

**REPORT ON ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY THE OIRSA
IN RELATION TO THE AGREEMENT ON SANITARY
AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES**

Statement by the International Regional Organization for Plant and Animal Health (OIRSA)
at the Meeting Held on 2 and 3 April 2003

Mediation and facilitation in the sanitary dispute between Costa Rica and Honduras

1. On 18 November 2002, a mediation meeting, attended by the animal health directors of Costa Rica and Honduras, was held in order to resolve the sanitary dispute on poultry and poultry products.
2. At the conclusion of the meeting, both parties agreed to comply with the agreements reached at the meeting and to exchange information. OIRSA officials undertook to follow up the action by the countries in order to reach a comprehensive solution to the dispute, which has now been settled in part, by approving Costa Rican installations which export their products to Honduras and Honduran plants exporting to Costa Rica.

Completion of level II of the Technological Masters' Degree Programme in Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures.

3. The Masters' degree programme had seven modules and 28 agricultural health technicians working for ministries and/or secretaries of agriculture and livestock in member countries and the OIRSA graduated. One of the participants is a Peruvian national so the programme goes beyond the area covered by the OIRSA.

Auditing of inspection, control and approval procedures (PICA) in Annex C to the Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS)

4. In February 2003, the auditing of PICAs in the eight member countries of the OIRSA was completed. The documents were transmitted to the Lth Ordinary Meeting of the Technical Committee of the International Regional Committee for Plant and Animal Health. The member countries agreed to revise and update the documentation submitted and transmit it to the OIRSA headquarters for incorporation in the latter's website as of 20 May 2003.
5. The member countries will also define their requirements for support from the OIRSA in order to comply with all existing procedures and incorporate new procedures on the basis of the analysis carried out on compliance with the SPS Agreement and taking into account the Free Trade Agreement between Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica and the United States of America.

Seminar on "Challenges and Opportunities for the Regional Agrofood Sector within the Framework of the Central American Free Trade Agreement with the United States"

6. The seminar was held in Managua, Nicaragua, from 5 to 7 March 2003; it was attended by agricultural negotiators from the ministries of agriculture and livestock, ministries of the economy, and representatives of business leaders in two countries.

7. The situation of the five countries taking part in the negotiation was examined as regards progress made in complying with the SPS Agreement in the following areas:

- Harmonization;
- information;
- transparency;
- PICAs;
- equivalence;
- certification.

8. Recommendations to the national and regional authorities were drawn up so as to establish priorities and systems of work to facilitate progress in complying with the Agreement.
