

**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 54th Meeting of the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures  
10–11 July 2012

The following communication, received on 6 July 2012, is being circulated at the request of OIRSA.

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

1. Information sessions for food exporters on the impact of the United States Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) were held in the Dominican Republic in coordination with the Agrifood Safety Department (DIA) of the Ministry of Agriculture (MA) and the Dominican Exporters Association (ADOEXPO), within the framework of the IDB-MIF/ADOEXPO Project. The sessions were attended by over 150 exporters from small and medium-sized enterprises.

2. In the Dominican Republic, technical materials for training small-scale producers in the prevention, control and eradication of avian diseases were designed and distributed.

3. In Panama, a regional workshop on the use of liquid chromatography-tandem mass spectrometry (LC-MS/MS) and the control of food contaminants was held, in coordination with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA/FAO) and the National Plant Health Directorate of the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MIDA), for the staff of pesticide residue analysis laboratories in Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama and the Dominican Republic.

4. In the uplands of Chiriquí Province in Panama, OIRSA provided technical assistance in implementing the emergency plan to combat tomato leaf miner (*Tuta absoluta*).

5. In Panama, a national workshop on bovine traceability and its importance, analysis of the legal framework and Panama's plan of action was conducted in coordination with the MIDA and the Ministry of Health (MINSA).

6. Technical assistance was provided for the preparation and approval by all parties of Panama's Livestock Traceability Law and for drawing up the implementation plan.

7. In coordination with the Division responsible for the safety of food of animal origin (DIPOA) in the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock's Directorate-General of Livestock and El Salvador's honey subsector, an all-day training session on the post-harvest handling of honey was attended by more than 60 producers and officials.

8. In Honduras, the second theoretical and practical refresher training course on white shrimp (*Penaeus vannamei*) immunology was held in coordination with the National Agricultural Health Service of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (SENASA/SAG), the National Association of Aquaculture Producers of Honduras (ANDAH) and the Organization for the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector of the Central American Isthmus (OSPESCA).

9. In Honduras, the regional training workshop for trainers in good agricultural practices (advanced level) was organized in coordination with SENASA/SAG's Food Safety Division (DIA), the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Joint Institute for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (JIFSAN). The workshop was attended by 25 official technicians from the nine OIRSA member countries, 42 technical personnel from the Honduran fruit and vegetable subsectors and six JIFSAN-FDA instructors.

10. A presentation on the factors limiting the quality of fisheries products destined for domestic and regional trade within Central America and on how to overcome them was given during a regional workshop on market access and value chains in fisheries and aquaculture, organized by the Centre for Marketing Information and Advisory Services for Fishery Products in Latin America and the Caribbean (INFOPECSA/FAO) and the Directorate-General of Fisheries and Aquaculture (DIGEPESCA/SAG).

11. In coordination with SENASA/SAG's Food Safety Division (Honduras) and support from the Spanish National Association of Fish and Seafood Canning Manufactures and Technical Centre for the Preservation of Fish and Aquaculture Products (ANFACO-CECOPECSA), the technical staff of the National Residues Laboratory (LANAR) was given advice and theoretical and practical training in the procedure for validating methods for the analysis of heavy metals, bisulfite and veterinary drug residues, so as to ensure compliance with Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004 relating to the placing of aquaculture products on the European market.

12. A pre-audit of good aquaculture practices and hygiene and safety of farmed shrimp was conducted in Honduras, in coordination with SENASA/SAG's Food Safety Division.

13. OIRSA gave logistical and technical support for the Ninth Central American and Caribbean Congress on Apicultural Integration and Modernization, organized by the National Animal Health Service of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (SENASA/MAG) of Costa Rica and the Central American and Caribbean Beekeepers Federation (FEDECCAPI). OIRSA made two presentations on the new challenges facing the beekeeping industry to meet European Union requirements and on the achievements of the OIRSA Ad Hoc Group on Apicultural Health and Safety in the field of apiculture in Central America and the Caribbean. The event was attended by more than 400 officials and honey producers and exporters from Central America and the Dominican Republic.

14. A refresher seminar on European legislation relating to the hygiene and safety of fisheries products was held in Guatemala, in coordination with the Department of Animal and Hydrobiological Products of the Food Safety Directorate of the Vice-Ministry of Agricultural Health and Regulations (VISAR)/Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food (MAGA).

15. In Guatemala, support was provided to the Department of Animal and Hydrobiological Products of the VISAR/MAGA Food Safety Directorate in the form of a pre-audit on the hygiene and safety of fisheries products (farmed shrimp), in accordance with European Union requirements, to

prepare for an inspection visit by the authorities of the Food and Veterinary Office of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Health and Consumers (FVO/DG-SANCO).

16. Guatemala received technical and logistical support in preparing and implementing a project to determine the presence or absence of the small hive beetle (*Aethina tumida*) in the border area between Guatemala and Mexico.

17. In Nicaragua, the Department of Agricultural and Food Safety (DIA) of the Directorate-General of Agricultural Protection and Health (DGPSA)/Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Forestry (MAGFOR) was given support in reviewing the implementation of the national plan to monitor residues in farmed shrimp for export to the European Union.

18. Support was also provided to the authorities of Nicaragua's DIA/DGPSA/MAGFOR in reviewing the programme for the institutional strengthening of the milk product inspection and control system.

19. Under FAO-OIRSA technical cooperation project TCP/RLA 3311, 14 public and private citrus sector participants from the nine OIRSA member countries attended the International Workshop on Citrus Quarantine Pests, held in Mexico.

20. The regional apiculture laboratory ongoing training workshop took place in Mexico.

21. Twelve health education and communication campaigns on avian diseases and immunization against avian influenza, Newcastle disease and fowl typhoid were conducted in Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua.

22. Training workshops on the validation of laboratory techniques for diagnosing classical swine fever were held in Panama and the Dominican Republic.

23. Studies were carried out with a view to promoting the eligibility of regional poultry products on international markets.

24. The manual on the pathology, diagnosis and control of the main pests and diseases affecting honey bees was published and distributed.

25. Two thousand handbooks on safety measures in small and medium-sized semi-mechanized pig farms, 2,000 handbooks on the building of pig-farming facilities, 2,000 handbooks on pig feeding with available farm resources, and 2,000 manuals on backyard pig breeding were produced and distributed.

26. OIRSA is continuing to provide technical assistance to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) and the Health and Agriculture Authority (BAHA) of Belize in implementing the bovine traceability system (information system and legal framework) and the scanning project aimed at determining the prevalence of bovine brucellosis and tuberculosis in the national herd, which will facilitate the export of live cattle from Belize to Mexico.

## **2. Support for the harmonization and equivalence process**

27. OIRSA provided support for the participation of four delegates of National Codex Alimentarius Committees in the 35<sup>th</sup> Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

28. In its capacity as a Regional Plant Protection Organization (RPPO), OIRSA took part in the seventh meeting of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC).

29. In El Salvador, a workshop with a view to harmonizing regional regulations for the certification of citrus fruit nurseries was held under FAO-OIRSA technical cooperation project TCP/RLA 3311.

30. A regional workshop to harmonize bovine traceability standards was held in El Salvador.

31. In the Dominican Republic, a workshop was held to standardize avian guidelines for trade facilitation and draw up new guidelines on excreta management and control and on biosafety in poultry holdings.

**3. Support for regionalization (establishment of pest-/disease-free and low-prevalence areas, development of protocols for their recognition)**

32. In Nicaragua, technical and financial support is still being provided for the programme to maintain the northern part of Lake Xolotlán as an area free from the Mediterranean fruit fly (*Ceratitis capitata*).

33. In Nicaragua, technical and financial assistance was provided for the citrus leprosis-free area programme, the citrus Huanglongbing (HLB) control programme and the programme to maintain Nicaragua's status as a country free from the pink bollworm.

34. The guidelines for the inspection and certification of farms and pest-/disease-free areas were revised and updated.

**4. Prevention, control and eradication activities (programmes or campaigns)**

35. The regional emergency programme for the control of classical swine fever in Guatemala is being implemented, along with control and prevention measures in neighbouring countries.

36. In order to support citrus HLB control measures, OIRSA is implementing technical cooperation project TCP/RLA 3311 with the FAO, at a cost of half a million dollars over a two-year period. The project is centred on technical assistance in the areas of control, citrus regulations, surveillance and diagnostics.

37. In addition, details are being finalized for the launching of the HLB and HLB vector control project, with support from Chinese Taipei's International Cooperation and Development Fund (ICDF). The emphasis is on technical assistance, the transfer of technology and the production of healthy plants, using two germplasm banks and four greenhouses for shoot multiplication and applying integrated pest management.

38. OIRSA visited Chinese Taipei to learn about the latter's technical and scientific experiences in managing HLB.

39. In Nicaragua, technical and financial support is being provided for the surveillance programme to prevent entry of tomato leaf miner (*Tuta absoluta*).

## **5. Strengthening of national institutions in order to facilitate trade**

40. With support from the WTO Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF), Project STDF/284 aimed at strengthening the National SPS Committee (CNMSF) of Honduras is still ongoing. A document entitled "Diagnostic study on the incorporation of sanitary and phytosanitary measures (SPS) in undergraduate university curricula in Honduras" was prepared over recent months. Moreover, in coordination with SENASA's Food Safety Division OIRSA reviewed and updated four regulations on inspection, sanitary approval and certification of milk and dairy products, poultry and poultry products, meat and meat products, and fresh and processed fruit and vegetables.

41. The STDF Working Group approved the draft regional veterinary legislation for OIRSA member countries (STDF/PG/358).

## **6. Strategic alliances for the promotion of health and trade**

42. Under the Cooperative Agreement between OIRSA and the North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO), OIRSA participated in the meeting of the Citrus Panel, which saw the approval of NAPPO Standard 16 on the importation of citrus propagative material into a NAPPO member country.

43. OIRSA signed a technical cooperation framework agreement with France's NORD/SIPRE Committee to provide support for regional training, technical assistance and research as well as support in managing the transfer of technology.

44. In Guatemala, a working meeting was held with Guatemalan members of the Central American Parliament to analyse the regional implications of sanitary and phytosanitary measures within the framework of the European Union Association Agreement with Central America.

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