

**ACTIONS AIMED AT IMPLEMENTING THE WTO AGREEMENT ON THE
APPLICATION OF SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES**

Information submitted by the Inter-American Institute
for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)

Observer organizations are invited to submit written reports on the actions they have taken to promote a greater understanding, and the implementation, of the WTO Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. Herein, IICA describes some of the initiatives it has undertaken, or is planning to undertake, in pursuit of this objective.

Second Module of the Executive Leadership Series on Food Safety: "Legislation and Ethics"

1. The second module of the Executive Leadership Series on Food Safety, attended by 28 people from 17 countries of the Americas, took place from 30 September to 5 October 2001. This event was organized by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CIFA) and IICA.
2. The objective of the event was to discuss the legal foundations for implementing and maintaining food safety systems, the use of science in decision making related to food safety, and effective participation in international organizations, and to enhance the leadership capabilities of the participants, via conversations on ethics and personal values.
3. Speakers included officials from the CFIA, WTO, the Secretariat of Trade and Finance of Mexico, and other organizations. In these events, there is one mentor for each five participants, who, on this occasion, discussed the projects that will be implemented throughout the Americas during 2002-2003, with partial funding from the FAS-USDA. The mentors are from the CFIA, the IPPC, the University of Chile, EMBRAPA-Brazil and IICA.
4. The participants will meet again in April 2002 in Chile for Module III, the theme of which will be "The Agrifood Chain".
5. For further information, contact kwalker@iica.ac.cr

Third Symposium on Equivalence between the Northern and Southern Regions of the Americas

6. The Third Symposium on Equivalence was held in Argentina from 10-11 September 2001. It was organized by IICA's Northern Regional Center and the IICA Cooperation Agency in Argentina.
7. The discussions of the symposium, which was attended by experts from Canada, the United States of America, Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, Chile and Paraguay, focused on the way in which the topic of equivalence is addressed in international forums such as the WTO and Codex Alimentarius. Also, the experiences of the participating countries in the implementation of equivalence agreements were analyzed.

8. For further information, contact dalliker@iicawash.org or ebolanos@iica.ac.cr

Twelfth Meeting of the Informal Consultative Group of the Agricultural Negotiators of the Americas

9. The Twelfth Meeting of the Informal Consultative Group of the Agricultural Negotiators of the Americas, organized by IICA and FAO, was held in Panama City on 28 August 2001. The participants discussed topics related to sanitary and phytosanitary measures, technical assistance, modernization of agricultural health and food safety services in the Andean countries, and the foot-and-mouth disease programme in Panama.

10. For further information, contact hbenavides@iica.ac.cr or ebolanos@iica.ac.cr

Support to the Agricultural Health System in Mexico in Controlling and Preventing Specific Diseases, and Early Warning Systems

11. The IICA Cooperation Agency in Mexico has set up working teams with representatives of the public sector to monitor the development of diseases such as foot-and-mouth disease and bovine spongiforme encephalopathy around the globe. The purpose of these teams is to strengthen existing prevention mechanisms in the country, analyze risks and make recommendations to authorities regarding the importation of animal and agricultural products. Also, the Cooperation Agency is participating in an animal health early warning system. It distributes information on a selective basis and makes presentations with a view to facilitating decision making and the process of updating information on specific diseases.

12. For further information, contact amateos@iica.org.mex

Fruit fly Programme in Nicaragua and Honduras

13. The United States Department of Agriculture, the Governments of Nicaragua and Honduras, OIRSA and IICA are carrying out a programme aimed at establishing and maintaining fruit fly-free areas in Nicaragua and Honduras. IICA participates through the International Advisory Committee, coordinating with experts who are monitoring the activities of the programme to ensure that its objectives are being achieved.

14. Inspection, monitoring, trapping and species identification systems are being developed in both countries, articulation with the private sector is being promoted, and the need to strike a balance among technical, institutional and regulatory considerations is being stressed.

15. For further information, contact rmontoya@iica.ac.cr.

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Agricultural Health and Food Safety
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