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**Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures**

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## **ACTIONS AIMED AT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WTO AGREEMENT ON SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES**

### **INFORMATION SUBMITTED BY THE INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR COOPERATION ON AGRICULTURE (IICA)**

The following communication, received on 28 February 2019, is being circulated at the request of the IICA.

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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 SUPPORT FOR MULTILATERAL FORUMS ASSOCIATED WITH SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES**

##### **1.1 Virtual Codex colloquia**

1.1. During the first half of 2019, the IICA, together with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) will hold six virtual Codex Alimentarius colloquia. The colloquia will concern the following committees: (i) Committee on General Principles (meeting already held with the participation of 30 countries); (ii) Committee on Food Additives (meeting already held with the participation of 22 countries); (iii) Committee on Pesticide Residues; (iv) Committee on Contaminants in Foods; (v) Committee on Food Labelling; and (vi) Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling. Countries from the Codex region of Latin America and the Caribbean (CCLAC), the United States and Canada will participate in the colloquia.

##### **1.2 Promotion of participation in Codex Alimentarius meetings**

1.2. Under the Programme to Promote Participation in Codex Alimentarius Meetings, the IICA, with financing from the USDA, promoted the participation of countries from the CCLAC region in the Codex Committees on Food Hygiene and on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses and the *Ad Hoc* Codex Intergovernmental Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance.

##### **1.3 Virtual coordination sessions**

1.3. The support that IICA provides to CCLAC countries in the area of communication and coordination includes, prior to each Codex meeting, the provision of a virtual communication platform to enable coordination between the countries.

##### **1.4 Support for the provision of training to Latin American countries on ISPM 38**

1.4. The IICA provided support to the North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO) for a workshop on the international movement of seeds. This event took place in the second week of March.

## **1.5 Support for the study of OIE standards**

1.5. From 24 to 25 April, a strategic session will be held at IICA headquarters for the analysis of several chapters of the OIE Terrestrial Code. The event is being held for the third year in a row, and will serve as excellent preparation for participants prior to the World Assembly of OIE delegates. It is being organized with funding from and in collaboration with the USDA.

1.6. The OIE Terrestrial Code chapters of interest that will be discussed include those that will be submitted for adoption at the next World Assembly of OIE delegates in May, as well as other chapters that are still under review. The themes to be discussed include:

- An overview of OIE processes for the establishment of standards;
- Chapter 8.14: Infection with rabies virus;
- Chapter 10.4: Infection with avian influenza viruses;
- Chapter 7.10: Animal welfare and broiler chicken production systems;
- Chapter 15.2: Infection with classical swine fever virus.

## **1.6 Support for WTO training workshops**

1.7. The IICA continues to provide support for and follow-up to the Advanced Course on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures held in November 2018, through the development of, and assistance for, country projects carried out by participants. The IICA also supported a course on trade facilitation organized by the WTO in Honduras, and a regional course on sanitary and phytosanitary measures (SPS) and trade facilitation for the Caribbean, which were both held in February.

## **1.7 Workshop on market access aimed at diplomatic missions in the United States**

1.8. The first roundtable meeting concerning negotiations on SPS market access was attended by representatives from 30 diplomatic missions, and representatives from the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Organization of American States (OAS), the USDA and the private sector, to discuss the development of a tool to support countries in the process of establishing their priorities for negotiations on SPS market access.

1.9. Engaging in multiple SPS negotiations at the same time can be a major challenge, especially for developing countries. It is always necessary to prioritize some negotiations over others and, at times, it is difficult for countries to limit political influence on their decision-making processes and base their decisions on the most relevant technical aspects.

1.10. In this regard, high-level representatives from eight major importing countries and regions (the European Union, the United States, Canada, Japan, Mexico, Chile, Malaysia and the Philippines) and two private sector organizations held a group discussion on whether and how shared data could be encapsulated and systematized in a tool to establish priorities in negotiations on SPS market access, taking into account the related SPS import requirements, import tariffs and other factors that may affect their decision-making processes.

## **2 OTHER ACTIVITIES**

### **2.1 Safe food for Canada**

2.1. The IICA and the Government of Canada held an explanatory webinar on the requirements for the exportation of food products to Canada under the new Safe Food for Canadians Act and the corresponding regulations, during which they indicated where to find key information on the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) website. The event was managed by the National Manager for Food Imports of the CFIA.

### **2.2 Antimicrobial resistance**

2.2. The IICA continues to support its member countries in the development of integrated antimicrobial resistance surveillance plans throughout the agri-food chain, with ongoing processes in countries such as Belize, Ecuador and the Dominican Republic. It is also contributing to the completion of the first integrated antimicrobial resistance surveillance plan in Paraguay.

### **2.3 Good agricultural practices**

2.3. The IICA continues to support the training of producers on good agricultural practices, with the implementation of an extension programme in collaboration with the firm Bayer, and is promoting horizontal cooperation through an exchange of experiences between Costa Rica and Trinidad and Tobago.

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