



**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 30 June 2021, 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. In collaboration with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the African Union's Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR), IICA hosted the following Interregional Virtual Colloquium for Countries of the Coordinating Committee for Africa (CCAFRICA), the CCLAC and the United States:

- 25 March 2021 - 5th Session of the Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH5);
- 15 April 2021 - 41st Session of the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CCMAS41);
- 5 May 2021 - 25th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS25);
- 10 June 2021 - 25th Session of the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF25);
- 16 June 2021 - 52nd Session of the Codex Committee on Pesticides Residues (CCPR52).

1.2. These events provided an opportunity for delegates from these two regions and the United States to analyse issues of common interest and develop regional participation strategies prior to those Codex Committee meetings.

1.2 Regional Coordination Session on WTO SPS Matters

1.3. Adding to the regional efforts to strengthen capacities in the Hemisphere for the application of sanitary and phytosanitary measures and working in collaboration with several of its members and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), IICA conducted last May its First Coordination Session on WTO SPS Committee Matters. The meeting was hosted virtually with simultaneous interpretation for English, Spanish and French and was attended by 160 participants

from thirty-three countries of the Western Hemisphere and nine ECOWAS countries. Considering the current prominent subjects under discussion in the WTO SPS Committee, the first coordination session addressed matters related to the document [G/SPS/GEN/1758/Rev.5](#) on a SPS Declaration for the WTO's 12th Ministerial Conference (MC12). Countries co-sponsoring the document highlighted the importance of reaffirming science as the basis for SPS measures in an MC12 Declaration. Participants valued the initiative and expressed their interest for further coordination sessions on WTO SPS Committee matters.

1.3 Regional Consensus Building On-line Training for Codex Alimentarius National Officers

1.4. Aiming at strengthening capacities in the Hemisphere for activities related to the Codex Alimentarius, IICA, in partnership with the United States Dairy Export Council (USDEC) and the University for Peace (UPeace - Costa Rica), concluded last May the first "Online Course on Consensus Building" for National Codex Officers. The training took place in six virtual sessions distributed between the months of April and May 2021 and was offered in English and Spanish. The first three sessions were designed for the presentation of the concepts and techniques that are applicable to the facilitation of consensus in negotiations of Codex Alimentarius issues, both at the level of national committees and in international meetings. The three additional sessions were for practical activities, in which the participants, divided into small groups, applied the knowledge acquired in previous sessions to solve examples observed in Codex negotiations. Forty-six National Codex Officers from twenty-four IICA member countries were trained under this initiative.

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 seventh edition of its Strategy Session organized in partnership and sponsored by the USDA. Seventy-six participants from twenty-one IICA member countries were represented in the two sessions held virtually on 27-28 April 2021. Regional positions on Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD - Chapter 8.8), Animal Welfare and Laying Hens, Wildlife and Infectious Hematopoietic Necrosis Virus were discussed.

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

2.2. Following up to the information provided in March 2021 ([G/SPS/GEN/1878](#)), IICA and the USDA are taking specific actions to support the alignment of national pesticide registration systems and to harmonize maximum residue levels (MRLs) with the objective of facilitating trade in Central America and the Andean Regions. A new series of training sessions by IICA, the USDA and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on ecotoxicology in wildlife, assessment of environmental fate, pollinators and occupational exposure took place in the first semester of 2021 with the attendance of more than 500 participants.

2.3 Project - Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Measures

2.3. With the aim of assisting the region to modernise their AHFS systems for improved agricultural trade interventions, the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) Programme SPS Measures Project builds on previous investments to strengthen SPS systems in the regulatory environment and in supply chain systems. The Project focuses on strengthening the SPS regulatory environment, public and private sector capacity to comply with SPS measures, standards, and procedures and SPS capacity in the fisheries sector. The beneficiaries of the Project include public and private sectors from Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, the Bahamas, Belize, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

3 OTHER ACTIVITIES

3.1 Online Training on Transboundary Animal Diseases with emphasis on African Swine Fever for Central America and the Andean countries

3.1. IICA, in collaboration with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) APHIS and the Center for Food Security and Public Health (CFSPH) at Iowa State University (ISU), is currently hosting an online self-paced course for the Central American and the Andean countries, aimed at increasing the competencies of veterinarians and other animal health professionals to identify, prevent, respond, control and eradicate African Swine Fever. More editions will be available until 2022.

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

3.2. 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 11 grower trainings on the FSMA/PSA rule have been delivered and more than 500 participants have been trained. In addition four webinars on FSMA priority topics have been held with the attendance of 2,122 professionals. The 2019-2020 series of webinar is available at the following link: <https://www.iica.int/es/webinars>.

3.3 Food Systems Summit

3.3. In a bid to enrich and foster the active participation of the agriculture sector of the Americas in the United Nations Food Systems Summit 2021, a series of five independent dialogues took place held by IICA between 7 May and 4 June with key actors in the region's agri-food chains, as well as with public and private sector representatives, researchers, exporters, and consumers. The meetings were organized in the form of Summit Dialogues and addressed the following topics: cooperatives; bioeconomy; agricultural digitalization; the One Health approach and international trade; as well as research.

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>
