



14 March 2013

(13-1392)

Page: 1/3

Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

Original: Spanish

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

INFORMATION SUBMITTED BY THE INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR COOPERATION ON AGRICULTURE (IICA)

The following communication, received on 12 March 2013, is being circulated at the request of the IICA.

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.

1 PROMOTING PARTICIPATION IN MULTILATERAL FORUMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SPS COMMITTEE

As part of the Codex Alimentarius-related support provided by the IICA to its member countries, a conference was held in Panama from 15-18 January so that delegates from 23 countries could analyse agendas and work on establishing regional positions for the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS) and the Committee of the Codex Commission. The event was funded by the United States.

The IICA also provided support for virtual coordination sessions for each Codex Committee meeting held (eight in total between October 2012 and March 2013). These sessions, led by the Secretariat of the Codex Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean (CCLAC), provided countries with an opportunity to discuss agenda items and identify common positions. In this way, countries unable to attend Codex meetings can share their positions with other countries in the region, so that they can be reflected or defended at Codex sessions by the CCLAC delegates present. Such sessions also contribute to CCLAC coordination by allowing for the advance planning of regional strategies and participation.

Two sessions were held that were not related to Codex Committee agendas but to a specific technical issue and the use of an information system. The first of these sessions concerned the issue of cadmium in cocoa, which requires considerable regional coordination and the generation of scientific data for the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA). The second session concerned an information system that was developed to facilitate communication between members and the dissemination of response times to requests from the Codex Secretariat.

Many IICA offices actively support national Codex committees and technical subcommittees. This makes it possible to obtain an up-to-date and in-depth understanding of key needs, while developing specific capacity-building activities and encouraging experience-sharing between countries. In December 2012, the IICA held a workshop on Codex committee management in Ecuador, which examined the case of Costa Rica and Uruguay.

At the beginning of 2013, as part of the programme to promote participation in Codex Alimentarius meetings, the IICA provided support for the meetings of the Committees on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (six countries), Food Additives (three countries) and Food Contaminants (four countries) and will continue to provide support for four more meetings in 2013. US funding has been used to finance this programme. For further information, please contact: Ricardo Molins (Ricardo.molins@iica.int) or Eric Bolaños (Erick.bolanos@iica.int).

2 SUPPORT FOR INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

The IICA continued to support the State Phytosanitary Service of Costa Rica by developing performance indicators for its Strategic Plan. For further information, please contact: Alejandra Diaz (Alejandra.diaz@iica.int) or Sacha Trelles (sacha.trelles@iica.int).

The IICA Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS) tool continues to be applied in various countries: in Surinam, Guyana and Nicaragua for national phytosanitary protection organizations and in the Bahamas for veterinary services. For further information, please contact: Ana Marisa Cordero (marisa.cordero@iica.int).

IICA support provided to Paraguay for strengthening the National Animal Quality and Health Service (SENACSA) recently resulted in progress as regards matters pertaining to international animal health standards, and a draft decree defining the functions of the Service. For further information, please contact: Carlos Franco (carlos.franco@iica.int).

3 SUPPORT FOR SPS-RELATED REGIONAL OR HEMISPHERIC ORGANIZATIONS

In the area of animal health, the IICA concluded its epidemiology training programme with the Standing Veterinary Committee of the Southern Cone (CVP). The projects developed throughout the year were presented and explained. Four of the six CVP countries participating in the programme presented their work:

- Sampling and control plan for classical swine fever (Uruguay);
- Sampling plan for avian salmonellosis (Uruguay);
- Assessment of alternative diagnostic strategies for bovine tuberculosis (Chile);
- Sampling evaluation for Maedi-Visna disease (Argentina).

In the area of plant health, the IICA supported the Southern Cone Plant Health Committee (COSAVE) in the preparation, printing and dissemination of training materials on Huanglongbing (HLB) disease. These materials will be distributed in citrus fruit-producing areas and at border crossings by the national phytosanitary protection organizations of the region.

The IICA, as Technical Secretariat of the Inter-American Group for Coordination on Plant Protection (GICSV), supported the resumption of work in this forum by holding a face-to-face meeting in Costa Rica on the 26 and 27 November 2012 and a video conference meeting in February 2013. The following regional plant protection organizations participated in these events: the North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO), the Regional International Organization for Plant and Animal Health (OIRSA) and the Southern Cone Plant Health Committee (COSAVE). A work plan was agreed for 2013. For further information, please contact: Lourdes Fonalleras (Lourdes.fonalleras@iica.int).

SPS measures in the Caribbean region: The final version of the action plan and the annual and total budgets for the SPS component of the project to be implemented by the IICA during the 2013-2016 period was approved with Caribbean Community (CARICOM) representatives. This component (amounting to 11.7 million euros) is part of the "CARIFORUM *Economic Partnership Agreement* (EPA)" between the European Union and the South Pacific and Caribbean countries that have concluded a free trade agreement with the European Union (CARIFORUM comprises the 15 CARICOM countries and the Dominican Republic). The project will cover numerous aspects of SPS measures and agricultural health and food safety (AHFS), including

the creation and strengthening of national AHFS agencies, support for the regional agency (CAHFSA), harmonization of animal and plant health and food safety legislation, modernization of AHFS services, participation in international SPS standardization processes, and training on good practices (e.g. GAPs, GLPs, GMPs and HACCP) for the public, private and academic sectors. For further information, please contact: Ricardo Molins (ricardo.molins@iica.int) or Carol Thomas (carol.thomas@iica.int).

The non-tariff measures used by countries in the region and their effects on trade were discussed at the third ministerial meeting of the Sub-Committee on Agricultural Trade Facilitation in the Caribbean. The meeting was attended by the ministers of agriculture of Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and Jamaica, and representatives of the IICA, FAO and the *Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute* (CARDI). The group hopes to find solutions and recommendations for the ministers. For further information, please contact: Carol Thomas (carol.thomas@iica.int).

Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)
Agricultural Health and Food Safety
<http://www.infoagro.net/salud>
<http://www.iica.int>
