

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

Report to the Thirty-Sixth Meeting of the Committee on Sanitary and
Phytosanitary Measures of the World Trade Organization,
27 and 28 June 2006

The following communication, received on 23 June 2006, is being circulated at the request of OIRSA.

I. TRAINING AND DISSEMINATION IN THE AREA OF AGRICULTURAL HEALTH AND TRADE

1. At the teleconference "Avian influenza, epidemiological surveillance and early detection of the disease for the purpose of human prevention in Central America", the first of five events being organized by OIRSA and the Regional Technical Unit for Technical Assistance (RUTA), OIRSA gave a presentation on the topic "Status of Avian Flu in the World".

2. Support was given to a Workshop to Strengthen Animal and Plant Health Services and Food Safety Systems in the Dominican Republic, as follows:

- (a) Presentation of a preliminary diagnosis of the veterinary, phytosanitary and food safety services in the Dominican Republic;
- (b) review, updating and validation of information with the authorities;
- (c) presentation of a methodology for developing a strategic plan and its results; and
- (d) formation of a group to monitor and review the strategic plan, which will be presented to the Committee of Ministers of the Region (H. CIRSA).

II. SUPPORT FOR THE DISSEMINATION OF INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL STANDARDS

3. Support was given to a meeting in El Salvador to review comments on the first draft of the "Handbook of Good Practices in the Production and Manufacturing of El Salvador Balsam" submitted by the country's private and public sectors and advisers from the European Union. It was agreed to

align the new draft with the "WHO Guide: Good Agricultural and Collection Practices on Medicinal Plants", as advised by the European experts.

4. A first draft of "A Handbook of Good Dairy Farming Practices for Central America, Panama and Belize" has been submitted to the public and private sectors of member countries for consideration.

5. The "Third Audit of Inspection, Control and Approval Procedures (PICA) in the Agro-health Services of the OIRSA Region", was presented at the OIRSA Technical Committee.

III. STRENGTHENING NATIONAL SANITARY INSTITUTIONS IN ORDER TO FACILITATE TRADE

6. Support was given to the Agriculture and Food Safety Department of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Dominican Republic for reviewing and presenting comments on three technical guides for good agricultural practices (GAP): Technical Specifications for GAP in Fruit Tree Production, Technical Specifications for GAP in the Production of Greenhouse Vegetables, and Technical Specifications for GAP in the Production of Open Air Vegetables.

7. In coordination with Spain's Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAPA) and the Training Centre of the Spanish International Cooperation Agency (AECI), a seminar was held on quality and safety assurance for agricultural products. The objectives of the seminar were: (a) to build countries' capacity to implement food control and safety systems; (b) to reinforce the food control and safety systems of member countries; and (c) to explore channels for communication and technical cooperation between member countries of OIRSA and the MAPA. The seminar was attended by 36 people from the nine member countries of OIRSA; 20 public sector officials and eight private sector representatives from the beef, dairy, and fisheries industries.

8. Support was given to the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of El Salvador in reviewing the "Good Practices Guide for Traceability in Apiculture Production".

IV. STRENGTHENING OIRSA'S RELATIONS WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES

9. A Workshop for Trainers in the Auditing of HACCP and GMP Systems was organized and coordinated jointly with PAHO and the IICA's ILRI Project. It was attended by 44 officials from the nine member countries of OIRSA and the four countries of the ILRI project.

10. In conjunction with the Federation of Poultry Farmers of Central America and the IICA, OIRSA drew up a checklist to assess the degree of countries' preparedness for an outbreak of avian influenza.

11. A proposal was formulated for a Mutual Cooperation Agreement between the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), the Food Safety Institute of the Americas (FSIA) and OIRSA.
