



12 October 2020

(20-6978)

Page: 1/2

Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

Original: English

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 8 October 2020, is being circulated at the request of IICA.

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). 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 FORA ASSOCIATED WITH SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

1.1 Codex Alimentarius Colloquia

1.1. The support that IICA provides to countries of the Codex Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean (CCLAC) 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. Last August, in collaboration with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), IICA hosted an Interregional Virtual Colloquium for Countries of the Codex Coordinating Committees for Africa (CCAFRICA) and the CCLAC. This event provided an opportunity for delegates from these two regions to analyse issues of common interest and develop regional participation strategies prior to the 43rd Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC43).

2 INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS IN REGARD TO SPS MEASURES

2.1 Strategy Session on OIE Guidelines

2.1. Aiming at improving coordination and promoting the development of harmonized comments on the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code chapters, IICA hosted the 5th edition of its Strategy Session organized in partnership and sponsored by the USDA. Twenty-four IICA member countries were represented in the four sessions held virtually, between 2-11 June 2020. Regional positions on Animal Welfare and Laying Hens Production Systems, Avian Influenza (Chapter 10.4), Classical Swine Fever (Chapter 15.2), Foot and Mouth Disease and Safe Commodities (Chapter 8.8), and Zoning and Compartmentalization (Chapters 4.4.6 and 4.4.7) were discussed.

2.2 Project - Harmonization of Pesticide Registration Procedures and Maximum Residue Limits for the Central and Andean Regions

2.2. IICA and the USDA are implementing a project aimed at harmonizing pesticide registration procedures (for agricultural use and bio-pesticides) and harmonizing maximum residue limits. The project includes eleven countries from the Central American, the Caribbean and the Andean regions. It has a long-term profile, with its completion expected for 2024, and four fundamental

components: harmonization of pesticide registration procedures (for agricultural use and bio-pesticides); harmonization of maximum residue limits (MRLs); standards (MRLs); and research.

3 OTHER ACTIVITIES

3.1 Support for Member Countries Response against COVID-19

3.1.1 Virtual Course and Electronic Manual – "Preventive Measures in the Agriculture Sector to Guarantee a Continuous Food Supply for the Population During COVID-19"

3.1. Aiming at ensuring the continuous provision of food to the population through recommendations for the protection of the health of workers in the agricultural sector and the prevention of the spread of COVID-19, last April, IICA elaborated these capacity-building resources. With a series of recommendations on preventive measures for farm owners and managers, food establishments, as well as collection centres and markets, the purpose is to bolster and complement national efforts to efficiently manage preventive measures during the COVID-19 pandemic, and, in turn, protect the health of employees, prevent the spread of the disease, and guarantee a continuous food supply.

3.2. Information available at the following link:

Electronic manual: <http://opac.biblioteca.iica.int/cqi-bin/koha/opac-detail.pl?biblionumber=139985>

Virtual course: <https://elearning.iica.int/mod/page/view.php?id=8840>

3.1.2 Virtual Technical Forum - "Main Challenges and Opportunities of Agricultural Health and Food Safety Services in the Face of COVID-19"

3.3. Aiming at promoting knowledge management, the exchange of experiences and opportunities for collaboration between the agricultural health and food safety services of IICA member countries in the face of the pandemic, the Virtual Forum hosted by IICA last July was attended by 27 countries of the continent, represented by 280 delegates of the National Control Agencies.

3.1.3 International Seminar - "Food Safety in Global Trade in the Context of Increasing Non-Tariff Barriers"

3.4. The Virtual Event was organized by IICA and the Group of Producing Countries from the Southern Cone (GPS). The Virtual Event was held last July and participants voiced the concerns of Latin American countries regarding access of their products to major global markets in the wake of COVID-19. Ranging from those in the export sector to representatives of different public agencies, participants in the event discussed major ag-trade topics in four different panels: production and border logistic implications for countries in the region; new non-tariff measures in the context of the pandemic; consumers' food safety demands and the imposition of new sanitary conditions to access markets; and sanitary and food safety strategies to address the new challenge of exporting "safe food". Identifying the common interests within the region, the participants agreed on the need for countries to coordinate their efforts as a region.

3.2 Support for the Implementation of the US Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA)

3.5. IICA, in conjunction with the FDA Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, continues to strengthen the capacities of professionals in the Hemisphere in the FSMA regulations on the safety of fresh agricultural products. To date, more than 50 Lead Trainers in the FSMA Standard on the safety of fresh agricultural products and more than 4,000 producers have been trained on the subject.

For further information, please contact Ana Marisa Cordero (ana.cordero@iica.int).

Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)
Agricultural Health and Food Safety
<http://www.iica.int>