

The World Trade Organization (WTO) determined that Costa Rica did not present sufficient scientific justification to limit the importation of Mexican Hass avocados, website [Q Costa Rica](#) reports.

In 2015, the government of Luis Guillermo Solís stopped the importation of Hass avocado due to the risk of the entry of Sun Blotch disease, a decision that was denounced before the WTO by Mexico, Guatemala, the U.S., and South Africa.

In March 2017, Mexico filed a formal complaint with the WTO against Costa Rica for the prohibition on entry of the product to the country.

The administration of Carlos Alvarado maintained the limitations.

The WTO panel considered it a legitimate objective to protect the country, in order to achieve an adequate level of phytosanitary protection. But they recommended that Costa Rica modify the measures established for aspects related to pest risk analysis and pest surveillance and verification processes, concluding that the scientific basis of the measures is insufficient.

The former ambassador of Costa Rica to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Manuel Tovar, said that the conclusion of the panel is forceful so that Mexico could impose sanctions in products that Costa Rica exports to it.

Tovar said that, through litigation, the damage caused by limitations on avocado imports could cost the country more than US\$30 million dollars.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) announced that Costa Rica will accept the resolution of the panel of experts, so the necessary adjustments are being prepared in the phytosanitary protection measures related to avocado imports.

The Ministry of Foreign Trade (Comex) reported that, from the beginning of the process, a defense team was formed, made up of the Centro de Asesoría Legal en Asuntos de la OMC (the only law firm in the sector dedicated exclusively to advice on this type of procedure) and the Servicio Fitosanitario del Estado (SFE). - State Phytosanitary Service.

Initially and before the start of the litigation, Comex had calculated the cost of defending the country before the WTO over the Hass avocado dispute at around US\$600,000.