



---

**European Chamber**  
**Agriculture, Food and Beverage Working Group Meeting**

**Date and Time:** 4 November 2020, 15:00-16:00

**Venue:** European Chamber Shanghai Office  
(Unit 2204, Shui On Plaza, 333 Huai Hai Zhong Road)

**Attendees**

No.	Authority	Name
1	EU Delegation to China	Damien PLAN
2	French Embassy	François BLANC

No.	Company	Name
1	Unilever	Sandy Li
2	Knudsen	Jennie Zheng
3	Sinodis	Denis VERGNEAU
4	European Chamber	Xinyi Xie

**Meeting minutes**

**I. Welcoming Remarks**

Ms. Sandy Li, National Chair of the AFB WG gave a welcoming speech to the European officials visiting the European Chamber Shanghai office and thanked their supports in the AFB WG activities.

**II. Keynote presentation on EU-China Agri-Food Relations by Damien Plan**

Mr. Damien Plan, the Counsellor for Agriculture from the EU Delegation to China, addressed to the attendees on the situation of EU-China agri-food trade in 2019 and 2020:

- EU is the No 1 in the world for agri-food trade
- China is a top-ranking trade partner for EU as the No. 2 export destination for EU agri-food and No. 4 import origin
- EU and China signed the Geographical Identification (GI) agreement in 2020 to jointly protect GIs from both parties in the future
- Recurrent agri-food market access issues in China still exist

**III. Presentation of the AFB WG Position Paper 2020/2021**

Ms. Xinyi Xie, AFB WG Coordinator presented the 8 key recommendations of the AFB WG Position Paper 2020/2021 to the attendees.

**IV. Discussion**

**1. Shelf life “rules” for food importers**

- 
- It is a business practice of some supermarkets and local distributors that only products with over half (sometimes 2/3) of their shelf life left could go on the shelves. It is strict for importers especially during the pandemic period since shipping is taking longer. On the other hand, it also cause serious unnecessary food waste.
  - AFB WG will organize an internal meeting among supermarkets and importers with the same problem to see the whole story.

## **2. Upcoming GB7718**

- The revised text is ready to be published at any time in the next few weeks.
- Some articles where members had problem with remained the same in the final text, e.g. the order of “date of manufacture” has to be year-month-day.

## **3. Responses following public opinion solicitation of laws and regulations**

- In October 2019, the State Council issued the [Regulations on Optimizing the Business Environment](#). This measure states that, in general, a public comment period of 30 days should be provided for administrative regulations, departmental rules, and administrative normative documents related to the production and operations of market entities (Article 62).
- While this is a progress from the Chinese government side, comments submitted to relevant authorities seldom receive feedbacks and it is frustrating for the industry that has prepared the comments. In comparison, government in Vietnam, Indonesia and Thailand for example, they answer to public comments in these occasions with concrete feedbacks.
- The AFB WG hopes that the EU authorities could use the occasion of commenting on China’s WTO compliance to ask for more proactivity of Chinese government facing the public comments on laws and regulations.