

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

Report to the 50th Meeting of the Committee on
Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures,
30 and 31 March 2011

The following communication, received on 22 March 2011, 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 agrifood chains. The following action has been taken over the past three months.

Phytosanitary programme in support of the pineapple production chain

2. Pursuant to the declaration of a phytosanitary regional emergency for pineapple Fusariosis (*Fusarium guttiforme*), issued at its 57th Ordinary Meeting by the International Regional Committee for Plant and Animal Health (CIRSA), made up of the Ministers/Secretaries of Agriculture and Livestock, OIRSA coordinated and financed a technical visit to Brazil by regional officials responsible for phytosanitary diagnosis, in order to learn about morphological characteristics for identification of the pathogen, selective media and molecular markers (PCR), as well as disease recognition and instructions in the field.

3. A technical document was prepared entitled "Fusariosis de la Piña: *Fusarium guttiforme*, Una grave amenaza para la producción de piña en los países de la región del OIRSA" (Pineapple Fusariosis, *Fusarium guttiforme*, a serious threat to pineapple production in the countries of the OIRSA region).

Phytosanitary programme in support of the citrus fruit production chain

4. OIRSA and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) coordinated and supported the participation of the regional technical group on fruit flies in the Eighth International Symposium on Fruit Flies of Economic Importance, held in Valencia, Spain. The participants also received in-service training, in Murcia and Almería, on new technologies for massive trapping of fruit flies using protein, without insecticide, and with an exposure period of four months in the field without

adulteration. Regional studies are currently being carried out to evaluate the adaptability of the traps and attractants.

5. Technical assistance was provided to officials responsible for the phytosanitary programmes in Mediterranean fruit fly-free areas: Belize, Xolotlán Valley (Nicaragua), Espíritu Santo Island and San Pedro Puxtla (El Salvador). The technical assistance included training on taxonomy, ecology, control, trapping and sampling of fruit flies of economic and quarantine importance, as well as the implementation of quarantine measures.

6. Under the training and dissemination programme, technical material on the regional programme of certification of citrus fruit nurseries continued to be distributed, in order to prevent transmission of Huanglongbing and other diseases transmitted by graft. Material was also produced in Panama which included recommendations on preventing premature fall of oranges caused by the *Leptoglossus zonatus* bug and calcium deficiency.

Phytosanitary programme in support of the vegetable production chain

7. Pursuant to Resolution No. 10, *Tuta absoluta* survey, of the 52nd Ordinary Meeting of the CIRSA, the OIRSA, in addition to developing a uniform detection procedure, acquired and made available to some countries traps and pheromones specific to the pest, in order to facilitate the detection process. Virtual technical meetings have also been held with South American specialists on the pest, for the exchange of knowledge and experiences. A protocol on action to be taken in the event of the detection of tomato leafminer (*Tuta absoluta*) is also available.

8. OIRSA is continuing to support implementation of the programme to eliminate the South American cucurbit fruit fly, *Anastrepha grandis*, in the Panamanian province of Darién. The programme, which includes massive trapping (1,618 multi-lure traps for national monitoring) has enabled the country to maintain access to international markets, thereby avoiding an estimated US\$498 million in economic losses.

Swine health programme

9. In the context of the PREFIP III Project, which is being implemented by OIRSA with support from the Government of Chinese Taipei, the swine health programmes of Nicaragua and Honduras are being supported with a view to their self-declaration as countries free from classical swine fever, which is expected to be achieved in the first half of 2011.

10. In the Dominican Republic, OIRSA is supporting the restructuring and updating of the National Programme for the Prevention, Control and Eradication of Classical Swine Fever.

Bovine health programme

11. With the support of OIRSA and the Ministries or Secretariats of Agriculture and Livestock, studies are being conducted to determine the prevalence of bovine brucellosis and tuberculosis in El Salvador and Nicaragua, while studies for Honduras, Guatemala and Belize have been developed and approved and are awaiting implementation.

12. In order to strengthen veterinary diagnostic capacity in respect of bovine brucellosis and the pursuit of regional harmonization of diagnostic techniques in accordance with the OIE diagnostic manual, OIRSA is testing and evaluating the "indirect and competitive ELISA" techniques. In addition, equipment, materials and laboratory reagents are being supplied to those countries in the region that face the greatest constraints.

Poultry Health Programme

13. Under the Regional Avian Disease Programme (PREA) and the Regional Health Programme for Backyard Poultry (PRESAAT) which are being implemented by OIRSA in cooperation with the Government of Chinese Taipei, technical audits were developed for poultry health programmes in Guatemala and El Salvador.

14. Avian disease surveillance and diagnostic systems have been strengthened through support for monitoring and risk characterizations.

15. Prophylactic campaigns are being developed for the prevention of diseases such as Newcastle disease, coryza and fowl cholera in pilot areas of the backyard poultry programme, for the benefit of small rural poultry farmers in countries covered by the programmes.

16. Courses on poultry health, management and nutrition were provided for technicians, small-scale poultry farmers and communal leaders. Technical and instructional material was also distributed in support of the training programme.

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

17. In Nicaragua, regional courses were held on: updating diagnostic techniques for classical swine fever and risk analysis; these events laid the groundwork for the preparation of risk analyses in countries that have been declared free from the disease.

18. In Honduras, a regional training workshop was held on good apicultural practices, manufacturing and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP).

19. OIRSA prepared and distributed the following technical handbooks: Swine Management - Semi-Technified Sector, Backyard Pig Breeding, Pig Feeding with Available Farm Resources and the Handbook on Pig Farm Structures.

20. In Belize, the training of trainers workshop was held for fish product safety inspectors on the "Intermares" boat with the support of the Spanish Ministry of the Environment and the Rural and Marine Sectors (MARM).

21. In Honduras, in coordination with the Food Safety Division of the National Agricultural Health Service (SENASA) and with support from the National Association of Aquaculture Producers of Honduras (ANDAH), the second pre-audit visit was made to cultured shrimp farms and packing plants.

22. The Regional Workshop for Apiculture Trainers, focusing on the production and primary processing of honey, was held in Honduras, and also dealt with the transfer of knowledge of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs), Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures (SSOP) and HACCP.

23. In Honduras, technical support was provided to SENASA for an inspection visit by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to fruit and vegetable farms and packing plants.

24. At the second Pre-Harvest Agricultural Training Session organized by the Honey Chain of El Salvador and the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of El Salvador, training was provided on the preparation of beehives for the sanitary management of honey, so as to guarantee its quality and compliance with national and international standards, particularly in Europe, the main destination of Salvadoran honey exports.

25. The Manual of Good Manufacturing Practices for Honey Export Plants has been updated by the OIRSA Ad Hoc Group on Apicultural Health and Safety.

26. In Panama, a pre-audit was conducted on food safety in the papaya and cucurbit agrifood chains.

27. A regional workshop on management of locusts, *Schistocerca gregaria* (Walker, 1870), was held in Mexico in coordination with that country's National Agriculture and Food Health, Safety and Quality Service (SENASICA). Instructional material on this pest was also prepared. OIRSA provides assistance to members for the surveillance and control of *S. gregaria gregaria*, and more particularly to countries with areas where this insect is endemic, in order to prevent and control population increases.

28. A regional workshop on *palmaceae* pests was organized in coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (SAG) of Honduras, the Honduran Agricultural Research Foundation (FHIA) and the Pan American School of Agriculture. The cultivation of *palmaceae* (especially *Cocos nucifera* and *Elaeis guineensis*) is of great socio-economic importance in various OIRSA member countries.

29. The "Contingency Plan for Any Outbreak of Lethal Yellowing of the Coconut Palm (ALC) in a Country in the OIRSA Region" has been drawn up; copies may be obtained at the following link: "<http://www.oirsa.org/aplicaciones/subidoarchivos/BibliotecaVirtual/PlancontingenciaALCOIRSA2010.pdf>"

3. Strengthening of national institutions in order to facilitate trade

30. STDF project 284, "Strengthening the Honduran National Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures", continues to be implemented with the support of the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF). The National Committee has perfected a new working procedure allowing for the full and participative discussion of trade and SPS issues in Honduras.

4. Support for regional trade facilitation

31. With a view to facilitating trade in dairy products between El Salvador and Nicaragua, OIRSA provided support for the adoption of a sanitary protocol to facilitate bilateral trade between the two countries.

5. Support for the harmonization process

32. OIRSA collaborated with the IPPC in translating three draft standards into Spanish, which were submitted for country consultation in 2010. It also translated into Spanish the prototype of the phytosanitary capacity evaluation (PCE) tool. The Secretariat gave a demonstration of the PCE to NPPO officials from member countries via a teleconference sponsored by OIRSA.

6. Strategic alliances for the promotion of health and trade

33. OIRSA is holding coordination meetings with Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária (EMBRAPA) with the aim of identifying possible technical cooperation programmes, for example in the development of Huanglongbing research and biological control of the vector, Asian citrus psyllid.

34. OIRSA signed a cooperation agreement in the area of food safety with the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) and the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), which are both agencies of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The agreement will provide

support for OIRSA countries in revising or establishing new technical standards on food safety and development consistent with international standards, including those of the United States.

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