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**Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures**

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**ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY THE INTERNATIONAL REGIONAL  
ORGANIZATION FOR PLANT AND ANIMAL HEALTH (OIRSA)  
RELATING TO THE WTO AGREEMENT ON THE  
APPLICATION OF SANITARY AND  
PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES**

REPORT TO THE 69<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE ON SANITARY  
AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES, MARCH-MAY 2017

The following communication, received on 21 June 2017, is being circulated at the request of OIRSA.

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**1 TRAINING, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES RELATING TO  
AGRICULTURAL HEALTH AND TRADE**

1.1. Within the framework of the OIRSA-Chinese Taipei/ICDF HLB project, a training day on citrus huanglongbing (HLB) recognition and prevention was organized for 17 Ministry of Agricultural Development (MIDA) officials from the province of Darién in Panama.

1.2. Training and supervision workshops on foundation stock and citrus shoot multiplier greenhouses (level 1 and level 2, respectively), led by a specialist from Chinese Taipei, were held at the National Agricultural and Forest Technology Centre (CENTA) in El Salvador. Participants included technical experts from the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG), OIRSA representatives, and staff from private sector nurseries in the country.

1.3. A course on the production of healthy citrus plants and integrated HLB management was held in Honduras. The 24 course participants included citrus fruit growers, nursery gardeners and technical experts from the department of Comayagua. The aim of the course was to improve citrus fruit production in the country and build national capacity to address the threat posed by citrus HLB.

1.4. Through the OIRSA-Chinese Taipei/ICDF HLB project, OIRSA took part in the King's College Science Fair in Belize, where it shared experiences regarding the production of healthy citrus plants and integrated HLB management, and information on the STG programme for obtaining healthy plants with desirable characteristics.

1.5. A course on the production of healthy citrus plants and integrated HLB management was organized for 30 technical graduates from the CURLA-UNAH University. The event was held at the OIRSA-Chinese Taipei/ICDF HLB project greenhouses.

1.6. A certified healthy citrus shoot production scheme was launched in Panama under the OIRSA-Chinese Taipei/ICDF HLB project, with a view to enhancing HLB control in the country.

1.7. OIRSA took part in the 2017 American Phytopathological Society congress in Costa Rica, where it shared details regarding progress made and challenges in relation to crop losses, phytosanitary risks and tropical diseases. Particular emphasis was placed on the impact of diseases and pests such as coffee rust, *Tuta absoluta* and HLB.

1.8. OIRSA gave a presentation on topics including pests and diseases affecting countries in the region, and the early warning system for coffee crops, at the Meso-American Workshop on Technological Innovation for the Inclusive Management of Agricultural Health Risks Linked to Climate Change, held in Panama.

1.9. A training day was organized for Agricultural Protection Service (SEPA) and International Quarantine Treatment Service (SITC) managers on the legal instrument governing the customs union between Guatemala and Honduras.

1.10. Students from the faculties of agricultural and environmental sciences and foreign trade at the Rafael Landívar University in Guatemala were given training on measures adopted in compliance with international, regional and national standards following an official laboratory diagnosis.

1.11. OIRSA took part in the second virtual forum for regional international agricultural health organizations on risk analysis in the Americas, which was organized by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).

1.12. A second online course on good agricultural practices was organized in conjunction with the IICA. The course provided training to more than 200 participants from the OIRSA region and other Latin American countries.

1.13. An online training course on cattle, swine and poultry production systems and the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) System was organized for safety auditors. The course was attended by more than 250 participants from the OIRSA region and other Latin American countries.

1.14. OIRSA supported the participation of officials from the pesticide and veterinary product residue analysis laboratories of four countries in the region (El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica) at the 6<sup>th</sup> Latin American Pesticide Residue Workshop: Food and Environment (LAPRW 2017), which was held in San José, Costa Rica.

1.15. A lecture on food safety was given to final-year students from the faculty of veterinary medicine and animal husbandry at the San Carlos University in Guatemala.

1.16. A second online course on epidemiological surveillance in shrimp farming was completed by 175 professionals from within and outside the region.

1.17. A training and refresher course on veterinary epidemiology was organized for 36 year-six veterinary medicine and animal husbandry students from the San Carlos University in Guatemala.

1.18. Awareness-raising talks on the importance of epidemiological surveillance in relation to vesicular diseases and screwworm were attended by veterinarians and producers from four countries in the region (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua).

1.19. OIRSA participated in the 14<sup>th</sup> Central American and Caribbean Congress on Apicultural Integration and Modernization, with a presentation on productive management and apicultural traceability.

1.20. In Guatemala, OIRSA gave a presentation on bovine brucellosis and tuberculosis, which focused on national progressive control programmes for these diseases. The event was attended by 45 people (animal husbandry specialists, veterinary surgeons and leading figures from the livestock sector).

1.21. OIRSA supported the organization of a workshop on epidemiological surveillance for swine diseases, which was held in Guatemala on 26 May 2017 and attended by 52 professionals.

1.22. OIRSA participated in a National Bacterial Resistance Committee meeting in El Salvador, with a presentation on the results achieved at a workshop on the importance of antimicrobial resistance monitoring in human and animal medicine, which had been held by OIRSA in September 2016.

1.23. Six technical meetings were organized in Guatemala to harmonize the Central American Technical Regulation (RTCA) on veterinary medicines. Participants included representatives from manufacturers of these inputs, academic institutions, professional associations and Ministry of Agriculture authorities.

## **2 SUPPORT FOR THE HARMONIZATION AND EQUIVALENCE PROCESS**

2.1. A Latin American and Caribbean workshop on the phytosanitary diagnosis of *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *cubense* tropical race four was held at the National Phytosanitary Reference Centre in Tecámac, Mexico State.

2.2. OIRSA participated in the International Cargo Cooperative Biosecurity Arrangement (ICCBA) workshop in Bangkok, Thailand, the main aim of which was to update the biosecurity arrangement to which 20 countries are party, which places emphasis on using the fumigant methyl bromide in an effective manner.

2.3. OIRSA participated in a meeting on phytosanitary protection-related environmental problems, which was organized by the IPPC in Argentina. Participants examined various aspects relating to environmental degradation, in particular the use of methyl bromide, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and invasive species, the protection of endangered areas, climate change, and action taken in response to pests.

2.4. Four video-conferences were organized to harmonize criteria for the interpretation and implementation of Central American Technical Regulations. Participants included heads of veterinary medicine and animal feed registration and control units or departments in Central America, and industry representatives from each member country of the Central American Veterinary Industry Federation (FIVETCA).

2.5. Support was provided to enhance the Honduran National Poultry Farming Programme (PAN) and to harmonize epidemiological surveillance criteria for avian influenza and Newcastle disease.

## **3 PREVENTION, CONTROL AND ERADICATION ACTIVITIES (PROGRAMMES OR CAMPAIGNS)**

3.1. Certified citrus shoots (128,812 in total) were provided to nursery gardeners in Guatemala, Honduras and Panama, in accordance with parameters established in domestic regulations on HLB control.

3.2. Within the framework of the OIRSA-Chinese Taipei/ICDF HLB project, work began in El Salvador on the construction of a private nursery where healthy citrus plants are to be grown in accordance with methods developed in Chinese Taipei. This initiative is being implemented by traditional nursery gardeners who have received practical training on HLB control. The nursery will have a production capacity of approximately 20,000 citrus plants a year.

3.3. Support, including of a technical nature, was provided to enable nursery gardeners in the Republic of Guatemala to set up six new nurseries for the production of healthy citrus plants free from HLB and other diseases.

3.4. In Belize, 105 shoot tip grafting (STG) trials were conducted as a strategy for obtaining clean citrus material of cultural, national or regional importance in the context of HLB control.

3.5. Seven monitoring routes for the prevention of HLB are maintained under the HLB project as a strategy for the early detection and control of outbreaks in areas free from HLB.

3.6. Squash Vein Yellowing Virus was detected on the southern coast of Guatemala, after having destroyed watermelon crops in the area. Recommendations were issued on how to manage the disease and training was provided to cucurbit crop producers and specialists.

3.7. OIRSA continued to support epidemiological surveillance activities in respect of classical swine fever and related diseases, and the strengthening of sanitary emergency teams in Panama, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala and Belize.

3.8. Educational materials on bovine paralytic rabies were produced for El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.

3.9. An epidemiological survey on shrimp farming was designed in conjunction with Panama's public and private sectors. The survey, applicable to private farms, is followed up by risk analysis activities.

3.10. Steps were taken to monitor low-pathogenicity H5N2 avian influenza control and eradication activities in Guatemala.

3.11. 15,000 posters on bovine brucellosis were printed as part of efforts to strengthen control and eradication programmes and campaigns for the disease in Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.

3.12. In conjunction with PANAFTOSA, OIRSA arranged for bovine paralytic rabies conjugates to be obtained for Guatemala.

3.13. Support was provided to Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua to strengthen epidemiological surveillance in respect of foot-and-mouth disease, cattle screwworm and other transboundary animal diseases.

3.14. OIRSA supported El Salvador in the preparation of the first draft of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock work plan for the National Bacterial Resistance Programme to be implemented by the Ministry of Public Health with the support of the various institutions involved.

#### **4 STRENGTHENING OF NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN ORDER TO FACILITATE TRADE**

4.1. Nicaragua was provided with the means to conduct a preliminary technical inspection of the fruit fly-free area in the northern part of Lake Xolotlan, with a view to improving procedures to obtain international recognition by USDA/APHIS.

4.2. Fifteen Data Logger sets were assigned to Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua, to be used as precision climate-measuring instruments for various crops of interest.

4.3. Diagnostic kits for the detection of *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *ubense*, such as the Banana Plant Tissue DNA Extraction & Purification Kit and the Real-Time PCR Foc TR4 diagnostic kit, were purchased and delivered to Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Mexico.

4.4. OIRSA supported El Salvador following reports of higher than acceptable levels of glycerol in Salvadoran honey, by forming a technical working group, conducting an investigation to determine the root cause of the problem, and establishing a road map for managing and controlling the problem.

#### **5 STRATEGIC ALLIANCES FOR THE PROMOTION OF HEALTH AND TRADE**

5.1. The Taiwan International Cooperation Development Fund (Taiwan ICDF) made a new financial contribution to the project for strengthening HLB control and integrated citrus pest management, so as to ensure the continuation of activities under the OIRSA-Chinese Taipei/ICDF HLB project.

5.2. OIRSA coordinated and participated in a meeting of the banana phytosanitary committee in the Dominican Republic, with a view to encouraging joint action to boost productivity, competitiveness and environmental sustainability in respect of banana production, improve sector organizations, and facilitate producers' access to financing.

5.3. A letter of understanding on technical assistance was signed by MAG, OIRSA, the Embassy of the Republic of China (Chinese Taipei) in El Salvador, and Salvadoran citrus nursery gardeners. The letter agreed on participation in the technical assistance programme via level 3 greenhouses, which would be used to ensure healthy citrus plants at national level.

5.4. The National Agricultural Health Centre (CENSA) of Cuba was provided with a means of virtual communication to present the 2016 results of the inter-laboratory testing programme for classical swine fever (ILCT 2016) to beneficiary countries.

5.5. OIRSA supported the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food (MAGA) in the implementation of the Honey Chain Traceability in Guatemala project (STDF/PG/515).

5.6. OIRSA is implementing the Regional Project for the Accreditation of Laboratory Diagnostic Tests for Animal Diseases (STDF/PG/495).

5.7. OIRSA is also implementing a regional project on support for the development of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) national action plans in Latin America and the Caribbean (FMM/RLA/215/MUL).

5.8. The FAO-OIRSA technical cooperation project on the strengthening of agricultural health services between the Republic of Haiti and the Dominican Republic, is also being implemented.

5.9. OIRSA participated in the 44<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting of the South American Commission for the Fight Against Foot-and-Mouth Disease (COSALFA) and the international seminar entitled "Last stage of the Hemispheric Program for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (PHEFA): The transition towards eradication", held from 4 to 7 April 2017 in Pirenópolis Goiás, Brazil.

5.10. OIRSA also participated in the first regional workshop on a regional programme for resource mobilization and south-south cooperation for the strengthening of national systems for the surveillance and control of pests and diseases (in relation to agriculture, animals, aquaculture and forests), which was organized by FAO and held in El Salvador on 21 and 22 March 2017.

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