



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Twenty-Second Regular Meeting
2 - 3 October 2002

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**AVANCES EN EL CUMPLIMIENTO DE LA RESOLUCIÓN
DE LA JUNTA INTERAMERICANA DE AGRICULTURA (JIA),
SOBRE LAS RELACIONES IICA/FAO**

Meetings between high-level IICA and FAO authorities in 2002:

The Director General of IICA, Dr. Chelston W.D. Brathwaite, participated in the 27th FAO Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Havana, Cuba, from April 23 to May 5 of this year, during which he met for the first time with FAO's Director General, Jacques Diouf. At that time, they signed the "Aide Memoire: Cooperation between IICA and FAO" for 2002-2003. In this document, the two organizations reiterated their satisfaction with the progress achieved through their cooperative efforts. They also agreed on the importance of continuing to work closely together in consultation and to program actions, in order to ensure greater coordination and the identification of joint actions. This will enable the two institutions to make maximum use of their respective human, technical and financial resources, which will translate into increased benefits for their common member countries.

On June 10-13, both the Director General and IICA's Director of Strategic Partnerships attended the World Food Summit: Five Years Later, held at FAO Headquarters in Rome. While there, they met with the Director of the World Agricultural Information Center (WAICENT) to discuss exchanges of information and strengthen existing cooperative relations.

The Twenty-second Regular Meeting of the Ministers of the Regional Council for Agricultural Cooperation (CORECA) was held at IICA Headquarters on August 30. In addition to the Ministers of Agriculture of Central America, Mexico and the Dominican Republic, who make up the Council, the meeting was also attended by the FAO Deputy Director General and Regional Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean, Gustavo Gordillo, who presented a proposal for cooperation for preparing a Mesoamerican Program on Food Safety, valued at US\$400,000, in which IICA will participate. The goal of this initiative is to lessen food security vulnerability throughout the region by providing support to the preparation of policies, a program for action and investment project profiles, all within the context of regional integration efforts and the implementation of the Puebla-Panama Plan.

Results of cooperation - January 2001 to August 2002

A) Trade and Agribusiness

As regards joint IICA/FAO actions associated with the Informal Consultative Group of the Agricultural Negotiators of the Americas (GINA, the Technical Secretariat of which is exercised jointly by the two organizations), international trade negotiations are being monitored via the GINA electronic forum (<http://Infoagro.net/Comercio>). This forum, designed by IICA, allows for the virtual exchange of information among negotiators and, on average, receives 5,000 hits per month.

In this same area, the following events were held in Panama City:

- Eleventh GINA Meeting, on: Outlook for the Ministerial Summit of Doha, Qatar; Declaration and Plan of Action of the Summit; and Recommendations from the Private Sector in the Seminar-Workshop: International Agricultural Negotiations, jointly organized by ALADI, IDB-Intal, IICA and CABEL. 35 participants.
- Twelfth GINA Meeting, on Technical Assistance: a new Approach to Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures; Modernization of Agricultural Health Services and Control of Foods in Andean Countries; and the Foot-and-Mouth Disease Program in Panama. 34 participants.
- Thirteenth GINA Meeting, on results of the Fourth WTO Ministerial Conference (Doha, Qatar). 25 participants.
- Fourteenth GINA Meeting, which focused on: conclusions of the meeting of the General Council of the WTO held on February 1, 2002; Development Boxes, presented by Dr. Jose Luis Cordeu, of FAO; and Trade Authority Promotion, by Dr. Spitzer. 34 participants.
- Fifteenth GINA Meeting, June 23, 2002, on the U.S. Farm Bill, which was presented by Dr. Robert Spitzer of the USDA. 25 participants.

A conference entitled Supporting the Diversification of Exports in the Caribbean/Latin American Region through the Development of Organic Horticulture was held in Trinidad and Tobago on October 8-10, 2001. Attended by 188 people, the conference focused on key issues related to the production and marketing of organic horticultural products, including market outlets, logistics, certification and standards.

Trinidad and Tobago was also the site of another workshop, entitled Developing a Caribbean Response - Improving Competitiveness and Expanding Regional Trade in Fruits. The 57 participants explored opportunities for expanding trade in fresh citrus and selected minor fruits, exchanged experiences and developed strategies. To date, exporters in the region have developed frames of reference for increasing trade in the region.

The Meeting on Agricultural Statistics was held in Panama City, Panama, on December 10-13, 2001. These biannual meetings are coordinated by the FAO-OAS/CIE-IICA Working Group on Agricultural Statistics in Latin America and the Caribbean. Although these meetings have been held for the past 40 years, IICA has participated in this group since 1995. The most recent meeting was organized in collaboration with of the National Statistics and Census Directorate of the Office of the Comptroller General of the Republic of Panama. The 60 participants discussed the current state of agricultural statistics in the region, and offered ideas and recommendations on how to improve existing and develop new national programs for compiling, generating and making use of agricultural statistics.

B) Technology and Innovation

The Executive Directorate of PRODAR, with support from the Technical Secretariat of FORAGRO/IICA and IICA's Directorate of Technology and Innovation, conducted a Regional Consultation on Post-harvest Technology Innovation in Latin America and the Caribbean, with contributions from FAO and IICA/PRODAR/FORAGRO. The following results were obtained:

- Five diagnostic studies (one per subregion) on technology innovation.
- A workshop for the Regional Consultation on Technology Innovation, held in April in Quito, Ecuador, with 40 participants from the region and officials from both FAO and IICA.
- Preparation of two directories: one of post-harvest specialists and another of projects on that subject.
- Identification of topics for priority action related to post-harvest activities in Latin America, and of elements for a future regional agenda on this matter.

C) Agricultural Health and Food Safety

The First Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Hemispheric Plan for the Eradication of Classic Swine Fever (CSF) in the Americas was held in Costa Rica in April 2001. FAO and IICA have joined forces to prepare the project "Control and eradication of screwworm in Haiti and the Dominican Republic," and are seeking funding for its implementation. Also, a project on rural and peri-urban horticulture has been prepared and is currently being studied by several donor countries, and joint support was provided to Chile vis-à-vis the modernization of higher institutions of veterinary education.

A workshop on the *Codex Alimentarius* Commission was held in Guelph, Canada, on May 29-June 1, 2001, attended by 20 delegates from the ministries of agriculture, health and industry of the 12 CARICOM member countries. The objective was to familiarize participants with the *Codex Alimentarius*, how it operates and the important role it plays in the international context, to encourage the development of strategies and recommendations and increase the effectiveness of participation in this process. During the follow-up meeting held in Belize on July 3-7, 2002, the following results were identified: improved communication between official services involved in food safety and with the *Codex Alimentarius*; a better understanding of issues of food quality and food safety as they relate to trade and public health; identification of obstacles that prevent the full participation of the countries in international standard-setting bodies; the recent appointment of a representative to the *Codex Alimentarius* by the Ministry of Agriculture of Suriname; and the affiliation of The Bahamas as a member country of *Codex*.

With a view to training trainers, FAO has developed the program TCP/RLA/0065 "Strengthening the National *Codex* Committees and Application of *Codex Alimentarius* Norms." As part of this program, a subregional workshop was held in Costa Rica in late September and early October 2001. The objective was to train trainers in good agricultural practices (GAP), good manufacturing practices (GMP), and hazard analysis and critical control points (HACCP). During the workshop, attended by some 35 representatives from Central America, IICA made a presentation on obstacles to implementing food safety systems in the region. As a result of these programs, beneficiary countries will have teams of trainers capable of transferring the knowledge required to strengthen the countries' international participation; they will be able to make better use of the advantages offered by such organizations; and long-term policies for this subject area will be promoted.

A workshop was held on October 17-18, 2001, in Trinidad and Tobago, dealing with the validation of emergency action plans for exotic plant and animal pests and diseases in Trinidad and Tobago. The objective of the workshop, attended by some 80 people, was to develop an emergency preparedness plan. The model emergency plans were validated and corrected, and are ready for conducting simulation exercises.

On November 19-23, 2001, Trinidad and Tobago was the venue for the Eleventh Session of the Caribbean Plant Protection Commission (CPPC). The 41 participants analyzed the IICA-FAO proposal to replace the CPPC with the Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA), and discussed regional plant protection issues. There was consensus regarding the possibility and a follow-up plan was developed.

The Regional Workshop on Qualitative Risk Analysis for Plant Health was held in Trinidad and Tobago on June 25-28, 2002, attended by 25 people. Its objective was to provide training in techniques and procedures for establishing data bases for risk analysis. The data base was initiated with information on commodities frequently marketed in the Caribbean.

Within the framework of the *Codex Alimentarius*, IICA approached the Chairman of the *Codex Alimentarius* Commission, Dr. Thomas Billy, and made it possible for him to meet with national authorities from Costa Rica to discuss different aspects of the *Codex Alimentarius*. IICA's Area of Agricultural Health and Food Safety also met with Dr. Billy to discuss possible areas for joint action, including the strengthening of existing norms, the participation of developing countries in *Codex* activities, and technical support for the countries regarding the different *Codex* committees. These meetings took place on August 19-21, 2002.

The IICA Office in Costa Rica, FAO and other international cooperation organizations are working together to provide support to the Inter-sectoral Commission on Food Safety, a forum made up of 17 public and private institutions in Costa Rica concerned with food safety. This commission was created to protect consumers from

food-borne diseases and improve the access of domestically produced products to international markets. Actions carried out to date include the joint design, among all the institutions, of a plan of action. The role IICA and FAO are to play in implementing it will be defined in the near future.

As regards the Executive Leadership Series on Food Safety, Dr. Robert Griffin, of the International Plant Protection Convention -IPPC, has participated actively as a mentor in all four modules executed to date, the last taking place in September 2002 in the Dominican Republic. Dr. Griffin has directed some of the participants in formulating food safety projects.

The RLA5045 program is still under way. This program, being executed jointly by the International Atomic Energy Agency, FAO, IICA and the MoscaMed-USDA-SAGARPA-MAGA program, and aimed at the eradication of the fruitfly, is currently carrying out field activities.

In Ecuador, IICA and FAO provided support for establishing the National Food Safety Network, which involved helping prepare and analyze the ministerial agreement on this topic, supporting the process to promote the network, and participating in the Inter-institutional Commission on Food Security, of Ecuador.

During the last two months, IICA and FAO technicians in Haiti have been working together with a technician from the Ministry of Agriculture on a strategic program to combat the pink mealybug. They have received support from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

On October 8-10, IICA will provide support for the meeting of the Technical Advisory Group for Latin American and the Caribbean on Phytosanitary Measures of the International Plant Protection Convention, which will take place at IICA Headquarters.

The Caribbean Subregional Workshop on Draft International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures will be held on October 9-11 of this year. The 15 participants from the Member States in the Caribbean will have an opportunity to provide inputs into the IPPC standard setting process.

D) Rural Development

Preliminary contacts have been made with the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of FAO's World Agricultural Information Center (WAICENT), for the joint development of the Knowledge Management System for Rural Development. This system will provide a virtual site for training and for the generation of knowledge. It will comprise a network with several regional nodes, which will facilitate integration and generation of hemispheric, regional and national initiatives; horizontal technical cooperation; and innovation through the exchange of information and experiences among users.

IICA has also worked with FAO in the Inter-Agency Group on Rural Development (IFAD, FAO, World Bank, IICA, ECLAC, USAID, GTZ and IDB). At the July 2002 meeting in Brasilia, two joint training proposals were formulated. The first focuses on policies to be developed at ECLAC-Chile; the other deals with rural development activities to be developed at IICA-Panama. This latter module will systematize rural development methodologies with a territorial approach, including natural resource management and issues involving target groups (young people, women and indigenous peoples). At the Inter-Agency Group meeting to be held on November 18-20, 2002, in Panama, the Panama Rural Plan, a key proposal that incorporates the modern concept of sustainable rural development, will be analyzed.

The Ministry of Agriculture of Panama received support from IICA and FAO Representatives for preparing a proposal to be submitted at the next meeting of the Inter-Agency Group, to be held in Panama in November 2002.

On September 1-2, 2001, FAO and the IICA Office in Bolivia held the National Workshop of the Gender Network: Conceptual Frameworks for the Market and the Employment of Women. The objective was to generate conceptual agreements, methodologies and strategic lines of work vis-à-vis the market and the employment of women in rural areas. Participating were 18 leaders from organizations of women producers, and leaders of small-farmer organizations. The meeting resulted in the creation of the National Association of Producers of Bolivia (APROB) and the establishment of the Bolivian Consortium in Support of Rural Agroindustry.

Since 1996, both the IICA and the FAO Offices in Honduras have been providing technical and financial support to the National Council for Sustainable Hillside Development (CONASEL), a forum for analysis and evaluation and the for presentation of proposals by institutions, organizations, programs and projects involved in sustainable rural development. The Council focused on the exchange of experiences, discussions of topics of national interest, and ways to assess the value of the environmental services of hillsides. These actions are carried out through national and regional forums attended by producers, independent technicians and those of public and private programs and projects, as well as representatives of international cooperation agencies. The Second Sustainable Agriculture Forum on Soil and Water Resource Management in Forest Production Systems "Risks and Prevention" was held on September 12-13, 2002. Also, the two organizations are working together as members of the National Program for Sustainable Rural Development (PRONADERS).

E) Agricultural Information

IICA and FAO's strengths in terms of documentary information were analyzed, and it was agreed that activities would be carried out using the platform established by the Agricultural Information and Documentation System for the Americas, with the Orton Memorial Library providing technical coordination.

As part of the initiatives to disseminate information management tools, the new WebAgris interface was reviewed and relevant observations presented. This has led to improvements in this tool, which is one more in their arsenal of resources. The Orton Memorial Library provides technical assistance to national institutions that adopt the WebAgris interface, and follows up on training activities by means of a discussion list.

A survey was designed and conducted to identify training needs, which served as the basis for scheduling joint training activities.

The program was designed for the course "Automated Organization of Specialized Collections in the Agricultural and Related Sciences," which will be used to generate interactive training modules for preparing electronic documents and using the new interface for data base management. In the area of training, the following activities were carried out:

- Course/Workshop - Electronic Production of Documents and Management of Agricultural Bibliographic Data Bases, from October 15-20, 2001, Turrialba, Costa Rica, organized by IICA, CATIE and FAO, and taught by technicians from FAO and IICA.BCO. Twenty-two technicians, from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, Dominican Republic, Uruguay and Venezuela, participated.
- Course/Workshop - Electronic Production of Documents and Management of Agricultural Bibliographic Data Bases, University of West Indies, Mona Campus, Jamaica, May 20-23, 2002. Organized by IICA.SIDALC, FAO. Taught by technicians from FAO and IICA.BCO and with organizational and logistic support from the IICA Office in Jamaica. Fifteen technicians, from Guyana, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Kitts and Nevis, Barbados, Bahamas, Trinidad and Tobago, and Jamaica, participated. The objective of the course/workshop was to provide training to facilitators from agricultural sector information units on the management and publication of documents in electronic format, and in the use of technologies and tools for managing bibliographic data bases.
- Course/Workshop - Electronic Production of Documents and Management of Agricultural Bibliographic Data Bases, Lima, Peru, May 20-24, 2002. Organized by SIDALC-IICA in coordination with FAO and the UNALM and through the National Agricultural Library. Taught by BAN technicians. Forty officials from the National Network of Peru participated, as did two from Ecuador and two from Bolivia.

The second meeting of the Consortium of Continuing Education for the Management of Agricultural Information in Latin America (Achira Group) was attended by representatives of FAO, IICA, RECAPA and CIAT. As a result of this meeting, a FAO plan was presented for identifying vocabularies and thesauruses developed in LAC libraries, which could be used for updating the AGROVOC thesaurus. IICA was invited

to participate in the initiative promoted by FAO and presented in Florida on the development of ontological systems.

The FAO and IICA representatives in Jamaica met with the Ministry of Agriculture to identify joint actions. It was determined that the area of information (data and documents) is of common interest and a proposal is currently being developed on the matter.

F) IICA Offices that have strengthened relations with FAO representations, based on the new legal instrument signed by the parties in April.

Barbados:

IICA's Office is promoting collaboration among PAHO, FAO and CARICOM, with a view to developing proposals for strengthening the phytosanitary and food safety systems of the country.

Bolivia:

On July 4, 2002, a coordination meeting was held to identify possible joint actions between IICA and FAO in Bolivia, within the framework of the resolutions approved by the IABA and IICA's Executive Committee. As a result of this meeting, which was attended by the representatives and technical personnel from both IICA and FAO, an agenda for inter-agency collaboration was defined.

Colombia:

The IICA and FAO Representatives have held conversations on the possibility of executing complementary actions, and have identified areas in which their actions coincide. The IICA Office has sent to the FAO Office proposals for joint efforts in the area of organic agriculture.

Dominican Republic:

The IICA Office and the FAO Office have engaged in a coordination process involving all the professional staff of both organizations in the country. This has made it possible to establish shared priority areas and activities to be carried out in the areas of international trade, agricultural health and food safety, rural development and information and communication.

El Salvador:

On June 26 of this year, the two representatives met and agreed to exchange information and experiences on the subjects of sustainable rural development and agribusiness. The cooperation agendas of both institutions for El Salvador include projects in these fields. To this end, they have organized complementary actions and, through the exchange of experiences, hope to benefit both producers and technical personnel in the country. Also, IICA's Office is supporting FAO as an active member of the World Food Day Committee, to be held on October 16, in the organization of events on the theme for this year "Water: Source of Food Security."

Guatemala:

The Representatives of both institutions met on August 23 to prepare a proposal for joint actions for the remainder of the year, within the framework of their respective cooperation agendas.

Nicaragua:

Contacts were established recently because, for a considerable period of time, there was no FAO representative in the country. Nonetheless, IICA and FAO are now planning to undertake joint actions in the areas of food safety, good agricultural practices, and trade negotiations. To this end, they have conducted a number of consultations.

St. Kitts and Nevis:

IICA technical personnel supported the FAO technician stationed in Barbados in conducting a workshop on project preparation, attended by 18 people, including extension agents, farmers and fishermen.

Uruguay:

The IICA Representative met with the FAO Representative in Uruguay and expressed IICA's interest in carrying out joint actions. He also discussed the possibility of setting up an Inter-Agency Group for Rural Development in the country.

Venezuela:

Work is under way with the FAO Office to identify possible inter-institutional actions and mechanisms.