



In the face of the challenges posed by the crisis of the three Fs (food, fuel and finance), the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) remains firmly committed to proposing new ways in which stakeholders in the agricultural sector can learn about novel ideas and successful experiences. The agrifood chains and territories of the countries must be able to shield themselves from the effects of the crisis and have access to tools and strategies that allow them to innovate and take advantage of the opportunities to enhance their capabilities, embark upon the road to recovery and attain high levels of development.

As the agency of the Inter-American System specializing in agriculture and rural well-

being, IICA envisions a new paradigm for agriculture that would not only mitigate the impact of the crisis of the three Fs, but also help to improve the competitiveness of chains, the well-being of rural communities, and food security, and mitigate the effects of climate change.

With the emergence of this new paradigm in agriculture, it is even more important that we furnish the Member States with proactive, up-to-date information, so that agricultural policymakers in the Americas can translate this more productive, more inclusive and more sustainable form of agriculture into concrete actions. With this vision, the current issue of **COMUNIIICA** marks a new depar-

ture and addresses new issues related to the challenges facing agriculture:

- As this emerging paradigm takes shape, it is necessary to clarify the development models and approaches used in Latin America, where agriculture plays a key, visible role not only in supplying food but also in creating a more diversified base of production and employment, and of rural initiatives based on knowledge, innovation, technology and cultural identity.
- One important aspect of the new paradigm is the transformation that agriculture is undergoing as a result of the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) and biotechnology to meet the new



demands of society, markets and agrifood chains. As biotechnology is one of the main components of the transformation, there is growing interest in providing objective, impartial, up-to-date and scientifically validated technical information on the progress, benefits and risks of agro-biotechnology, which offers an effective array of techniques for enhancing the productivity and competitiveness of the agricultural sector and making better, sustainable use of genetic resources for agriculture and food security.

- The new paradigm in agriculture also calls for efforts to tackle climatic phenomena, with positive solutions based on far-reaching political decisions,

changes in individual and collective consumption patterns, programs and strategies that promote technological contributions, innovation and modern institutional arrangements.

- To complement the topics addressed, the magazine also presents the initiative implemented in Mexico to assess the economic impact of Huanglongbing (HLB) disease on the country's citrus fruit chain, which includes a comparison of the preventive and control actions taken to date.

- Finally, the progress of the rural development initiatives that IICA is spearheading with Brazilian institutions is highlighted in a brief description of

the project, "The new face of rural poverty in Brazil: challenges for public policies, profile and transformations," which invites reflection on the urgent need to understand and define the phenomenon of poverty in a new and different way.

In this way, **COMUNICA** seeks to contribute to the efforts of many institutions and countries in the region keen to provide a proactive response to the effects of the crisis of the three Fs by furnishing accessible, up-to-date and clear information. The contents of this and previous issues of the magazine are available on the Web page ([www.iica.int](http://www.iica.int)).