

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

Statement by Belize at the meeting of 28-29 October 2009

The following communication, received on 30 October 2009, is being circulated at the request of the Delegation of Belize.

Update on Technical Assistance Received from the European Communities

1. The implementation of the technical assistance project: "To Enhance National Sanitary and Phytosanitary Capacity in Belize" was to initiate in February 2009, however this did not occur until May 2009. This was as a result of the findings of the first mission which indicated that the specific technical training requested by Belize required more specialized experts than previously envisioned.
2. To date the following has been accomplished:
  - Twenty-two (22) officers have been trained in meat hygiene, inspection, on-farm food safety programmes including traceability; and
  - Ten (10) officers have received training in sanitary certification of fishing vessels.
3. Additional activities to be undertaken in November and December 2009 include:
  - Training to enhance surveillance programmes, including sampling and testing methodologies;
  - Training in specialized avian pathology; and
  - Pest identification.
4. One of the experts will also conduct a gap analysis which will be a comparison of our current draft food safety and plant and animal health bills with the EC agriculture health and food safety legislation, with the objective of highlighting those areas most pertinent to Belize.
5. We extend our appreciation to the European Communities for this technical assistance but in particular are very grateful for the flexibility in its delivery since throughout the process it has been recipient rather than donor driven.

Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Accountability Seminar

6. The Belize Agricultural Health Authority will be hosting a seminar on 5 November 2009 with the objective of updating stakeholders on the major achievements that Belize has obtained as a result of the implementation of SPS programmes at the national level and participation in relevant

international fora, such as Codex, CPM, OIE and the SPS Committee meetings. This seminar is being conducted in collaboration with the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture and has been held on an annual basis for the past four years.

Technical Assistance from Mexico

7. Belize would also like to acknowledge and thank the Government of Mexico for the assistance being received for the strengthening of two specific surveillance programmes in plant and animal health.

Assistance Received from the Standard Trade and Development Facility

8. The Standards and Trade and Development Facility (STDF) assisted Belize with the participation of two of its delegates to the workshop on "The Use of Economic Analysis to Inform SPS Decision Making Decision" held during the week of 26-30 October 2009. We extend our appreciation for the assistance received and for the development of the DVD film "Trading Safely: Protecting Health, Promoting Development" which features the Med fly Surveillance Programme in Belize as one of the success stories. This film has been shown in Belize and has resulted in more support being garnered for the strengthening of the sanitary and phytosanitary capacity in our country.

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