

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

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

The following communication, received on 17 June 2009, is being circulated at the request of IICA.

1. The observer organizations in the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) of the World Trade Organization (WTO) are invited to submit reports on the activities they have carried out to promote understanding and implementation of the SPS Agreement. IICA wishes to present some of the actions and activities that it considers relevant to the work of this Committee.

**I. IICA-STDF-108 PROJECT**

2. IICA continues to implement the IICA-STDF-108 project. Actions at the national level aimed at institution building and the preparation of national agendas for sanitary and phytosanitary measures have been completed. The process was conducted in 26 of the 28 countries covered by the project.

3. This phase evaluated *inter alia* how the countries have benefited from six years of financial, technical and institutional support under the Initiative for the Americas, which has enabled them to participate in the WTO SPS Committee. It also served to evaluate the countries' institutional SPS capabilities.

4. One of the most significant accomplishments of this first phase was the preparation of the national agendas, which have already been presented to the STDF and which provide a "road map" for the countries involved and for the cooperating organizations in identifying and prioritizing their needs.

5. Another important element was the training which the countries have received on the institutional structures designed to facilitate implementation of the SPS Agreement, including the successful experiences presented by Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile and the United States on institutional matters, transparency, dispute settlement, etc.

6. In addition to the national agendas, the project identified regional activities to be implemented in the Caribbean, Central American, Andean and Southern Regions. These activities largely address the priorities identified in the national agendas.

7. Regional actions can be classified as follows:
- (a) Awareness-raising tools: successful cases (institutional and technical) of investment in SPS and benefits deriving from international participation will be documented and decision makers will receive training in the importance of SPS measures and international standards.
  - (b) Support for technical independence: organization of workshops on risk evaluation of chemical and microbiological hazards in food (July/August for the Andean and Southern Regions). Preparation of a manual and relevant training courses on phytosanitary hazard profiles. Training in risk communication.
  - (c) Capacity building: organization of SPS workshops, development and implementation of information systems aimed at improving management of knowledge of SPS issues. Preparation of manuals on how to improve the notification process. Workshops on good practice for participation in international fora, which will be accompanied by manuals and a training CD.
8. For further information, contact Ricardo Molins at [ricardo.molins@iica.int](mailto:ricardo.molins@iica.int), or Erick Bolanos at [erick.bolanos@iica.int](mailto:erick.bolanos@iica.int).

## II. SERIES ON EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP IN FOOD SAFETY

9. IICA's Agricultural Health and Food Safety Area and Center for Leadership in Agriculture, in collaboration with the Global Initiative for Food System Leadership of the University of Minnesota, has launched the Second Series of the Executive Leadership in Food Safety (ELFS) Program (2009-2010).
10. The programme aims to implement four modules over a two-year period and to provide food safety training for 25 to 30 professionals from the public and private sectors.
11. The four modules are: (i) Globalization and public/private partnerships; (ii) Laws, ethics and regulations; (iii) Food safety systems, public health and the agri-food chain; and (iv) Multiple roles of agricultural health and food safety.
12. For further information, contact Ricardo Molins at [ricardo.molins@iica.int](mailto:ricardo.molins@iica.int), or Ana Cordero at [ana.cordero@iica.int](mailto:ana.cordero@iica.int).

## III. SPECIFIC ACTIONS, BY COUNTRY OR REGION

13. Support for the Southern Cone Plant Health Committee (COSAVE): A pilot plan to set up a regional risk analysis centre is being developed with a view to the practical evaluation of a methodology for pest risk analysis at regional level. A seminar and workshop on phytosanitary inspection are being organized in order to upgrade the management of phytosanitary inspection and certification by national plant protection organizations and to build up regional capacity to implement and administer phytosanitary measures.
14. Support for the Permanent Veterinary Committee (CVP-for the Southern Region): IICA is coordinating support for the implementation and management of risk analysis for the purposes of food safety and animal health. Support is being provided to conduct a regional inventory of food safety objectives established by the CVP member countries.

15. Ecuador: As part of the move to strengthen the country's National Food Quality, Health and Safety System, IICA is providing support for the design of instruments needed to implement the new model for sanitary registration of processed food products, which seeks to streamline and automate the sanitary registration of products once plants have been certified as applying Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) and to strengthen post-registration controls. The procedures manuals, instructions and guides are currently being prepared, new cost-based charges and fees are being calculated, and a programme is being designed to include small-scale producers in the implementation of GMP in their plants. At the same time, work is being done on two draft regulations: the Single Food Regulation and the Technical Food Regulation, which will provide the legal framework for the initiative.

16. Peru: The IICA Office in Peru is supporting SENASA's integrated quality and safety control system in developing sectoral food safety standards.

#### **IV. SUPPORT FOR THE DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION**

17. IICA has various newsletters and other communication media to promote the exchange of information on SPS matters and the work of the WTO, the international reference organizations and the regional organizations.

18. The electronic newsletter CODEX-SPS Opinion Forum specializes in developments within the Codex Alimentarius and the WTO SPS Committee. The newsletter reports on and analyses standards and activities, and its purpose is to broaden the dissemination and study of the topics involved. It is available to all members at [www.iica.org.ar](http://www.iica.org.ar). For further information, contact Lourdes Fonalleras at [mlfonalleras@iica.org.ar](mailto:mlfonalleras@iica.org.ar).

19. The AGROSALUD information system focuses on the circulation of information on agricultural health and food safety and encompasses standards and activities of the WTO and the international reference organizations (English version available at [www.agrihealth.ws](http://www.agrihealth.ws); Spanish version available at [www.infoagro.net/salud](http://www.infoagro.net/salud)). For further information, contact Ericka Calderón at [ericka.calderon@iica.int](mailto:ericka.calderon@iica.int).

20. In Paraguay, a periodic electronic newsletter reports on the activities of the National SPS Technical Committee and on SPS developments. For further information, contact Carlos Franco at [carlos.franco@iica.int](mailto:carlos.franco@iica.int).

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