms of pest tolerance levels, adds and removes certain pests from the quarantine list (see Appendix I). Egypt notified the World Trade Organization (WTO) on October 9, 2018, of its new “Import Phytosanitary Requirements of Seed Potatoes” – G/SPS/N/EGY/87 (see Appendix II).

Based on industry estimates, U.S. seed potato exports to Egypt could reach \$15 million annually once market access issues are resolved. U.S.-origin varieties competing with those of EU suppliers would be price competitive. Egypt’s yearly imports of seed potatoes average \$85 million (CY 2015-17).

Egypt’s Exports of Ware Potatoes

Egypt is major exporter of ware potatoes. In calendar year 2018, Egypt has exported over 759,200 MT of ware potatoes. Egypt is the fifth largest exporter for ware potatoes. Supplying primarily the Russian Federation (367,000 MT or 48 percent) and to a lesser extent the EU-18 (190,400 MT or 25 percent) and United Arab Emirates (UAE) (53,100 MT or 7 percent) markets. Presently, the EU is not Egypt’s largest export destination for Egyptian ware potatoes.

Figure 2: Egypt, Ware Potato Export Destinations, 2017/18



SOURCE: Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation\Central Administration for Plant Quarantine (CAPQ) – Statistical Unit and FAS Cairo office research.

Egypt's phytosanitary regulations require laboratory testing against potato brown rot (*Ralstonia solanacearum*) and ring rot diseases causal agents in all imports and exports of potato. Egyptian exports of ware potatoes to the Russian Federation, EU, Lebanon, and Jordan are permissible only if produced in Pest Free Areas (PFA), in accordance with the [International Standard for Phytosanitary Measure \(ISPM 4\) of the International Plant Protection Convention](#).

The Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation has designated the Potato Brown Rot Project (PBRP) as the exclusive entity responsible for Pest Free Area establishment, inspection, monitoring, and maintenance, as well as for laboratory testing against brown rot disease's causal agents.

The following figure highlights the main tasks undertaken by the PBRP on imports of seed potatoes and exports of ware potatoes.

Figure 3: Egypt, Potato Brown Rot Project, Annual Work Calendar

Tasks	Ja n	Fe b	Ma r	Ap r	Ma y	Ju n	Ju l	Au g	Se p	Oc t	No v	De c
Laboratory testing of imported seeds cultivation												
Laboratory testing of imported potato for processing												
Monitoring of winter season cultivations												
Field inspection for winter season cultivations												
Monitoring of harvesting for winter season cultivations												
Laboratory testing of winter season potato for exportation												
Monitoring of summer season cultivations												
Field inspection												

for summer season cultivations												
Sampling and laboratory testing for local potato seeds in storages												
Pest free area establishe- ment												
Pest free area maintenance												
Peat-moss laboratory testing												

SOURCE: Potato Brown Rot Project, FAS Cairo Office Research.

APPENDIX I

Unofficial translation

Arab Republic of Egypt
Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation
The Minister

**Ministerial Decree
No. (1202) of 2018**

**Import Phytosanitary Requirements and Specifications for the
Importation of Seed Potatoes for Growing Year (2018/2019)**

Minister of Agriculture and Land Reclamation,

Having perused

- Agriculture law No. 53 for the year 1966;
- Ministerial Decree no. 3007 for the year 2001, concerning Egyptian plant quarantine regulations;
- Ministerial Decree no. 1485 for the year 2015 concerning the import requirements and specifications to be fulfilled in imported potato seeds for the growing season (2015/2016);
- Ministerial Decree no. 483 for the year 2016 concerning the approval of importing seeds for private use.
- Ministerial Decree no. 1458 for the year 2017 concerning the import requirements and specifications to be fulfilled in imported potato seeds for the growing season (2017/2018);
- International standards of phytosanitary measures of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), and agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS);
- Opinion of relevant research institutes; and
- The approval of Agricultural Crops Seeds Committee in its meeting dated September 3, 2018.

Decided
Article (1)

Importation of potato seeds shall be upon technical import approval issued by the Agricultural Crops Seeds Committee through a yearly application submitted by each importing entity to the Agricultural Crops Seeds Committee by the end of October every year, the application shall include the quantity, variety, grade and the country of origin.



Article (2)

The import of seed potatoes is banned except importing from accredited companies as seeds producing companies from the approved exporting countries all the documents need to be approved from the chamber of commerce and the Egyptian consulate.

Article (3)

Potato seeds imported for growing year (2018/2019) shall meet the following conditions:

a. Varieties:

The varieties should be registered in the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation or recommended by the Committee of Varieties Registration. However, it is permitted to import limited quantities of new unregistered varieties after the approval of Agricultural Crops Seeds Committee not exceeding 10 tons in the first year and 50 tons in the two subsequent years, providing that necessary quarantine conditions for import potato seeds are met and according to the enforced regulations in the last years.

b. Grades:

- Potato seeds shall be of grade Elite "E" (or EEC2 according to EU standard) or its equivalent or more superior, which is authorized for handling in EU or other potato seeds producing and exporting countries that approved by the Egyptian Plant Quarantine as approved origins for importing seed potatoes.

-In case of new varieties where their registration in Egypt has not exceeded three years, it is permitted to be imported from grade A or its equivalent with quantities do not exceed 10% of company imports from the same variety and it is not allowed to use it in producing local seeds.

Article (4)

The size of potato tubers shall be ranged between (28 mm – 55 mm). According to natural grading of tubers size for all varieties and purposes (trade- special use- cultivation process and export), Tubers shall be vigorous, fleshy and with no shrinkage. The packages shall be appropriate and homogenous in its quantity and variety in the same lot.

Each package shall be accompanied with affixed card stating the variety - grade – production date - country of origin and grower number.

Sprout shall not exceed 2 mm – each package shall be free from varieties mix and free from tubers malformation.



Article (5)

Potato seeds shall be shipped onto means of transport fulfilling the conditions and specifications that ensure the safely arrival of the shipments and its compliance with the specifications laid down in this decree, the last date of shipping is December 31, 2018.

Copy of bills of lading shall be submitted to Plant Quarantine Service in written by the 5th January with the shipped quantities first by first with all information related to these consignments (vessel name, shipped quantity, varieties).

Article (6)

The requirements and specifications stated in articles (3, 4, 5) in the present decree don't apply to the imported potatoes (Micro tubers – Mini tubers) produced in tissue culture and were not produced in normal soil. In all cases, only registered varieties are allowed to be handled.

Article (7)

Potato seeds importation shall be in accordance with the quarantine requirements specified in this decree. Imported potato seeds shall be accompanied with a valid phytosanitary certificate, issued by the competent authority in the country of origin confirming its validity as seeds and confirming, or by an additional declaration, its compliance with Egyptian plant quarantine conditions and also the details laid down in article (4) of this decree.

Article (8)

Pests:

First (Insects)

The imported potato seeds shall be totally free from infestation of the following insects or any of its stages:

Leptinotars decemlineata (Say)
Phthorimaea operculella (Zeller)
Euzophera osseatella (Treitscke)
Premnotypes spp.
Epitrix cucumeris (Harris)
Epitrix subcrinita (Le conte)
Limonius canus
Limonius californicus
Ctenicera pruinina
Epicauta spp.
Phyllophaga spp.
Hydraecia micacea (Esp)



Second (Diseases)

1- Imported potato seeds shall be originated in pest free production sites free from the following diseases and its pathogens these places should be established according to the relevant international standards of phytosanitary measures:
; importing seed potatoes from farm numbers which proven to be infected with one of the following pests is banned until the eradication of the pest and for at least three years from the date of infection.

A. Fungi

-*Synchytrium endobioticum*

-

B. Nematodes

- *Globodera* spp.
- *Trichodorus* spp. and *Paratrichodorus* spp.

C. Bacteria

- *Clavibacter michiganensis* sub. sp. *sepdonicus*
- *Ralstonia solanacearum*
- *Dickeya* spp.
- *Candidatus Liberibacter solanacearum* (Zebra Chip)

D. Phytoplasma

2-Imported potato seeds shall be produced from pest free production sites and they shall be totally free from the infection Potato Yellow Dwarf Virus

3-Imported potato seeds shall be totally free from the infection with the following diseases :

A. Nematodes

- Ditylenchus destructor*
- Meloidogyne* spp.

B. Virus and Viroid

- Spindle Tuber Viroid*
- Tobacco Necrosis Virus* (TNV)
- *Tobacco Ring Spot Nepo Virus* (TRSV)

C. Physiological diseases / Other

- Frost injury

4- Infection with the following diseases shall not exceed the indicated percentage opposite to each disease in the sample representing the lot:-



A. Bacteria

- *Pectobacterium carotovorum* :

It is not allowed to enter infected tubers with infection percentage exceeding 0.2%.

- *Pectobacterium atrosepticum* :

It is not allowed to enter infected tubers with infection rate exceeding 0.2%.

B. Fungi

- *Phytophthora erythroseptica*:

It is not allowed to enter infected tubers with infection rate exceeding 0.1%.

- *Phytophthora infestans* :

It is not allowed to enter infected tubers with infection rate exceeding 0.1%.

- *Colletorichum atramentarium* (*Colletorichum Coccodes*) – Black dot

It is not allowed to enter infected tubers with infection rate exceeding 20%.

- *Alternaria solani*

It is not allowed to enter infected tubers with infection rate exceeding 0.5%.

- *Verticillium* spp.

It is not allowed to enter infected tubers with infection rate exceeding 0.5%.

C. Virus

- It is not allowed to enter infected tubers with infection rate exceeding 0.1% for the following virus

- *Corky Ring sport (Tobacco Ratte Virus)*

- *Potato Leaf Roll Virus*

- *Mop Top Virus (MTV)*



- It is not allowed to enter infected tubers with infection rate exceeding 0.4% for the following virus
 - *Alfa Alfa Mosaic Virus*
 - *PVY*
 - *PVX*

And the total count of the abovementioned viruses shall not exceed 0.8 %

5- Infection with following diseases shall not exceed the indicated percentage opposite to each disease, and the total percentage for all of them shall not exceed 5%:

A. Fungi

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| - <i>Fusarium</i> spp. | 1 % |
| - <i>Phoma</i> spp. | 0.5% |
| - <i>Pythium</i> spp | 0.5 % (Watery wound rot) |

B. Physiological Diseases / Others

-Internal Brown Spot and Browning or Black Spot & Vascular Discoloration
0.5%

- | | |
|--------------------|------|
| -Hollow heart | 0.5% |
| -Black heart | 0.5% |
| -Skin necrosis | 0.5% |
| -Mechanical damage | 3.0% |

6- Infestation with following diseases shall not exceed the indicated percentage opposite to each disease in the sample:

a- *Spongospora subterranea*:

It is not allowed to enter infected tubers with infection rate exceeding 1%; the amount of pimples shall not exceed 10% of tuber surface area.

b- *Streptomyces scabies* :

Infected tubers with common scab are being allowed to enter according to the Dutch standard scale number (1.5).

c- *Rhizoctonia solani* : (black scurf and all different symptoms of infection)

It is not allowed to enter infected tubers with infection rate exceeding 5% and the infected part of the tuber surface shall not exceed 10%.



d- *Helminthosporium solani*

It is not allowed to enter infected tubers with infection rate exceeding 20% and the infected part of the tuber surface shall not exceed 20%.

Article (9)

- This present decree shall neither contradict the general operative plant quarantine rules and conditions nor the provisions of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), Rome 1951, and its annexes.

Article (10)

- All Ministerial Decrees and regulations contradicting with the provisions of this present are hereby abrogated.

Article (11)

This decree shall be published in the official Gazette and shall be enforced as of the day following the date of its publication.

Done in: September 12, 2018

Minister of Agriculture and Land Reclamation

Dr. Ezz El-Din Abou Steit



APPENDIX II



G/SPS/N/EGY/87

9 October 2018

(18-6224)

Page: 1/2

Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

Original: English

NOTIFICATION

1.	Notifying Member: <u>EGYPT</u> If applicable, name of local government involved:
2.	Agency responsible: Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation - Central Administration of Plant Quarantine
3.	Products covered (provide tariff item number(s) as specified in national schedules deposited with the WTO; ICS numbers should be provided in addition, where applicable): Potato seeds
4.	Regions or countries likely to be affected, to the extent relevant or practicable: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All trading partners <input type="checkbox"/> Specific regions or countries:
5.	Title of the notified document: Import Phytosanitary Requirements of Potato Seeds. Language(s): Arabic (and an unofficial translation in English). Number of pages: 5 (and 7) https://members.wto.org/crnattachments/2018/SPS/EGY/18_5248_00_x.pdf https://members.wto.org/crnattachments/2018/SPS/EGY/18_5248_00_e.pdf
6.	Description of content: Ministerial Decree No. 1202 for the year 2018 stating the import phytosanitary requirements and specifications of potato seeds for the growing year 2018/2019.
7.	Objective and rationale: <input type="checkbox"/> food safety, <input type="checkbox"/> animal health, <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> plant protection, <input type="checkbox"/> protect humans from animal/plant pest or disease, <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> protect territory from other damage from pests.
8.	Is there a relevant international standard? If so, identify the standard: <input type="checkbox"/> Codex Alimentarius Commission (e.g. title or serial number of Codex standard or related text): <input type="checkbox"/> World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) (e.g. Terrestrial or Aquatic Animal Health Code, chapter number): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International Plant Protection Convention (e.g. ISPM number): ISPM N° 20 <input type="checkbox"/> None Does this proposed regulation conform to the relevant international standard? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If no, describe, whenever possible, how and why it deviates from the international standard:

9.	Other relevant documents and language(s) in which these are available:
10.	Proposed date of adoption (dd/mm/yy): 11 September 2018 Proposed date of publication (dd/mm/yy): 12 September 2018
11.	Proposed date of entry into force: <input type="checkbox"/> Six months from date of publication, and/or (dd/mm/yy): 12 September 2018 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trade facilitating measure
12.	Final date for comments: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sixty days from the date of circulation of the notification and/or (dd/mm/yy): 8 December 2018 Agency or authority designated to handle comments: <input type="checkbox"/> National Notification Authority, <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National Enquiry Point. Address, fax number and e-mail address (if available) of other body: Central Administration for Foreign Agricultural Relations Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation 1 Nadi El Saïd St., Dokki, Giza, Egypt Tel: +(202) 333 76 589 +(202) 374 90 805 Fax: +(202) 374 90 805 E-mail: enq_egy_sps@yahoo.com
13.	Text(s) available from: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National Notification Authority, <input type="checkbox"/> National Enquiry Point. Address, fax number and e-mail address (if available) of other body: Central Administration for Foreign Agricultural Relations Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation 1 Nadi El Saïd St., Dokki, Giza, Egypt Tel: +(202) 333 76 589 +(202) 374 90 805 Fax: +(202) 374 90 805 E-mail: enq_egy_sps@yahoo.com