

ACTIVITIES OF MEMBERS

Statement by the Dominican Republic at the Meeting of 17 and 18 March 2010

The following communication, received on 16 March 2010, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of the Dominican Republic.

1. The Dominican Republic wishes to inform the Committee of progress achieved in the work aimed at improving the National System for the Use and Handling of Pesticides in the Dominican Republic and the Application of Good Agricultural Practices and Good Manufacturing Practices.
2. The Ministry of Agriculture, through its Departments of Plant Health and Agri-food Safety, has been working hard to supplement the registers of firms engaged in the sale of agrochemicals throughout the national territory, having notified the representatives of these firms of the need for registration under Law No. 311-68 on pesticides and Regulation No. 322-88 thereto. At the present time, 79 per cent of institutions eligible to trade in pesticides in the Dominican Republic are registered and 21 per cent are in the process of obtaining registration.
3. The new registers and the revised status of agrochemical firms require that the products be used specifically for crops under conditions of sale authorized by a phytosanitary technical expert, on the basis of Ministry of Agriculture Resolution No. 50-2009, which prohibits and restricts certain active ingredients, in accordance with status of use, following mutually agreed national and international investigations.
4. This work has been given further impetus by the establishment of the Programme on Oriental Plants and Fresh Fruits for Export (PROVOFEX), with the aim of monitoring agricultural products for export and domestic consumption. In order to provide guidance on the monitoring of pests and agrochemicals to be used by producers, the programme establishes procedures for the determination of economic pest thresholds, together with a list of pesticides to be used for each crop, which is continuously updated. It also has a team of technicians for field work and professional inspectors for the inspection of packing plants, who work in conjunction with plant quarantine personnel at ports and airports and are distributed among diagnostic laboratories and twenty-five (25) quarantine posts throughout the country.
5. Furthermore, the pesticide residue laboratories have been restructured and equipped; pursuant to a resolution of the Minister of Agriculture, units have been set up to deal with quality assurance, pesticide residues in plants and fruits and formulated pesticides. Tests are currently being conducted for the determination of pesticide residues and the quality of pesticide formulations, for certification and accreditation purposes.

6. Guidebooks and handbooks on Good Agricultural Practices and Good Manufacturing Practices have been developed, and training has been given to the staff of the regional technical committees, known as COTERES; moreover, technical data sheets have been produced for a Register of Responsible Pesticide Use by producers.

7. As part of the process of streamlining and making more transparent the services offered by the Ministry of Agriculture's Plant Health Department for the domestic production and export of agricultural products, the finishing touches are currently being put to a computerized system covering the procedures of that Department, by means of which the country's producers and traders will be able to access services concerning the registration, import and use of pesticides, as well as the export and import of agricultural products and by-products. This includes some of the administrative units of the Department.

8. In addition, the Dominican Republic offers general and specific information on topics and work being conducted in the areas of plant and vegetable health and agri-food safety, through the website of the National Committee for the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, <http://www.cnmsf.gob.do>. Information on the different laws of the country and SPS-related documents are also available on that site.
