

**EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES – PROTECTION OF TRADEMARKS
AND GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS FOR AGRICULTURAL
PRODUCTS AND FOODSTUFFS**

Communication from the Chairman of the Panel

The following communication, dated 17 August 2004, addressed to the Chairperson of the Dispute Settlement Body (DSB), is circulated in accordance with Article 12.9 of the Dispute Settlement Understanding (DSU).

Article 12.8 of the Understanding on Rules and Procedures Governing the Settlement of Disputes (DSU) provides that the period in which a panel shall conduct its examination, from the date that the composition and terms of reference of the panel have been agreed upon until the date the final report is issued to the parties to the dispute, shall, as a general rule, not exceed six months.

Article 12.9 of the DSU provides that, when a panel considers that it cannot issue its report within six months, it shall inform the Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) in writing of the reasons for the delay, together with an estimate of the period within which it will issue its report.

At its meeting on 2 October 2003, the DSB established a single Panel pursuant to the requests of the United States in document WT/DS174/20 and Australia in document WT/DS290/18, in accordance with Article 9 of the DSU (WT/DSB/M/156). This Panel on *European Communities – Protection of Trademarks and Geographical Indications for Agricultural Products and Foodstuffs* (WT/DS174 and WT/DS290) was composed on 23 February 2004.

Due to the complexity of the case, the Panel will not be able to complete its work in six months. However, the Panel expects to issue its final report to the parties before the end of this year.
