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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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**SPS ACTIVITIES OF THE CARIBBEAN AGRICULTURAL HEALTH
AND FOOD SAFETY AGENCY (CAHFSA)**

REPORT TO THE COMMITTEE ON SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

The following communication, received on 9 October 2020, is being circulated at the request of 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 seventy-eighth regular meeting of the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, summarising key activities and providing updates on CARICOM SPS work programme.

1.3. As with most organizations, the COVID 19 pandemic has adversely affected the CAHFSA 2020 work programme, forcing an adjustment in the approach to execution. The Agency has however managed to implement most of its activities using the remote platform.

**2 COLLABORATION WITH INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE
AREA OF AGRICULTURAL HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY**

2.1. CAHFSA continues its engagement with the OIE, IPPC and the Codex Alimentarius Commission through meeting participation and regional coordination of activities.

2.2. As the Regional Plant Protection Organization for the Caribbean, CAHFSA led the organization of the 2020 IPPC Regional Workshop for the Caribbean. Fifty-six participants from 17 member States and eight regional/international institutions attended the three-day workshop, which was held by videoconference on 1-2 September 2020. The regional workshop was followed on 8-9 September by a two-day working on national reporting obligations.

2.3. CAHFSA has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with CAB International to strengthen relations through cooperative activities aimed at improving national plant health systems among the CAHFSA member States.

2.4. Under the 11th EDF project and the support of IICA (the executing agency), CAHFSA will lead the development of a Regional Policy and Action Plan for Agricultural Health and Food Safety (AHFS). The project seeks to develop a Regional Agricultural Health and Food Safety Policy and Action Plan and a National AHFS Policy Framework that will allow the Caribbean to have a more strategic and focused approach for addressing important AHFS regional and national issues such as meeting SPS requirements for regional and international market access. This intervention will ultimately serve to provide the region and countries with a coherent, coordinated and focused approach to addressing AHFS issues.

3 CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMMES AND ACTIVITIES

3.1. CAHFSA has signed a new Letter of Agreement (LOA) with the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Sub-Regional Office for the Caribbean to provide technical support for conducting Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluations (PCE) in four Caribbean countries. Like all projects being executed by CAHFSA, realization of the outputs from this project has been affected by the pandemic as no face to face interaction is possible. While the countries are at various stages of project implementation, all four are successfully conducting the PCE remotely.

3.2. The institution has continued its engagement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) through support to the implementation of the Regional Project to facilitate the development of human resource and capacity building in member States in the use of nuclear technology for application in agriculture. The IAEA Board of Directors approved the project in October 2019, and although the global pandemic has delayed implementation of some activities, others are being executed remotely.

3.3. CAHFSA submitted a request to the STDF for a Project Preparation Grant on piloting the use of Prioritizing Investments for Market Access (P-IMA) in the CARICOM region. The grant proposal was approved, and implementation has begun.

3.4. CAHFSA continues to provide training in pest risk analysis to CARICOM member States; towards improving the competence of analysts in the region and to build a cadre of risk assessment professionals.

4 TRADE FACILITATION

4.1. CAHFSA has received support from the Caribbean Development Bank to support the development of guidelines for intra-regional trade in animal and plant products which will enhance the framework for intra-regional trade in agricultural commodities among member countries. Specifically, the project involves the development of regional commodity-specific sanitary and phytosanitary guidelines for five animal and fourteen plant products. The duration of the assignment is expected to be for nine months.

5 TECHNICAL RESOURCES AND INFORMATION EXCHANGE

5.1. The *Information Portal* developed on CAHFSA's website continues to provide a weekly update on WTO notifications as well as agricultural health and food safety alerts.
