

**ACTIONS AIMED AT IMPLEMENTING THE WTO AGREEMENT  
ON SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES**

Information submitted by the Inter-American Institute for  
Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)

The following communication, received on 4 October 2012, is being circulated at the request of the IICA.

1. The observer organizations of the WTO Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Committee) are invited to submit reports on the activities they have carried out to promote the understanding and implementation of the SPS Agreement. The IICA wishes to present some of the actions and activities that it considers relevant to the work of this Committee.

**Promoting participation in multilateral forums associated with the SPS Committee**

2. Review of phytosanitary standards: In September, two regional meetings were held (one for the Caribbean and the other for Latin America) to review the phytosanitary standards that will be examined at the next meeting of the IPPC Commission on Phytosanitary Measures in 2013. A total of 27 countries participated in these meetings, together with two regional international phytosanitary protection bodies (the International Regional Organization for Plant and Animal Health (OIRSA) and the Southern Cone Plant Health Committee (COSAVE)), the IPPC, the IICA and FAO. The purpose of these events was to ensure that observations and comments on the draft standards currently under review were transmitted to the IPPC. It is the third consecutive year that the IICA has sponsored these IPPC meetings. For further information, please contact: Ricardo.Molins@iica.int or Lourdes.Fonalleras@iica.int.

3. Support for Codex Alimentarius procedures: Coordination events related to the Codex Alimentarius have continued to be held and support has been given to the Codex Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean (CCLAC) through virtual media. These sessions have been of great benefit to CCLAC, enabling it to identify topics of common interest and move forward in the formulation of regional positions. Recently, coordination sessions have been held for the Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables and the Committee on Fish and Fishery Products. For each Codex meeting, the IICA organizes virtual regional coordination sessions. For further information, please contact: Eric.Bolanos@iica.int.

4. In Uruguay, the IICA has completed the first stage of the domestic food legislation digitalization and consolidation project, as requested by the National Codex Committee through the Uruguayan Technological Laboratory (LATU), the Codex Alimentarius contact point in Uruguay. As a result, the National Bromatological Regulations (RBN) have been transcribed into digital format

and their amending and supplementary decrees added to obtain a first complete text. Other food-related regulatory provisions that do not form part of the RBN, such as Ministerial Resolutions submitted to the working group responsible for the compendium or available on institution websites, were also incorporated. For further information, please contact: [Alejandra.Bentancur@iica.int](mailto:Alejandra.Bentancur@iica.int).

5. In Peru, the IICA has begun assisting the National Codex Committee with a view to developing and implementing a work plan. Two work sessions have been held and the process is expected to be completed in 2013. For further information, please contact: [Erika.Soto@iica.int](mailto:Erika.Soto@iica.int).

6. As a result of the cooperation agreement between the IICA and the Ministry of the Economy of Costa Rica, the following materials and instruments now exist to support this country in its role as CCLAC coordinator: (i) Profile and responsibilities of delegates and (ii) a regional notification system designed to facilitate the management of Codex documents and promote the identification of common regional positions. For more information, please contact: [Eric.Bolanos@iica.int](mailto:Eric.Bolanos@iica.int).

### **Technical and institutional capacity building**

7. The final versions of the tool to characterize diagnostic laboratories in the fields of agricultural health and food safety and the tool to characterize national food inspection systems have been completed. These tools can also be used to supplement the Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS) tools already available. A third edition of the instrument "Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS) for National Food Safety Services" has also been developed in conjunction with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). For more information, please contact: [Ricardo.Molins@iica.int](mailto:Ricardo.Molins@iica.int).

8. Future PVS applications: Nicaragua (phytosanitary), Bolivia (phytosanitary), Venezuela (food safety), Haiti (food safety), and the Bahamas (two PVSs). For more information, please contact: [Ana.Cordero@iica.int](mailto:Ana.Cordero@iica.int).

9. The IICA, as Secretariat, has organized a hemispheric video conference to reactivate the Inter-American Group for Coordination on Plant Protection (GICSV), members of which include the plant protection organizations of the American continent NAPPO, OIRSA and COSAVE, as a prelude to a coordination meeting that will take place at IICA headquarters in Costa Rica in November 2012. For more information, please contact: [Lourdes.Fonalleras@iica.int](mailto:Lourdes.Fonalleras@iica.int).

10. The IICA has continued to support the Central American Customs Union (UAC) by providing technical assistance for the second round of meetings of the UAC Sanitary and Phytosanitary Committee. For further information, please contact: [Alejandra.Díaz@iica.int](mailto:Alejandra.Díaz@iica.int).

11. The IICA approved an internally funded project for the creation of a virtual school for phytosanitary inspectors in South America. The project is now at the implementation stage. For further information, please contact: [Lourdes.Fonalleras@iica.int](mailto:Lourdes.Fonalleras@iica.int).

12. From 20 to 24 August 2012, the face-to-face training module on pest risk analysis was held in Lima, Peru. This initiative was organized in conjunction with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and the IPPC. A total of 20 professionals from Peru, Colombia, Paraguay, Ecuador, Bolivia and Brazil received training. For further information, please contact: [Lourdes.Fonalleras@iica.int](mailto:Lourdes.Fonalleras@iica.int).

13. In July, the four-year project to create an epidemiological surveillance network in the Caribbean, funded by USDA/APHIS and with the participation of CIRAD (France) and CaribVET, was completed. The project covered nine countries (ten islands). It provided training for

ten epidemiologists/para-epidemiologists, strengthened veterinary services, and ended with a round table simulation exercise on responding to an animal health emergency in which 14 countries and territories participated. For more information, please contact: Ricardo.Molins@iica.int.

14. The following publications may be viewed online at: <http://www.iica.int/esp/programas/sanidad/Paginas/default.aspx>:

- (a) *Situación y Perspectiva de las Buenas Prácticas Agrícolas en la Región Sur* (Situation and outlook regarding good agricultural practices in the southern region) (in Spanish only).

Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)

Agricultural Health and Food Safety

<http://www.infoagro.net/salud>

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