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**Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures**

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## **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 1 March 2023, 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. IICA, in collaboration with the United States Codex Office, CCLAC and the AU-IBAR, continues to support its member countries in their active participation in the Codex Alimentarius, through the implementation of an annual program of colloquiums aimed at the CCLAC and the CCAFRICA countries and the United States. In these colloquiums, both regions (43% of the Codex membership) discuss and exchange opinions on the various agenda items of each of the official Codex Alimentarius meetings. These meetings motivate and support developing countries to enhance their active participation both individually and regionally. The most recent colloquiums were:

- November 2022 – preparation for the 45<sup>th</sup> Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC45) – Besides the Virtual Colloquium, IICA has coordinated and financed the physical participation of delegates from the CCLAC Region at CAC 45. Through this effort, the region was physically represented at the session by 30 of the 31 CCLAC countries (23 with IICA resources and 7 with their own resources);
- January 2023 – preparation for the 26<sup>th</sup> Session of the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF26);
- February 2023 – preparation for the 43<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU43).

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

### **1.2 Codex Alimentarius Colloquia for the Private Sector**

1.3. In partnership with the United States Dairy Export Council (USDEC), IICA hosted in November 2022 a colloquium in preparation for the CAC45 aimed at private sector stakeholders, from Latin America and the Caribbean Regions, involved in Codex Alimentarius activities. The activity

was held virtually, with simultaneous interpretation English/Spanish and counted with presentations from renowned experts from the Americas.

### 1.3 Regional Coordination Session on WTO SPS Matters

1.4. 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 IICA conducted in November 2022 its Fifth Coordination Session on WTO SPS Committee Matters. The meeting was hosted virtually with simultaneous interpretation for English, Spanish and French and was attended by 110 participants from thirty-one countries. Considering the current prominent subjects under discussion in the WTO SPS Committee, the Fifth Coordination Session addressed matters related to the Working Groups of the SPS Declaration for the 12<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference ([WT/MIN\(22\)/27](#)). The next coordination session on WTO SPS Committee matters will occur in March 2023 in preparation for the forthcoming 85<sup>th</sup> Session of the WTO SPS Committee.

### 1.4 Inter-American Coordinating Group in Plant Health (GICSV) recent activities

1.5. Since the constitution of the GICSV, IICA has exercised the Technical Secretariat on a permanent basis and currently hosts its [website](#). In recent years it has maintained an intense agenda and a work plan focused on institutional strengthening, coordination of activities and attention to the main emerging phytosanitary issues. The most relevant events and activities conducted during the period covered by this report were:

Meetings of the Working Groups:

- December 2022 – Meeting HLB Working Group
- January 2023 – Meeting Orthopter Working Group
- February 2023 – Meeting FOC R4T Working Group
- February 2023 – Meeting HLB Working Group
- February 2023 – Meeting Fruit-fly Working Group
- February 2023 – Meeting e-Phyto Work Group
- February 2023 – "GICSV Citrus Health Webinars"
- February 2023 – Webinar on Sea Container and Cargo Cleanliness Activities
- March 2023 – GICSV Coordinating Committee Meeting
- March 2023 – Meeting of the Tuta Absoluta Working Group

## 2 INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS IN REGARD TO SPS MEASURES

### 2.1 Strategy Session on WOAHP Guidelines

2.1. Aiming at improving coordination and promoting the development of harmonized comments on the WOAHP Terrestrial Animal Health Code chapters, IICA hosted in its Headquarters in Costa Rica, in December 2022, the twelfth edition of its Strategy Session organized in partnership and sponsored by the USDA. Matters related to Chapter 8.8 - Foot-and-mouth disease; Chapter 11.4 – Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy; Chapter 12.2 - Contagious Equine Metritis; Chapter 12.7 - Equine Piroplasmiasis; Chapter 13 - Equine Influenza; Process for the Generation of Draft Joint Proposals to Present the WOAHP; Establishment of a Working Group on the Glossary Definitions for Poultry, Backyard Poultry and Meat Products.

## 3 OTHER ACTIVITIES

### 3.1 Latin American Trade Bloc Project (LAC)

3.1. In a partnership between IICA and the USDA, the LAC Project provides technical advice on agricultural health, food safety and food quality matters. With the support of certified lead instructors, it focuses primarily on companies, organizations, and producers in need of training on the US Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) rules. Besides the face-to-face training, the technical assistance modality of the LAC Project consists of visits to production plants where the trainees have the opportunity to accompany audits.

3.2. From November 2022 to March 2023, the following activities were carried out:

- FSMA Preventive Controls Qualified Individuals (PCQI) Workshop, in Guatemala with a total of 20 growers trained;
- FSMA Produce Safety Grower Trainings in Peru and Ecuador with a total more than 500 growers trained;
- Food Safety Regional Directors Meeting for Central America and Dominican Republic to discuss and identify priority areas or technical cooperation. 22 Delegates were at the meeting.

### **3.2 African Swine Fever**

3.3. Within the framework of the GFTADs, IICA has been leading training actions for the prevention of African Swine Fever (ASF) in the countries of America and the Caribbean, which are still free of the disease. This coordination is being developed in conjunction with the different international agencies, as well as regional agencies (WOAH, FAO, CVP, CAN, CAFHSA, CaribVET, OIRSA, USDA, COPEG).

3.4. Continuing with the work plan for 2022, IICA hosted from November 2022 to February 2023 the three parts of the hemispheric webinar on ASF Risk Communication.

### **3.3 Antimicrobial resistance twining project**

3.5. In the framework of this action, developed with the support of USDA/FAS, eight countries received assistance in the following areas: Costa Rica - AMR Surveillance in aquaculture; Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua - AMR Surveillance Pilot Plan (poultry); Brazil, Chile and Mexico - Laboratory data analysis and Trinidad and Tobago: Laboratory Certification.

### **3.4 STDF Project: Piloting the use of Third-Party Assurance (TPA) Programme in Central America (Belize and Honduras) to improve food safety outcomes for public health and trade**

3.6. This pilot project seeks to drive up compliance with national food safety standards and regulations through better targeting of official resources to facilitate improved public health outcomes and trade opportunities. In the last part of 2022, a series of virtual and in-person workshops were held to increase understanding, knowledge and expertise on the different approaches, schemes, and regulatory options for using data generated by vTPA programs. In addition, the capacity building actions of government inspectors in risk-based inspection practices will continue until May 2023.

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