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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 COMMITTEE ON SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES,
FEBRUARY - MAY 2019

The following communication, received on 26 June 2019, is being circulated at the request of OIRSA.

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

- 1.1. In Costa Rica, a training programme on the prevention of melon and watermelon virus diseases was organized, in conjunction with the State Phytosanitary Service, which was aimed at members of the Melon Growers Association, representatives of producer enterprises and technicians in the sector.
- 1.2. As part of the OIRSA Technical Committee meeting held in El Salvador, a field day on coffee plant health was organized, during which information was provided on a coffee-leaf-rust investigation programme implemented in El Salvador, and on the soil fertility study conducted in the six coffee-growing mountain ranges in the country.
- 1.3. To support the quarantine system in Nicaragua, two canine units were created at the canine school of the National Health, Food Safety and Agrifood Quality Service (SENASICA) in Mexico.
- 1.4. The training of a canine unit for Guatemala is under way at the canine school of the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MIDA) in Panama.
- 1.5. In Panama, a certification course was organized for production officials and technicians on the implementation of the Produce Safety Rule under the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), which applies to fresh fruit and vegetables. The course was attended by 31 participants.
- 1.6. An introductory course on food safety was developed and organized through OIRSA's virtual classroom, which provided training for 2,048 people.
- 1.7. OIRSA has developed and is implementing courses on safety auditors in plant and animal production systems, the validation of microbiological monitoring in the food industry, and risk-based food inspection, in which 1,374 participants are currently participating.
- 1.8. OIRSA has been making updates to the "Manual of Good Practices on Shrimp Farms" since February 2019.
- 1.9. From 11 March to 31 May 2019, a self-managed course on bee health and diagnosis was organized through OIRSA's virtual classroom, with the participation of professionals from the public and private sectors, from within and outside the region.

1.10. Awareness-raising talks on good poultry practices, biosafety, and the welfare of broiler chickens were attended by Panamanian veterinary doctors and producers at various sessions of the National Poultry Commission (COTAN) held on 21 March and 24 April in Santiago de Veraguas in Panama.

1.11. OIRSA organized the second meeting of the Regional Commission for Veterinary Medicines and Animal Feed (CORMEVA), which was attended by heads of the animal medicine and feed registries of Central America, as well as representatives of the animal medicine and feed industry, with the aim of addressing the main issues affecting the registration of and trade in such products in the region.

1.12. OIRSA held a workshop on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) surveillance in the region, which was attended by representatives from the public and private sectors, and which allowed for the identification of the progress made with national AMR surveillance programmes in Central America.

1.13. In Guatemala, a demonstration on the use of the Trazar-Agro platform was given to agricultural epidemiologists and technicians from the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food, to provide information on the tool and its potential use in programmes in which they are involved.

1.14. Training on the use of a bovine health module was provided for officials from the Guatemalan Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food and from OIRSA's Programme for the Progressive Control of Brucellosis and Tuberculosis, in order to proceed with the validation of the module in the field and its implementation as a tool for the bovine health programme.

1.15. Training on the use of the Trazar-Agro platform was provided for plant health technicians from the Guatemalan Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food, for the management of an agricultural registration module as a tool for operational planning and epidemiological surveillance.

1.16. In Honduras, a presentation on the traceability system was given to shrimp traders who are members of the Association of Small- and Medium-Scale Aquaculture Producers of the South (APEMASUR), SUR COMPITE and associations of small-scale producers (groups from Marcovia and Valle), and members of the National Association of Aquaculture Producers of Honduras (ANDAH).

1.17. The database of the Harmonized Bovine Traceability System of Panama was transferred to the Trazar-Agro platform. Training was provided for officials from the Panamanian Ministry of Agricultural Development who are engaged in traceability activities, and for veterinary doctors, animal health epidemiologists, and private users of the system.

2 SUPPORT FOR THE HARMONIZATION AND EQUIVALENCE PROCESS

2.1. OIRSA participated in a meeting of the Inter-American Group for Coordination on Plant Protection (GICSV), at which working groups were created with regard to issues such as the comprehensive management of citrus huanglongbing (HLB), ePhyto certification, the management of locusts and *Tuta absoluta*, the prevention of banana Fusarium wilt caused by the fungus *Fusarium oxysporum* f.sp. *cubense* (Foc-TR4), and fruit flies.

2.2. A *Trogoderma granarium* (Gorgojo Kapra) risk assessment was carried out to support the establishment of measures to prevent the entry of the pest into the OIRSA region.

2.3. A protocol for taking and sending samples of cocoa beans for the determination of cadmium content was developed and disseminated to countries in the region.

2.4. A protocol for taking and sending samples of rice for the determination of arsenic content was developed and disseminated to countries in the region.

2.5. A risk-based food assessment manual was developed for countries in the region.

2.6. The Central American Technical Regulation on Veterinary Medicines and Similar Products from the Central American Customs Union was revised and updated.

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

3.1. In Panama, the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MIDA) is receiving support to implement actions for the phytosanitary control of pests that affect the production of *Bactris gasipaes*, especially *Curculionidae* (*Metamasius hemipterus* and *Rhynchophorus palmarum*).

3.2. In the Dominican Republic, OIRSA participated in the *Campo Limpio RD* (Clean Countryside in the Dominican Republic) programme, with the aim of establishing mechanisms for the collection and final disposal of empty pesticide and similar product containers.

3.3. In Nicaragua, OIRSA participated in the 15th Agricultural Technology Fair of the National Agricultural University (UNA), at which a stand was set up with healthy citrus plants and a mother plant bank for the production of healthy shoots.

3.4. OIRSA participated in the Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation mission carried out by the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) at the Institute for Agricultural and Livestock Protection and Health (IPSA), with a view to strengthening the Nicaraguan phytosanitary system and enhance national and international trade in the country.

3.5. In El Salvador, OIRSA, in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, delivered 2,000 healthy citrus shoots to Salvadoran nurseries, as part of its efforts to prevent HLB and to comprehensively manage citrus fruit pests.

3.6. In Costa Rica, OIRSA, in coordination with the State Phytosanitary Service (SFE), the FAO and the National Banana Corporation (CORBANA), conducted a simulation exercise on the eradication, containment and management of banana *Fusarium* wilt (Foc TR4) outbreaks in the countryside.

3.7. In the Dominican Republic, the Ministry of Agriculture received support for the development of actions to prevent the entry of tomato moths (*Tuta absoluta*), in response to reports of the presence of the pest in Haiti.

3.8. OIRSA developed a general manual on emergency care, which included annexes on foot-and-mouth disease, avian influenza, classical swine fever, natural disasters, and the Incident Command System (SCI), and annexes containing a list of materials and equipment, and a list of reference laboratories in the region.

3.9. Communications on the global situation of African swine fever and recommendations were developed and disseminated to prevent the entry of the disease into the region.

3.10. Information material (video and flyers) was developed and made available in English and Spanish to countries for the strengthening of measures to prevent African swine fever in the region.

3.11. A regional seminary on African swine fever was held in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture of Guatemala, the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at the San Carlos University of Guatemala, and the Professional College of Veterinary Doctors. The seminary was broadcast live for Central American countries, Belize and the Dominican Republic.

3.12. A mobile phone application was developed for the creation of the OIRSA virtual library, which included the Spanish edition of a veterinary manual on taking and sending samples, created by the Pan American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center (PANAFTOSA) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Supply of Brazil (MAPA).

3.13. Technical and financial support was provided for the implementation of the second phase of the National Bovine Brucellosis Emergency Fund in Panama.

3.14. An African swine fever diagnosis kit was acquired to help strengthen the epidemiological surveillance of the disease in the veterinary services in El Salvador.

3.15. A kit for the diagnosis of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) was acquired for the Animal Health Laboratory of Guatemala to strengthen the surveillance of the disease.

3.16. In conjunction with the Guatemalan Technical Commission on Bovine Health, an epidemiological inspection concerning a bovine brucellosis health status was carried out on a farm in the country, and a herd sanitation plan was delivered to the Technical Commission.

3.17. To support actions for the epidemiological surveillance of *Coleoptera*, 1,100 traps for the small hive beetle (*Aethina tumida*) were acquired for El Salvador (500) and Belize (600).

3.18. Material (cutimeters and automatic syringes) was acquired for the strengthening of an official progressive control programme for bovine tuberculosis in El Salvador.

3.19. Laboratory material and reagents were provided for the strengthening of antimicrobial resistance surveillance in El Salvador.

3.20. Support was provided for the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of El Salvador at a meeting held with the Governing Board of the Salvadoran Association of Pig Farmers (ASPORC) to establish the steps and process to be carried out for the submission of the application for recognition by the OIE as a country free of classical swine fever.

3.21. A plan for the implementation of a swine traceability system was developed together with members of the Swine Technical Commission, the industrial sector and the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food of Guatemala, with the aim of participating in the efforts to meet the requirements for the application for recognition by the OIE as a country free of classical swine fever.

3.22. OIRSA participated in the 57th Central American Regional Climate Forum, at which the rainfall and temperature outlook for May to July 2019 and the implications in terms of agricultural health risks were analysed.

3.23. OIRSA developed and distributed a regional bulletin on the climate forecast and its implications in terms of animal and plant health and food safety, which included practical prevention and management measures.

3.24. Production risk maps based on climate forecasts and pest bioecology were developed for banana Sigatoka, the sugarcane spittlebug, cardamom thrips, and the mango fruit fly. These models have been incorporated into OIRSA's geo-portal which also contains models for a further 12 pests.

4 STRENGTHENING OF NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN ORDER TO FACILITATE TRADE

4.1. In Honduras, OIRSA and SENASA verified the status of Mediterranean fruit fly-free areas. The institutions have been working since 2002 on a programme for the maintenance of Mediterranean fruit fly-free status in the Aguan Valley.

4.2. OIRSA supported member countries in subscribing to the bibliographic pest database, CAB Abstracts, with the aim of ensuring that the provision of technical and scientific assistance for decision-making related to phytosanitary measures in international trade.

4.3. Member countries received support in accessing the University of Georgia's platform for the use of the Distance Diagnostics through Digital Imaging System.

4.4. Support was provided for the organization of interagency consultations on the preliminary draft Salvadoran Technical Regulation (RTS) No. 65.05.01.19 on the epidemiological surveillance and prevention of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) and other transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs), between the animal health authorities of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) and the Salvadoran Technical Regulation Agency (OSARTEC).

4.5. OIRSA, together with the Federation of Poultry Farmers of Central America and the Caribbean (FEDAVICAC) organized a meeting of the Regional Technical Committee on Poultry Health (CTRSA), which was attended by technicians from veterinary services and the private sector of Belize, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama.

4.6. Nicaragua and Panama received support for the revision of their applications for international recognition as countries free of classical swine fever prior to submission to the OIE.

4.7. Honduras received support for the development of conditions for the administration and use of the information to be managed in the traceability and movement control system.

5 STRATEGIC ALLIANCES FOR THE PROMOTION OF HEALTH AND TRADE

5.1. In Panama, OIRSA and MIDA signed a cooperation agreement for the production of Geisha coffee in the Ngäbe-Buglé Comarca.

5.2. OIRSA coordinated and participated in the Central American Cooperative Congress for the Improvement of Crops and Animals (PCCMCA), at which information was provided on the results of agricultural research, and the threat posed by climate change to crops and animals.

5.3. OIRSA held a meeting for quarantine regulators in Panama, which was headed by Australia and which brought together 30 countries from South-East Asia, Oceania and member countries from the OIRSA region.

5.4. OIRSA updated a regional project on aquatic animal health, with the incorporation of all OIRSA member countries, and the translation into English of the project to be submitted to the Norwegian community.

5.5. In the Dominican Republic, a working session was held with teams from the Ministry (Registry of Agricultural Production Units (RUPA) and Plant Health) to plan the provision of support to the Dominican Republic regarding the country agreement and, specifically, the project formerly known as RUPA, which has now been named the Geo-referenced Registry of Farms and Agricultural Producers (RGPPA).
