



28 February 2022

(22-1904)

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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

Original: Spanish

**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,
NOVEMBER 2021 TO FEBRUARY 2022

The following communication, received on 22 February 2022, is being circulated at the request of OIRSA.

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

1.1. A workshop on the prevention and control of swine diseases was held for veterinarians from the epidemiological surveillance system of the Animal Health Directorate of the Guatemalan Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAGA), benefiting 25 public sector professionals.

1.2. A virtual workshop was held on monitoring and detecting Foc TR4 using satellite images, and technicians were trained in the diagnosis, prevention and control of this pest as part of the regional pilot project for the prevention of *Fusarium* Tropical Race 4 in Central America, which is being developed by OIRSA and the Chinese Taipei International Cooperation and Development Fund.

1.3. A regional refresher workshop on *Xylella fastidiosa* was held, which was coordinated by OIRSA, the University of Costa Rica (UCR) and the State Phytosanitary Service (SFE) of Costa Rica. The event was attended by 20 technicians from plant health laboratories in the OIRSA region, and provided an understanding of the various diagnostic techniques for identification and the current regulatory procedures.

1.4. Field schools, demonstration plots, phytosanitary plans and field visits were carried out and new areas with healthy plants were created to manage the *Diaphorina citri* vector, which affects citrus.

1.5. Workshops and training were held in Honduras and Guatemala on phytosanitary surveillance of the giant African snail pest.

1.6. Twenty-seven assistants from the International Quarantine Treatment Service (SITC) and 15 inspectors of the Agricultural Protection Service (SEPA) of Guatemala were certified in quarantine treatments in conformity with the Australian fumigation standard. Eighty-two SEPA inspectors received training on occupational accidents. Officials from Belize and Honduras received training on the interpretation of X-ray images. In Mexico, training was provided on phytosanitary treatments using chemical products on imported plant goods, products and by-products.

1.7. A lecture on OIRSA member countries' programmes on food contaminant monitoring was given at the "International Workshop One Health and Climate Change Latin America, Ibero and the Caribbean".

1.8. The second and third course on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) interpretation and auditing was held with the Spanish Association for Standardization and Certification (AENOR), with the participation of 42 officials for the safety of food of animal and plant origin from the nine OIRSA region countries.

1.9. Twenty safety officers from OIRSA region countries followed the AENOR Live Training course on remote audits.

1.10. The regional quarantine early warning system was made available to the National Agrifood Health, Safety and Quality Service (SENASICA) of Mexico.

1.11. Training was provided to technicians from the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MIDA) of Panama and the Institute for Agricultural and Livestock Protection and Health (IPSA) of Nicaragua on the use of the traceability system and its platforms Trazar-Agro and the movement control module. The Panamanian Aquatic Resources Authority (ARAP) was trained on the implementation of Trazar-Agro for fisheries traceability.

1.12. The development of the food safety module was completed, which will allow Ministry officials to, *inter alia*, calculate the frequency of risk-based inspections, schedule inspections of establishments, enter laboratory results, and prepare and follow up action plans.

2 SUPPORT FOR THE HARMONIZATION AND EQUIVALENCE PROCESS

2.1. Meetings of the regular assembly of the Antimicrobial Resistance Network (AMR) were held in Guatemala, with the participation of officials from veterinary drug registries, industries manufacturing, importing and marketing these products in Central America, and productive sectors.

2.2. The regional form for assessing biosecurity on poultry farms was updated within the Regional Technical Committee on Poultry Health (CTRSA).

2.3. Support was provided to the Dominican Republic with the development of an action plan in response to the measure to temporarily increase official controls on the entry into the European Union of aubergines, beans, sweet peppers and hot peppers exported from the Dominican Republic.

2.4. Support was provided to the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) of El Salvador to assess the procedure for sampling, storing, transporting and analysing samples of imported dairy products carried out by the Ministry's Division responsible for the safety of food of animal origin.

2.5. Participation in the thematic session of the SPS Committee on the procedure for monitoring the WTO international harmonization process, under the theme, "harmonized regional guide to good risk-based agricultural practices".

2.6. Support was provided with the development of the annual plan of the national codex programme 2022 of El Salvador, in the framework of the El Salvador-Guatemala binational project.

2.7. Support was provided to the Ministry of Agriculture of the Dominican Republic for the development of the national programme for the monitoring and control of chemical and biological hazards in milk and milk products in the Dominican Republic.

2.8. Participation, as an observer, in the virtual session of the mirror committee (EC), a working group convened by the Salvadoran Technical Regulation Agency (OSARTEC), in which the proposals to create and revise Codex Alimentarius standards, guidelines and codes of practice were analysed, with a view to issuing a country stance on such proposals.

2.9. Analyses to establish the baseline for inorganic arsenic in polished rice in OIRSA member countries were carried out in partnership with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Livestock Production of Brazil.

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

3.1. Technical assistance was provided, and emergency funds were designated to contain and control the African swine fever (ASF) outbreak in the Dominican Republic and to implement prevention measures in ASF-free countries. Follow-up meetings were held with Dominican Republic authorities and other cooperation agencies (OIE, FAO, IICA, USDA/APHIS) to coordinate joint actions to eradicate and contain the outbreak. Outreach materials containing health alerts and advisory measures were developed. Training workshops were held on using the digital agricultural information system (SIDIAGRO) platform as part of the ASF epidemiological surveillance component in the Dominican Republic. Supplies, materials, reagents and minor equipment were provided to strengthen ASF diagnosis in member countries.

3.2. Kits and supplies for the diagnosis of bovine brucellosis were delivered to El Salvador, and traps for the control of *Aethina tumida* were delivered to Belize.

3.3. Monitoring groups were set up in response to the outbreak of Newcastle disease in Belize. Videos on avian influenza epidemiological surveillance were also produced and distributed.

3.4. The national phytosanitary surveillance system platform was launched in the Dominican Republic. This computer tool supports the work of plant health technicians through the creation, for example, of surveillance routes, sentinel plants, trapping, sentinel plots and examination.

3.5. The project to enhance the control of HLB and to implement integrated pest management was assessed in Belize, Guatemala and Nicaragua.

3.6. Canine units for the detection of flavourings of products of animal or plant origin were trained in the Dominican Republic and Belize, to strengthen border control points for the prevention of the entry of quarantine pests and diseases. A portable incinerator was also installed at the Óscar Arnulfo Romero y Galdámez airport in El Salvador.

3.7. The Trazar-Agro system was further developed to strengthen countries' capacities to control the movement of live animals and products of porcine origin, thereby supporting health programmes and the work with some countries in the region to obtain recognition of Classical Swine Fever (CSF) disease status.

4 STRENGTHENING OF NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN ORDER TO FACILITATE TRADE

4.1. Plans are being drawn up to support the development of artisanal fisheries, to strengthen and facilitate domestic trade in such products and to increase the purchasing power of fishers on the Caribbean coast of Honduras, together with the GOAL organization and the National Agriculture and Food Health and Safety Service (SENASA) of Honduras.

4.2. The technical capacities of staff from the traceability department at IPSA of Nicaragua were strengthened, through the installation of the new application and database server and adjustments to the Trazar-Agro movement control module to facilitate the trade and the movement of dairy products.

4.3. Assistance continued to be given to the national traceability systems of Guatemala and Nicaragua in preparing the single guide on sanitary movement and control (GUIASA) for exports. Proof of origin, official individual identification and the sanitary status of animals are requirements for entry into the destination country.

4.4. The Trazar-Agro mobile application for movement control was made available to countries to support the movement of live animals, fresh and processed products of various categories, such as cattle, pigs and aquaculture (farmed shrimp) as a domestic and foreign trade facilitation tool.

5 STRATEGIC ALLIANCES FOR THE PROMOTION OF HEALTH AND TRADE

5.1. Together with the University of Glasgow in Scotland, the regional project, "Molecular characterization of the rabies virus in animal outbreaks in OIRSA member countries" was carried out.

5.2. The technical cooperation agreement between MAGA, the Guatemalan Swine Association (APOGUA) and OIRSA to strengthen the prevention and control of swine diseases, with an emphasis on ASF and CSF, was reviewed and updated.

5.3. The second phase of the SDTF/PG/495 project is being implemented in six countries (Belize, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica and Panama), including 14 additional techniques.

5.4. The FAO-OIRSA agreement, "Animal health emergency preparedness and management systems and management of complaints and notification to improve early detection of animal diseases; with special emphasis on African swine fever (ASF) in the Dominican Republic", was signed.

5.5. OIRSA and the Palm Growers Association (GREPALMA) carried out activities to strengthen pest prevention in oil palm cultivation, in order to step up the prevention of quarantine and economic pests in oil palm cultivation.

5.6. The 33rd meeting of the Technical Consultation among Regional Plant Protection Organizations (RPPOs) of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) was held, where the regional plant health-related challenges were presented.

5.7. Participation in the event to share the achievements in Central America of the Research Programme on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS) of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), organized by the Secretariat of the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC).

5.8. Processes for registration, renewal and modification were systematized, configured and authorized in the following areas: veterinary drugs and related products, products used in animal feed, poultry programme, fertilizers and pesticides for agricultural use, meat and meat products, fresh and processed fruit and vegetables, milk and dairy products, aquaculture and fisheries products and apiculture products.
