

**ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY THE INTERNATIONAL REGIONAL
ORGANIZATION FOR PLANT AND ANIMAL HEALTH (OIRSA)
RELATING TO THE WTO AGREEMENT ON THE APPLICATION
OF SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES**

Report to the 47th Meeting of the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures
17 and 18 March 2010

The following communication, received on 12 March 2010, is being circulated at the request of OIRSA.

1. Specific support for agricultural production chains

1. In conjunction with national sanitary and phytosanitary authorities and the private sector, OIRSA is continuing to implement sanitary and phytosanitary programmes in support of agri-food chains. The following action has been taken over the past three months. As from this year, OIRSA will develop new phytosanitary programmes in support of agricultural production chains, which will include: Musaceae, Palmaceae, Vegetables (tomatoes, chili peppers, potatoes and onions), Pineapples, Basic Grains (rice) and Citrus Fruits.

Belize

2. Within the framework of the phytosanitary programme in support of the citrus and other fruit production chain, the following activities were implemented:

- (a) Technical support in the development of the Tri-national Programme (United States of America, Mexico and Belize) to Combat Huanglongbing (HLB);
- (b) initiation of the National Huanglongbing Control Plan in Belize, by:
 - Establishing a working group;
 - legislation declaring the pest to be regulated;
 - prohibiting the movement of nursery plants;
 - continuous monitoring;
 - developing diagnostic capability;

- training personnel;
 - provision of real-time PCR equipment;
- (c) implementation of an education programme for technicians and producers and information to the general public;
- (d) training producers and technicians to recognize the disease; and
- (e) international technical assistance: consultants from the USA, Brazil and France.
3. Within the framework of the regional support programme for the poultry production chain the following action was taken by OIRSA in the last quarter:
- (a) Poultry standards harmonized in the Regional Commission for Poultry Health were officially adapted for Belize, bringing the country into line with Panama, Costa Rica, El Salvador and Guatemala. This is expected to help facilitate the regional poultry trade;
 - (b) technical support for the Belizean veterinary services, including a training seminar on vaccination against Newcastle disease; and
 - (c) technical and logistical support during the launch and development of the vaccination campaign against Newcastle disease in Belize. The Programme donated the vaccines utilized in the campaign and provided training in poultry vaccination techniques.

Honduras

4. Within the framework of the programme in support of the swine production chain, Honduras finalized the control phase for Classical Swine Fever (CSF), and initiated the eradication phase from 30 September 2009. The country is thus expected to declare itself free from this disease by December 2010.

Nicaragua

5. Under the phytosanitary programme in support of the citrus and other fruit production chain, the following action was taken by OIRSA:

- (a) Support for the detection of HLB and its insect vector;
- (b) identification of greenhouses for the reproduction of material from the United States of America,
- (c) training on quarantine fruit pests; and
- (d) technical assistance in support of maintaining the area north of Lake Xolotlán free from fruit flies.

6. Within the framework of the programme in support of the swine production chain, a Ministerial Decree was published in which the country was officially declared to be in the eradication phase of CSF. The aim is to declare Nicaragua free from CSF by the end of 2010.

El Salvador

7. Under the phytosanitary programme in support of the citrus and other fruit production chain, the following action was taken:

- (a) Support for the detection of HLB and its insect vector;
- (b) identification of greenhouses for the reproduction of material from the United States of America;
- (c) training on quarantine fruit pests; and
- (d) participation in the fifth International Business Forum on Tropical Fruits, with a talk on: Phytosanitary threats for regional fruit production.

8. Within the framework of the programme in support of the poultry production chain, OIRSA is implementing a National Programme on Backyard Poultry, focusing on the following activities:

- (a) In conjunction with the authorities of the National School of Agriculture (ENA), the National Centre for Agriculture and Forestry Technology and the General Directorate for Plant and Animal Health (DGSVA), a national plan was drawn up, which will be of benefit to 20 rural communities living in extreme poverty. Schemes have already been initiated in two communities in the departments of La Libertad and Sonsonate.

9. Within the framework of the programme in support of the swine production chain, since April 2009, when the national authorities declared the country free from CSF, steps have been taken to obtain official regional and international recognition of this status.

Costa Rica

10. Within the framework of the phytosanitary programme in support of the citrus and other fruit production chain, the following action was taken in Costa Rica:

- (a) Support for the detection of HLB and its insect vector;
- (b) identification of greenhouses for the reproduction of material from the United States of America;
- (c) technical support to maintain the pest-free area in the Peninsula of Nicoya; and
- (d) training on HLB for private companies.

Panama

11. The following activities were implemented under the phytosanitary programme in support of the fruit production chain:

- (a) Support for the detection of HLB and its insect vector;
- (b) training on quarantine fruit pests;
- (c) consultations on: contingency plans and handbooks on phytosanitary technical assistance for papaya;

- (d) technical support in the Azuero region for exports free from the Mediterranean fruit fly;
- (e) technical support for the management of *Thrips palmi*;
- (f) phytosanitary support for citrus fruits, papaya and mango; and
- (g) support for the *Anastrepha grandis* eradication programme in the Darién zone and the Chapo, west of the Panama Canal. As a result of coordinated efforts by the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MIDA) of Panama through the National Directorate for Plant Health, the University of Panama and OIRSA, phytosanitary restrictions on exports of cucurbits to the US market have been successfully lifted.

12. Within the framework of the sanitary programme in support of the aquaculture production chain, and as a result of the meeting between OIRSA's Ad Hoc Group on Aquaculture Health and the Organization for the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector of the Central American Isthmus (OSPESCA), the Handbook on Good Shrimp Farm Management Practices was developed.

Guatemala

13. Through the programme in support of the swine production chain, epidemiologic surveillance measures continue to be supported in the wake of the national authorities declaring the country free from classical swine fever in 2009.

Dominican Republic

14. Under the programme in support of the swine production chain, FAO and OIRSA held the fourth Continental Plan meeting for the eradication of classical swine fever. During this event, the Central American countries and the Dominican Republic set 2012 as the target date for eradicating CSF.

15. In the Dominican Republic, backyard pigs continue to be systematically vaccinated in order to finalize the CSF monitoring phase.

2. Training, technical assistance and dissemination activities relating to agricultural health and trade

16. Technical posters about HLB and the plants and vectors that amplify the disease, such as lemon grass, myrtle or jasmine (*Murraya paniculata*), have been designed and distributed.

17. The first Latin American Pig Farming Congress was organized jointly by the FAO, the OIE and OIRSA, in conjunction with the Dominican Federation of Pig Farmers (FEDOPORC) and the Latin American Organization of Pig Farmers (OIPORC). At that event, the progress achieved in the classical swine fever programme was analysed, as were the strengths and weaknesses of national programmes, and a course of action was adopted to improve implementation of the Continental Plan so as to achieve the 2020 objectives. In addition, joint strategies were defined in order to improve competitiveness within the pork industry.

18. In Nicaragua, a regional congress on traceability and good agricultural practice was organized in cooperation with the Producers and Exporters Association of Nicaragua (APEN). There were 261 participants from the livestock, agricultural and bee-keeping sectors at this event.

19. A training course on health and safety for apiculture was held in Nicaragua for the benefit of technicians from the official sector, producers, academics and honey exporters, whose principal market is the European Union.

20. In Panama, the National Animal Health Directorate of the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MIDA) received support for the organization of the seminar-workshop on good animal husbandry and hazard analysis and critical control points.

21. In Maryland, USA, with the cooperation of the United States Department of Agriculture - Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA/APHIS) and OIRSA, laboratory technicians from the Ministries/Secretariats of Agriculture and Livestock of OIRSA member countries were trained to carry out the PCR technique for Huanglongbing detection in citrus fruits.

22. Technical information (more than 600MB) on the subject of Huanglongbing in citrus fruits has been distributed to the citrus fruit sector by the authorities as a result of the technical assistance received from USDA/APHIS of Florida, Fundecitrus of Brazil and INRA of France.

23. In Panama, a workshop on biosecurity in semi-industrial and backyard farming was held under the joint FAO-OIRSA Project on "Emergency Assistance for the Surveillance of Influenza A Subtype H1N1 Virus in Swine Populations in Central America and Neighbouring Countries".

3. Support for the regional harmonization process

24. A draft protocol to facilitate bilateral trade in dairy products was prepared at the request of the health authorities in Nicaragua and El Salvador.

4. Support for risk analysis

25. A Pest Risk Analysis of the weed *Polygonum lapathifolium* was prepared at the request of the authorities of Nicaragua's Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAGFOR).

5. Strengthening of national institutions in order to facilitate trade

26. In Honduras and the Dominican Republic, continuing support was provided for the national committees on sanitary and phytosanitary measures. A project on "Strengthening the Honduran National Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures" was submitted for approval by the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF).

27. In cooperation with OSPESCA, an evaluation of Central American laboratories that analyse waste from fishery products was carried out in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala.

28. OIRSA supported the Belizean Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries in developing a project on the harmonization of health standards for exports of live animals and meat from Belize to Mexico, which is to be presented by the authorities to the cooperation arm of the European Union and is expected to receive a US\$1.7 million investment from the United States. The project will be used to establish equivalencies between the official veterinary services, to determine the health requirements applicable to trade between the countries, and to establish a system for identifying Belizean farms and cattle.

6. Strategic alliances for the promotion of health and trade

29. Organization of the OIRSA-AECID-IDB Regional Project on new technologies for the phytosanitary management of citrus fruits (FRUTIC) has commenced, with the aim of modernizing the regional phytosanitary surveillance of citrus fruits through the development and installation of the digital information technology infrastructure necessary to manage data from citrus fruit farms.

30. Within the framework of the IDB Mesoamerican Fruit-Growing Project (PROMEFRUT), a regional workshop for PROMEFRUT Platform C on health, quality and safety was held in El Salvador. This component of the project will be coordinated by OIRSA.

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