

# EU, other nations submit list of targeted US imports in dumping dispute

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The European Union and six countries have submitted lists of US exports which will be targeted by millions of dollars in sanctions unless the United States abolishes anti-dumping legislation, the World Trade Organisation said Thursday.

The lists from the EU, Brazil, Canada, India, Japan, Mexico and South Korea are due to be formally endorsed on November 24 during a meeting of the WTO's disputes settlement body, according to a newly released WTO agenda.

The sanctionable US products were not revealed, but Washington's trading foes -- including Chile which has since dropped out -- have estimated that their sanctions would be worth up to 150 million dollars a year.

The WTO paved the way for retaliatory sanctions in August, following seven months of arbitration triggered when Washington failed to repeal anti-dumping legislation, known as the Byrd Amendment, by an end-December 2003 deadline.

Technically the countries opposing the US can apply the sanctions -- normally tariffs on specified US imports -- at any time they choose after the meeting at the WTO's Geneva headquarters in two weeks' time.

Under the 2000 Byrd Amendment, Washington paid about 561 million dollars (463.2 million euros) to US firms that signalled foreign goods were being imported at prices below those charged in their home markets in 2001 and 2002.

In August the WTO allowed the countries to levy retaliatory sanctions equivalent to 72 percent of the Byrd repayments made to US industry.

The EU has estimated that its sanctions would amount to between 40 and 50 million dollars a year, while Japan is targeting 78 million dollars in sanctions.

A European source said the EU would be targeting similar products to those during the steel dispute with the US: textiles, shoes, fruit and vegetables.

The US government said it had not managed to convince the US Congress to revise its anti-dumping legislation, but it is the third time American exporters have faced the threat of officially approved sanctions recently.

US President George W. Bush scrapped temporary tariffs on certain steel imports late last year after the EU gained WTO approval for 2.2 billion dollars in retaliatory sanctions.

In March, the EU, backed by a WTO ruling, started imposing multi-million-dollar duties on designated US imports until Washington annuls tax breaks granted to American firms operating through offshore havens under the Foreign Sales Corporation (FSC) law.