

**ACTIVITIES BY THE INTERNATIONAL REGIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR PLANT
AND ANIMAL HEALTH (OIRSA) RELATING TO THE AGREEMENT ON THE
APPLICATION OF SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES**

Report to the 43rd Meeting of the Committee on
Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures,
8 and 9 October 2008

The following communication, received on 4 October 2008, is being circulated at the request of the International Regional Organization for Plant and Animal Health (OIRSA).

I. SPECIFIC SUPPORT FOR PRODUCTION CHAINS FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS

1. The OIRSA, in coordination with national sanitary and phytosanitary authorities and the private sector, has continued to implement sanitary and phytosanitary programmes in support of agri-food chains. The following action has been taken over the past three months.

Honduras

2. In the context of the pig production chain, the OIRSA continued to support action undertaken by the national authorities through the programme for the prevention, control and eradication of Classical Swine Fever (CSF), immunizing a total of 49,916 pigs in the departments of Atlántida y Cortés, in support of 8,476 small farmers. With the progress made under this programme, the Honduran authorities consider that they are now at the eradication phase in 12 of the 14 departments in Honduras.

3. The OIRSA supports the Technical Division of Animal Health in the National Agricultural Health Service (SENASA) in developing the training programme for the eradication of CSF, in which 28 officers and technicians took part.

Nicaragua

4. Under the phytosanitary programme in support of the fruit and vegetable production chain, the following action was undertaken:

- Guidelines were prepared for undertaking audits of pest-free areas;
- support for the Plant Health Department in preparing the list of non-regulated pests;

- support for the Plant Health Department in preparing three-part documents on citrus leprosis, locusts and the technical bulletin on *Thrips palmi*;
- for the fourth consecutive year, technical and financial support was given to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAGFOR) for the implementation of the fruit-fly free areas programme in the north part of Lake Xolotlán, which it is planned to declare a free area in the near future;
- for the fifth consecutive year, technical and financial support was given to the MAGFOR for implementation of the citrus leprosis-free areas programme.

5. The OIRSA continues to assist the national authorities with the implementation of a food production programme and held three training courses for 80 women producers.

Panama

6. In support of the citrus and other fruit production chain, the following action was undertaken:
- Continued support to the National Plant Health Directorate of the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MIDA) in maintaining, recognizing and promoting the Azuero Peninsula as an area free of Moscarded;
 - support for the MIDA in holding institutional workshops which produced the document "Framework guidance for the development and implementation of the Azuero plan for exports free of the Mediterranean fly";
 - working sessions and tours for producers from Azuero for the purpose of training on services to farms and a packing centre for papaya exports to the United States. As a result of these efforts, Azuero producers decided to sow the first 25 hectares of papaya for export in Azuero;
 - support for participation by a group of Panamanian technicians and producers in service training sessions on papaya exports in Belize and Guatemala.

7. In support of the poultry production chain, the OIRSA held a refresher course on pathology, epidemiology and sample taking for avian influenza for veterinarians in the public health service.

8. As part of the programme in support of the bovine production chain, the OIRSA continued with the programme to improve animal health diagnostic laboratories and with support for the campaign against brucellosis.

9. Under the health programme for the fisheries and aquaculture production chain, the OIRSA supported the establishment of the consultative ad hoc group on aquaculture health.

Guatemala

10. Under the health programme in support of the pig production chain, whose main objective is to prevent, control and eradicate classical swine fever (CSF), the authorities belonging to the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food (MAGA) officially declared Guatemala to be at the eradication phase, without vaccination, with the exception of the Department of El Petén, which was already free of CSF, complying with the information and procedures required by the International Office of Epizootics (OIE).

II. TRAINING, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL HEALTH AND TRADE

11. In Nicaragua, during the International Congress of Melon Producers, a lecture was given on preventing contamination by *Salmonella spp* in the production of Cantaloupe melons; over 200 people attended this event. Furthermore, two technical talks were given at the VIIIth Expo-APEN Fair on the following: traceability and health requirements for fruit and vegetables, attended by 80 participants comprising producers, exporters and students. Also in Nicaragua, during the training course for honey producers, a lecture was given on good apicultural practice and the manufacture of honey for over 100 beekeepers.

12. In Guatemala, 25 technicians were trained: two from the exporters' association (AGEXPORT), 15 from exporting firms, and eight officials from the MAGA's Standards and Regulations Unit. The following issues were covered: sanitary handling of fisheries products; organoleptic and chemical assessment; microbial growth factors; programme prerequisites; updated GMP, eight SSOP (fishing) and basic HACCP principles.

13. In El Salvador, in support of the diploma programme on organic agriculture, talks were given to students on the implementation of good organic production practice and food safety.

14. In Chile, during the "Regional Seminar on Private Standards for Plant Health and Food Safety; the need for regional action to promote public assets," sponsored by the FAO, a talk was given on "The current situation in countries in the region with regard to private standards and the performance of certification agencies".

15. Under the regional project for the prevention of avian diseases, the following activities were carried out;

- Updating of the emergency plans for dealing with health emergencies in Central American countries;
- training in poultry production and health in order to strengthen the biosafety systems on farms;
- evaluation of poultry health programmes in the region.

III. SUPPORT FOR THE REGIONAL HARMONIZATION PROCESS

16. In La Ceiba, Honduras, a regional workshop was held to revise the draft International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPM), put before the countries for consultation in 2008 by the Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC): (a) revision of ISPM No. 15 "*Guidelines for regulating wood packaging material in international trade*"; (b) "*Classification of products according to their phytosanitary risk*"; (c) Annex 1 to ISPM No. 26 [*Establishment of pest-free areas for fruit flies (Tephritidae)*] "*Fruit fly trapping*"; (d) Amendments to ISPM No. 5 (*Glossary of phytosanitary terms*); (e) Supplement to ISPM No. 5 "*Terminology in the Biodiversity Convention relating to the glossary of phytosanitary terms*"; (f) "*Structure and operation of post-entry quarantine facilities*"; (g) "*Pest-free micropropagation materials and mini potato tubers for international trade*". The comments made at this workshop, sponsored by the OIRSA, were discussed at a Latin American workshop on revision of the draft ISPM, sponsored by the FAO, held in Santiago, Chile.

17. The OIRSA, as the regional phytosanitary protection organization within the IPPC, took part in the 20th Technical Consultation among Regional Plant Protection Organizations (RPPO), held at the

FAO, Rome, at which a proposal was made on exchange of information on the presence, outbreak and/or dissemination of pests.

18. In Panama, support was given to the MIDA's National Plant Health Department for the adoption of the following resolutions, based on the IPPC standards.

- Resolution DAL-047-ADM-2008 of 7 July 2008. ISPM Nos. 11 and 21 of the IPPC on pest risk analysis were adopted;
- resolution DAL-048-ADM-2008 of 18 July 2008. Declares official control of *Fusarium oxysporum* as a quarantine pest causing Panama FOC disease, tropical race No. 4 of musaceas;
- resolution DAL-041-ADM-2008. Establishing the manual of procedures for the operation of field stations for detecting pesticide residues in fresh fruit and plants;
- resolution DAL-047-ADM-2008 of 18 July 2008. Adopting regulations defining phytosanitary measures and guidelines for the export, import and release of biological control agents and other beneficial organisms in Panama's national territory, in accordance with the IPPC's ISPM No. 13;
- resolution relating to the list of regulated pests, according to ISPM No. 19 IPPC.

19. In Nicaragua, support was given to the MAGFOR authorities for revision of the phytosanitary requirements for products on lists A and B in connection with the negotiations on the establishment of the Central American Customs Union.

IV. TRANSPARENCY OF INFORMATION

20. Distribution of the monthly Regional Epidemiological Bulletin, which contains information on the incidence of animal diseases in OIRSA member countries, has continued in order to promote transparency in epidemiological information and surveillance.

V. SUPPORT FOR UNDERTAKING RISK ANALYSIS

21. In Panama, support was given to the national authorities for the preparation of technical files for risk analysis for the following quarantine pests: *Frankliniella occidentalis* and *Contarinia maculipennis*.

VI. STRENGTHENING OF NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN ORDER TO FACILITATE TRADE

22. At the request of the national authorities, a good agricultural practice course was given in Panama for 15 officials from the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Inspectorate of the Panamanian Food Safety Authority (AUPSA), of the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MIDA) and the Department of Food Safety (DEPA).

VII. STRATEGIC ALLIANCES FOR PROMOTING HEALTH AND TRADE

23. A cooperation agreement was signed between the Latin American Poultry Breeders' Association (ALA) and the OIRSA with a view to having an effective impact on the preparation of international health standards; promoting harmonization of regional standards in accordance with

international guidelines from the competent organizations; and contributing towards developing prevention, control and eradication programmes for poultry diseases.

24. A cooperation agreement was signed between the El Salvador Exporters' Corporation and the OIRSA in support of implementation of the *"Assistance programme for small and medium-sized enterprises in Central America in relation to technical requirements for access to DR-CAFTA"* (AgroCAFTA). Under this agreement, it is hoped to strengthen national and regional coordination of cooperation projects and/or programmes so as to optimize results and the positive impact for small and medium-sized enterprises in the agri-business sector in the Central American region by meeting the technical requirements for market access resulting from the DR-CAFTA integration agreement.

25. A cooperation agreement is being signed between the Federation of Chambers and Associations of Exporters of Central America and Panama (FECAEXCA) and the OIRSA in order to coordinate cooperation efforts aimed at improving access for the region's agricultural export offer by developing action to permit compliance with the sanitary and phytosanitary regulations of the target markets.

26. The OIRSA has become a cooperating entity for implementation of Phase IV of the AI-Invest initiative for the region, which is a European programme that aims to improve the level of social cohesion in Latin America by strengthening small and medium-sized enterprises in the region.

VIII. STRENGTHENING OF INTER-INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL BODIES

27. In El Salvador, a workshop was held to revise the TCP implementation strategy: "Strengthening of the BSE prevention mechanism and adoption of good practice in animal feeding": this project will be carried out by the FAO, OIRSA and the national authorities.
