



## REPORT ON SPS ACTIVITIES

### COMMUNICATION FROM THE CARIBBEAN AGRICULTURAL HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY AGENCY (CAHFSA)

The following communication, received on 7 March 2017, is being circulated at the request of the Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA).

#### 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA) was established by the Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) to perform a coordinating and organizing role in the establishment of an effective and efficient regional sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) regime and to execute on behalf of member States such SPS actions and activities that can be more effectively and efficiently executed through a regional mechanism.

1.2. CAHFSA became fully operational on 1 October 2015 and focused its attention on major areas of work, aligned to its mandates. As this is the Agency's first presentation to the WTO SPS Committee, the report provides an overview of CAHFSA's activities for the period October 2015 to March 2016.

#### 2 DEVELOPING LINKAGES WITH INTERNATIONAL SPS-RELATED ORGANIZATIONS

2.1. CAHFSA, as the regional organization tasked with coordinating and harmonizing SPS-related activities, sought and obtained Observer status at the meetings of the three standard setting bodies formally recognised in the WTO SPS Agreement (Codex Alimentarius Commission, IPPC, OIE).

2.2. The Organization also received Observer status to the meetings of the WTO SPS Committee and wishes to use this opportunity to thank the meeting for the honour of participating.

#### 3 STANDARD SETTING

##### 3.1 Plant Germplasm

3.1. Six protocols on the safe movement of plant germplasm within the CARIForum region, were sent for member State consultation. These include protocols for moving *Ipomoea batatas* (sweet potato), *Dioscorea* spp (yam), *Capsicum chinense* (hot peppers), *Cajanus cajan* (pigeon peas), *Zea mays* (corn) and *Phaseolus vulgaris* (beans) planting material.

##### 3.2 Products Derived from Regional Priority Commodities

3.2. In order to support the region's initiatives to produce value-added products, including cassava flour, CAHFSA, in collaboration with regional partners, sought to evaluate the quality of cassava flour produced in the region as a first step towards some level of standardization of the product. A draft standard for cassava flour has been developed.

### **3.3 Pest Risk Analysis**

3.3. A guideline for conducting pest risk analysis was developed to provide a standardised model for interpreting and applying the IPPC ISPM standards for Pest Risk Analysis (PRA). This document is intended to help ensure consistency and harmonisation in conducting PRAs in the region.

### **3.4 Regional Animal Health Protocols**

3.4. Three regional animal health protocols have been reviewed towards approval at a recently held stakeholder consultation. These include:

- Harmonized Protocols for the Movement of Dogs and Cats in the Caribbean;
- Conditions for a Permit Controlling the Importation of Live Caprine and Ovine from CARICOM Countries; and
- Protocol Governing CARICOM Control, Inspection and Approval Procedures for Trade in Animals and Animal Products.

## **4 RISK ANALYSIS**

### **4.1 Animal Health**

4.1. A Regional Animal Health Assessment Team has been established by CAHFSA and tasked with conducting regional animal health risk assessment as determined by CARICOM. To date, animal health risk assessments have been conducted in six CARICOM member States, towards facilitating the trade in meat products within the region.

### **4.2 Plant Health**

4.2. A training programme, including PowerPoint presentations and a workbook has been developed for use in training a cadre of pest risk analysts in the region. The programme has been used to conduct training workshops in five member States, most of which are currently engaged in establishing PRA Units/Committees.

## **5 TECHNICAL RESOURCES AND INFORMATION EXCHANGE**

5.1. Several databases related to agricultural health and food safety have been developed to improve the delivery and sharing of information across the region. These databases, which are still in the developmental stage, are available from the CAHFSA website and will provide information on:

- Risk analyses completed;
- Regionally regulated pests;
- Regional trade issues;
- Import and export requirements of the member States; and
- Food safety, animal and plant health practitioners in the region.

## **6 DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

### **6.1 The Development of a procedure for SPS-related trade dispute settlement within CARICOM**

6.1. The prevalence of SPS-related disputes among member States and the protracted time-frames for their resolution was largely behind the initiative by CAHFSA to focus on the development of a draft procedure for resolving SPS disputes as a means of facilitating intra-regional trade. The draft document is currently being prepared for member State consultations.

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