

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

Report to the 49th meeting of the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures
20 and 21 October 2010

The following communication, received on 13 October 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 actions were carried out during the past three months.

Phytosanitary programme in support of the citrus fruit production chain

2. OIRSA collaborated with Mexico's National Agriculture and Food Health, Safety and Quality Service (SENASICA/SAGARPA) to coordinate and finance the visit by experts from Brazil's Fund for Citrus Plant Protection (FUNDECITRUS). Workshops on the control of Huanglongbing (HLB) were held in order to share Brazil's successes in controlling this devastating disease. The workshops were attended by some 350 producers from several citrus-growing states in Mexico.

3. By providing the technical assistance of international experts on pests of the family Thripidae (Thrips and Frankliniella), OIRSA has supported member countries in bolstering their systems for identifying and controlling these pests. Amongst other things, the assistance has included the use of software to identify and build up capacity in the process of collecting, preserving, sending, preparing and mounting specimens in laboratories. In addition, field management strategies have been promoted such as crop rotation, the use of biological controllers like entomopathogenic fungi and the release of predators of the pest such as the *Orius insidiosus* bug. These pests constitute a serious phytosanitary threat to the region's fruit and vegetable crops.

Phytosanitary programme in support of the vegetable production chain

4. With the technical assistance of experts from Spain and Argentina, the Workshop on the tomato leafminer (*Tuta absoluta* Meyrick) was held in Honduras. The event will form the basis for conducting the survey to detect this pest and for establishing a regional and international network of specialists in the subject.

5. In Honduras, OIRSA cooperated with the authorities of the National Agricultural Health Service (SENASA/SAG), the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), universities such as the Autonomous University of Sinaloa and the University of Arizona, as well as the Honduran Agricultural Research Foundation (FHIA) to stage the regional workshop on the theme "Potato psyllid/Ca. *Liberibacter solanacearum*: A new bacterial-insect vector complex causing diseases of potato and tomato in the Americas". This event took place in response to the mandate given to OIRSA by the region's Ministers or Secretaries of Agriculture to take action to obtain technical assistance in the prevention and control of the pest. In turn, and in compliance of the aforesaid mandate, a national course on the management of the Paratuberculosis (*Bactericera cockerelli*) and its association with the Candidatus bacteria *Liberibacter solanacearum* was held in Nicaragua.

6. To support the National Plant Health Directorate (DNSV/MIDA), an intensive training programme on the *Anastrepha grandis* pest was held in Panama, designed to boost the campaign to monitor and detect this disease. In addition, OIRSA emergency funds and technical assistance are providing support for the programme to eradicate the disease in Panama's Darién province, which borders on Colombia.

Health programme in support of the bovine production chain

7. With the support of OIRSA and the Ministries or Secretariats of Agriculture and Livestock, studies were launched to determine the prevalence of bovine brucellosis and tuberculosis in El Salvador, Nicaragua, Belize and Honduras.

Health programme in support of the poultry production chain

8. In the framework of the Regional Health Programme for Backyard Poultry, which is being supported financially by the Chinese Taipei Government, action plans have been drawn up and approved for Belize, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and the Dominican Republic. The aim of this programme is to improve on food security and home economics in small rural communities by enhancing the conditions of production, health, genetics and nutritional status of backyard poultry.

Health programme in support of the swine production chain

9. Through the Regional Project for the prevention, control and eradication of classical swine fever (PREFIP III), being carried out with the financial support of the Chinese Taipei Government and OIRSA, a regional simulation was undertaken in Guatemala in order to buttress the official veterinary departments of the countries in Central America, Belize, Panama and the Dominican Republic through training and the implementation of a single regional strategy. This strategy is in line with the OIE guidelines and paves the way for early detection and immediate response should a focus of emerging or exotic diseases in pigs be identified.

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

10. The training course in bee health was held in Nicaragua with a focus on pathology and diagnosis.

11. In Honduras, OIRSA supported the training programme for SENASA inspectors in the Verification of Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and Good Management Practices (GMPs) - Inspector's Manual, Fruit and Vegetable Section.

12. In Honduras, and with the technical assistance of ANFACO-CECOPESCA of Spain, OIRSA ran the Course on Validation and Uncertainty in Physical-Chemical Testing - Standard UNE-EN ISO/IEC 17025 and Decision 657/2002/EC, which trained 16 residue analysis laboratory technicians from the Central American countries and the Dominican Republic.

13. In coordination with the Directorate of Agricultural and Food Safety (DIA/MAGFOR), a training seminar/workshop on hygiene and safety of fishery products was held in Nicaragua, with emphasis on European Union legislation and the outcomes of the latest DG-SANCO audits of countries in the region.

14. Support was given in Honduras to the Food Safety Division (DIA/SENASA/SAG) in carrying out a preliminary inspection concerning the health of fishery and aquaculture products from the southern region.

15. Support was also given in Honduras to the DIA/SENASA/SAG in conducting preliminary GAPs and GMPs-related inspection visits to pineapple and banana producers that export to the United States, in preparation for a visit by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

16. Taking place in Costa Rica is the regional trainers workshop for the fruit and vegetable sector (good agricultural practices, pesticide residues and contaminants, GMP, "Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures" (SSOP) and traceability). The workshop is a joint effort by the State Phytosanitary Service (SFE/MAG), JIFSAN, FDA and OIRSA.

17. At the Eighteenth International Congress of Producers and Exporters of Melon and Watermelon, organized by the Federation of Agro-Exporters of Honduras (FPX), a keynote address was given on the theme of how to prevent and control the microbiological contamination of fresh fruit and vegetables. A similar presentation was made during the Fourteenth Agricultural Exports Congress 2010, organized by the Group of Non-Traditional Agro-Exporters of Panama (GANTRAP).

18. OIRSA assisted with and facilitated the technical visit to Mexico by officials of the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MIDA) and from Panama's private sector to familiarize themselves with the work experience of the Sinaloa State Plant Health Committee (CESAVESIN). The basis of the Committee is the regional organization of agricultural producers into local plant health boards with a view to implementing phytosanitary programmes and strategies to prevent, control and eradicate agricultural pests and diseases. This improves competitiveness in the production, handling and national and international marketing of agricultural produce.

19. The Manual of Good Manufacturing Practices for Honey Export Plants is being updated by the OIRSA Ad Hoc Group on Apicultural Health and Safety.

20. In Panama, the USDA, the Panamanian Food Safety Authority (AUPSA) and OIRSA together ran the first training session for AUPSA inspectors.

21. At the Eleventh National Congress of Veterinary Medicine organized by the Panamanian Association of Veterinary Surgeons, a keynote address was delivered on "The Use of Veterinary Drugs in Food-Producing Animals".

3. Support for the harmonization process

22. As a Regional Plant Protection Organization (RPPO) and pursuant to the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), OIRSA took part in Technical Consultation No. 22 amongst RPPOs. The meeting addressed topics such as the future of plant health and the IPPC; and the business plan

of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures, and roles and activities of RPPOs: updating of e-certification.

23. Moreover, in coordination with and in support of the National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) of its member countries, OIRSA organized the national and regional review of the draft International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPM) submitted for consultation by the IPPC in 2010. National consultations took place in Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama and Belize, with the participation of producers, university lecturers and researchers. A regional workshop was held in El Salvador and attended by NPPO authorities. Its observations were transmitted to the IPPC. The ISPM drafts submitted for consultation were: (a) Systems approaches for pest risk management of fruit flies (TEPHRITIDAE); (b) Appendix to ISPM No. 15 (2009), Submission of new treatments for inclusion in ISPM No. 15; (c) Integrated measures approach for managing pest risks associated with international trade of plants for planting; (d) Appendix to ISPM No. 28 (2009), Irradiation treatment for *Ceratitidis capitata*; (e) Appendix to ISPM No. 27 (2010), Diagnostic protocol for Plum pox virus.

4. Strengthening of national institutions in order to facilitate trade

24. STDF project 284 "Strengthening the Honduran National Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures" was launched with the support of the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF).

25. As the entity responsible for the monitoring and surveillance of STDF project 238 "Development of accredited HACCP certification schemes for processed food products" being implemented by AGEXPORT in Guatemala, OIRSA is undertaking the relevant follow-up and has facilitated the project's execution by signing a cooperation agreement with AGEXPORT for direct payment of the international consulting firm selected to advise HACCP inspection agencies on HACCP and ISO 17020 issues.

5. Strategic alliances for the promotion of health and trade

26. Operations were launched under the project "Harmonized Systems of Bovine Traceability in Central America, Belize, Panama and the Dominican Republic", which is a strategic alliance with the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB). Through its regional public goods programme, the IADB is providing US\$1.2 million, which are matched by regional counterpart funds worth US\$700,000. The activities carried out include: familiarizing the main players in the bovine production chain with this programme and analysing prior experiences in the implementation of traceability programmes in member countries.

27. OIRSA is supporting the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in the Technical Cooperation among Countries (TCC) project aimed at strengthening the programme of epidemiological surveillance and response to outbreaks of equine encephalitis. Such cooperation involves building technical capacity for diagnosis and epidemiological surveillance.

28. OIRSA has extended its cooperation with the USDA, leading to the signing of a Food Safety Cooperation Agreement. OIRSA and APHIS/USDA recently held a regional workshop in Honduras on molluscs of quarantine significance.

In the framework of the alliance between OIRSA and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for implementation of the project on fruit fly-free and low prevalence areas, the joint task force held a coordination meeting to discuss the project during the 8th International Symposium on Fruit Flies of Economic Importance, held in Valencia, Spain. OIRSA provided support for officials from the region's Ministries or Secretariats of Agriculture to attend this event.

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