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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 TO APRIL 2021

The following communication, received on 17 June 2021, is being circulated at the request of OIRSA.

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

- 1.1. Training was provided to plant quarantine officials from the State Phytosanitary Service of Costa Rica on the use of the regional quarantine early warning system hosted on OIRSA's website.
- 1.2. Support continued to be given in the training of canine units for the inspection of cargo and luggage in the Dominican Republic, El Salvador and Belize.
- 1.3. In the Dominican Republic, the process for training canine units was launched. In El Salvador, support continued to be given in the training of the canine units of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock.
- 1.4. Support was provided to the State Phytosanitary Service of Costa Rica in the development of a plan for the eradication of the giant African snail.
- 1.5. Guidance was given to Nicaragua's Institute for Agricultural and Livestock Protection and Health and the State Phytosanitary Service of Costa Rica on the construction of fumigation chambers.
- 1.6. A forum on the Central American locust was organized, during which presentations were given on matters relating to the history and current status of this pest both at the global level and in the region specifically. OIRSA is supporting the follow-up to this research.
- 1.7. OIRSA is supporting the Government of Panama's initiative for the development of fruit programmes in the country.
- 1.8. OIRSA supported the Huanglongbing (HLB) disease emergency action plan in Panama.
- 1.9. A virtual conference was held on internationally recommended diagnostic tests for brucellosis, aimed at veterinarians from Guatemala.
- 1.10. Presentations were given on Argentina's and Mexico's experiences with the use of S-19 and RB51 vaccines as a tool for controlling bovine brucellosis as part of official programmes.
- 1.11. A virtual talk was given for members of the Governing Board of the Chamber and the authorities of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food (MAGA) on the programme for the progressive control of bovine brucellosis and tuberculosis and its progress in Guatemala.

1.12. At the request of the competent authority from Honduras, a virtual talk was organized, in coordination with specialists from the Mexican National Agri-Food Health, Safety and Quality Service (SENASICA), on the prevention and control of bovine paralytic rabies, aimed at producers in the affected areas.

1.13. A virtual seminar was held on the diagnosis of diseases based on evidence in pig farming, in which private veterinarians and officials from OIRSA member countries participated.

1.14. A virtual workshop on traceability in the pig sector and the use of the guide on the control of movement was delivered to veterinarians and pig farmers.

1.15. The virtual course on Good Emergency Management Practice (GEMP) for animal health, developed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), was launched as part of the strategy for the building of emergency response capacity, which has been drawn up together with FAO, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA-APHIS), the Panama – United States Commission for the Eradication and Prevention of Screwworm (COPEG) and OIRSA.

1.16. OIRSA participated in the 88th General Session of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).

1.17. Training on audits under ISO Standard 19011:2018 was provided to food safety officials and technical staff from countries in the OIRSA region (Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and the Dominican Republic).

1.18. A workshop was delivered on the protocol on sampling aflatoxins in maize in the OIRSA region, which was aimed at officials from this region and based mainly on statistical sampling techniques.

1.19. OIRSA participated in the 8th Latin American Pesticide Residue Workshop (LAPRW ONLINE), during which presentations were given on matters relating to, *inter alia*, rejections of food due to pesticide residues and aflatoxin sampling protocols.

1.20. OIRSA participated in the dialogue on the "One Health" approach and international trade.

1.21. OIRSA participated in the XLIII Forum on applying climate forecasts to food and nutrition security, making recommendations on the safety of foods of plant and animal origin.

1.22. Thirty safety officials from the OIRSA region were accredited in HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point) and its pre-requisite programmes by the International HACCP Alliance.

1.23. A virtual course on good livestock practices, good manufacturing practices and HACCP was delivered in OIRSA's virtual classroom.

1.24. The second virtual training course on pest risk analysis in the area of plant health was delivered in OIRSA's virtual classroom.

1.25. Officials from the Ministry of Agricultural Development of Panama were trained on the use of the Trazar-Agro traceability system.

1.26. The following traceability applications were published: "Trazar-Agro" for registering individuals and establishments engaged in agriculture, aquaculture and fishing; and "Trazar-Agro Movilización" for controlling the movement of animals and aquaculture products.

1.27. The first phase of the electronic registration management system was developed for the systemization of the animal health, plant health and food safety services of the Honduran National Agriculture and Food Health and Safety Service (SENASA).

1.28. The monitoring system and the Trazar-Agro system were interconnected in order to link establishments with the results of the monitoring and bovine sanitary control programmes.

1.29. The Trazar-Agro bovine traceability module was implemented in Nicaragua for the management of the information relating to traceability and the control of animal movement.

2 SUPPORT FOR THE HARMONIZATION AND EQUIVALENCE PROCESS

2.1. A working meeting of the National Veterinary Drug Committee of Guatemala was organized to follow up on the activities to harmonize the register of veterinary drugs and animal feed, using as a base the Central American Customs Union's Technical Regulation on veterinary drugs and related products.

2.2. OIRSA took part in a meeting of the National Codex Alimentarius Committee (CONACODEX) of El Salvador in order to assess the situation of the country in two important areas: (1) the revision of the general guidelines on sampling; and (2) the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods, maximum levels for total aflatoxins in certain cereals and cereal-based products.

2.3. OIRSA participated in meetings convened by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) relating to the RLA 5080 project on the development of a reference framework for the regional network for the sharing of data relating to food safety.

2.4. Salvadoran Technical Regulation (RTS) No. 65.05.02:19 on the registration and identification system for livestock and aquaculture traceability entered into force following its publication in the Official Journal and is the basic regulatory framework for ensuring livestock and aquaculture traceability.

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

3.1. The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food (MAGA) and OIRSA are coordinating actions for the control of locusts in Petén, Guatemala. The capacities of the official and private sectors to diagnose, monitor and deal with infestations of the Central American locust are being developed.

3.2. Producers affected by storms Eta and Iota are receiving support from the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (SAG) and OIRSA, as part of which producers of aubergines and other oriental vegetables were provided with insecticides, training and targeted technical assistance with their crops after floods.

3.3. The project for the biological control of pests of economic concern in Belize was launched.

3.4. OIRSA is supporting the State Phytosanitary Service of Costa Rica following the detection of the giant African snail (*Achatina fulica*), sending a technical mission to strengthen the plan for the containment and eradication of this pest in the country.

3.5. At the request of the competent authority from El Salvador, OIRSA managed the purchase and transfer of vials of Rose Bengal for the diagnosis of bovine brucellosis.

3.6. A sanitation plan was developed for farms affected by bovine brucellosis in Guatemala, so that the herds may be sanitized and certified as being free from the disease.

3.7. A timeline for dealing with the health emergency caused by an outbreak of bovine paralytic rabies in Honduras was drawn up.

3.8. The OIRSA Ad Hoc Group on Aquaculture Health was revived, with a view to boosting health activities in favour of the region's aquaculture and fisheries sector.

3.9. Traps were purchased for the control of *Aethina tumida* in Guatemala.

3.10. A manual of emergency procedures for transboundary diseases in marine shrimp was developed as an annex to the regional manual of best practices for dealing with health emergencies.

3.11. A project for the development of computerized monitoring and laboratory platforms is being implemented to support the sanitary programmes of Panama and Guatemala.

4 STRENGTHENING OF NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN ORDER TO FACILITATE TRADE

4.1. OIRSA coordinated the technical working group for the updating of Guatemala's classical swine fever (CSF) dossier, which is expected to be resubmitted to the OIE in 2021. Belize, Honduras and El Salvador have begun to compile their CSF dossiers, receiving guidance from an expert recruited by OIRSA, with the goal being to submit the documents to the OIE in September 2022.

4.2. Support was provided in the process of exporting live cattle from Guatemala and Nicaragua to Mexico by land transport.

4.3. The Directorate-General of Plant Health of El Salvador was supported in updating and improving its national plan for monitoring pesticide residues in agricultural products.

4.4. OIRSA coordinated bipartite collaboration between the Honduran National Residues Laboratory (LANAR) and the Central Veterinary Laboratory of the Dominican Republic (LAVECEN) in order to improve the Dominican Republic's analytical capacities. To support LAVECEN and the Dominican Republic's Department of Agri-Food Safety, a matrix relating to the pesticides that have been detected by the European Union was developed to assess the viability of incorporating pesticide analysis matrices.

4.5. At the request of the OIRSA representative in Guatemala, OIRSA participated in a meeting on the Codex Trust Fund, which is a bipartite project between Guatemala and El Salvador.

4.6. Ongoing support is being given to the implementation of the plan for the control of the movement of animals and aquaculture and fisheries products in the N1 intervention zone in Honduras.

4.7. OIRSA has actively participated as an observer in the meetings of the Honduran National Council on Traceability (CONART), the aim of which is to achieve consensus in the productive sectors regarding traceability, market access and aquaculture and livestock movement.

5 STRATEGIC ALLIANCES FOR THE PROMOTION OF HEALTH AND TRADE

5.1. OIRSA participated in the 12th quarantine regulators meeting (QRM 2021), which is a forum promoted by the Australian Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment.

5.2. OIRSA took part in a session of the International Cargo Cooperative Biosecurity Arrangement (ICCBA) in order to discuss the matter of remote auditing techniques in a changing environment, which is an initiative from New Zealand.

5.3. OIRSA held a working meeting with Chinese Taipei's International Cooperation and Development Fund in Guatemala, during which joint work was planned in the area of plant health and, specifically, in relation to pests such as HLB in citrus fruit and Foc TR4 in musaceae.

5.4. OIRSA signed a letter of understanding with the University of Glasgow in Scotland, which will support the implementation of the regional project "Molecular characterization of the rabies virus in animal outbreaks in OIRSA member countries".

5.5. OIRSA visited the campus of the Panama – United States Commission for the Eradication and Prevention of Screwworm (COPEG), with the aim of discussing new opportunities to expand the collaboration between both institutions in the areas of training and emergency response activities.

5.6. An inter-agency strategy for the preparation and management of emergency responses for Latin America and the Caribbean was outlined in conjunction with FAO, IICA, USDA-APHIS, COPEG and OIRSA.

5.7. The following agenda of activities of common interest was drawn up between OIRSA and the OIE: (1) The Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADs) standing group of experts on African swine fever; (2) Course on the transport of biological materials – International Air Transport Association (IATA); (3) Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR); (4) African swine fever (ASF); (5) Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs); and (6) OIE participation in OIRSA meetings.

5.8. Three follow-up and activity planning meetings were organized as part of the technical cooperation agreement between OIRSA and the Guatemalan Chamber of Milk Producers to promote traceability and the programme for the progressive control of bovine brucellosis and tuberculosis.

5.9. Two meetings were held to follow up on the activities of the official inspection programme for factories that process foods of animal origin, as part of the agreement between the Guatemalan Ministry of Public Health and OIRSA.

5.10. An addendum to the agreement on technical cooperation with the National Agriculture and Food Health and Safety Service (SENASA) of Honduras was drawn up to develop an electronic registration management system for agricultural establishments, drugs, pesticides and other products for agricultural use, as part of the Trazar-Agro system. The aim of this is to strengthen information processes for the timely registration of establishments and products with standardized, clear and automated criteria.

5.11. The agreement on technical and financial cooperation to ensure the continued development and implementation of the computerized agri-food traceability and safety module (Trazar-Agro – Inocuidad Agroalimentaria) was signed between the Honduran Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (SAG), SENASA and OIRSA.
