

**ACTIONS AIMED AT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT  
ON SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES**

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

The observer organizations are asked to present reports on the activities implemented to promote greater understanding and implementation of the WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. IICA wishes to present information about a number of activities that have already been carried out for that purpose, or are due to be implemented in the near future. These activities are as follows:

**International Seminar on Animal Health Equivalence and Risk Analysis**

1. An International Seminar on Animal Health Equivalence and Risk Analysis was held 25-26 March in Bolivia. The event involved officials of the health systems of Bolivia, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Peru and Paraguay.
2. The objectives were to harmonize animal health equivalence and risk analysis concepts among the zoosanitary authorities of the countries taking part, and to develop concepts for the preparation and interpretation of studies on equivalence and zoosanitary risk.

**Andean System of Studies on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Risk Analysis and Equivalence**

3. IICA, the ICA (Colombian Institute of Agriculture), APHIS (Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, of the USDA) and USAID (United States Agency for International Development) signed an agreement for the implementation of the Andean Center for Risk Analysis Studies, in Bogotá, Colombia.

**"Agrifood Chain" Module of the Executive Series on Leadership in Food Safety:**

4. The Third Module of the Executive Series on Leadership in Food Safety was held 15-19 April. Some of the topics covered were: food safety and the development of the agrifood chain; virtual frontiers in phytosanitary inspection of agricultural products; Leadership: coping with competition in the marketplace and unfair barriers to trade; and Increasing exports: specific cases. The Government of Chile collaborated and played an active role in this module, through the Agricultural Service and the Undersecretariat of Agriculture. The fourth and last module will be held in the Caribbean in September.

### **Activities to be implemented in the Caribbean region in the short term**

5. In order to improve compliance with the SPS Agreement, IICA will be implementing the project "Strengthening of Agricultural Quarantine Services in the Caribbean," with financing provided by the European Union. The project will last 30 months and will begin in August 2002.
6. A training workshop on pest risk analysis will be held 24-28 June in Trinidad & Tobago, for plant protection officials from the Caribbean. Organized by IICA, the event is being funded and training services provided by the USDA-APHIS.
7. The second meeting of the Canada/CARICOM Alliance on food control systems will be held 3-7 July in Belize. The activity is being sponsored and organized jointly by IICA, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, the Department of Health of Canada and the Belize Agricultural Health Authority.
8. To promote the harmonization and modernization of the regulatory framework in the Caribbean region, the draft International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures will be studied at a meeting in Trinidad & Tobago in October. The IPPC will provide financing for the activity, which will be organized by IICA.

### **Seminar on SPS in Central America**

9. IICA took part in the "Seminar on the Implementation of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures", held 3-5 June in Panama City. The 47 participants were from Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Belize, Cuba, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Dominican Republic. The WTO, the Inter-American Development Bank and Central American Bank for Economic Integration organized the event, in collaboration with the Government of Panama. It was used to discuss the countries' strengths and weaknesses vis-à-vis proper implementation of the WTO SPS Agreement. The main recommendations were as follows:

- Coordinate SPS issues among the stakeholders in the Agricultural Health and Food Safety System;
- Enhance transparency processes and actions at both the domestic and international levels;
- Step up the harmonization processes;
- Promote coordination among regional and international organizations that facilitate technical and financial cooperation;
- Participate actively in the international reference organizations and ask them and their member countries to establish institutional, financial or other mechanisms that would facilitate the active participation of developing countries.

### **Information**

10. Information on animal health, plant protection and food safety is provided by the Andean Agricultural Health Information Network (<http://www.iicasaninet.net/>) and the AgriHealth XXI Network ([www.infoagro.net/salud](http://www.infoagro.net/salud)) by means of press releases, publications and weekly bulletins. Users are kept up to date about the work of the "three sisters" and the WTO, and active participation in these organizations is encouraged. At the moment, there are almost 3000 daily accesses, within the networks 3,900 registered users, and have a coverage of 48 countries.

11. For further information about any of the events mentioned, contact:  
ebolanos@iica.ac.cr (Eric Bolaños) or kwalker@iica.ac.cr (Kevin Walker)  
Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)  
Agricultural Health and Food Safety  
<http://infoagro.net/salud>
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