



REPORT ON SPS ACTIVITIES

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

The following communication, received on 28 June 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 is pleased to provide this report to the 69th meeting of the SPS Committee summarising key activities and providing updates on CARICOM SPS standard-setting work programme for the period March to July 2017.

2 DEVELOPING LINKAGES WITH INTERNATIONAL SPS RELATED ORGANIZATIONS

2.1. CAHFSA participated in the 68th meeting of the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (Geneva, 22-23 March 2017), the 12th Session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (Incheon, 5-11 April 2017) and the 85th General Session of the World Organisation for Animal Health (Paris, 21-26 May 2017).

3 REGIONAL COLLABORATION

3.1. CAHFSA has signed a letter of agreement (LOA) with the regional office of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) for provision of "*Services towards strengthening agricultural quarantine capacities in Dominica, Grenada and St. Kitts and Nevis*".

3.2. The objective of the Agreement is to strengthen the plant and animal quarantine capacities of the three countries based on specific priorities identified by these countries in their respective *Country Programming Frameworks*.

4 LEGISLATION

4.1. A draft Regional Model Food Safety Bill developed under the 10th EDF Project was recently reviewed by the Senior Officials of the Legal Affairs Committee (SOLAC) as well as the Legal Affairs Committee (LAC) of CARICOM and will be recommended to the Heads of States for signing at their meeting in July 2017.

5 STANDARD SETTING AND IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Market Access

5.1. A guideline for preparing market access proposals has been developed for use by CARICOM member States.

5.2. A Draft Regional Biosafety Policy was developed by the University of the West Indies (UWI) with funds from UNEP/GEF with the intention of developing and implementing a harmonized biosafety system in 12 participating CARICOM countries, based on the Cartagena Protocol. The Council of Ministers (COTED: Agriculture) at its 62nd Special Meeting agreed that member States should provide feedback to CAHFSA on this Draft Regional Biosafety Policy so that it can be fine-tuned and adopted at the CARICOM level to not only provide a clear CARICOM policy on GMOs and Biosafety but also to improve the competitiveness of the region in the global space.

5.2 Regional Animal Health Protocols

5.3. Three regional animal health protocols have been reviewed by the SOLAC and the LAC of CARICOM. 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;
- Protocol governing CARICOM Control, Inspection and Approval Procedures for Trade in Animals and Animal Products.

6 CAPACITY BUILDING

6.1 Risk Analysis

6.1. CAHFSA has conducted pest risk analysis training in several member States towards improving the competence of analysts in the region and in an effort to build a cadre of risk assessment professionals.

7 TECHNICAL RESOURCES AND INFORMATION EXCHANGE

7.1. An *Information Portal* has been developed on CAHFSA's website which provides a weekly update on WTO notifications as well agricultural health and food safety alerts.

7.2. 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 provide information on:

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

8 DISPUTE RESOLUTION

8.1. The prevalence of SPS-related disputes among member States and the protracted timeframes 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 has been circulated for member State consultations.
