

**REPORT ON ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY THE INTERNATIONAL
REGIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR PLANT AND ANIMAL HEALTH
(OIRSA) IN RELATION TO THE AGREEMENT ON SANITARY
AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES**

Statement by OIRSA at the Meeting of 29-30 October 2003

Start-up of the project for the support of intraregional trade

1. The project in support of agricultural trade through the harmonized implementation of sanitary and phytosanitary measures in Mesoamerica, launched in the framework of the Puebla-Panama Plan (PPP), involving all of the countries of the region stretching from Mexico to Panama, is now in operation. This project is the result of a strategic effort by OIRSA in cooperation with the Interamerican Development Bank (IDB) which administers the Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF).

2. The project is intended to contribute to boosting trade in agricultural products in the countries making up the region. It further seeks to harmonize agricultural health requirements and strengthen the country's operational structures in that area.

Training and dissemination in the area of agricultural health and trade

3. In anticipation of the future implementation of the United States' Public Health Security and Bio-Terrorism Preparedness and Response Act (Public Law 107-188), the following information and training campaigns have been organized:

- (a) Four information sessions, in August, directed towards the private and public sectors in Boquete and David (Chiriquí Province), Chitré (Los Santos Province) and Panama City. More than 500 persons took place in these sessions.
- (b) Two information sessions (August and October) concerning the Law, its impact on international food trade, and its interrelationship with the health regulations in force in the United States, held in Guatemala City, Guatemala, with the participation of some 100 representatives of public and private sector institutions.
- (c) Briefing session in Honduras in August, attended by more than 70 persons from the public and private sectors (producers, exporters and academics).
- (d) Information sessions in El Salvador in August and September for entrepreneurs in the coffee sector and the media.
- (e) Briefing session in Belize in September, attended by more than 70 persons.
- (f) Information sessions in Panama and El Salvador in August and September concerning the EUREPGAP regulations.

4. In coordination with the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Codex Alimentarius, OIRSA conducted a workshop in El Salvador entitled "Encouraging Participation and Efficiency of Central American Countries in the Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods".

Coordination and harmonization

5. In coordination with the Central American Commission on the Environment and Development of the Central American Integration System (CCAD/SICA), OIRSA conducted its first meeting of experts on hazardous chemical substances.

6. The VIII Meeting of the Regional Commission on Pest Risk Analysis was held in support of regional capacity-building in risk analysis.
