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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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**STRUCTURE OF THE ARGENTINE NATIONAL AGRICULTURE AND  
FOOD QUALITY AND HEALTH SERVICE  
CURRENT SITUATION**

**COMMUNICATION FROM ARGENTINA**

The following communication, received on 7 October 2015, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of Argentina.

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**1 INTRODUCTION**

1.1. The Argentine National Agriculture and Food Quality and Health Service (SENASA) is the national authority responsible for animal and plant health and quality and food safety policies. Its mandate also includes monitoring movements at the federal level as well as imports and exports of animal and plant products, byproducts and derivatives, agrifood products, pharmacological and veterinary products, agrochemicals, fertilizers and soil amendments.

1.2. SENASA is a decentralized body with economic, financial, technical and administrative autonomy within the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries. It is responsible for planning, organizing and implementing specific programmes and plans that regulate production so as to obtain food which is safe for human and animal consumption at both domestic and international level.

1.3. SENASA performs its functions across the national territory through its own extensive field network, which allows it to closely monitor actual conditions in the various areas of agricultural production and to interact on an ongoing basis with producers and other stakeholders.

1.4. As the agency in charge of supervising agrifood exports, SENASA certified 43% of Argentine exports in 2014, representing goods to the value of more than US\$30 billion.

1.5. SENASA is actively involved in the various relevant international reference organizations, such as the Codex Alimentarius (CODEX), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), and the WTO SPS Committee. It also participates in the definition of standards adopted in MERCOSUR. At regional level, it belongs to technical organizations such as the Southern Cone Plant Health Committee (COSAVE) and the Standing Veterinary Committee (CVP) of the Southern Cone, which respectively encompass the authorities responsible for plant protection and animal health and the safety of animal products.

1.6. As a result of the health policies implemented, SENASA has achieved official international recognition for Argentina as a foot-and-mouth disease-free country with areas with and without vaccination, a negligible BSE-risk country, and a country free from peste des petits ruminants, contagious bovine pleuropneumonia, and African horse sickness, while the Patagonia region and the central and southern oases of the province of Mendoza have been officially recognized as fruit fly-free areas.

1.7. In 2014 the OIE carried out a PVS evaluation of the national veterinary services and its report is available to the public.

## **2 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

2.1. The President and Vice-President of SENASA are the top management authorities. They oversee a group of departments and special coordinating offices that deal with cross-cutting issues pertaining to the agency's spheres of concern. These offices include the General Coordinating Office for Regional Management, the General Coordinating Office for Regional Development, the Coordinating Office for International Relations, the Coordinating Office for Institutional Communication, the Coordinating Office for Control and Regulation, the Coordinating Office for Family Farming, the Coordinating Office for Residue and Contaminant Monitoring and Alert, and the Coordinating Office for Strategic Planning.

2.2. Reporting directly to the President and Vice-President are the national directorates responsible for SENASA's core technical functions: the National Directorate of Plant Protection (DNPV), the National Directorate of Animal Health (DNSA), the National Directorate of Agriculture and Food Safety and Quality (DNICA), and the National Directorate of Agricultural Chemicals, Veterinary Products and Food (DNAPVA). All of these depend for their smooth functioning on the support of the Directorate-General of Laboratories and Technical Supervision (DILAB), the Directorate of Legal Affairs (DAJ) and the Department of Environmental Management (DGA).

2.3. The above-mentioned entities make up the central level of the agency. This is the level responsible for framing national policies and regulations as well as for international negotiations and trade agreements.

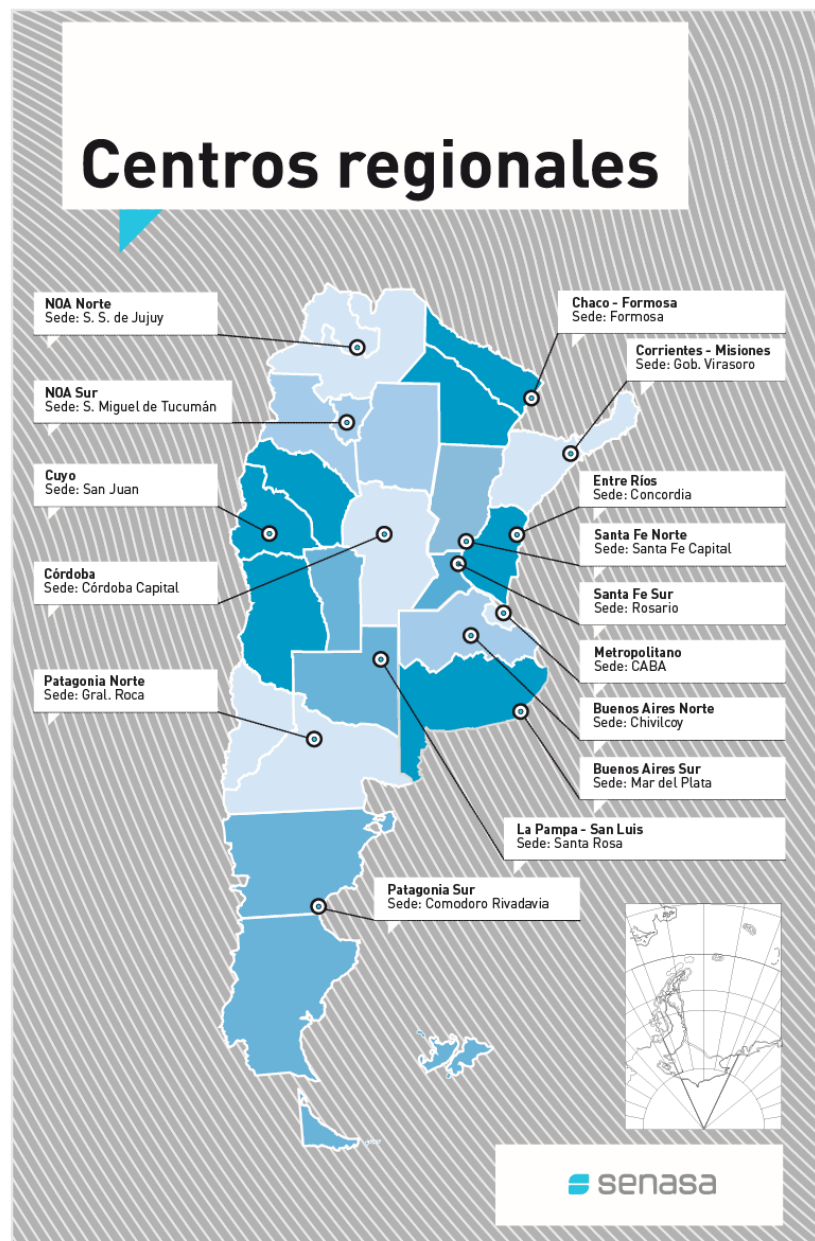
2.4. The operational implementation of activities, including animal and plant health programmes drawn up by the National Directorates, is organized through 15 Regional Centres and carried out by official agents at the various points of intervention. This model of operational decentralization was implemented in 2010.

2.5. The General Coordinating Office for Regional Management, which answers to the President of SENASA, is responsible for coordinating, supervising and monitoring the activities of the Regional Centres. It plans, coordinates and evaluates the conduct of activities at the air, land, sea and river border control posts and internal control posts, as well as the implementation and execution of the National Waste Regulation Plan.

## **3 SENASA'S PRESENCE ACROSS THE NATIONAL TERRITORY**

3.1. In accordance with its geographical area of competence, SENASA is present throughout the national territory.

3.2. For the purposes of SENASA's functions, the territory is divided into 15 Regional Centres designated according to the regions' production and technical specificities rather than the political organization of the country. Thus, each Regional Centre may fully or partly cover the territory of a province, and in some instances may cover territory extending beyond more than one province.



3.3. SENASA's Regional Centres manage an extensive network of intervention posts including 375 SENASA offices, 104 air, land, sea and river border control posts and a vast number of internal (air, land, sea and river) transit control posts as well as official inspection offices attached to food production plants.

3.4. SENASA employs over 5,500 people including veterinarians, agronomists and other professionals, as well as technical, administrative and support staff. More than 80% of these are professionals and technicians and only 25% are based at central level. This means that 75% of SENASA personnel work in its national field network. In addition to ensuring proper implementation of national programmes, this lends SENASA a unique capacity for control and monitoring, interaction with the production sector, and early detection of animal and plant health problems and emerging issues within its spheres of competence.

3.5. The SENASA website (<http://www.senasa.gov.ar>) contains more information on its structures and functions, as well as the latest information regarding its activities.