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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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ACTIONS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WTO AGREEMENT ON SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

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

The following communication, received on 8 October 2016, 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 Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement). The IICA would like to present some of the actions and activities that it considers relevant to the work of this Committee.

1 EFFORTS TO MAKE GREATER USE OF MULTILATERAL AND REGIONAL FORUMS

1.1 Codex Alimentarius

1.1. A seminar was organized by the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CCMAS) under the IICA twinning programme. The event took place on 21 September in La Paz, Bolivia, and was attended by more by 50 technical personnel from 30 public, private and academic institutions and cooperation agencies with links to the National Codex Alimentarius Committee (NCAC) and the Technical Committee on Quinoa.

1.2. The event included presentations on the following aspects: the work and operation of the NCAC in Bolivia; the Standard on Quinoa, developments regarding the electronic working group (e-WG), and the deadline for completing Step 2 in December 2016; the recognition and accreditation status of laboratories belonging to the Network of Official Food Analysis Laboratories (RELOAA); saponin in quinoa grains for human consumption and its implications; and the structure of the International Codex and the various committees with which Bolivia's proposed Standard on Quinoa may be linked.

1.3. The seminar provided the necessary tools to improve the wording of the Standard on Quinoa with regard to the test methods included in the current draft text, which must be scientifically based.

1.4. **Participation Programme:** This programme is a competitive fund to facilitate participation by some countries in selected committees. It has recently provided support for the Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods.

1.5. These activities benefitted from the financial support of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Canada and the European Union, and from the IICA's own resources. In addition, they were or will be supported by officials from the Latin American and Caribbean countries.

2 SUPPORT FOR STRENGTHENING THE INSTITUTIONAL, TECHNICAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

2.1. The pilot project on setting up antimicrobial resistance (AMR) surveillance programmes, which was launched in May and July in seven Caribbean countries (Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Dominican Republic, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago), is nearing completion. We are beginning to analyse the results with a view to determining the next steps to be taken.

2.2. The initiative forms part of the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Measures project, which receives support from the 10th European Development Fund, under the programme "Support to CARIFORUM States in the Implementation of the Commitments Undertaken under the CARIFORUM-European Union (EU) Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA): Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Measures", which is implemented by the IICA with support from the European Union.

2.3. The initiative was developed on the basis of the specific needs identified by the region, in collaboration with the College of Veterinary Medicine of Ohio State University (OSU).

2.4. **Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA):** On 22 August, the IICA held a FSMA workshop in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. The aim of the workshop was to raise awareness of FSMA provisions that are to be implemented by Haitian exporters. 31 people from the public and private sectors received training in this area.

2.5. On 30 August, in Kingston, Jamaica, the IICA gave a Food Safety Preventive Controls Alliance (FSPCA) training course for lead instructors and preventive controls qualified individuals. The aim of the course was to train representatives from the public and private sectors and academic institutions to be lead instructors and preventive controls qualified individuals. Training was provided to 17 participants in total.

2.6. **Good Agricultural Practices (GAP):** The IICA office in Costa Rica held a GAP training workshop for public and private sector representatives from 11 to 15 July in San José. The course, attended by 38 technical personnel from both sectors, was organized with a view to improving the safety of fresh products and providing guidance on the proper implementation of standards for exports to the United States.

2.7. **Project STDF/PG/502 COSAVE:** On 6 September, the IICA held an initial regional workshop on general phytosanitary surveillance in Asunción, Paraguay. The event was the first activity organized under the STDF/COSAVE project, and was very well attended and received by attendees from the participating countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay). The workshop's main achievements are as follows:

- Training for 20 technical personnel on the implementation of general surveillance based on ISPM No. 6 and the aspects currently under review;
- Strategic guidelines for the implementation of general surveillance and the prompt notification of changes in pest status at regional level;
- Identification of the characteristics and content of a general surveillance implementation guide. Consideration will be given to ISPM No. 6 and the IPPC Plant Pest Surveillance Guide during the drafting process;
- Guide to IT system development and adaptation: identification of the needs to be met by an IT system in terms of organizing and communicating information, and the content and functionality that it should have;
- Identification of each country's progress in implementing general surveillance systems, and the challenges faced.

2.8. **Cadmium in cocoa:** On 11 July, the IICA office in Ecuador held a technical forum in Quito on cadmium in cocoa. This event, organized within the framework of the Chains flagship project and attended by 30 participants from Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Haiti, Panama and Peru,

encouraged the exchange of information on the issue of cadmium in cocoa, Ecuador's experiences in this area, and good practices for the remediation of soil contaminated with cadmium.

2.9. Risk management in agriculture: Within the framework of the Resilience flagship project, the IICA organized a demand and status workshop, which was held from 4 to 6 July in Quito. The purpose of the workshop was to collect input to analyse the status of agricultural risk management policies and instruments in Ecuador. The event, in which 25 people participated, provided a preliminary overview of the current situation, identified the main problems and the courses of action needed to resolve them, and gave attendees the opportunity to discuss proposals for strengthening the institutional framework and instruments for risk management.

2.10. On 19 July, under the Resilience flagship project, the IICA office in Ecuador held a videoconference on Argentina's experiences of comprehensive agricultural risk management. The aim of this activity, in which 20 people from Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru participated, was to learn more about comprehensive risk management in Argentina, with a view to strengthening risk management in Ecuador.

2.11. Common vision sessions and implementation of the Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS) instrument: On 26 July, the IICA office in El Salvador held a common vision session in Santa Tecla on the PVS instrument for sanitary and phytosanitary measures (SPS). 15 public and private sector representatives participated in this event, the aim of which was to create a vision for both sectors following the implementation of the PVS SPS, with a view to improving national SPS services in El Salvador.

2.12. On 29 August, the IICA office in Ecuador held a common vision session in Quito on the PVS instrument for animal and plant health and food safety. 125 public and private sector representatives participated in the event, which sought to establish a common vision for setting priorities and facilitating strategic planning.

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