



Annual Report 2008

IICA's Contribution to the Development of Agriculture and Rural Communities in the Americas

XXXIX Regular Session of the
General Assembly of the Organization
of American States (OAS)

2008 Annual Report

**IICA's Contribution to the Development of
Agriculture and Rural Communities
in the Americas**

**XXXIXth Regular Session
of the General Assembly of the Organization
of American States (OAS)**

© Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA). 2009
ISBN 978-92-9039-998-8

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Foreword

In 2008, agriculture worldwide witnessed two important developments that reinforced IICA's commitment to promoting food security in the hemisphere and its insistence on the importance of the sector for the development of our nations.

The first development was the publication, during the first quarter of the year, of the World Bank's World Development Report 2008, "Agriculture for Development." Among other things, the report demonstrates that agriculture has a strategically important role to play in reducing poverty at the global level and that public and private actors need to take urgent, practical steps to ensure that our peoples enjoy greater prosperity. The second development, which occurred from mid-year onward, concerned the highly volatile prices of some agricultural commodities. Many international agencies and governments warned of the problems that could ensue, responded rapidly to calls for action from agricultural producers and revised their medium-term plans to ensure that people had enough to eat.

Against this backdrop, IICA continued to carry out its activities in line with the institutional priorities and overarching objectives established in its 2006-2010 Medium-Term Plan, which include the promotion of food security, agricultural development and environmental sustainability. As this latest annual report shows, the Institute intensified its efforts in the area of food security, especially by galvanizing support from other stakeholders and through its activities under programs and projects of strategic importance to its Member States.

IICA's technical cooperation model - based on work programs agreed with the different public and private actors in the countries and the Institute's close working relationship with government agencies, academia, producers' organizations, chambers of commerce and cooperation agencies - is reflected in this wide-ranging report containing details of the most significant results achieved at the hemispheric, regional, national levels.

This report also includes information about the Institute's role as a partner in the Summit of the Americas process, the decisions taken by our governing bodies in 2008, the actions implemented to carry out the mandate of promoting women's rights and gender equality, and our human and financial capital.

We feel honored to pay tribute in this report to Dr. Emilio Araujo, a citizen of Brazil of great human stature. As Director General of IICA between 1970 and 1982, he took important decisions that reshaped IICA and had an impact on the societies we serve.

The Institute, still imbued with Dr. Araujo's values and teachings, continues to implement the modernization process that got under way in 2002. Once it is completed, IICA will be better equipped to deal with the increasingly complex problems of agriculture and offer innovative solutions.

An example of such solutions is the recently inaugurated Center for Leadership in Agriculture. It has been one of our greatest accomplishments in 2008 and has made it possible and has made it possible to bring together, in the course of the year, dozens of young people, decision-makers and senior officials from our Member States to discuss and reflect on the situation and outlook for agriculture and rural life.

Other technical cooperation actions carried out by IICA in hundreds of rural territories, in fields such as agribusiness, health, agro-tourism, organic agriculture, agro-industry and agro-energy, are clear examples of the desire for change, the search for excellence and the promotion of new leadership in agriculture in our countries.

At the broader level, we will continue to promote the need to adopt a new development model that recognizes agriculture as the linchpin of national development agendas, as a sector of strategic importance for reducing poverty and as a means of livelihood for thousands of farmers and agricultural entrepreneurs in the Americas.

IICA's personnel are committed to finding and implementing innovative solutions to achieve development that is more equitable by tapping opportunities and implementing measures to offset the now acknowledged limitations of the global market. Given the abundance of information available, we need to be able to recognize and generate the knowledge required to modernize the institutional framework of agriculture, make agriculture competitive, promote food security and guarantee sustainable development in harmony with the environment.

To this end, we shall exploit to the fullest our collective skills. This, added to the team effort in which we have been engaged with other international organizations and the permanent dialogue with our Member States, will continue to be a source of inspiration and will be a positive step for those who foresee difficult times ahead.

In the respective 2008 report on each IICA region and member country, and on our website (www.iica.int), additional, more detailed information is available on the state of agriculture, the Institute's response to the commitments assumed under our cooperation agendas and the opportunities for future collaboration.



Chelston W.D. Brathwaite
Director General

The legacy of an agricultural leader

*Tribute to Jose Emilio Araujo,
Director General of IICA from 1970 to 1982*

A few short months have elapsed since the passing of Dr. Jose Emilio Araujo, Director Emeritus of IICA, and it is only fitting that we pay tribute to his long legacy of accomplishments in the field of agriculture throughout the hemisphere and his endearing qualities as a humanist leader.

Our Director General, Chelston Brathwaite, had something to say at a recent Cabinet meeting, which encapsulates our esteem and appreciation for Dr. Araujo: “there are no words or writings to aptly describe the magnitude of Dr. Araujo’s contributions to agriculture in the Americas and to IICA.”

The General Directorate of IICA wishes to extend this recognition and appreciation to the international and national partner institutions of IICA which, like this humanist leader, have struggled to forge a new destiny for those who live in the rural areas of the Americas and depend on agriculture for their livelihood.

Below is a brief summary of Jose Emilio’s contributions to the Institute:

Jose Emilio Araujo, who was born in Brazil in 1922, envisioned a model of agriculture which, at the time, was a mere dream –agriculture that factored in the perspective of the farmer and that took into account the social circumstances of the rural areas.

His career had a promising start. After receiving a doctorate in agronomy, with a specialty in soils, from Cornell University in New York, he became a professor in soils at the School of Agriculture of the Federal University of Pelotas in the south of Brazil, where he went on to become head of the School and the research institute

In 1965, he entered IICA as a specialist at the Inter-American Agrarian Reform Center, in Colombia. He was appointed head of that center a few years later and was subsequently appointed to the position of IICA Representative in that country.

In 1970, the Government of Brazil nominated him as a candidate for the post of Director General of IICA and he was elected to that office that same year. This ushered in a new phase of sweeping institutional reform and his administration, which went on for a second six-year term, until 1982, is recognized as a period of “hemispheric and humanistic projection”. During those years, Canada and many Caribbean countries joined the Institute.

It was also during his administration that Member States adopted a new Convention which changed the physiognomy and the name of the Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Sciences to Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture.

The Convention, which entered into force on December 8, 1980, marked the genesis of an Institute that would support agricultural development and rural well-being in the countries of the Americas through the delivery of technical cooperation services.

A humanistic leader

Jose Emilio Araujo's thinking may be summed up in the concept of the hemispheric and humanistic projection that conceives the overall improvement of the human being as an end in itself, where science and technology and the application of the findings of both should be used to serve mankind.

He promoted IICA as being a flexible organization that was receptive to the expressed needs of its Member States, one that was conceptually sound and that had as its underpinning the technical expertise of its staff. The basis of that approach was established in the General Plan approved in Mar del Plata, Argentina, in 1970.

Many consider his most important accomplishment to be the adoption of the IICA Convention which paved the way for the Institute's transformation from an organization specialized in agricultural sciences and higher education into a technical cooperation agency.

That Convention also changed the management structure of the Institute. The responsibilities that heretofore rested with the ambassadors of the Member States of the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States (OAS) were transferred to the Ministers of Agriculture of the countries.

His vision of "people who work the land" and small-scale farmers fueled his interest in implementing a humanistic policy that focused on the human being as the *raison d'être* of our organization, a vision that has endured until now.

Araujo introduced to the Institute certain activities that had been the purview of other institutions or of the OAS General Secretariat and, thanks to him, the Institute became an organization of the Inter-American System specialized in agriculture and rural development.

It was during his Administration that the Offices in Member States were created and, with the support of the then President of Costa Rica, Jose Figures Ferrer, the Headquarters Building was erected.

Thirty-five years ago, when he held the reins of our Institute, the Brazilian Enterprise for Research on Farming and Cattle Raising (EMBRAPA) was created with decisive support from IICA. Today, EMBRAPA is the pride of Brazil and the Americas. The Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) was also created at that time.

His idea was to make the Institute a cohesive instrument for development to serve the countries, one that would have a hemispheric projection and a humanistic vision. This ideal of his has served as an inspiration for the nations of the hemisphere as they seek to build agriculture that is modern, competitive and equitable in terms of the distribution of wealth.

José Emilio Araujo is an example for coming generations that wish to build a brighter future, marked by more freedom and unity for the men and women of the rural areas of the hemisphere.

Executive Summary

The mission of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), acknowledged as the specialized agency for agriculture and rural development in the Americas, is to provide innovative technical cooperation to its 34 Member States aimed at achieving food security, rural prosperity and competitive agricultural sectors in the countries concerned.

With regard to the Summit of the Americas process, the Institute assisted the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, other member countries and the OAS Summit Secretariat with the preparations for the Fifth Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Americas. Progress was also made in organizing the Fifth Ministerial Meeting “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas,” due to take place in Jamaica in October 2009.

IICA’s Executive Committee held its Twenty-eighth Regular Meeting in July 2008. The committee adopted 17 resolutions on a range of topics, including institutional policy and technical cooperation, budgetary and financial matters, institutional management and matters pertaining to the governing bodies.

As a strategic contribution to the agricultural development of the countries, IICA established the Center for Leadership in Agriculture and Rural Life. The Center made it possible for representatives of the public and private sectors and over 80 young people from the western hemisphere to meet at the Institute’s Headquarters, to reflect on and discuss the state of and outlook for the agricultural sector at the global level. Meetings to promote leadership in agriculture also took place in the Andean Region, and at the country level in Guatemala, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic.

The crisis triggered by rising food prices proved to be a global challenge in 2008. This led IICA to strengthen its activities in the field of food security, convening and taking part in international meetings of experts on the subject, devising methodologies to gauge the impact of price volatility and permanently monitoring trends in markets and food security policies in the countries.

To strengthen business capabilities, IICA continued to implement the “Export Platforms” program, thanks to which producers and entrepreneurs from Panama, Honduras, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Paraguay and Ecuador became more competitive and are better equipped to export and market their products.

In Ecuador, Colombia, Panama and the Central American countries, progress was made in formulating and implementing policy tools for agroindustry and microenterprises. Members of more than 15 organizations of small-scale entrepreneurs and 25 organizations of 3000 families in Colombia, Peru and Mexico enhanced their capacity to market their products, helping them to maintain a presence in their respective markets. In other parts of the hemisphere, such as northern Costa Rica and the provinces of Lima and Junin in Peru, IICA collaborated in the application of strategies aimed at activating agro-industrial clusters.

In the area of agricultural health and food safety, IICA continued to implement the Initiative for the Americas, which permitted the countries to play an active role in the work of the WTO/SPS Committee. The Performance, Vision, Strategy (PVS) tool was also used to pinpoint the needs of the health services of IICA's member countries and determine the actions needed to meet them. Furthermore, working with the USDA, no less than 500 people from 32 countries were trained in the international standard-setting processes related to animal and plant health and food safety; and primary schools received educational material designed to raise consumer awareness of the importance of good practices in the hygienic handling of foodstuffs.

With regard to the efforts to promote the strengthening of rural communities, IICA focused its actions on collaborating in the design of the Regional Environmental Strategy for Central America and Ecuador's Rural Development Strategy; evaluating the PRODERT program in Honduras; and providing technical guidelines for agricultural research in Venezuela. Moreover, cooperation was provided to develop capabilities for sustainable rural development with a territorial approach in Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Venezuela, Honduras and Chile. To that end, the Institute formulated and published a series of methodologies for applying the territorial approach in rural development projects and actions.

IICA played an active part in a number of international events related to natural resources and environmental management, including the meeting of the Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission, held in Ecuador. It also carried out a series of technical missions in Mexico, Costa Rica, Bahamas, El Salvador, Panama, Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil and Venezuela that led to the formulation of projects and the identification of areas for joint work with various institutions. Furthermore, the Institute implemented an extensive outreach campaign on the management of natural resources and environmental management.

In the area of the promotion of technology and innovation, IICA strengthened the hemispheric dialogue for the design of policies in technological innovation and the development of a regional agenda in this field under Regional Forum on Agricultural Research and Technology Development (FORAGRO) and Regional Fund for Agricultural Technology (FONTAGRO), which was made possible by the signing of a new agreement with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). In addition, the cooperation programs for agricultural technology research and innovation (PROCIs) were strengthened.

IICA prepared the "2008 Report on the state and performance of agriculture in Latin America and the Caribbean from the technological perspective." Other important results included the work with IFPRI to update the science and technology indicators of several countries in the hemisphere; a study of the mechanisms for protecting public goods related to the PROCIs and FONTAGRO; and the conclusion, with support from the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR), of the international assessment of the role of agricultural knowledge, science and technology in development and a study on technological innovations for production systems based on family agriculture.

As follow-up to the exercise carried out in 2007 to identify biotechnology and biosafety needs, the Institute discussed and designed a number of projects, including one aimed at diversifying the food supply for vulnerable populations in the Andean Region, and strategies for the adoption of biotechnology in the Andean, Central and Southern regions. Furthermore, IICA organized a meeting to discuss the state of biotechnology in the hemisphere and the implications of agreements reached in international forums such as the Cartagena Protocol and the Codex Alimentarius.

Under IICA's Hemispheric Agroenergy and Biofuels Program, implementation of projects related to those fields got under way in Jamaica; capacity-building efforts in the same areas were carried out in Belize and Saint Lucia; and various international seminars on those subjects took place. IICA and the Latin American Energy Association (OLADE) also signed an agreement for the design and execution of the Regional Biofuels Program.

In its capacity as the Executive Secretariat of the Network of Competent Authorities in Organic Agriculture, the Institute organized the network's first international meeting and helped strengthen it with the creation of the Inter-American Commission for Organic Agriculture. In the same field, projects were implemented and agreements signed in several countries, including Costa Rica, Peru, Argentina, Paraguay and Chile.

With regard to actions at the hemispheric level, IICA made progress in implementing knowledge management strategies designed to strengthen its technical cooperation actions. Among other things, the Institute's information systems and services (e.g., INFOAGRO-Agronegocios, INFOAGRO-Comercio, INFOTEC and the Agricultural Information and Documentation Service for the Americas (SIDALC)) made it possible to promote the development of various communities and intensify the dialogue and information sharing within and between countries. IICA also enhanced the agricultural information capabilities of over 50 professionals from various countries. The actions carried out included those coordinated with the Technical Center for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) and others related to the strengthening of leadership in information management in the Caribbean Region and the implementation of distance training courses using IICA's virtual learning environment, known as E-Vida.

The following are some of the most important results at the regional level: a) the creation and implementation of the Andean Alliance for Dialogue and the Reassessment of the Value of Agriculture and Rural Life, working with institutional partners in that region; b) the promotion in the Caribbean Region of the use of the Agro Matrix and other tools that are useful for repositioning agriculture; c) support for the implementation of animal and plant health policy measures as part of the Central American Agricultural Policy (PACA); d) the continuity of projects such as the SICTA Network and PROMECAFE in the Central Region; e) technical and administrative support for FONTAGRO in the Northern Region; f) the support that IICA provides in the Southern Region as Secretariat of the CAS; and, g) the use of IICA's capabilities in the countries of the Southern Region to identify, formulate and operate projects with the European Union, FONTAGRO and PROCISUR.

Furthermore, in 2008 IICA worked with a wide range of public and private sector organizations, academic institutions and international agencies, including the IDB, the Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE), the World Food Programme (WFP), Google Inc., the Caribbean Council of Higher Education in Agriculture (CACHE) and several American universities (Cornell University, University of California, University of Nebraska, etc.), with which it executed various projects aimed at agricultural and rural development in the hemisphere.

As explained in this report, in 2008 IICA contributed to the development of agriculture and rural life in its member countries by means of over 500 actions, the results of which moved the countries closer to achieving the goals of food security, rural prosperity and agricultural competitiveness.

1. Origin, legal basis, structure and purposes

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) was created by the Governing Board of the Pan American Union in 1942. In 1949, it was recognized by the OAS as the agency of the Inter-American System specializing in agriculture and the well-being of the rural population.

A new IICA Convention came into force in 1980, establishing two governing bodies: the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), composed of all Member States, and the Executive Committee (EC), made up of 12 Member States appointed to the Committee on a rotating basis. The IABA holds regular meetings every two years to consider and adopt measures related to the Institute's policy and action. The EC acts on behalf of the IABA when the latter is not in session and holds regular meetings once a year.

In 2000, the OAS, by means of General Assembly Resolution 1728, recognized the IABA as the primary ministerial forum for analyzing and building consensus on policies and strategic priorities for the improvement of agriculture and rural life in the hemisphere.

The Institute's executive body is the General Directorate and its Headquarters is in San Jose, Costa Rica. The Director General of IICA is Dr. Chelston W.D. Brathwaite, a citizen of Barbados.

The Institute has a network of Offices in its 34 Member States and a Permanent Office for Europe, located in Madrid, Spain, which promotes relations with strategic partners. It also has an office in Miami, Florida, United States, which directs the Inter-American Program for the Promotion of Trade, Agribusiness and Food Safety.

IICA's mission is to provide innovative technical cooperation to its Member States with a view to achieving their sustainable development in aid of the peoples of the Americas. The Institute is seeking to assume a leadership role in the Americas in the areas of agriculture and rural development, and to become a partner of choice by virtue of the quality of the technical cooperation it provides to its Member States, and its contributions to sustainable agricultural development, food security and rural prosperity.

2. Implementation of resolutions and mandates

2.1 Summit of the Americas Process

The Ministerial Meetings on Agriculture and Rural Life held in the context of the Summit of the Americas Process serve as a hemispheric forum where the ministers of agriculture discuss and define priorities and strategic actions for the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu.

The adoption of the Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement Guatemala 2007 signified the renewal of the countries' commitment to the 2003-2015 AGRO Plan of Action and to the strengthening of the Ministerial Process through the two strategic guidelines that inspired that agreement: "(...) to promote with the agricultural stakeholders a broad-based approach to thinking and acting in agriculture and the rural milieu and, "working together" to improve agriculture and rural life in the Americas."

Both of these guidelines take on extraordinary importance and relevance given the situation experienced over the last two years where the prices of fuels and basic agricultural commodities and inputs have been unstable. This situation is compounded by the global economic and financial crisis which directly impacts agriculture, rural communities and food security.

This disquieting scenario is reflected in the logo for the Fifth Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Americas: "Securing our citizens' future by promoting human prosperity, energy security and environmental sustainability". That Summit will take place in Trinidad and Tobago in April of 2009. During 2008, the countries went a long way towards reaching agreement on the draft Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain which, in specific regard to agriculture and rural life, reflects the spirit and guidelines of the Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement Guatemala 2007.

Further to the agreement in question, IICA, as an institutional partner in the Summit Process, has supported the authorities of Trinidad and Tobago (country that holds the Chairmanship), the member countries and the OAS Summits of the Americas Secretariat with the preparations for this meeting. Specifically, IICA addressed enquiries from the countries in the Summit Implementation and Review Group (SIRG) and the Joint Summit Working Group (JSWG), bodies in charge of following up on the Summit process.

Likewise, IICA, as Secretariat for the Ministerial Meetings "Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas", extended the necessary support to the countries in publicizing and implementing the mandates of the Heads of State and Government and in publicizing and implementing the 2003-2015 AGRO Plan of Action.

As part of the process and in response to the concerns expressed throughout the hemisphere, as mentioned above, the Institute presented the its response to the food situation in the hemisphere to the Foreign Ministers of the Americas at the OAS session of

the General Assembly, held in Medellin, Colombia. IICA has also participated in all of the meetings of the SIRG, to which it has lent technical support.

Also, as part of this process, the Institute provided technical support to the Government of Jamaica with preparations for the Fifth Ministerial Meeting, to be held in Montego Bay in October of 2009. The theme of that meeting, “*Building Capacity for Enhancing Food Security and Rural Life in the Americas*” reflects the concern that has surfaced as a result of the current situation and the commitment to seek sustainable medium- and long-term solutions that are consonant with the purposes expressed in the logo for the Fifth Summit of the Americas, to be held in Port of Spain.

2.2 Governing Bodies of IICA

Twenty-eighth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee (EC)

The Twenty-eighth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee was held at IICA Headquarters in San Jose, Costa Rica, from July 22 through 24, 2008. Its membership comprised Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Dominica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Saint Lucia, United States of America and Venezuela.

The Committee adopted 17 resolutions on the following topics at the various working meetings:

- A. Institutional policy and cooperation services;
- B. Budgetary and financial matters;
- C. Advisory services to the Institute’s management; and
- D. Matters pertaining to IICA’s Governing Bodies and to the Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas.

Matters related to institutional policy and cooperation services

Under resolution No. 481, the EC approved the 2007 Annual Report of IICA. That Report outlines cooperation activities carried out by the Institute for implementation of the national, regional and hemispheric cooperation agendas.

With regard to the assessment of current technical expertise at IICA, under Resolution No. 483, the EC resolved to accept IICA’s report on progress with the implementation of actions intended to improve technical expertise at the Institute and instructed the Director General to continue with the activities for improving technical expertise at the Institute and to submit the reports on progress in this area.

In light of the rapid rise in food prices, the Executive Committee, aware of the causes of this rise and of the importance of strengthening agricultural productivity, efficiency and competitiveness in order to increase food production, adopted Resolution No. 482 in which it instructed IICA to take on the following responsibilities:

- (i) Monitor and expeditiously inform member countries about the food security situation as it evolves, including the determining factors and impacts;
- (ii) Provide, upon request, support and advice to Member States related to food security as well as revise and adjust accordingly the Institute's hemispheric, regional and national technical cooperation agendas through the appropriate IICA governing bodies to provide cooperation to all Member States in their efforts to confront the crisis;
- (iii) Provide technical cooperation and collaborate with the OAS and other strategic institutions on food security issues in the region to support the governments, the civil society and the private services sector to increase access to financial resources; and
- (iv) Promote and collaborate with strategic institutions to support training and technology transfer as one of the key mechanisms to increase food production, particularly to the small- and medium-sized farmers.

In view of the new challenges facing the countries of the Americas and of its conviction that cooperation between IICA and CATIE needed to be increased, the EC resolved in Resolution No. 496 to congratulate both Directors General on the progress achieved and to prepare a joint program of action for 2009 and 2010 for the next regular meeting of the EC.

In Resolution No. 485, the EC further recognized the importance of the recently inaugurated Center for Leadership in Agriculture for countries interested in developing expertise in their leaders. It also acknowledged the importance of the Member States and IICA promoting that Center.

Budgetary and financial matters

By means of Resolution No. 486, the EC approved the Institute's financial statements for 2007, as published in document IICA/CE/Doc.521 (08), "2007 Financial Statements of IICA and Report of the External Auditors". The administration also submitted to the EC the Fourteenth Annual Report prepared by the Audit Review Committee (ARC), which was also approved in Resolution No. 487.

Under Resolution No. 488 on the collection of quotas owed to the Institute and its financial situation, the EC thanked Member States for their efforts to honor their annual quota payments to the Institute and instructed the Director General to continue efforts to collect quotas.

Under Resolution No. 489, the EC, with express authorization from the IABA, approved the distribution of funds of the Special Budget for 2009 (overall allocation of US\$1,000,000), in accordance with Resolution IICA/JIA/Res.434(XIV-O/07).

Advisory services to the Institute's management

After reviewing the document IICA/CE/Doc.518 (08), "Report on the 2008 Meeting of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues (SACMI)", the EC accepted that

report under Resolution No. 491 and instructed the Director General to carry out the recommendations of that Commission.

At the special meeting of the SACMI, the Director General submitted a report on progress achieved by the Institute in implementing the recommendations of the external assessment to upgrade technical expertise at IICA that do not require decision by the EC and the IABA or additional resource contributions. In this regard, the EC decided to approve Resolution No. 490 approving the recommendations of the report and to instruct the General Directorate to give continuity to the Steering Committee and to include in the proposed Program Budget for 2010-2011 the necessary financial resources for doing so. The EC also decided to include Brazil, Chile and the United States of America in the Steering Committee.

The Governing Bodies of IICA and the Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas

Recognizing the importance of the Inter-American Awards in the Rural Sector and the need to improve the procedures for selecting candidates and for granting the awards, the EC adopted Resolution No. 494 containing a series of measures and actions to that effect.

By means of Resolution No. 493, the EC conferred the title of “Emeritus” on former staff members of the Institute: M. Susana Dancourt Iriarte, H. Arlington D. Chesney, P. Lizardo de las Casas, Ernani M. da C. Fiori, Guillermo Grajales and Víctor Manuel Tunarosa Murcia, who devoted a major part of their professional lives to service to the Institute and its Member States.

Finally, by means of Resolution No. 492, the EC accepted the reports prepared by the General Directorate on the status of the resolutions adopted by the IABA at its Fourteenth Regular Meeting, and by the Executive Committee at its Twenty-seventh Regular Meeting, and expressed satisfaction with the progress achieved.

2.3 Promoting women’s rights and gender equity and equality

The Institute promoted the consolidation of rural women producers’ organizations and networks in Mexico. In conjunction with the National Rural Women’s Network (Red Nacional de Mujeres Rurales -RENAMUR), it organized the international seminar entitled: “The role of rural women in reappraising the rural milieu”. The event was attended by 400 women participants from production organizations and 12 international lecturers. The “Ruta de la Sal” project was discussed and the decision was to systematize the experience with that project in Zapotitlan Salinas, in the State of Puebla, Mexico. The decision was also taken to sponsor a visit by the chair of RENAMUR to Costa Rica to learn about rural tourism models that might be able to contribute to improving the management of that project. In addition, IICA signed a general technical cooperation agreement with the Foundation 10,000 Women for Morelos to hold training activities.

In Central America, the Institute joined the Project on the Harmonization of Initiatives to Support Economic Progress for Rural Women in the Framework of the Value Chains in the Central American Region, working with the Council of Ministers of Women's Affairs in Central America (COMMCA), RUTA, GTZ, UNIFEM, UNDP, the Arias Foundation, CATIE, Women National Institute (INAMU), FODEMIPYME and the Project to Promote Sustainable Markets of the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development and EARTH University. As a result, it was possible to reach agreement on strategic actions and expected outcomes in major areas and thereby move ahead with applying the gender approach in value chains for the period 2008-2009, in projects promoted by partner institutions.

In January 2008, the Institute was involved in the organization of the National Sectoral Women's Seminar in Brazil. At that seminar, a document was prepared as part of the campaign for the equality of women and was presented to the Conferência Nacional de Desenvolvimento Rural Sustentável e Solidário (CNDRSS) (National Conference on Sustainable and Integral Rural Development -CNDRSS).

In Colombia, arrangements were made for executing the project, "Mujeres Ahorradoras en Action" (a project to promote savings among women), in its first year (2007-2008). The project has adapted successful experiences from countries, such as Peru and Bolivia. Led by the Presidential Agency for Social Action and International Cooperation, this project is one of the components of the government's Program for Generating Revenue which, in the framework of a technical cooperation agreement signed with IICA, operates in 11 municipalities, targeting 6,000 women beneficiaries. In this first year, major results were achieved in terms of generating income, providing training in social business praxis and developing programs aimed at elevating the dignity of women and ensuring that their communities and families recognize their true worth, thanks to a cross-cutting gender approach.

Finally, in Peru, technical and managerial expertise was upgraded in Peru for 100 women in the province of Huaura. As a result, they were able to improve the quality of the handicrafts they make with reeds, introduce innovations in their designs and increase their income levels. Participation by women who are part of the networks in the Technical and Surveillance Committees in the preparation of budgets for their districts was promoted as was reflection on the role of women in local development, with the participation of local authorities, NGOs and grassroots and production organizations.

3. Technical cooperation

3.1 *Implementing the hemispheric agenda*

In 2008, IICA focused on the priority technical cooperation topics established in the 2006-2010 MTP and others designed to meet the needs of the Member States. The Institute placed special emphasis on the situation created by volatile prices and unstable supplies of the main agricultural products, and the implications for food security. IICA studied the countries' responses to the situation and the policies they have adopted for dealing with it, and constantly monitored the trends in prices and markets. The institution's response was based on the use of differentiated approaches at the hemispheric, regional and national levels and emphasized the need to adopt medium- and long-term approaches to food insecurity rather than stopgap measures.

The Institute established the Center for Leadership in Agriculture; defined various aspects of the operation of the technical area of Natural Resources and Environmental Management; officially launched the Hemispheric Agroenergy and Biofuels Program; and, strengthened and consolidated the Biotechnology and Biosafety, Rural Agroindustry, Organic Agriculture and Agro-tourism programs.

IICA continued to give a high priority to efforts to reorient and transform the approaches and cooperation actions related to knowledge management, which has become the core concept around which technical cooperation revolves.

Another achievement was the launching of a new institutional Web portal, designed as a tool for the decentralized management of the information and knowledge resources of the Institute's Offices in its 34 member countries.

The existing communication, information and knowledge systems were also expanded and strengthened, and the number of active communities of practice increased. All this has resulted in a healthy institutional environment that allows the participants to exchange and share ideas, information, knowledge and good practices.

All the efforts undertaken, which are presented below, are part of the commitment to ensuring the quality and relevance of the technical cooperation services that IICA provides to its 34 Member States.

Repositioning agriculture and rural life

Institutional modernization

In 2008, one of the most important actions was the organization and implementation of the international workshop of experts entitled "Contribution of Agriculture and the Rural Milieu to Sustainable Development and Food Security in the New International Context." A number of international agencies and academic institutions discussed in depth the different definitions of the term "rural" and the role of agriculture in helping to reduce

poverty and promote rural prosperity. A document was presented at the workshop on the new international scenario for agriculture created by the volatile prices of commodities; and six critical issues related to the agricultural sector were defined that will form part of a wide-ranging study that IICA intends to carry out in 2009. Furthermore, a clear institutional position was established with regard to the question of agriculture's contribution to food security and development in Latin America and the Caribbean with a view to presenting a document on the subject at the Fifth Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Americas.

Over the course of the year, five technical forums were held on critical and emerging issues in agriculture and rural life:

- “The World Bank’s World Development Report 2008: Agriculture for Development,” which focused on the report’s implications for agriculture in the hemisphere;
- “Management of intellectual property rights: the case of regional public goods resulting from agricultural technology development;”
- “A new vision for dealing with zoonotic diseases;”
- “Agriculture and food security in the new international context,” which coincided with the international workshop of experts already mentioned; and
- “Direct foreign investment in Latin America and the Caribbean and its impact on agriculture and rural development.”

To support decision-making with respect to agricultural and rural policies, IICA developed methodologies designed to gauge the impact of volatile international commodity prices on food security in the countries, and to analyze the effects of international prices on rural incomes. The latter called for case studies to be carried out in five countries of the Americas.

The Institute published the digital version of the Report on the State of and Outlook for Agriculture for 2007. It was presented to the World Bank, the UN Council on Sustainable Development and the ministers who sit on the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC). In the case of the CAC, the event was organized jointly with the World Bank and used to disseminate the bank’s 2008 Development Report as well.

Leadership in agriculture and rural life

IICA implemented special programs for five new ministers of agriculture (Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Belize, Dominica and Jamaica) and forums for decision-makers. The participants were briefed about and discussed in-depth the current situation, the trends, and the main challenges facing agriculture at the global and hemispheric levels, as well as sustainable agriculture, agro-energy, biotechnology and leadership in agriculture.

Various events targeting young agricultural leaders took place. At the hemispheric level, the Forum for Young Leaders in Agriculture was held in Costa Rica. Eighty-one young people from IICA’s 34 member countries took part. The forum focused on topics related to leadership and values, rural development based on a territorial approach, competitive

agribusinesses and efficient methods for searching for agricultural information. One of the results of the hemispheric forum was the creation of an internship program, thanks to which young leaders in the Americas have the opportunity to increase their knowledge and experience in a country other than their own.

At the regional level, the First Forum for Young Leaders in the Andean Region took place in Quito, Ecuador. Some 25 young people from Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela took part. The agenda for the forum covered topics such as leadership and values, climate change and its impact on small-scale agriculture, agribusiness and food production and its bearing on rural well-being.

The Institute supported the implementation of other regional forums, such as the Second International Course on Leadership for the Development of Eco-agriculture and the First Central American Forum on Leadership in Agro-energy. At the national level, IICA organized or supported the implementation of a number of leadership and youth forums (in the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Venezuela, and Colombia).

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusiness

Policies and trade

With regard to **multilateral trade agreements and regional integration processes**, IICA monitored the negotiations and reported on developments via the Infoagro/Comercio system. Regular updates with the main news items and documents related to the negotiations were sent out to over 3500 registered users.

A training program on trade policy and integration was set up for officials from the public and private sectors in the Central Region. Under this program, the expertise of 45 Central American professionals was enhanced by means of two meetings - one in Costa Rica and one in Honduras.

As follow up to the **volatile prices of agricultural products and their bearing on food security**, IICA published a document entitled “Trend in the prices of agricultural products: possible impact on Latin American and Caribbean agriculture,” which was the theme of the first issue of the COMUNIICA magazine in 2008. The Institute also prepared two impact assessments, the first of which gauged the effects on the dairy sector in the Americas of factors such as climate change and higher grain prices. The second study analyzed the trade liberalization strategy implemented by Peru and Colombia.

IICA received a large number of invitations from a variety of institutions to speak on the subject of food security and present its findings. For example, Institute officials spoke at the Central American Academy of Costa Rica; the 38th World Congress of the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP), held in Poland; the International Center for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD), in Barcelona; the High-level Forum on Food Security and Youth organized by the Government of El Salvador and held in San Salvador; the Second Seminar on Agricultural Policies: “Food security in the Dominican Republic: turning the crisis in prices into a business opportunity,” organized by the Government of

the Dominican Republic; and the Dos Pinos Cooperative in Costa Rica and the COLANTA Cooperative in Colombia.

The Second International Forum on the Outlook for the Agricultural Trade Negotiations provided an opportunity to give a presentation on sensitive issues involved in the negotiation of the agreement of association between the Andean Community (CAN) and the European Union (EU), establish a plan for joint work with the CAN and deliver the following documents to support the CAN negotiators: a) Comparison of the prices of sensitive CAN and EU products; b) Estimate of the level of concessions made by the European Union in the agreements negotiated with Chile and Mexico; c) System for the continuous evaluation of offers and demands in the CAN-EU negotiations; and, d) Strategy for negotiating an agreement on bananas with the EU.

In support of the Aid for Trade (A4T) initiative, IICA took part in the workshop “Strengthening agricultural trade strategies: towards a Caribbean agenda,” held in Belize. At the workshop, the Institute presented projects to be financed by the European Union that were designed to mitigate the negative effects of trade liberalization on the Caribbean countries.

IICA supported the MIDA of Panama and the Rice Corporation of Costa Rica at various national sectoral workshops, presenting an analysis of the international trade conditions facing the rice sector.

Agribusiness and the competitiveness of agricultural enterprises

With regard to the **strengthening of business capabilities**, IICA continued to implement activities such as the Export Platforms program, the Program to Strengthen the Business Capabilities of Small- and Medium-scale Producers and Strengthening Businesses to Export. In the Dominican Republic, the Institute carried out the third export platform, focusing on New York as a market. In Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Paraguay and Ecuador, workshops and seminars were held to enhance business capabilities and exporting efforts.

The Institute also disseminated at least three editions of the “Agroenlace” radio program, presented a project to strengthen the business and export capabilities of small- and medium-sized enterprises in Haiti and assisted the Dominican Republic in analyzing development opportunities along the border with Haiti.

To support the **strengthening of the institutional framework for the development of agribusinesses**, IICA was instrumental in eight Caribbean countries joining the *Market Information Organization of the Americas* (MIOA) and took part in the organization’s seventh regular meeting in Panama City. The assessment of the agricultural information systems of the same eight countries also got under way and will conclude in the first quarter of 2009.

In Panama, the Institute supported the establishment of programs to improve the competitiveness of the rice and dairy chains. In Honduras, it helped to develop an

agricultural investment strategy and consolidate agri-food chains, while in the Dominican Republic, IICA presented a proposal for the development of innovative agribusinesses. In Trinidad and Tobago, the Institute also developed a capacity-building program for the National Agricultural Marketing and Development (NAMDEVCO).

In Central America, the Institute supported the implementation of the Central American Agricultural Policy (PACA) by presenting the profile of a project for the execution of agreements on competitiveness and the development of a strategy for the region's poultry sector, in coordination with the Federation of Poultry Farmers of Central America and the Caribbean (FEDAVICAC). In support of the Secretariat of the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC), IICA prepared a proposed regional strategy for improving corn production and productivity, which also provided input for the Emergency Plan to increase staple grain production in Central America.

A project entitled Global Linking Farmers to Markets was designed and presented to the GFAR and approved at that organization's most recent meeting, held in Maputo, Mozambique. In support of the countries of the Central Region, IICA submitted a proposal to the IDB for the Program to Improve the Competitiveness of Fruit-growing in Central America.

With a view to improving knowledge management and thereby achieving competitive agribusinesses, the Institute operated and improved the Infoagro/Agronegocios information platform and the MIOA's Web page. IICA also published three new volumes of the *Serie Agronegocios: Cuadernos para la Exportación*.

In response to the situation with regard to food security and volatile agricultural prices that developed in 2008, IICA participated in several events to learn about the needs and concerns of the different actors and share information and ideas about the impact of the situation and the role that agribusinesses could play in it. The Institute took part in a meeting of experts on the subject; gave a presentation to officials of Venezuela's Commodity Exchange on the market for agricultural commodities and another, on the food crisis, at the Third Meeting on Agricultural Innovation, coordinated by the National Forestry, Agriculture and Livestock Research Institute (INIFAP), in Mexico.

Rural agroindustry

In this field, IICA proposed hemispheric, regional and local actions to improve: i) links between small-scale producers and markets; ii) recognition of the importance of origin and traditions as part of the value and quality of foodstuffs; iii) the activation of localized agri-food systems; and, iv) the consolidation of economic enterprises in which the territorial approach to development is applied.

Ecuador, Nicaragua, Colombia, Panama and the Central American countries as a group all made progress with their efforts to formulate and implement policy tools in support of development and strengthen agroindustry and microenterprises. IICA also presented a proposal to the Undersecretary for the Sierra of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock

of Ecuador for implementing a capacity-building program for small rural entrepreneurs, to improve their chances of accessing national and international markets.

Some 150 organizations representing small businesses and 25 national and local organizations in production and trade chains (which represent 3000 rural families in Colombia, Peru and Mexico) improved their capacity to gain access to, and maintain a presence in, markets by participating in projects supported by the IICA Office in the countries mentioned (PADEMER in Colombia, the Red de Pueblos in Peru and PRODESIS in Mexico).

Working with universities and NGOs in Mexico and Peru, IICA increased and improved the supply of formal and informal training programs in the fields of rural agroindustry, localized agri-food systems and agro-tourism.

As a result of cooperation from IICA, methodologies and tools were developed and validated for activating clusters of rural agro-industries or localized agri-food systems, preparing agro-tourism development plans and identifying opportunities for economic enterprises based on the comparative advantages of territories. The instruments were validated and applied, respectively, in Chiapas (Mexico), the northern region of Costa Rica and provinces in the departments of Lima and Junin (Peru).

Thanks to various international, regional, national and local technical and scientific events that IICA promoted, over 1000 specialists, policy-makers, educators, researchers and students improved their understanding of the challenges and opportunities involved in promoting rural agroindustry.

IICA sensitized over 300 young leaders from 30 countries in the Americas to the different opportunities available for value-added economic enterprises in rural territories, their potential impact on local development and the role that the young people could play in tapping the opportunities and overcoming the constraints.

With regard to knowledge management, around 3500 people from 30 countries are constantly sharing information about technical matters, trade and services via the PRODARNET, SIALNET and AGROTUR interest lists.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

In the area of **sanitary and phytosanitary measures (SPS)**, IICA continued to implement the Initiative for the Americas, which began in 2002 and concluded with the October 2008 meeting of the WTO's SPS Committee. The 34 member countries took part in the last meeting. Six make up a support group, while the other 28 benefited from the program. The Initiative led to the structuring of institutional and informal SPS coordination mechanisms in most countries of the Americas. It also raised awareness of the importance of this forum and the need to address SPS issues to protect human, animal and plant health and ensure uninterrupted access to world markets for agricultural products. The international community praised the Initiative and 21 member countries and the Secretary of the WTO's SPS Committee congratulated IICA publicly for its work.

The Institute began to implement an institution-building project related to SPS, financed by the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF). As part of the project, the new IICA tool *Performance, Vision and Strategy in Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures* (PVS/SPS) was applied in 24 member countries. Reports were produced on each country, in which the Institute identified SPS needs and provided information for the preparation of 24 national and four regional SPS project profiles.

As part of a wide-ranging project financed by the USDA, designed to encourage the countries of the Americas to participate in the international standard-setting processes related to animal health (World Organization for Animal Health - OIE), plant health (International Plant Protection Convention - IPPC) and food safety (Codex Alimentarius), IICA offered courses in collaboration with the OIE, FAO and the Plant Health Committee of the Southern Cone (COSAVE). Between 500 and 600 participants were trained at each course in the 32 countries.

With regard to **institutional modernization**, the PVS tools were applied in the veterinary services of Jamaica and several Brazilian states, plant health services in Costa Rica and food safety services in Bolivia. IICA also published the new PVS tool on sanitary and phytosanitary measures and a manual on the use of the PVS tools. In addition, the scope of the PVS tool was expanded to include the design and implementation of projects to modernize the veterinary and plant health services of Paraguay and the veterinary services of Jamaica and Costa Rica.

With regard to **leadership in food safety**, under the agreement signed in 2007 with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (USA), IICA enhanced the expertise of all its AHFS, food safety and risk assessment specialists, thereby enabling them to provide more effective technical cooperation in this area.

In collaboration with Michigan State University and Earth University, IICA held a workshop in Costa Rica entitled "Thinking globally and acting locally." This paved the way for a line of hemispheric thinking aimed at promoting agricultural health measures in the communities to increase surveillance and early warnings when outbreaks of pests and diseases occur. Five projects were also financed to promote work at the community level in Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Honduras and Mexico.

At the international level, IICA assisted the Codex Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean (CCLAC) in pinpointing opportunities to increase the participation of the countries of the Americas in the Codex Alimentarius standard-setting process. As a result, the countries' participation is expected to increase in 2009.

By beginning to distribute educational material for primary schools donated by the USDA, IICA expanded the scope of its food safety work to include education with a view to raising consumers' awareness of the importance of good practices in the hygienic handling of foodstuffs.

To improve **the task of dealing with emerging issues and emergencies**, the Observatory on Emerging Issues and Emergencies in the field of AHFS now has the capacity to alert

member countries to officially confirmed outbreaks of pests and diseases, incidents of food-borne diseases and news about trends that could affect trade, such as possible regulatory changes in importing countries.

Implementation of an extensive project designed to reinforce the epidemiological surveillance of animal diseases also got under way in the Caribbean, in collaboration with the USDA/APHIS, CIRAD (France) and the Caribbean Animal Health Network (CaribVet). As a result, a network of ten epidemiologists and para-epidemiologists was established in nine Caribbean countries.

Promoting stronger rural communities

With regard to the **formulation and management of policies and policy instruments and tools for strengthening the institutional framework** of the Member States, IICA helped formulate the Agro-environmental Regional Strategy (ERAS) in Central America and the Rural Development Strategy of Ecuador's Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion (MIES). The Institute presented the evaluation of the PRODERT program to the institutional partners in Honduras, and provided technical guidelines to the National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI) in Venezuela for institutional reform and technological innovation policies for small-scale agriculture. IICA was also involved in reformulating the logical framework of the CAN's Andean Rural Development Forum Project.

In the area of **capacity building for public and private actors**, in Ecuador, the Institute formulated a proposal for training in sustainable rural development (SRD) based on a territorial approach for the teams of technicians and professionals of the Directorate of Rural Development of the MIES. In Peru, IICA trained the entire technical staff of the Ministry for Women and Social Development (MIMDES) and sensitized the Association of Peruvian Entrepreneurs to the importance of sustainable rural development.

In Bolivia, the Institute sponsored and participated in the International Seminar on Approaches to Rural and Territorial Development, held at the Universidad Mayor de San Andres, in collaboration with *Ayuda en Accion*, the Embassy of Denmark and the Latin American Center for Rural Development. IICA presented and validated the module on agro-environmental public policies at the Second Course on Agro-environmental Policy, held in Costa Rica with participants from three rural territories.

In Venezuela, the Institute implemented two training workshops on concepts and tools for territorial rural development, targeting the technical teams of partner institutions that work in the semi-arid territory of Lara State. IICA also supported the launch of the Permanent Forum on Rural Development and Food Security in Honduras, organized by the Secretariat of Agriculture and Livestock in collaboration with the UNDP, the Network of Universities, and the Food Security and Rural Development Network.

At the CAN's request, a teleconference involving representatives of the Andean Rural Development Forum was held. During the teleconference, IICA presented its methodology for systematizing SRD experiences. The Institute supported the implementation of the

Chilean Rural Development Congress, in collaboration with the Regional Government of the Metropolitan Region, which led to a national network of social and institutional rural development actors being organized. IICA also provided training in leadership for SRD in international forums of young leaders of agriculture, organized in Costa Rica and Ecuador by the Institute's Center for Leadership.

In 2008, IICA published, and distributed in 16 Member States, a series of methodologies and tools for implementing the SRD territorial approach. Three of these were especially important, namely: a) an updated version of the methodology for planning SRD in rural territories; b) an updated version of the methodology for estimating the level of sustainable development in rural territories, including applications in Brazil, Colombia and Peru; and, c) a methodology for systematizing SRD experiences and tools using the territorial approach as input for the establishment of a knowledge management system in rural development. The Institute also prepared a tool for identifying and selecting SRD experiences at the hemispheric level.

To support the **strategic partnerships**, IICA provided technical contributions on the subject of natural resources and agriculture over the course of working meetings with the University of Nebraska. Working with institutional partners, the Institute formulated the document-project "Partnership against Climate Change" and identified opportunities for joint work with CATIE and other partners, such as the Tropics Foundation, the American Forum on Climate Change and Capacity Building International. The latter is comprised of GTZ, the KFW, the CIM and INVENT.

With regard to **information and knowledge management for rural development**, IICA helped consolidate the SRD Forum in Brazil by contributing content for three activities on technical matters. The Institute held a workshop with the team of the Peruvian Observatory on Chains and Territories, to share technical views and collect information with a view to applying the experience in Bolivia and Ecuador. IICA prepared a case study on the experience of the SISAL territory, in the State of Bahia, Brazil, which was presented at the International Congress on Clusters, held in Chihuahua, Mexico.

Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment

At the 25th meeting of the Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission (COFLAC), which took place in Quito, Ecuador, IICA worked with delegates from 28 countries on the regional agenda for natural resources, ecosystems and climate change. The issues of food security and poverty reduction were incorporated. During the meeting, IICA and CATIE met with the Forestry Directors of Central America to determine areas for joint collaboration at the regional and national levels.

The Institute carried out an extensive sensitization campaign on natural resources and environmental management via missions to Mexico, El Salvador, Panama, Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Ecuador and Venezuela. The missions helped promote the alignment of public policies for technical cooperation and develop indicators of sustainability. IICA also entered into strategic partnerships, and bolstered existing ones, in the area of natural

resources and environmental management with CATIE, the University of Nebraska, the EARTH University and Chapingo Graduate School. It defined new and complementary topics for joint work with all of them.

The natural resource management component of an IICA project for Haiti was prepared, entitled “Restoration of natural resources of ecosystems as a means of adapting to and mitigating climate change.” Funding of US\$100 million was secured for the work.

In Venezuela, the Institute identified areas for joint action with *Petroleos de Venezuela Sociedad Anonima* (PDVSA) and is negotiating a technical collaboration agreement that includes environmental topics and the restoration of ecosystems. In the state of Trujillo, IICA worked with the Foundation for the Development of Science and Technology in the West-Central Region of Venezuela (FUNDACITE) on the incorporation of an environmental and natural resource conservation component into project proposals involving alternative tourism, potato production, micro-watershed restoration, community nurseries and the strengthening of production chains.

In Ecuador, the Institute and the Ministry of Agriculture drew up a proposal for technical cooperation on commercial forestry plantations and reforestation to restore ecosystems. IICA consolidated the program “Diversification of the food supply for vulnerable populations,” which aims to take advantage of technological tools for native crops in the Andean Region. The Institute also identified areas for technical cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture of Ecuador through PROFORESTAL, and laid the groundwork for a cooperation agreement to be funded with resources from the Ecuadorian Government.

In Bolivia, IICA revised the proposal concerning the Norte Paceño reference territory; provided input for natural resource issues and the diversification of production in the territory’s ecosystems; and transferred information from FAO about applied examples of fire management systems in Peru and Guatemala.

In Colombia, the Institute helped strengthen the areas of natural resources and environmental management for the Tequendama territory. In the Bahamas, it began identifying proposed productive projects for the restoration, conservation, protection and production of natural resources of the country’s ecosystems to combat climate change.

IICA provided logistical support for the initiative of the Technical Office of the National Commission for Biodiversity Management of the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Telecommunications (MINAET) of Costa Rica, specifically for the implementation of the workshop “Benefits derived from the use of natural, genetic and biochemical resources.” IICA gave the keynote address and took advantage of the event to disseminate the results of the research and bio-prospection projects, as well as information about the benefits derived from the use of the resources in question. During the workshop, the participants assessed a representative sample of research and bio-prospection projects. Other important presentations made included “Food insecurity and the risks posed by climate change,” at Chapingo Graduate School (Montecillos, Mexico), and “Management tools and tools for implementing actions aimed at the conservation, restoration, protection and production of

the natural resources of forest ecosystems in the territories of Forest Management Units,” at the Third National Meeting on Regional Planning, in Guadalajara, Mexico.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development

Technology and innovation

With regard to the **strengthening of the hemispheric system of cooperation among countries for technological innovation in agriculture** and its links with the international research system, IICA strengthened the hemispheric dialogue for the design of policies and the development of a regional technological innovation agenda under the aegis of FORAGRO, whose Technical Secretariat is operated by the Institute. With Uruguay’s NARI and other partners, IICA held the Fifth International Meeting of FORAGRO, Montevideo 2008, whose theme was “Institutional innovations for agriculture with knowledge in the Americas for the 21st century.” The principal agreements reached were set out in the Declaration of Montevideo 2008.

As the Technical Secretariat of FORAGRO, IICA facilitated the dialogue aimed at securing a renewed presence in LAC of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). The Institute also spearheaded the preparation of a document on the CGIAR’s vision in LAC and proposals for achieving a more active presence of the organization in the region.

IICA strengthened the mechanism for funding agricultural research and innovation, known as FONTAGRO, by signing a new agreement with the IDB for the period 2008-2009. Thirty professionals from a number of different countries received training at the course-workshop “Enhancing Capabilities for the Design of Projects for FONTAGRO’s Calls for Proposals.” IICA also supported the organization of a technical follow-up workshop, in which participants from 15 countries received up-to-date information about the status of 23 projects financed by FONTAGRO and shared information about the findings of the research and innovations of the projects supported by the Fund.

Under the PROCIs and equivalent programs, reciprocal cooperation among countries was strengthened. PROCINORTE and the SICTA implemented strategic planning processes to boost and renew cooperation. IICA and the Andean countries signed a new agreement for the continuation of PROCIANDINO and the program’s MTP was drawn up. The latter includes regional cooperation actions on food security, climate change, institution building, agricultural biotechnologies and agro-energy.

With a view to developing a **prospective vision of technology and innovation in agriculture**, IICA and the IFPRI updated information related to the indicators for science and technology (ASTI) in Central America and other LAC countries. These indicators include information about the institutional actors of technology research and development and the funds and human resources invested in such activities.

The Institute prepared the 2008 report on the state and performance of agriculture in LAC from the technological perspective, to support the design of technology policies and decision-making processes for the management of technological innovation. The report highlights the challenges facing technological innovation and institutional innovation in the current environment, characterized by volatile food prices and growing demand for technologies for dealing with climate change. The report also underlines the need to take advantage of the increasing readiness of governments to promote technological services for agriculture, in relation to both technology development and the reorganization of agricultural extension.

Three results stand out in the area of **institutional modernization for agricultural technology and innovation**. Firstly, IICA helped complete the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD) for LAC. According to the assessment, over the last 60 years, the knowledge, science and technology system has been successful in generating knowledge and technological innovations but greater efforts are needed to tap the potential of agricultural knowledge, science and technology for improving local living standards and reducing hunger and poverty. The latter could be achieved by designing and implementing an economically sustainable environmental and social development model. IICA also used various means to disseminate the results, including a videoconference in which six authors of the assessment interacted with over 100 participants in five countries.

Secondly, with regard to the management of intellectual property, the Institute conducted a study that describes the different mechanisms for protecting the regional public goods produced by the research and innovation processes carried out under the aegis of the PROCIs and FONTAGRO. The study recommends that the countries develop strategies for sensitizing and training researchers and innovators, and promote a policy for managing goods that can be protected, including controls to ensure compliance. Input for fine-tuning the assessment was obtained through dialogue at an international workshop and a technical forum on the management of intellectual property with respect to regional public goods.

Finally, with support from the GFAR IICA conducted a study entitled “Technological innovations for production systems based on family agriculture.” The findings were discussed at a workshop held during the meeting of FORAGRO. The participants underscored the need to prepare methodologies for gauging the impact of family agriculture programs and provide more information about the institutional efforts of the countries in aid of that agriculture subsector.

With regard to the **promotion of information and knowledge management**, the Institute continued to develop the INFOTEC system for sharing scientific and technological information under the aegis of FORAGRO-IICA. It also continued to promote, via different media, the concept of information management as a crucial aspect of innovation. The website (<http://www.iica.int>) was used to facilitate the public’s access to information that is important for technical cooperation in technology and innovation.

Biotechnology and biosafety

In partnership with the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications (ISAAA), and with collaboration from the World Bank's Global Development Learning Network (GDLN), a videoconference was held to disseminate up-to-date information about the development and adoption of agricultural biotechnology.

IICA continued to strengthen its Scientific Information System on Biotechnology and Biosafety (SIBB); the number of registered users (including representatives of the public, private and academic sectors) increased by 100.

Food security became a major concern during 2008, so special emphasis was placed on the needs identification exercise carried out in 2007. This led to the conceptualization and discussion of a project aimed at diversifying the supply of food for vulnerable populations in the Andean Region through the application of widely used biotechnological tools in culturally important foods.

In the Andean, Central and Southern regions, the Institute made progress in formulating regional strategies and regional projects for the development and appropriate use of biotechnology and biosafety techniques. This made it possible to share experiences and information related to the adoption of biotechnology and biosafety components among Member States. In Paraguay, for example, IICA provided technical cooperation to build capacity in intellectual property in cutting-edge biotechnologies and supported the development of the academic profile needed for a university course offering a specialization in biotechnology.

IICA also organized a preparatory hemispheric technical meeting prior to the negotiations on the Cartagena Protocol (CPB) at COP-MOP 4, which took place in Bonn, Germany. The aim was to share final information, with the forum set to discuss articles 15, 16, 18, 23, 26, 27, 30, 33 and 35. The meeting was held with financial support from AG Canada, the USDA and the Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO). As a result, delegates from 15 countries in the hemisphere were able to take part.

Working with the abovementioned collaborators, the Institute also continued to prepare the countries for the negotiations of the working group on liability and redress. To that end, IICA organized a hemispheric meeting in Costa Rica to prepare for the global meeting convened by the Secretariat of the CPB for February 2009, in Mexico City. The objective of this series of international meetings was to involve the countries more closely in the process of negotiating the articles of the CPB.

With the same objective in mind, the Institute produced a series of technical publications on the state of biotechnology in different parts of the hemisphere. These documents also gave details of its impact, the policies implemented, the opportunities available, the risks faced, the challenges posed and the level of adoption. Furthermore, the publications analyze the implications for the countries of the agreements adopted in international forums, such as those related to the Cartagena Protocol and Codex Alimentarius.

Agro-energy and biofuels

On instructions from the Executive Committee, IICA set up a technical team to implement the Hemispheric Agro-energy and Biofuels Program. Among other things, this led to the establishment of biofuels projects in Jamaica, training in the construction and maintenance of bio-digesters for producers in Belize and Saint Lucia and, jointly with the OLADE and the FAO, the holding of the Third Latin American and Caribbean Seminar on Biofuels, in the Dominican Republic. During the meeting, IICA signed a letter of understanding with OLADE that establishes mechanisms for technical cooperation between the two organizations and proposes the design and execution of a joint regional biofuels program.

The Institute also participated in the International Conference on Biofuels held in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and discussed the possibility of carrying out joint agro-energy activities with the Brazilian Cooperation Agency. In Colombia, following a presentation on the subject during the event “Agroenergy in the Andean Region: Current Situation and Sharing Experiences in Science and Technology,” progress was made in defining the terms for providing technical training jointly with Colombia’s CORPOICA.

IICA also gave a presentation at the Canadian Young Farmers Forum on how to ensure that agro-energy production does not undermine food production. This led to the signing of a collaboration agreement with the colleges for the dissemination of experiences related to the use of waste to generate energy and the production of biodiesel from algae.

In Costa Rica, the Institute gave several presentations and a lecture on the potential of agro-energy and biofuels to stimulate agriculture and increase producers’ incomes, and the options available. The presentations targeted managerial and technical personnel of the Ministry of Science and Technology and the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Telecommunications, academics from the University of Costa Rica, officials from the oil refinery, agro-industrialists and producers.

Organic agriculture

With support from the Ministry of Agriculture of Peru and SENASA, IICA held the “First Meeting of the Network of Competent Authorities in Organic Agriculture in the Americas” in that country. IICA operates the Executive Secretariat of the Network, which the Executive Committee strengthened by means of its Resolution No. 484, in which it created the Inter-American Commission for Organic Agriculture as a mechanism for coordinating development of the activity in the hemisphere. The Institute drafted the first version of the Commission’s statutes and created a private portal to enable the Network to disseminate information and experiences and discuss topics of interest. The countries also used the portal to reach a consensus on the development of organic agriculture in LAC and harmonized the proposed Central American and Dominican regulations for organic agriculture.

The Institute prepared the project profile “Reinforcing the institutional framework of organic agriculture in the Central American region,” which was presented to the Austrian Development Cooperation Agency.

At the country level, the following results were especially noteworthy: i) Peru: an agreement was signed with the Ministry of Agriculture to support the preparation of a plan for the development of the Pachacamac district of Lima, which the local authorities declared an Organic District; ii) Paraguay: the Institute secured the endorsement of the sector authorities for a proposal to implement the National Strategy for the Development of Organic and Agro-ecological Agriculture, for which IICA will be providing advisory assistance; iii) Chile: IICA and the authorities of the ODEPA agreed to support the preparation and execution of a strategic plan for developing organic agriculture in that country; iv) Honduras: the Institute trained personnel to conduct assessments and devise national and political strategies for the development of organic agriculture; and, v) Argentina: IICA and the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food (SAGPyA) agreed to base the Southern Node of the Inter-American Commission for Organic Agriculture in that country and give priority to the implementation of the Node's Information Resource Center.

External financing and investment projects

The following tables contain a summary, by region, of the most important investment programs and projects that IICA spearheaded during 2008.

Table 1. Programs and projects with IICA participation in the Andean Region

Name of program or project	Result of IICA's cooperation
ACCESO Program, Phase II (2008-2011): Andean Countries Cocoa Export Support Opportunities	The terms of reference were prepared and resources contributed for the consultancy that formulated the profile of the program presented to the IDB/MIF to continue the process of negotiating non-reimbursable funds for the implementation of the project. Participants: Andean DORI, ACCESO Program, External Financing and Investment Project Directorate (DFEPI)
Diversification of the Supply of Food for Vulnerable Groups by using Technological Tools in Crops Native to the Andean Region	A concept paper was prepared in order to continue the participatory process of formulating the project with key actors in the Andean Region. Participants: Andean Directorate of Operations (DORI), IICA/Technology and Innovation, DFEPI
Investment for the Integrated Management of Water Resources and Modernization of Production of the Puerto Cura Project in Peru	A proposal was prepared to support the Regional Government of Tumbes with the arrangements for, and organization of, an identification mission to initiate the process of formulating the program. Participants: IICA/Peru, Government of Tumbes, DFEPI
Sustainable Rural Development in Venezuela	IICA supported the process of preparing a general agreement and a technical cooperation project to assist the Social Development Management Unit of the PDVSA with sustainable rural development in selected social districts. Participants: IICA/Venezuela, PDVSA, MPPP, IICA/Natural Resources and Environment, DFEPI
Universities, Rural Development and Territories: Bases for Promoting a Sustainable Rural Development Strategy in the Countries of the Andean Region	A profile was prepared in order to continue the participatory process of formulating the project and for presentation to donors, with a view to obtaining pre-investment and/or investment resources. Participants: Andean DORI, universities, DFEPI
Food Security in El Oro Province, Ecuador	A food security project was prepared under the investment program for El Oro province. Participants: IICA/Ecuador, Prefecture of El Oro and <i>Universidad Técnica de Machala</i> , DFEPI
Institution Building of the National Agricultural Health Service (SENASAG) of Bolivia	IICA prepared a project document for the MDRAyMA to use in its negotiations with the IDB aimed at securing resources for the execution of the activity; and reviewed and adjusted the SENASAG's portfolio of projects, together with the PL480 and VIPFE. Participants: IICA/Bolivia, SENASAG, MDRAyMA, SAIA, DFEPI

MAGAP projects in the Sierra Region of Ecuador	Support for the Office's technical team in preparing: a) an Export Platform for Small-scale Producers; and, b) Implementation of the Livestock Program (dairy and dual-purpose farming) to be presented for financing to SENPLADES. Participants: IICA/Ecuador, MAGAP, DFEPI
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Source: The Directorate of External Financing and Investment Projects (DFEPI)

Table 2. Programs and projects with IICA participation in the Caribbean Region

Name of program or project	Result of IICA's cooperation
Extension and Technological Adaptation in Agriculture in the OECS Countries	The Institute began formulating the project with a view to presenting it to the INTAREG donation fund (European Union/France). Participants: IICA/OECS, MAG/OECS, CIRAD, DFEPI
Modernization of the Veterinary Services of the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands of Jamaica	The project was prepared and delivered to the MAG to support the negotiations aimed at securing resources from the Government. Participants: MAG, IICA/Jamaica, Caribbean DORI, SAIA, DFEPI

Source: The Directorate of External Financing and Investment Projects (DFEPI)

In the Caribbean Region, IICA and the Ministry of Agriculture of Haiti formulated an extensive portfolio of projects entitled "Investing for the future of food security in Haiti." Eighteen projects included in the portfolio were presented at the meeting of the Friends of Haiti in Washington D.C., organized by the OAS, and to the World Bank, the IDB, the European Union, CIDA, OXFAM and the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB). The projects include: (i) the re-launching of agriculture, (ii) Pro-Huerta, (iii) food security, (iv) development and planting of 500 hectares of mango trees, (v) agricultural vocational training, (vi) reforestation with timber-yielding species and timber production, (vii) development of fruit growing and fruit plantations (1200 hectares) and, (viii) rehabilitation of irrigation for small-scale producers.

Table 3. Programs and projects with IICA participation in the Central Region

Name of program or project	Result of IICA's cooperation
Modernization and Competitive Diversification of Coffee Growing and Food Security in Nicaragua	A proposal was prepared containing a profile of the program, organizational arrangements and a budget, in order to formulate the feasibility study that the MAGFOR presented to CABEI to support the request for pre-investment resources. Participants: IICA/Nicaragua, MAGFOR, DFEPI
Establishment of a System for the Purchase of Milk based on Quality in Panama	A draft version of the program profile was prepared. It will be used to formulate an investment proposal to help producers improve their production and productivity and milk quality. Participants: IICA/Panama, MIDA, IICA/Agribusiness, DFEPI
Investment for the Comprehensive Development of Powdered Milk Production in Nicaragua (Regional Program)	A proposal was prepared containing a profile of the program, organizational arrangements and a budget, in order to formulate the feasibility study that the MAGFOR presented to CABEI to support the request for pre-investment resources. Participants: IICA/Nicaragua, MAGFOR, CONACAFE, DFEPI
Program to enable small-scale producers to supply basic grains to the World Food Programme (WFP)	The technical and economic proposal requested by WFP was prepared for direct purchases from organizations of small-scale basic grain producers in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua. Participants: Central DORI, IICA Offices in participating countries, regional specialists and DFEPI
Modernization of Quarantine Control Posts in the Peripheral Customs Houses of the Central American Customs Union (UAC)	Advanced profile prepared so the CAC can support the negotiations to secure resources to enhance the design and/or execution of project components. Participants: CAC Secretariat, OIRSA, AHFS, DFEPI
Reinforcing the Institutional Framework of Organic Agriculture in the Central American Region	A project was prepared that was presented to Austria's cooperation agency (ADA) to secure a donation. Participants: Central DORI, IICA Hemispheric Organic Agriculture Program and DFEPI
Central American Traceability Project	An advanced profile was prepared that is being used to continue the participatory process of formulating the project with officials from institutions

	in the countries. Participants: AHFS, IICA Offices, AHFS institutions of the countries, CAC Secretariat, DFEPI
Territorial Development in the Belen-Gualcho Municipal District, in Honduras	Identification mission carried out and proposal prepared for the design of the investment program for the territorial development of the municipality. Participants: IICA/Honduras, Belén-Gualcho Municipal District, DFEPI
Strengthening the National Animal Health Service (SENASA) of Costa Rica	Advanced profile prepared to enable the SENASA to support the negotiations aimed at securing resources to enhance the design and/or execution of project components. Participants: IICA/Costa Rica, SENASA, AHFS, DFEPI

Source: The Directorate of External Financing and Investment Projects (DFEPI)

In addition to these programs and projects, IICA designed technical and economic bids with the German consortium GOPA Consultants that were sent to ACICAFOC/CICA for analysis, with a view to conducting a feasibility study on the investment program to complement the Integrated Management of Ecosystems among Indigenous Peoples and Communities (PMIIE) in Central America. The Institute also prepared the 2008-2012 Public Investment Strategy for the Agri-food Sector with a Production Chains Approach, for the SAG of Honduras.

Table 4. Programs and projects with IICA participation in the Southern Region

Name of program or project	Result of IICA's cooperation
Prevention of Avian Influenza	A proposal was prepared concerning the strategy for implementing and organizing the project. Participants: Southern DORI, IICA/AHFS, CAS, FAO, OIE, CVP, World Bank, PANAFTOSA, DFEPI
Strengthening the Institutional Framework of the Federation of Rural Associations of MERCOSUR (FARM)	A proposal and work plan were prepared to improve the performance of agri-food chains and agribusinesses in the MERCOSUR member countries. Participants: FARM, Southern DORI, DFEPI
Strengthening the Plant Health Service (SENAVE) of Paraguay	An advanced profile was prepared to enable the SENAVE to support the negotiations aimed at securing resources to enhance the design and/or execution of the project's components. Participants: IICA/Paraguay, SENAVE, AHFS, DFEPI

Source: The Directorate of External Financing and Investment Projects (DFEPI)

Finally, it is worth noting that in the Southern Region, IICA and the Government of Canelones in Uruguay prepared a proposal for the implementation of a new stage of the Sustainable Development Plan for Northeast Canelones, and training and modernization actions in the area of food quality and safety.

3.2 Implementing the regional agendas

Andean Region

The governments of this region have continued to pay special attention to agriculture, considered as the main engine for growing the economy. Notably, resources earmarked for technical cooperation agreements were increased, thereby making it necessary for the IICA Offices in Colombia and Peru to place emphasis on strategic planning and institutional management processes and for the Offices in Venezuela and Ecuador to implement office improvement plans to adjust to and meet the demand for cooperation and adhere to the guidelines of efficient work, quality in the delivery of services and transparency in the use of resources.

IICA was instrumental in creating and launching the “Andean Alliance for Dialogue on and Reassessment of Agriculture and Rural Life”. Leaders from the following, among other, sectors were involved: technological research and innovation, agricultural health, food safety, financing, integration, rural development, university education, biotechnology and biosafety, agro-production chains, sectoral policies, rural women’s affairs, agribusiness, rural youth, producers and indigenous women.

With regard to institutional coordination, ties with universities in the region offering majors in agriculture, livestock or forestry were revamped; also, fora promoted in each of the countries provided the basis for a proposal known as “Universities and territories”, which was presented to the Annual Meeting of FRADIEAR, held in Caracas in 2008, to validate it and initiate contact for financing it.

In an effort to address the effects of climate change in the Region, a project entitled “Diversification of food supply for vulnerable populations using technological tools in native products from the Andean Region was formulated in the wake of interaction among relevant players in the countries. Initial steps were made to secure financing for that project.

In the area of rural development, young rural leaders were one segment of the population that was the focus of special attention. The Andean Regional Forum of Young Rural Leaders was held in Quito for 25 such young leaders. The aim was to discuss the topics of leadership, climate change, food security and rural opportunities. Starting with this group, territorial fora were held, as in the state of Portuguesa in Venezuela and in the department of Guajira in Colombia. Young leaders from the Wayuu ethnic group participated in this latter forum. Also noteworthy is the success achieved in linking and identifying stakeholders in the areas of micro-insurance and micro-credit and the review of background information on the subject of agricultural insurance.

The issue of biotechnology was the focus of special attention, given the needs of the countries and, especially, of the members of the Andean Alliance, and the demand expressed in the support for the National Biotechnology Strategy for Ecuador, in the city of Quevedo. Resources were also raised to reinforce the IICA Office in Ecuador by adding a specialist and thereby supporting the region with projects such as the project for diversification of food supply.

The Executive Committee of PROCIANDINO held its special meeting at which it approved its 2008-2011 Medium-Term Plan. The new 2008-2011 PROCIANDINO agreement was signed in Quito.

Within the framework of PROCITROPICOS, the possibility of cultivating *Jatropha curcas* in North, Central and South America was explored and a proposal for launching a project to promote cultivation of it was prepared. Support was also provided to identify and evaluate the main collections of existing genetic resources in the eight countries and the corresponding document was presented to *Global Trust*.

The positioning of IICA in the area of AHFS was consolidated as a result of the reinforced and improved capacity of AHFS national services in the region to implement the provisions of the WTO SPS Agreement, as well as the decisions adopted by the international reference organizations: the OIE, the IPPC and Codex Alimentarius. Support was provided to the countries of the region for the design and execution of projects to promote the introduction of quality and safety management systems (GAP, GMP, HACCP, Traceability) in agro-production for their competitive development.

In the agribusiness area, noteworthy is the progress made by Ecuador and Colombia in formulating and applying policy instruments for agro-industry and micro-enterprise. In Colombia and Peru, capacity to access and maintain a footing on markets was improved as a result of cooperation provided to the PADEMÉR projects in Colombia and the People's Network in Peru. In the Departments of Lima and Junin, in Peru, methodologies and instruments for activating clusters of rural agro-industries and for identifying opportunities for economic undertakings based on comparative advantages of the territories were developed and validated.

Upon the satisfactory conclusion of the ACCESO project to support cocoa producers in four countries of the region, a joint effort was undertaken with CICAD/OAS for preparation of a funding proposal to be presented to the IDB.

In the area of policy and trade, a study was conducted to gauge the impact in territories of the increase in international prices on agriculture-related activities, natural resources and food consumption. The study of factors that affected production, costs, the profit margin and food consumption is now available, as is the analysis of measures adopted by producers to face and/or take advantage of the change in prices that impacted agriculture worldwide in 2008. What is more, governments and agricultural leaders involved in the agricultural negotiations now have the necessary information to evaluate on a continuing basis the possible impact of commitments resulting from international agricultural negotiations and their implications for the agricultural sector.

Caribbean Region

Against the backdrop of the global food crisis that came into prominence in 2008, IICA facilitated dialogue and coordinated interventions that could meaningfully contribute to the creation of a more enabling environment for food and nutrition security in the Caribbean.

IICA worked actively to promote and position the Agro-Matrix as a theoretically sound and practical tool to guide the process of repositioning the sustainable development of agriculture and rural life in the Caribbean. Key stakeholders in Member States were exposed to the Agro-Matrix as the basis of the 2003-2015 AGRO Plan at the regional and national seminars held in 2007.

At a St. Lucia meeting of an ECS consortium led by IICA and CIRAD, the principles of the Agro-Matrix as the basis for a more comprehensive information system were incorporated into a subregional project aimed at developing observatories in the OECS. "Agro-Matrix,

more than a concept” was drafted as work-in-progress to document all of the Caribbean’s experiences to date in promoting and applying the principles of the Agro-Matrix.

In order to highlight success stories that promote agriculture in a more positive light, instead of the usual reports that emphasize falling indicators, IICA explored the situation and outlook of the sector and included it in the document to be distributed in 2009.

Over 20 participants from public-sector institutions in Guyana, Jamaica, Haiti, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago, as well as the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI), CARICOM Secretariat and FAO, attended a regional workshop entitled “Sweet Potato - A Cornerstone for Food Security in the Caribbean.” As a result of the workshop convened by IICA in Trinidad and Tobago, three regional projects were proposed to enhance the productivity, production and market development of sweet potato, as well as institutional development and capacity building for knowledge management.

Under the CARICOM Regional Transformation Program, and in support of the implementation of the Jagdeo Initiative, the Caribbean Agribusiness Association (CABA) was appointed Lead Agency for the CARICOM Technical Sub-committee mandated to address issues related to marketing and the fragmented private agribusiness sector in the Caribbean.

In this regard, the Institute was proactive in helping the new CABA Executive to begin improving its governance, operating and reporting systems to connect with stakeholders, including the Alliance of Ministers. The Institute also assisted CABA with the preparation of the organization’s 2009 Work Plan, as well as the implementation of the CABA/MIF project funded by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

In the third quarter of 2008, the IICA Office in Trinidad and Tobago, in collaboration with NAMDEVCO, hosted a mission (including a workshop) for the design of a US\$230,000, three-year technical cooperation program to build the knowledge base of small- and medium-sized agricultural entrepreneurs. This will link them properly to domestic and export markets and build the capacity of NAMDEVCO to provide market information and other technical services.

Thanks to another IICA mission in 2008, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Bahamas Agricultural Industrial Corporation and the Bahamas Agricultural Producers’ Association jointly developed a technical cooperation program intended to address the issue of sustainable horticultural and fisheries production. It will also focus on the development of the institutional framework and capacity required to enhance the competitiveness of small- and medium-sized agribusinesses that the institutions serve. Other training missions focused on greenhouses development and valued added agriculture.

In relation to agricultural health and food safety, the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF-IICA) project was implemented. Thirteen countries in the Region participated in this project, which entailed using the Performance, Vision, Strategy (PVS) tool to assess each country’s SPS system. Furthermore, a Common Vision consultation

event was held in which both private- and public-sector stakeholders discussed their vision for the SPS system in each country and developed recommendations and strategies for realizing the vision.

In conjunction with USDA-APHIS, CIRAD, FAO and the ministries of agriculture in the 10 beneficiary countries, IICA implemented the Veterinary Epidemiological Project aimed at training a cadre of veterinary epidemiologists to manage the animal disease challenges in the region.

IICA conducted an assessment of the food safety system of Trinidad and Tobago at the request of the Cabinet-appointed Committee entrusted with developing a National Agricultural Health and Food Safety System for Trinidad and Tobago.

Assistance was provided to Jamaica in drafting guidelines for updated plant quarantine legislation. Similar assistance was provided in reviewing and commenting on a manual of good agricultural practices in Jamaica; training in GAPs for farmers and processors in the Bahamas; and training for plant quarantine inspectors in Dominica.

Other results included a series of lectures on sanitary and phytosanitary measures held in conjunction with the WTO and the University of the West Indies; a project proposal for the modernization of Jamaica's Veterinary Services Division of the Ministry of Agriculture; and a new training curriculum for quarantine inspectors in Antigua and Barbuda.

Central Region

Pursuant to the Cooperation Agreement signed between IICA and the CAC, the Executive Secretariat of the CAC provided support to the ministries of agriculture in the Central Region in carrying out the following priority actions: (i) formulating and implementing the "Emergency Plan to Increase the Production of Basic Grains in Central America for the 2008-2009 Agricultural Cycle"; (ii) implementing, at regional and national level, the 2008-2017 Central American Agricultural Policy; (iii) preparing and approving, at the highest political level, the Regional Agro-environmental and Health Strategy; (iv) advancing the process for establishment of the Central American Customs Union, in specific regard to the agricultural sector; (v) defining guidelines for formulating a Central American territorial rural development strategy to promote the diversification of sources of employment and income in the rural milieu, based on productive activities, in addition to agricultural activities, such as rural tourism, handicrafts, agro-industry and environmental services in the various territories.

With regard to technical cooperation activities in the region, various key players instituted sanitary and phytosanitary policy measures, within the framework of the 2008-2017 Central American Agricultural Policy. Among the main results of the Joint Program among the Secretariats of the Central American Economic Integration Subsystem, IICA and other cooperation agencies are the following: (i) progress by the countries in preparing harmonized quarantine procedures manuals; (ii) preparation of a regional project for modernizing peripheral quarantine posts of the Central American Customs Union; (iii) the training program to support the modernization of quarantine posts; (iv) the proposal for

creating a regional risk analysis unit; and (v) the contribution to implementation of the Work Program of the subgroup on sanitary and phytosanitary measures.

IICA was instrumental in helping 60 technicians from the sector (IICA Offices in four countries, technicians from the public and private sectors) familiarize themselves with the 2003-2015 AGRO Plan, the ministerial mandates and use of the Agro-Matrix as a follow-up and planning tool to facilitate achievement of the objectives of the Plan. It also provided support to those technicians to enable them to assist the Ministerial Delegates with circulating that Plan, the mandates and tool.

In addition, the expertise of persons responsible for rural development government programs and entities and national IICA specialists in the Central Region was upgraded through an exchange of knowledge and high-level training activities, such as the Workshop for an Exchange of Experiences in Territorial Development in the Central Region and a Hemispheric Workshop-Seminar on Rural Development, held in Quito, which was attended by representatives from the Central Region.

IICA has played a fundamental role in strengthening the Central American Integration System for Agricultural Technology (SICTA), to which five new virtual knowledge networks have been added.

In an effort to promote the competitiveness of agribusiness, the Institute trained 30 basic grain producers, who are also leaders and beneficiaries of the SICTA Network Project involving Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, in conceptual and practical issues related to agribusiness, marketing and market access. As a result, their entrepreneurial skills were upgraded.

The implementation of two important projects continues in the Region: the SICTA Network (IICA/SDC) and PROMECAFE.

As a result of the former project, six countries in the region have benefited from the financing of 14 innovation projects. As executing agency for the SICTA Network Project, to which SDC contributes resources, IICA supported associations of producers in the execution of the projects. This included the identification of national priorities and stakeholders in each of the countries. The SICTA Network has co-financed a total of US\$1,407,900 for the execution of these projects. It bears noting that 41 events were held as part of this project, in which 963 people participated, mainly producers and technicians from the projects that the SICTA Network is co-financing in the Region.

Thanks to PROMECAFE and the Project entitled Coffee Quality based on Place of Origin being executed by IICA with funding from the AECID, the coffee institutes of the Central Region received support from public institutions involved in the legal process of registering protected geographic indications and denominations of origin. They also had access to specially trained personnel, information and technological know-how for designing instruments and to mechanisms for coordinating the assessment of coffees from the region and improving competitiveness and access to the quality coffee market.

Finally, it should be noted that CONACAFE's capacity to formulate projects was upgraded, thanks to preparation of the profile of the Program for Modernization and Competitive Diversification of Coffee-growing in Nicaragua and Food Security, prepared jointly by the staff of CONACAFE and the IICA Office in Nicaragua. The estimated cost of that program is US\$93 million. The terms of reference for preparing the corresponding feasibility study were prepared for an estimated cost of US\$490,000. These documents were submitted for consideration by the CABI for the purpose of raising pre-investment funding.

Northern Region

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), signed by the three northernmost countries of the Americas, Canada, Mexico and the United States, has provided IICA with an opportunity to identify common needs among the three countries, related to agricultural trade and production. The main mechanisms IICA is utilizing to shape, develop and implement a Northern Regional Agenda are the Tri-National Council of the Northern Region and the Cooperative Program in Agricultural Research and Technology for the Northern Region (PROCINORTE). Additionally, the IICA Office in Washington, DC provides technical support to a hemispheric initiative, the FONTAGRO.

This year the Tri-National Council of the Northern Region could not officially meet as planned. Instead, IICA convened a meeting for the purpose of presenting, sharing and discussing IICA's Northern Region's Technical Agenda, emerging technical issues important for the Region. It also sought to analyze present partnerships, and to explore future potential partnerships, with various organizations and their implications for the technical cooperation agenda.

The streamlined priority list defined by IICA now stresses: (a) support to the cooperation mechanisms of the Northern Region -Tri-National Council and PROCINORTE- at the technical level; (b) continued technical support to FONTAGRO; (c) development of strategic technical partnerships with Northern Region organizations; and (d) report on an annual basis to maintain the Institute updated on important issues related to agricultural technologies and policies and rural life in the countries of the Northern Region.

Following the resolution of the 9th meeting of the PROCINORTE Board of Directors calling IICA to support its Executive Secretariat (ES) to develop a strategic plan (PEP), IICA convened a workshop in Mexico. The product of it was a blueprint and guidelines for the development of the PEP that included a consultation process in each country and a process for pooling and analyzing the information to be submitted to the Board of Directors. The information collected by the countries is now available to be presented to the Board of Directors at its upcoming meeting for it to decide on future strategic directions for the PROCINORTE. Additionally, IICA has supported the outreach and the establishment of relationships between PROCINORTE and other PROCINORTES and, to this effect, the President of the Board of Directors and its Executive Secretary made a presentation at the FORAGRO meeting held in Montevideo, Uruguay.

One of the most significant contributions of the Northern Region is the support provided to the Technical and Administrative Secretariat (STA) of FONTAGRO, based in Washington,

D.C. During 2008, IICA continued to actively participate in the STA at various levels and to give it technical support. First, IICA provided strategic direction to FONTAGRO through various interventions, such as the development of prospective studies of the agricultural production systems of the Americas, the present agendas on research and innovation in agriculture, the analysis and monitoring of the rapidly evolving institutional architecture in the areas of research, development, innovation and financial support to agricultural innovations. Also, IICA supported FONTAGRO with a specific study on the area of protection of regional public goods and prepared strategic documents for submission to its Board of Directors. Second, IICA participated in a training workshop to improve capacities for the formulation of project proposals and in the regional technical workshop on FONTAGRO projects. And finally, by sharing the FONTAGRO STA office space, it actively participated in the daily operational activities of the Fund, from the development of TOR for the annual call for proposals, training and follow up workshops, etc.

In terms of strategic partnerships for the region, the Institute participated in two seminars at the IDB on sustainable development and intellectual property rights, as well as a workshop for the Latin America Program of the International Development Research Center (IDRC) of Canada in Montevideo, Uruguay.

During 2008, two products strongly supported by the Institute are worth noting; first, the review, updating and standardization of the logical framework in use by FONTAGRO in all its documents and, second, the electronic Self-Guide for Preparation of Project Proposals.

Finally, IICA participated in various relevant events and made formal presentations in some of them: FORAGRO, Montevideo; USDA Outlook, Washington, DC; a USDA seminar on the Impacts of Climate Change in the US, Washington, DC; 31st Annual Food Policy Conference, organized by the Consumer Federation of America, on “Challenges and Opportunities for a more Sustainable Food System” and at a round table organized by the Political Affairs Secretariat of the OAS, on “The Food Crisis in Latin America and The Caribbean”.

Southern Region

IICA continued to function as Technical-Administrative Secretariat (TAS) of the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS) in the framework of which it facilitated the organization and holding of special and regular meetings of that Council. At those meetings, the ministers and representatives of the member countries of the CAS reviewed the situation of rising food prices and the impact in the region, as well as worldwide projections and trends.

In addition, the TAS-CAS organized the meetings held by the Agricultural Policy Coordination Network of the Southern Region (REDPA) and its technical working groups, as well as the Meeting of the Ad hoc Group on Fertilizers, held in Montevideo, Uruguay. Its support was crucial in gathering, compiling, analyzing and circulating essential information for designing agricultural policy.

The technical-institutional and regional coordination capacity of the countries of the Southern Region to analyze agricultural and trade policies and international negotiations was reinforced. This was the result of actions such as the following: (i) comparative analysis of MERCOSUR and the European Union in the framework of the cooperative EuMercopol project, and in conjunction with ECLAC and CIRAD/France; (ii) operation of the regional policy information system; (iii) various courses and seminars on the state of and prospects for multilateral agricultural trade negotiations and the rules and regulations in WTO agreements. In this, IICA worked in partnership with the WTO, ALADI, the IDB/INTAL, the Government of Spain and the Uruguayan Group of the Inter-parliamentary Union, depending on the case.

In the area of rural development, the definition of two territories was completed (Paraguari in Paraguay and Corral in Chile) with the formulation of rural development plans based on a participatory and territorial approach. Various activities related to the formulation of rural development plans (Argentina, Paraguay) and human resource training in the countries, to be carried out in 2009, were also defined and negotiated.

AHFS institutions in the region have been upgraded as a result of intensive training and briefing by IICA on the objectives and scope of the SPS Agreement, Codex Alimentarius, the OIE and the IPPC. Private-sector officials, such as the members of the Federation of Rural Associations of MERCOSUR, among others, also received training. A number of videoconferences on CODEX Alimentarius, traceability and veterinary systems were also organized.

The Institute also implemented the Regional Strategy for Control of Cotton Boll Weevil in the Southern Cone, which was financed with an IDB contribution (Non-reimbursable Technical Cooperation Agreement No. ATN/SF-9746-RG). The Regional Project on Avian Influenza and other Transboundary Animal Diseases (TAD) (CAS/CVP – BM-IICA TF 077819) were also prepared and carried out as a result of coordinated effort with the authorities of the Official Veterinary Systems (OVS) and the Permanent Veterinary Committees (PVC).

In the field of technological innovation, PROCISUR continued with its core undertaking of linking the National Agricultural Research Institutes (NARIs) with other players in the science, technology and innovation communities to leverage resources for research. During 2008, the member institutions of PROCISUR, the NARIs and IICA were able to participate in ten projects and thereby became associated with 51 R&D institutions and participated in projects involving more than US\$9 million.

In addition, PROCISUR generated “seed capital” for the following initiatives:

- TIPIFICAR: Technologies for the classification and grading of beef carcasses and meat for the expanded MERCOSUR (2004-2008).
- Regional Cooperative Project on Wheat Genetic Resources in the Southern Cone (2007-2009).
- SOUTHNOMICS: Genetic resistance to Asian rust in soybean (2006-2012).

The institutional effort in the Southern Region made possible execution of certain projects with FONTAGRO. These included:

- Evaluation of changes in water productivity in the face of different climate scenarios in various regions of the Southern Cone (2009-2012).
- Climate variability and change in the expansion of the agricultural frontier in the Southern Cone: technological strategies to reduce vulnerabilities (2009- 2012).
- Identification and validation of successful organic production systems that could potentially be adopted in family agriculture in Southern Cone countries (2008-2011).
- Expansion of the genetic base of naturalized forage legumes for sustainable grazing systems (2006-2009).

The following projects have been put into operation with the European Union:

- LOTASSA: *LOTus Adaptation and Sustainability in South America (2006-2009)*.
- OTAG: *Operational Management and Geodecisional Prototype to Track and Trace Agricultural Production (2007-2008)*.
- BABETHANOL: *New Feedstocks and Innovative Transformation Process for a More Sustainable Development and Production of Lignocellulosic Ethanol (2009-2012)*.

Other projects in which IICA participated were:

- IDB-Regional Public Good (RPG) -CAS Project.
- Joint Regional Project to Strengthen the Regional Institutional Framework of the Private Agricultural Sector to Enhance the Performance of Agrifood Chains and Agribusiness in Support of the Federation of the Rural Associations of MERCOSUR (FARM).
- Project for the modernization of SENAVE in Paraguay, with the cooperation of local specialists and the regional project specialist.

With regard to meetings, the Institute participated in the Ninth Specialized Meeting on Family Agriculture of MERCOSUR, held in Buenos Aires, thanks to which it was able to facilitate linkage between CAS and MERCOSUR. In addition, the Preparatory Technical Meeting of the Working Group on Article 27 of the CPB was held in Costa Rica. Participating in that meeting, at which information on liability and redress within the framework of the CPB was shared, were delegates from nine countries. In addition, delegates from the countries received coaching for their participation in the Fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, which serves as Meeting of the Parties in the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (COP/MOP 4).

Finally, the Institute provided technical and editorial support for the preparation of various publications, including: a) Rising Food Prices – the situation of the CAS countries (REDPA); b) Contributing to a regional agricultural policy on agro-energy (GT6); c) The soy market in the countries of the CAS (GT2); d) Regulatory frameworks and status of the commercial approval of GMOs in the countries of the Southern Agricultural Council (GT5); e) Rising food prices and their implications (ST CAS); and f) Electronic bulletins of the SPS Codex Forum.

3.3 *Implementing the national agendas*

Antigua & Barbuda

Repositioning agriculture and rural life

- The Minister of Agriculture and the Permanent Secretary improved their leadership skills by taking part in the Forum for Leaders of Agriculture at the Institute's Center for Leadership.
- A young woman improved her leadership skills by taking part in the Forum for Young Leaders of Agriculture in the Americas, held at the Institute's Center for Leadership.
- CABA members gained a better grasp of the issues affecting their livelihoods through technical assistance designed to enable them to conduct meetings on various topics of interest to sector stakeholders.
- The Ministry of Agriculture enhanced its ability to respond to issues affecting the agriculture sector through a National Agricultural Symposium, with support from the Institute.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusiness

- Agro-processors increased their market share and networked with potential clients and partners through the Third IICA Most-outstanding Agro-processors Award competition, held during the Christian Valley Mango Festival.
- Agro-processors improved their capacity to increase their income stream through technical assistance provided to the agro-processors group.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- In an effort to improve food safety standards, IICA, working with the Ministry of Health, conducted training sessions for food service providers in safe food handling practices.
- Technical assistance was provided to the Ministry of Agriculture to develop an SPS committee, which will enhance the Ministry's capacity to respond to SPS issues. An officer at the Ministry of Health gained a better grasp of the requirements of the international agreements by participating in the meetings of the WTO SPS Committee in Geneva.
- The Ministry of Agriculture increased its capacity to improve the surveillance of targeted animal health diseases through the regional Veterinary Epidemiology Project (VEP), which seeks to improve the surveillance of animal health diseases in the Caribbean. A veterinarian was trained to coordinate the program nationally.
- CODEX stakeholders increased their understanding of the Codex Alimentarius Standard Setting Process at a workshop implemented in collaboration with FAO and the Antigua and Barbuda Bureau of Standards.

Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment

Through technical assistance provided to the National Focal Group of the Global Environmental Facility, targeted stakeholders improved their understanding of the process of accessing funding for the Global Environmental Facility Small Grant Program.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on the territorial approach

- A member of the Antigua and Barbuda Agricultural Forum received training at the Caribbean Agricultural Youth Forum Workshop on Project Development and Resource Mobilization, held in St. Vincent during the Caribbean Week of Agriculture. As a result, the Forum is now better equipped to develop projects and seek funding.
- The agro-processors group enhanced its capacity for networking after one of its members participated in the CANROP meeting held in St. Vincent.
- IICA provided technical assistance to the Antigua and Barbuda Bee-keepers Cooperative to help members increase their income-earning capacity, which had been reduced following the collapse of the bee-keeping industry caused by bee pests.

Argentina

Contributing to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- All the Offices in the Southern Region were involved in a workshop, held in the form of a video conference, that was used to brief senior government officials and specialists in Argentina and the other countries of the region about the process of the Ministerial Meetings, the components of the 2003-2015 AGRO Plan of Action and, in particular, IICA's role in the process.
- IICA helped generate more knowledge about family agriculture in Argentina by expanding the scope of studies conducted in previous years. The Institute drew on information in national censuses and analyses of new groups of producers, and took into account new dimensions and variables, such as farm size, the system of land ownership, cultural practices, the type of livestock activity, the population, the labor force and the handling of the marketing of products.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- The IICA Office continued to implement its cooperation agenda for agro-energy and biofuels, collaborating with the SAGPyA and coordinating closely with other institutions. The objective was to provide national and provincial officials, academics, and the agricultural community as a whole, with more information and knowledge about the trends and outlook for biofuels within the country and at the global and regional levels. The Office prepared and disseminated studies, publications and e-bulletins, and organized video conferences and gave lectures.

- The Office cooperated with the Provincial Agricultural Services Program (PROSAP), implemented by the SAGPyA, in formulating and evaluating agricultural development projects in different regions of the country, specifically those related to rural infrastructure, irrigation and productive development in the provinces of Cordoba, Corrientes, Neuquen, Santa Cruz and Santiago del Estero, and plant health projects at the national level. Feasibility studies were carried out for a further 13 investment projects.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

The Office carried out a number of activities that enhanced the capacity of the country's institutions to deal with AHFS matters. The activities included support for the implementation of the PVS; the dissemination of the agreements of the WTO, the IPPC and the OIE and the Codex standards; training through national, regional and hemispheric activities, such as video conferences and participation in working committees; and the publication of the Codex-SPS quarterly e-bulletin.

Bahamas

Contributing to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life

High-level officials from the Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources (MAMR) and the Bahamas Agricultural Industrial Corporation visited IICA Headquarters in Costa Rica, where they shared experiences and visited technology-generating sites of interest.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusiness

The Agro-Tourism Linkage Project, which is being implemented by the Bahamas Agricultural Producers Association (BAPA) with technical support from IICA, completed an assessment of the state of the art of farming practices in the country and provided training in good agricultural practices for New Providence and Family Island Farmers, and project planning workshops with producers and hoteliers.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

Public and private sector technicians attended SPS/Codex/Common Vision and Mission/OIE meetings. They were able to identify and agree on priority actions to strengthen agricultural health and food safety services.

Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment

- With technical support from IICA and MAMR partners, the North Abaco Fishing Cooperative developed a bankable proposal for a fish processing plant for presentation to the IDB for funding.
- To encourage more youth participation in the agriculture sector, IICA took part in the SURE Program Career Planning, Work Study High School Program, Career

Days for Schools and COB Career Day, giving presentations on careers in agriculture and providing publications.

Barbados

Repositioning agriculture and rural life

- IICA designed a model urban/peri-urban system for small-scale producers. The model was established at the St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church with support from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MAR), church parishioners and Hydro Grow Farms.
- The Institute was an inaugural member of the new Inter-agency Committee, involving the OAS agencies resident in Barbados, 3 UN agencies, the CDB and others, to provide technical guidance to community groups in project conceptualization, implementation, monitoring and review.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusiness

- IICA concluded its implementation of a three-year OAS-funded agro-tourism project. The work included hosting a regional investment forum at which two projects from each of the seven participating countries were presented. The projects were later submitted to an Investment Forum hosted by the CARICOM Secretariat for funding support.
- Under a project funded by the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Institute facilitated a workshop that examined trade linkages between the agricultural and hospitality sectors.
- IICA provided training in GAPs and HACCP for the benefit of farmers and hoteliers at an EU-funded Caribbean Regional Sustainable Tourism Development Programme (CRSTDP) workshop.
- IICA supported the AgroFest by playing a significant role on the Planning Committee, hosting the Plantation Breakfast, a Healthy Snack Seminar and a Saturday Pickle Lime. IICA also supported the annual Taste of Barbados event by sourcing local produce for the culinary competition and facilitating a Farmers' Market.
- CDB was supported in conceptualizing and facilitating a training course for trainers, entitled "Costing and Pricing Techniques for Competitive Marketing and Computer Applications in Costing and Pricing." Thirteen Haitians were also able to take part in CDB training courses in Barbados and Jamaica.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- IICA coordinated the implementation of a VEP project with a Veterinary Officer at the Ministry of Agriculture and conducted an information-gathering exercise under the STDF project to assess the current SPS system.

- A cross-section of private- and public-sector officials were the beneficiaries of the virtually delivered regional courses on CODEX and OIE standards.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on the territorial approach

Under the OAS project, a community engagement strategy was developed for the Rock Hall community, Martin's Bay and the Airy Hill communities.

Belize

Contributing to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life

The country continues to implement the 2003-2015 AGRO Plan of Action. IICA fully supports and facilitates this process by participating in technical committees and in policy and strategy exercises, institutional capacity building and monitoring and evaluations of the agricultural sector and its impact on rural communities.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusiness

IICA provided technical cooperation to improve agribusiness competitiveness through BELTRAIDE. A technical committee is in place that is responsible for identifying potential products for the U.S. marketplace, providing training and promoting exports.

Strengthening agricultural health and food safety

- The Institute coordinated and provided logistical support for Belize's participation in the WTO/SPS committee meetings held in Geneva in 2008. The national SPS Committee is fully operational and, with IICA's support, held an accountability workshop to present and update stakeholders on the activities carried out over the course of the year.
- IICA and BAHA conducted a series of training activities for stakeholders to ensure compliance with production and export requirements, including subjects like traceability, HACCP, SPS, avian influenza and virulent Newcastle disease.

Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment

- As a member of the National Cacao Task Force, IICA provided support to CATIE for the presentation of the history and future of cacao in Belize at a workshop. This effort was in support of the Central American Cacao Improvement Project and the National Cacao Industry Evaluation.
- The Institute provided technical assistance to the Belize Organic Producers Association in the preparation of the Belize Organic Policy and legislation for submission to the authorities.
- IICA assisted BOPA in executing an organic vegetable production and marketing project that received financial support from the IDB.

- The Institute signed a contract with the Sugar Industry Control Board (SICB) and is executing a consultancy for the preparation of a Strategy for the Cane Farmers Association that includes the organization's role and functions.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development

- Under the chairmanship of IICA, the National Bio-safety Committee completed a national policy and continues to draft legislation on biosafety and bio-security. Belize has signed on to a Caribbean Regional Biosafety Project to assist countries with the implementation phase of the National Biosafety Framework.
- IICA supported the Ministry of Agriculture in hosting the SICTA Board of Directors' meeting, held in Belize. The Board agreed to support Belize in a bean evaluation project, to ensure technology adoption and transfer and food security, and enhance the country's competitive edge in export markets.

Bolivia

Contributing to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- IICA helped strengthen the National Agricultural Health and Food Safety Service (SENASAG) by promoting the creation of the FAO/PAHO/IICA Inter-agency Group that supported the process of developing a US\$10 million funding proposal for SENASAG for the period 2009-2014, aimed at improving its services and institutionalizing it as a decentralized public agency.
- The Institute supported the preparation of five projects designed to strengthen SENASAG's national programs: i) South American Camelidae; ii) Control of the Fruit Fly; iii) Foot-and-mouth Disease (Beni, Pando and the province of Iturralde in the department of La Paz); iv) Eradication of Newcastle Disease and Avian Influenza; and, v) Food Surveillance. These projects will be receiving financing from the APHIS of the USDA.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- IICA strengthened the institutional framework of the cacao chain, for which it was essential to maintain in operation, for the third consecutive year, the Coordinating Committee of the ACCESO Program. The Committee's work included the participatory preparation of the Strategic Plan for Cacao in Bolivia and of a document entitled "Cacao production technologies in Bolivia."
- Working with the Center for Research on and the Promotion of Small Farmers (CIPCA), IICA promoted the establishment and operation of the Technical Forum on Camelidae. As a result, actors such as the Ministry of Agricultural Rural Development and Environment (MDRAYMA), the Ministry of Water (MINAGUAS), the Ministry of Development Planning (MPD), the National Association of Camelidae Producers (ANAPCA), the departmental associations that belong to ANAPCA, various national and international cooperation agencies and universities held regular meetings and formed part of three working committees: i)

Programs and Projects; ii) Policies and Regulations; and, iii) Fairs and Training Events.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- The IICA Office in Bolivia, APHIS/USDA and SENASAG executed a letter of understanding aimed at implementing the Foot-and-mouth Surveillance Project in the Bolivian Chaco and the Computerized Agricultural Health and Food Safety System.
- The Institute strengthened the National Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (CNMSF) by applying the Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS) tool in this field. The results will be used as input for the Committee's actions in the future.
- IICA strengthened the System for the Prevention, Control and Eradication of Pests and Diseases by assisting SENASAG with the preparation of the plans for the national programs on avian influenza and other transboundary diseases (CAS/CVP-World Bank-IICA) and for the prevention, control and eradication of fruit flies.

Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment

The National Committee to Strengthen Education in Sustainable Eco-production (CONFEES) was set up to promote and implement activities linked to human resource training and research in eco-production at the national level. The committee is comprised of representatives of the Technical University of Oruro (UTO), the Association of Organizations of Ecological Producers of Bolivia (AOPEB), the Center for Action for Human Development and Nature (CADEHNA), the Bolivia Pesticides Foundation (PLAGBOL), the small farmer academic units of the Bolivian Catholic University (UAC-UCB) and IICA.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on a territorial approach

Based on the territorial approach, IICA assisted the Association of Municipalities of Norte Paceño Tropical in making conceptual and methodological adjustments to its proposed Sustainable Integrated Development Plan (PDIS).

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development

- The MDRAyMA, the Center for Plant Eco-genetic Research of Pairumani (CIF-Pairumani) and the Biotechnology Network of Bolivia (REDBIO) set in motion a process aimed at improving Bolivian society's perception of the development potential of genetic resources and biotechnology. Exhibitions were organized on these subjects and targeted journalists specializing in scientific issues and educators.
- IICA helped strengthen the Bolivian Animal Production Association (ABOPA) by supporting several of its initiatives (ABOPA is the only national platform linking specialists involved in technology research and development in the field of animal production).

Brazil

Contributing to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- IICA helped reposition agriculture by producing the following publications: National Report on the State of and Outlook for Agriculture - 2007, eight issues of the technical cooperation magazine, 22 issues of the Southern Cone Agrifood Bulletin, 50 issues of Agribusiness Alert and the document *Alternativas de Financiamento Agropecuário: Experiências no Brasil e na América Latina*.
- In partnership with IICA, the Ministry of National Integration (MI) held the International Congress on the Management of Regional Policies of MERCOSUR and the EU, in Brasilia. The participants discussed the economic integration experiences of the two economic blocs.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- IICA launched the Agribusiness Reference Center for the Southern Region (CERAGRO), a virtual portal whose objective is to share knowledge and disseminate information about agribusiness and other areas that are a priority for the development of agriculture and rural life.
- The Institute, the MAPA's Risk Management Coordination Unit and representatives of the Economic Research Department of UNICAMP discussed the current state of agricultural and rural insurance in Brazil and pinpointed the important issues, which were then discussed at the Seminar on Risks and the Management of Rural Insurance. The latter focused on the country's experiences and recent policies with regard to insurance.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- The Institute collaborated with the MAPA to strengthen and reposition the Secretariat for the Defense of Agriculture (SDA) by means of initiatives and projects aimed at strengthening specific areas of its work.
- Relations were strengthened with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), which trained staff of the National Agricultural Laboratories (Lanagros) in the most advanced techniques and protocols for diagnosing diseases that could affect Brazil's sanitary status.

Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment

- IICA focused its efforts on strengthening the technical, institutional and management capabilities of the national entities responsible for formulating, executing and evaluating strategies, policies, programs and projects in the area of integrated natural resource management and regional development.
- Proposals related to the replication in Mesoamerica of the Program to Combat Desertification and Mitigate the Effects of Drought in South America were prepared for the IDB. Other important achievements included the conduct of "Studies on

Ecological and Economic Zoning for Gilbues/DNOCS” and projects to combat desertification based on the climate change scenarios forecast by the IPCC, funded by the European Union and Britain’s cooperation agency.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on a territorial approach

- IICA provided technical cooperation to the Government of Brazil for the implementation of the national policy on sustainable development and rural poverty alleviation, which incorporates a territorial approach.
- The Institute facilitated two-way continuous learning: it disseminated among other countries details of Brazil’s experience with the formulation of strategies and policies and with the sustainable development of local capabilities; and provided information about experiences in other countries that could be replicated in Brazil.
- IICA and the Secretariat of Territorial Development (SDT) of the Ministry of Agrarian Development (MDA) signed an agreement for a new technical cooperation project aimed at enhancing the strategies, methodologies and tools for promoting the Sustainable Development of Rural Territories Program, which the SDT is responsible for implementing.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development

- To improve the competitiveness and quality of production chains, IICA, in partnership with EMBRAPA, executed the Program for Technological Innovation and New Forms of Management in Agricultural Research (Agrofuturo).
- With the approval of the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MER), IICA and the Secretariat of Science and Technology for Social Inclusion (SECIS) of the Ministry of Science and Technology (MCT) signed an agreement for a technical cooperation project involving actions to improve the quality of life of the rural population based on the dissemination of information on science and technology and improved accessibility to that information.

Canada

Contributing to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- IICA/Canada developed a new partnership proposal called *Canada and IICA: Partnering for Agriculture Development in the Americas*. The proposal is designed to present Canada with a new engagement model for the Americas, focusing on three main areas: rural development, leadership and trade.
- Working closely with the Canadian Young Farmers Forum (CYFF), an organization designed to build knowledge and leadership among Canadian young farmers, IICA/Canada secured the participation of two Canadian young leaders in the IICA Leadership Forum. IICA/Canada also collaborated with CYFF in the organization of the *Young Farmers Summit of the Americas*, held in Calgary, Canada. Both these activities were key in the establishment of a young farmer’s network where the

young leaders could exchange views on agriculture issues and discuss ways to improve their farming practices.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusiness

IICA/Canada continued to work with Pulse Canada to support the efforts of the Canadian and Mexican bean sectors to collaborate on areas of mutual interest, such as research and innovation, trade and promotion of bean consumption. To that end, IICA/Canada facilitated collaboration between Canadian and Mexican bean producers aimed at establishing a permanent network of producers. Farmers were able to discuss and exchange views on their respective experiences and identify areas of common interest, such as trade facilitation, increased technology transfer, the promotion of bean consumption and efforts to improve the nutrition quality of beans.

Strengthening agricultural health and food safety

- IICA/Canada worked to enhance and formalize the Institute's relationship with the North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO). The collaboration between NAPPO and IICA made it possible to disseminate information about phytosanitary and plant protection standards between the Northern Region and the rest of the hemisphere, with a view to ensuring the constant flow of trade among all the regions of the Americas. One example of cooperation was the participation of experts from the Caribbean and the Southern Cone in an international seminar on citrus greening organized by NAPPO.
- At the invitation of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), IICA became part of the Counter-Terrorism Capacity-Building Project.¹ IICA/Canada played an active role in the project by facilitating the identification and participation of the appropriate laboratory scientists and technicians in the training organized by CFIA, and by assisting in the organization of follow-up sessions with the participating countries.

Chile

Contributing to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life

The Institute supported efforts to modernize the institutional framework of the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAGRI) by carrying out the following studies: a) Proposed institutional framework for food quality; b) Proposed implementation of a consumer unit within the ministry; and, c) technical bases for the institutional design of the national research system.

¹ Designed to enhance the capacity of the Andean countries to diagnose animal diseases and to facilitate the application by the Southern Cone countries of a computer simulation modeling system to assess, predict and mitigate outbreaks of animal diseases. With state-of-the-art detection and monitoring systems, countries affected by outbreaks of animal diseases are better prepared to respond and able to return to the marketplace more quickly.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on the territorial approach

- IICA resumed implementation of the project Rural Development with a Territorial Approach in the Comuna de Corral, which began in 2005. The Institute held a workshop entitled “Rural Development with a Territorial Approach: Methodologies and Tools for Intervention in the Comuna de Corral, Los Rios Region.” It is currently working on a characterization of the Comuna’s social and productive structure, drawing on information from government agencies and NGOs.
- Working with the Government of the Metropolitan Region, IICA held the First Chilean Congress on Rural Development, in which over 400 people took part. The event led to agreements aimed at strengthening rural development in Chile, generating social and institutional networks, and setting up working groups on sustainable rural development.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development

- The Institute organized technical visits to producers who work with livestock production systems and the main entities involved in technology generation and transfer to identify topics of mutual interest in which Chilean institutions and the Scottish Agricultural College (SAG) could undertake collaborative technology research and transfer actions in the area of sustainable sheep production. This action resulted, among other things, in the preparation of a work program for 2009 that includes joint initiatives with the Agricultural Research Institute (INIA), the Agricultural Innovation Foundation (FIA) and the National Agricultural Development Institute (INDAP).
- To support INDAP in those areas of work regarded as the highest priority, 20 producers from the south of the country and INDAP officials visited Uruguay to learn about its milk production and export processes.
- Some 25 medium- and small-scale farmers and INDAP officials acquired new expertise by participating in a seminar on genetic improvement in sheep and cattle in southern Chile.
- The Southern University of Chile (UACH) and IICA signed a cooperation agreement for joint activities in the areas of teaching and research.
- Through the Public Intellectual Property Resource for Agriculture (PIPRA), a needs assessment of Chilean public institutions was carried out with a view to strengthening intellectual property. This work was requested by the Foundation for Agricultural Innovation (FIA), under an agreement signed with IICA.

Colombia

Contributing to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- IICA supported the efforts of national institutions to execute strategically important programs and projects, including the call for bids for the irrigation and drainage

component of the Secure Agricultural Income Program (AIS), the Rural Opportunities Program, the Agricultural Production Chains Program and the Agricultural Development Fund, working with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MADR). Other important activities to which the Institute contributed included the Income Generation and Women Savers with Social Action Program and the Seed Capital for Displaced Populations Project, both in collaboration with the Colombian Rural Development Institute (INCODER); and the calls for bids of the Agroindustry Program, working with the National Learning Service (SENA).

- The Institute assisted the MADR in analyzing and disseminating sectoral policy and obtaining feedback, to provide producers, entrepreneurs, leaders of farmers' organizations and local governments with more information about the Ministry's programs and projects and the impact that its investments have had on the development of the agricultural sector and the quality of life of rural populations.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- Under the AIS Program, IICA helped the MADR carry out two calls for bids involving irrigation and drainage work. Farm irrigation projects and the construction and rehabilitation of irrigation districts were co-financed.
- The Institute also cooperated in the calls for bids of the Rural Opportunities Program, designed to improve the business capabilities of small- and medium-scale rural producers.
- The MADR and IICA developed the Information System on the Management and Performance of Chain Organizations, a tool for providing follow-up to the commitments assumed in the agreements reached on competitiveness.
- In partnership with INCODER, under the Seed Capital Project, and with Social Action in the Income Generation Program, the Institute provided social-entrepreneurial support to rural organizations and displaced populations, to improve their management capabilities.
- IICA assisted women from vulnerable segments of the population who receive support from Social Action's Families in Action Program. It implemented a comprehensive training process with a gender approach, aimed at developing women's business skills and creating a savings mindset.
- The Institute strengthened organizations of small cacao producers in southern Tolima that receive support under the Areas for Municipal Alternative Development (ADAM) Program.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- Under the More Investment for Sustainable Alternative Development (MIDAS) Program, the Institute supported the application of good agricultural practices by small producers in the department of Boyaca. This enabled bulb onion producers who are members of ASOROA to obtain certification for their product under NTC 5400. Producers of purple passion fruit belonging to ASPROGULUPA were also able to obtain certification under the GLOBALGAP standard.

- IICA held a workshop entitled “Shared Vision for the Application of the Performance, Vision and Strategy Instrument for the WTO System of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures.” The aim of the activity, in which the National Planning Department (DNP), the Colombian Agricultural Institute (ICA), the INVIMA, the MADR and the National Consumers Federation of Colombia took part, was to ascertain the status of the process of modernizing the national SPS system, for which the CIMSF-MSF Inter-sectoral Commission is responsible, and the priority actions needed to continue the process.
- Several workshops were held for sensitization and training in GAP, GMP and HACCP, targeting small- and medium-scale fish farmers and fishermen linked to INCODER projects and micro-entrepreneurs involved in the Rural Opportunities Program. The workshops made it possible to implement quality management systems in fish products and by-products, and in the production of honey, fruits, vegetables and panela (brown sugar paste).

Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment

- With financing from the European Commission, IICA executed a long-term project aimed at promoting the management and sustainable use of timber-yielding and non-timber-yielding resources of the tropical rain forests of Colombia’s northern Amazon region.
- The Institute prepared and distributed a booklet on environment, forests, soils and the atmosphere designed to promote protection of the environment among the micro-entrepreneurs supported by the Rural Opportunities Program.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on a territorial approach

- Under the ADAM Program, IICA implemented a rural development project with a territorial approach in six municipal districts in southern Tolima. The districts were chosen because they are susceptible to the cultivation of illegal crops.
- Under the aegis of the Standing Forum on Sustainable Rural Development for the Andean Region, the Institute strengthened the National Rural Development Network.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development

- The National Service for Learning (SENA), with support from IICA, designed and implemented a call for bids for the co-financing of small- and medium-sized agroindustry projects aimed at introducing new technologies to make the producers more competitive.
- A project to implement biotechnology in cacao crops was executed to support small-scale producers in the department of Santander, as part of the activities of the ACCESO Program in Colombia.

Costa Rica

Contributing to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- Thirty-one Central American leaders (11 women and 20 men) acquired new expertise for designing and spearheading participatory multi-sectoral initiatives that contribute to agricultural development and the conservation of the region's biodiversity. The leaders took part in the Second International Course "Leadership for the Development of Eco-agriculture: the Integrated Management of Rural Territories in Central America," organized by IICA in tandem with the University of Berkeley, Eco-agriculture Partners (EP) and the CATIE.
- A total of 1300 senior administrators, specialists and rural leaders, drawn from the public and private sectors, acquired new expertise by participating in 47 events focusing on updating training and training and/or dialogue on institutional modernization, public policies, health and safety, market access, information services, territorial development and value chains. IICA organized and facilitated the activities in support of the public and private national counterparts.
- With support from the Institute, senior administrators and specialists from the agricultural sector took part in, and contributed to, the formulation of the Central American Agricultural Policy and the Regional Environmental and Health Strategy.
- The process of harmonizing international cooperation with national priorities was improved and efforts were made to ensure that the resources of IICA and other agencies, particularly OIRSA, CATIE, the FAO, the IUCN, University of California-Berkeley and EP, are used to complement rather than duplicate their work.
- IICA facilitated the preparation of an institutional strategic plan for the Association of Agronomists that was approved by its board of directors.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- The Integrated Agricultural Marketing Program (PIMA) has three new tools to enhance its operations: a strategic plan approved by the board of directors, a proposal for modernizing the wholesale market and a profile of a project designed to improve municipal markets.
- With technical support from IICA, the PIMA enhanced its capacity to organize the EXPOPIA for the second consecutive year.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- The authorities of the National Animal Health Service (SENASA) incorporated into the 2008-2012 Strategic Plan the advanced profile of the Project to Strengthen SENASA, formulated by IICA. The profile is being used to orient and coordinate national investments and international cooperation actions aimed at modernizing SENASA.
- The Minister of Agriculture and Livestock signed the IICA-SENASA agreement designed to strengthen SENASA's technical and institutional capabilities. A number

of national institutions will be investing a total of US\$5 million over a five-year period.

- SENASA has a proposed communications strategy and a draft document on a planning system, prepared with support from IICA.
- The commission set up to overhaul the State Plant Health Service (SFE), comprised of representatives of the MAG, the Chamber of Exporters, the National Chamber of Agriculture and Agribusiness and CIAgro, assisted by the Inter-agency Advisory Commission, made up of IICA, the FAO and OIRSA, presented to senior MAG officials, representatives of various productive and academic sectors and senior administrators and other officials of the SFE, its report on the analysis of the Service, highlighting critical aspects and recommending ways of strengthening it.
- As a part of the process of modernizing the SFE, 120 members of its staff and representatives of the private sector took part in two events related to the SFE modernization process organized and facilitated by IICA.

Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment

- Senior MAG officials and the chief administrators and specialists of the National Irrigation and Drainage Service (SENARA) took part in, and were briefed about the results of, the analysis and the recommendations made by the mission in support of the process of modernizing the SENARA, headed by IICA. Thanks to this effort, agreement was reached on the main strategic orientations of the process.
- Senior administrators and specialists of SENARA learned about the experiences of Chile's National Irrigation Commission, as input for the institutional modernization process supported by IICA.
- The Institute helped prepare the senior administrators and specialists of SENARA to execute the Integrated Water Resource Management Program (PROGIRH), a loan agreement that was approved recently by the Legislative Assembly and is awaiting ratification by the Executive Branch.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on a territorial approach

- IICA completed the design of the Action Training Program for Rural Leaders "Unleashing Local Energies," which includes 12 modules applied over a two-year period in three stages: Talent Management, Innovative Solutions and Transforming Joint Action.
- Twenty-eight rural leaders (9 women and 19 men) enhanced their expertise as facilitators of participatory local development processes by taking part in the Interactive Facilitation Meeting held with financing from the Program to Strengthen Municipal Governments (FOMUDE/IFAM-EU).
- The organizational and operating capabilities of Territorial Action Groups in the north of the country were strengthened by involving them in training activities and executing an investment program designed to strengthen food production, food security and innovation in the bean value chain.
- Working with the University of Costa Rica, IICA prepared a methodology for the cartographic analysis of territorial dynamics.

- A communications platform was designed and implemented for the Network of Rural Studies and Alternatives, as part of the “Central American Territories” portal.

Dominica

Contributing to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- IICA worked closely with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (MAFF) to place the endorsement of the draft policy framework entitled “Invest in Dominica - Secure Agriculture - National Policy for the Agriculture Environment (Agri-Eco) System, 2007-2025” on the agenda of the Cabinet of Ministers.
- IICA assisted the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the Permanent Secretary with their preparations for the IABA Meeting and the Forum for Leaders in Agriculture, held in Costa Rica. Whilst in Costa Rica, the Minister signed an agreement with IICA identifying the priority areas for further IICA assistance, including a strategic plan for the implementation of the policy, establishment of a Business Unit, strengthening of the agricultural health and food safety system and an agricultural insurance scheme.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusiness

- Under a project entitled Strengthening and Expanding Rural Income Streams, IICA, in collaboration with FAO, identified ways in which a potentially viable enterprise, Nelly Chips, could gain greater access to the agro-tourism market.
- IICA continued to work in tandem with the OAS in successfully implementing their joint project, “Strengthening of the Tourism Sector through the Development of Linkages with the Agriculture Sector in the Caribbean”.
- Under the same OAS-sponsored project, IICA coordinated and facilitated the participation of a delegation in the Regional Investment Forum on Agribusiness Opportunities, held in Barbados. Two businesses were able to interest investors and financiers in supporting their business proposals, such as the one from Macoucherie Estate Ltd.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- As a result of MAFF participation in the 43rd meeting of the WTO/SPS Committee, held in Geneva, stakeholders in the agriculture and related sectors in Dominica have a forum to analyze decisions and reach agreement on national positions on relevant SPS issues.
- The capabilities of quarantine inspectors and public health officers were enhanced through a training workshop on improved diagnostic and inspection services.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on the territorial approach

IICA provided technical support to the Dominica National Council of Women (DNCW) by conducting a preliminary needs assessment aimed at equipping the Council to serve its

members better and guiding its efforts to establish the National Chapter of CANROP in 2009.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development

IICA/Dominica secured a total of US\$95,000.00 from the IICA-CARDI Program and the Dominica Social Investment Fund (DSIF) to pursue the development and adoption of appropriate undercover system technologies by NAYA and Greenhouse Association members.

Dominican Republic

Contributing to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- Through the Steering Committee, IICA continued to make progress with the legal framework for carrying out studies for the reform and modernization of the agricultural sector. The work includes the preparation of draft regulations on GAP and Good Laboratory Practices, the law on INDOSAIA and the law on agricultural insurance.
- With support from the Ministry of Agriculture (SEA), the Institute held the First National Forum for Young Leaders in Agriculture. The Second International Seminar on Agri-food Policies also took place (the theme was “Food Security in the Dominican Republic”) and the groundwork was laid for the preparation of a national food security agenda.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- Studies were carried out on the agrifood chains of plantain and manioc.
- IICA supported the SEA and the National Statistics Office (ONE) by organizing a consultancy for the design of the National System of Agricultural Statistics.
- The Second Agroexport Platform was completed. All the training modules were carried out and a trade mission visited New York, USA, to establish business contacts.
- An agro-tourism project was executed with support from the Travel Foundation. The work included support for more than ten rural communities with the design and manufacture of the first mill for processing manioc flour with local technology (for use by producers in Moncion); an analysis of the demand for and supply of agricultural products in areas popular with tourists; and the construction of a greenhouse, a reservoir for breeding fish and a spice garden.
- IICA executed a project to analyze production capabilities with producers’ organizations along the border with Haiti.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- The World Bank approved a donation of US\$1 million for the implementation of the Project to Prevent Avian Influenza, which will be carried out by IICA with support from the SEA.
- The Institute supported the strengthening of the System for the Control and Registration of Veterinary Establishments and Products of the General Livestock Directorate. The actions included the preparation of draft project documents and profiles, the implementation of training activities and the hiring of consultants.
- IICA helped strengthen the Meat Inspection System by training 26 public and private sector veterinarians. It also supported the presentation to the SEA of a project aimed at improving the system.

Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment

IICA carried out educational visits involving agricultural entrepreneurs from the border region. The participants saw first-hand successful initiatives involving the production of organic fertilizer and sustainable agricultural management.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on a territorial approach

- The territory of Samana was identified as a pilot area for the execution of a rural development project with a territorial approach.
- IICA implemented the agreement related to the project “Institution Building of the Dominican Agricultural Sector (FISADO)”, aimed at preparing a proposal for the modernization of the extension service.
- In support of the Office of the First Lady and its development activities for rural women, the Institute helped organize and implement the International Meeting of Rural Women (Mexico), the International Seminar on the Cooperative Movement and Sustainability and the International Seminar on the Participation of Rural Women in the Efforts to Solve the Food Crisis.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development

- Working with the Dominican Agricultural and Forestry Research Institute (IDIAF), IICA carried out various training and advisory assistance activities.
- The Institute helped a number of producers by providing support in the sampling of soil and water for crop development.

Ecuador

Contributing to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- IICA held the First Andean Forum of Young Leaders in Agriculture and Rural Life, in which 28 young people from the different countries of the Andean Region took

part. The national governmental and private counterparts and universities formally thanked IICA for its support over the course of the year.

- The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Aquaculture and Fisheries (MAGAP) of Ecuador has a proposal for a process-based organizational restructuring initiative (design and redesign of the MAGAP's technical, administrative and financial processes to improve their results substantially).
- The Institute supported the efforts of the MAGAP to disseminate information about the 2007-2011 National Agricultural Recovery Plan by executing training workshops for farmers, adapting the structure of the MAGAP to enable it to implement the plan and strengthening the Ministry's services and technical and administrative and operations.
- IICA supported the design, implementation and implementation of the institutional Web page of the National Poultry Farmers Corporation, which actors in the sector will use to share reports.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- IICA conducted surveys of 45 organizations of small agricultural and agro-industrial producers in the Sierra Region to assess their business management skills and export capabilities. The data was used to prepare the proposal for the project Commercial Inclusion for Small-scale Producers, which was submitted to the Secretary of Planning and Development (SENPLADES).
- Five consulting contracts were awarded under the MAGAP-IICA Agricultural Emergency Agreement (on the topics of community marketing, gasification of rice, compound flours to replace wheat, sugar with vitamin A and biofuels).
- A technical assistance mission was carried out to prepare a work program and provide technical cooperation to support the implementation of national plans for storage, domestic marketing and food sovereignty. The aim was to consult relevant actors and, following the MAGAP's lead, formulate a proposal for generating policies and policy instruments for domestic agricultural trade, the supplying and storing of strategic staples and food sovereignty. IICA drew up a report containing conclusions and recommendations for implementing the policy.
- The Institute delivered to Ecuador's Ministry of Foreign Affairs a tool for evaluating the offers and demands made in trade negotiations between the Andean Community and the European Union, and a comparative study on the prices of sensitive products. The aim was to estimate the price differential between European products introduced into the Andean market and domestic prices of the sensitive products identified, as input for the negotiating team of the Agricultural Forum.
- IICA collaborated with the MAGAP in designing the System to Support Decision-making for Imports, specifically with regard to the granting of permits.
- With support from IICA, Ecuador implemented the Information System for Agricultural Production Markets (SIMAE) as a pilot project in Tungurahua, Manabi, Cotopaxi and Chimborazo, a process that included the signing of agreements, the implementation of workshops and the development of software.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- IICA formulated the process-based structure of the Integrated National System for Health, Quality and Safety (SISCAL) and the Agricultural Quality Assurance Agency (AGROCALIDAD), which replaced the Ecuadorian Agricultural Health Service (SESA).
- The Institute designed the new market surveillance system for the country's foodstuffs, which will provide the basis for the country's food quality, health and safety system.
- IICA provided technical support for the process of preparing and applying the SANIFLORES software, created to automate the inspection system and the procedure for issuing plant health certificates for ornamental flowers. Training activities were also held.
- In coordination with Ecuador's governmental health service and with financial support from Export and Investment Promotion Corporation (CORPEI) and APHIS, Ecuador's first field manual for monitoring the fruit fly was prepared.
- Over 700 producers and 100 veterinary students received training under the Program to Implement a Pilot Plan of Good Poultry Practices (GPP) in six areas that run the risk of an outbreak of avian influenza virus. GPP were implemented on 23 farms; the poultry census was carried out in the Galapagos Islands; and a kit for implementing GPP was developed and a computerized system prepared to automate the issuing of permits for moving birds and pigs.
- The Institute strengthened the National Codex Alimentarius Committee by designing and implementing a computerized system for managing information in a quick and transparent way. IICA also collaborated in the design of the Committee's Web page and logo; and helped the National Codex Alimentarius Committee organize the National Congress for the Socialization and Sensitization of Codex Alimentarius.
- In support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Foreign Trade and Investment Council (COMEXI) issued a resolution formally creating Ecuador's National Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures.
- The joint technical cooperation actions of AGROCALIDAD, APHIS, PL-480 and IICA included facilitating the implementation of the Plant Health Risk Analysis Center through the use of transportation equipment and computer systems). The Institute also provided technical cooperation for the importation of field and laboratory material to strengthen the phytosanitary surveillance actions of AGROCALIDAD's ten units nationwide.
- IICA helped identify and import technical books and supported subscriptions to specialized international journals, with a view to implementing the AGROCALIDAD documentary and virtual library.
- Continuous technical assistance was provided to the Foot-and-mouth Disease Eradication Program.
- IICA facilitated for the local committees computer equipment and the appropriate infrastructure for storing and managing foot-and-mouth vaccines. The level of vaccination in the provinces of Carchi, Imbabura, Sucumbios and Esmeraldas rose from 75.40% in December 2007 to 88.83% in May-June 2008.

- Over 150 local committees began using the Computerized System for Foot-and-mouth Disease in Ecuador (SIFAE), which makes it possible to control and monitor the process of vaccinating cattle.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on a territorial approach

- The Grant Funds Program was formulated and adapted as a tool for facilitating the territorial development of the watershed of the Paute River.
- The Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion (MIES), especially the Directorates of Rural Development and Community Management, have a new institutional management model based on the territorial approach to development. This has given the MIES new tools for the transparent allocation of financial resources for social investment.
- Implementation of the provincial planning processes got under way in the province of El Oro with the identification, formulation, prioritization and management of an investment program and its respective portfolio of projects, which incorporate the territorial approach into the province's development strategy.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development

- All the libraries of the Autonomous National Agricultural Research Institute (INIAP) took part in a comprehensive assessment of their services and, with support from IICA, formulated the strategic and operating plan for agricultural information management and a project to strengthen their units that was submitted to the Elsevier Foundation. In a key development, the libraries began implementing their updating and modernization plan, holding a course on virtual libraries and setting up the Network of Agricultural Libraries, jointly with the schools of agricultural sciences.
- At the Workshop on Technological Innovation in Stock Raising in the Tropics, 40 Ecuadorian livestock producers, students and researchers identified genetic advances in coastal cattle and incorporated as an experience the series of laboratory tests and examinations needed to manage animal health.
- In an international seminar, 120 people (representatives of crop and livestock farmers' organizations and associations of Barbados nut producers, professors, university students, MAGAP officials and INIAP researchers) validated the progress made by agronomic research and the development of technologies to convert Barbados nut oil into biofuel.
- Thirty schools of agricultural sciences in Ecuador reformulated their curricula for rural sociology and agricultural extension. They also drew up plans for establishing links with the community and updated their technology extension and transfer methodologies.
- IICA consultants and national, regional and hemispheric specialists in biotechnology, technological innovation, natural resources, projects and knowledge management drafted the Regional Program to Diversify the Food Supply for Vulnerable Populations, Using Technological Tools in Crops Native to the Andean Region.

El Salvador

Contributing to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- As many as 150 professionals were trained in the management of information systems for the agricultural sector.
- IICA generated reflection and dialogue on agriculture and the rural sector by means of an itinerant exhibition entitled “Rural Life in El Salvador through Art.” The exhibition was held in 20 cultural centers and visited by over 2500 people.
- The Institute and the Association of Agronomists of El Salvador held a forum entitled “Repositioning the Salvadorian agricultural sector in response to the agri-food situation.”

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- The fourth stage of the Program for the Development of Fruit Products of El Salvador (FRUTALES) was completed. A total of 370 ha. of fruit trees were planted and technical assistance was provided to 1322 producers who work 3497 ha. of fruit trees.
- IICA initiated the fifth stage of the FRUTALES program under a contract with the MAG.
- The actions carried out under the Project to Reinforce Chains of Fruits and Associated Products in the Northern Region benefited 280 producers. Another 80 people were trained and producers who work a total of 60 ha. received advisory assistance.
- With financing from the OAS, IICA began implementing the project entitled Developing the Competitive Advantages of Fruit-processing MSMEs.
- IICA facilitated a trade mission for three fruit-processing micro-enterprises and business contact meetings at the Expo-Comida Latina Fair held in Los Angeles, USA.
- A course in agribusiness management was held for 20 members of the Association of Agronomists of El Salvador.
- A technical cooperation agreement was signed with Wal-Mart to open up new marketing opportunities for Salvadorian fruit producers.
- IICA secured financing for the Program to Improve the Competitiveness of Fruit-growing in Central America, which will be executed as part of the Mesoamerican Plan.
- In collaboration with CATIE, the Institute trained 35 public and private actors of the cocoa chain.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- With support from the FRUNORTE, MAG-FRUTALES and MIPYMES-IICA-OAS projects, 23 technicians and 15 producers were trained in good agricultural practices for fruit production to enable them to meet the new requirements imposed by supermarkets and local buyers.

- IICA was a member of the team that promoted the joint work plan under which public- and private-sector actors will be implementing a system to ensure the safety of fruit and vegetable products. The actors also reached consensus on the work plan thanks to the Institute's efforts as a facilitator.
- A workshop was held entitled "Developing a national SPS agenda." A technical support team was set up to formulate a work plan aimed at complying with the WTO/SPS Agreement. IICA also registered and obtained a sanitary permit for 14 products for ten fruit-processing MSMEs; and designed and registered the respective brand names.

Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment

- IICA formalized a cooperation agreement with APA-Crop Life to carry out joint activities designed to ensure the safe use of pesticides.
- The Friends of Lake Ilopango received support from IICA with the design and formulation of the project Reforestation and Protection of Natural Resources in the Watershed of Lake Ilopango, financed by Ireland's cooperation agency.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on a territorial approach

- IICA contributed to generational change and the development of leadership in the rural communities of the Chalatenango Highlands by carrying out participatory processes in which women, children, young people and the elderly were involved.
- The Territorial Action Group (GAT) merged with the Association for the Integrated Development of the Chalatenango Highlands (ADIZAL) to form ADIZAL-GAT, an organization that represents stakeholders in the territory and is already providing input for decision-making and interventions in the area.
- Three national and two international exchanges took place that helped alter the mindset and praxis of the territorial actors, who are now passionate about their work aimed at the development of the territory.
- Three projects were implemented in the highlands: Organic Agriculture, Agrotourism Development in the Highlands and Certified Potato Seed Production.
- The partnership forged with CLUSA and the interaction with FOMILENIO and CATIE strengthened the community in the economic and financial areas and in relation to knowledge.
- The study "Socioeconomic assessment: risk scenarios - Association of Friends of Lake Ilopango," prepared by the UCA, was used as the basis for the strategic planning of the territory of the lake's watershed.
- A study was carried out entitled "Contribution of fruit chains to the rural development of the Chalatenango Highlands." It provides guidelines for the development of fruit chains in the territory.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development

- Working with the MAG-FRUTALES project, Center for Agricultural Technology (CENTA) and FUNDE, the Institute carried out the following activities: First National Symposium on Innovation in Fruit-growing (200 participants); a course on the development of new fruit products, involving 40 micro-entrepreneurs engaged in fruit processing; and the first phase of the effort to equip ten fruit-processing MSMEs.
- Supported by IICA, 30 national dyers used natural dyes (mainly indigo) to create new designs.

Grenada

Contributing to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life

Following their active participation in a seminar, twenty local agricultural technicians are better equipped to implement Grenada's agricultural policy and strategy effectively and to use the Agro-Matrix as a tool for continuing to plan Grenada's agricultural and rural development process.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusiness

- Through the development and initiation of a relevant Action Plan, IICA helped facilitate a more coordinated and focused approach towards increased participation of all stakeholders in the strengthening of links between the agriculture and tourism sectors. A re-vitalized Agro-tourism Linkage Committee, co-chaired by the Grenada Board of Tourism and IICA, made this possible.
- Technical and material assistance, under an IICA-implemented project funded by FAO, allowed a small agricultural entrepreneur to learn more about the value chain for noni products, especially noni juice, and then increase her production capacity.
- Nine selected agricultural entrepreneurs enhanced their business planning skills by participating in a workshop on entrepreneurship and business planning.
- Ten members of the national chapter of the Caribbean Agri-business Association (CABA) increased their capabilities for managing small businesses and identifying appropriate project ideas, based on their active participation in a business management training course.
- Membership of the national chapter of the CABA increased from 22 to 27.
- Eighteen agro-processors honed their skills in the areas of financial management and product formulation and costing by participating in a workshop organized by IICA in collaboration with the Grenada Bureau of Standards. The workshop included practical group sessions.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- The foundation was laid for the sustainable development of Grenada's agricultural health and food safety system through an assessment of the country's SPS system.
- Through participation in meetings of the WTO's SPS Committee, Grenada is better equipped to implement its obligations under the SPS Agreement effectively.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on the territorial approach

- The production and marketing capabilities of the national chapter of the Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers (CANROP) were greatly enhanced through implementation of an agro-processing project formulated by the chapter, in consultation with IICA and the Grenada Produce Chemist Laboratory. The United Nations Development Programme funded the project.
- The national chapter of the Caribbean Agricultural Forum for Youth (CAFY) was revitalized and a document prepared outlining the successes, failures, lessons learnt and the way forward for the Forum.

Guatemala

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- IICA helped enhance the capabilities of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food (MAGA) and several civil society organizations linked to agriculture with a view to designing and implementing policies and strategies to improve the competitiveness of agribusinesses. IICA's specific contributions included:
 - An up-to-date study on the state of agriculture and rural life in Guatemala in 2007;
 - Research findings: "Competitive performance of the country's agricultural and agro-industrial products: an evaluation based on the revealed comparative advantages of international trade with the rest of the world during the period 2000-2005;"
 - Work programs used in forums for dialogue and consensus-building between the public and private sectors on the design and implementation of policies and strategies to improve the competitiveness of agribusinesses;
 - Preliminary plan for the competitive and sustainable development of the national fruit-growing industry; and
 - A strategy to set up a national observatory of agricultural chains and rural territories with AGEXPORT.
- A byproduct of the Regional Cooperative Program for the Technological Development and Modernization of Coffee Cultivation (PROMECAFE), the Regional Coffee Quality Program is being carried out with funding provided by the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) and the Multilateral Investment Fund of the IDB (IDB/MIF). Thanks to the program, the National Coffee Association of Guatemala (ANACAFE) has trained staff,

information and expertise for designing tools and coordinating measures aimed at assessing the quality of special coffees and improving competitiveness.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- Representatives of the public and private agricultural sectors acquired more knowledge about the provisions of the SPS Agreement and Codex Alimentarius related to food safety.
- With support from IICA, the MAGA was able to take part in all the meetings on the SPS Agreement held in Geneva.
- Public and private agricultural institutions have information about the current state of national SPS capabilities. This will enable them to develop a shared vision and formulate the strategies required to strengthen government SPS services.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on a territorial approach

IICA helped strengthen the MAGA's Inputs Program by implementing a follow-up and evaluation system that will make it possible to deliver inputs more efficiently to small- and medium-scale basic grain producers and to measure the Program's expected results objectively.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development

- IICA promoted dialogue and consensus-building for the establishment of the National Agricultural Technology Research, Innovation and Transfer System (SNITTA) through an ad hoc committee made up of representatives of the Agricultural Science and Technology Institute (ICTA), the National Council on Agricultural Science and Technology (CONCYT), the National Secretariat of Agricultural Science and Technology (SENACYT), the Agricultural Technical Commission of SINCYT and the Association of Agronomists of Guatemala.
- The Institute helped improve the ICTA's institutional image and its relationship with regional and international organizations. As a result, the ICTA was elected to chair the board of the SICTA and played an active part in the execution of the System's Regional Agenda for 2008. Furthermore, several of its researchers formed part of the regional networks of practice and knowledge related to technology that were created by IICA.
- Thanks to IICA's support and advice, the ICTA entered into partnership with producers' organizations and executed projects co-financed by FONTAGRO, the SICTA Network and the Global Crop Diversity Trust. The projects were designed to generate and promote technological innovations in the bean, corn, potato and tomato chains, and to regenerate the corn accessions kept in the ICTA's germplasm bank.

Guyana

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- IICA hosted two workshops and trained 24 technicians and over 75 producers/exporters in export trade requirements for the USA and the management of market information, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and the New Guyana Marketing Corporation (NGMC).
- The Institute facilitated the Ministry of Agriculture's membership of the MIOA and its participation in the MIOA meetings held in Jamaica and Panama.
- The final phase of the OAS/IICA Agro-tourism Project saw the delivery of a strategy document to guide the MoA and the Ministry of Tourism, Industry and Commerce (MoTIC) in developing the agriculture and tourism sectors; the training of 30 participants (farmers, vendors, chefs, MoA technicians and other tourism workers) in best practices in food and beverages and the creative use of local produce in cuisine.
- Implementation of an agro-tourism component in the Tri Lakes Communities under the W. K. Kellogg Foundation Project resulted in IICA receiving the Agro-Tourism Development Initiative Award from MoTIC/Guyana Tourism Authority (GTA).
- To support product diversification, IICA continued to operate the revolving loan fund, procure equipment and improve organic pineapple and cassava processing facilities at Mainstay and Tapakuma, respectively.
- The Institute facilitated training for the Pomeroon Women Small Cottage Association (PWSCA) in best practices in agro-processing, which helped raised the profile of their brand.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- In collaboration with the FAO, OIE and CODEX, IICA hosted STDF Training seminars and Common Visioning Sessions for AHFS, training 30 persons from the public and private sector.
- The Institute supported the active participation of MoA and Ministry of Health technicians in regional and international forums, including the WTO/SPS Committee in Geneva and APHIS/USDA in Florida.
- IICA supported the country's surveillance efforts, particularly along its borders, for the carambola fruit fly.
- To facilitate trade in agricultural products, the Institute continued to support selected farmers in Region 10 in recordkeeping and good agricultural practices.

Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment

As part of the second phase of the W. K. Kellogg Project, an extensive environmental awareness campaign was undertaken in the Tri-Lakes Communities. The project was completed on schedule, within budget and with a very high impact on the beneficiaries.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on the territorial approach

IICA hosted community visioning exercises and best practices in agro-processing in the Tri-Lakes Communities geared towards the diversification of income-generating activities and emphasizing the synergies among agriculture, heritage and the natural environment.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development

IICA continued to promote hydroponic technologies in the country through the training of three community farmers' groups; the Secondary Schools' Hydroponics Competition, in which 27 secondary schools, 270 students and 27 teachers participated; and the opening of the largest hydroponics garden in the country at the Kuru Kuru Training Centre.

Haiti

Contributing to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- IICA briefed the OAS Permanent Council about the current state of Haiti's agricultural sector. This gave the Ministry of Agriculture and the Institute an opportunity to lobby strongly for a portfolio of 23 profiles of projects designed to reactivate the sector and improve the country's food security situation.
- IICA participated with other institutions in the process of preparing the document on the State Policy for Agriculture and the Rural Milieu, which is now being discussed and validated at the national level.
- The Institute contributed to the organization of the mango sector through workshops targeting leading actors in the country's chief mango-producing areas.
- IICA fostered partnerships with technical cooperation agencies, financial institutions and NGOs, including the PAHO/WHO, the FAO, USDA-APHIS, the cooperation agencies of Spain and France, OIRSA, USAID, OXFAM-Quebec, the Veterinary Christian Mission, CARDI, the World Bank, the EU and the IDB, and with the governments of the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico and El Salvador.
- An inventory of agricultural legislation was completed.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- IICA supported the participation of a group of eight agricultural enterprises in the North American Food Marketplace (SIAL), a trade fair held in Montreal, Canada. Before taking part, the companies' representatives received intensive training in international trade, thanks to the cooperation of Canada's Trade Facilitation Office.
- Haitian entrepreneurs and trainers participated in two training sessions organized by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), held in Jamaica and Barbados, thanks to which they were able to enhance their expertise in the areas of trade and agribusiness.

- IICA supported the participation of Haiti as a member of the MIOA in the most recent assembly of that organization, held in Panama.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- Working with the Ministry of Agriculture and with financial support from the Government of Haiti and the USDA-APHIS, over 700,000 pigs were vaccinated and 873 samples of serum were taken to determine the prevalence of the classical swine fever virus.
- With support from the Veterinary Christian Mission, IICA organized five sessions of practical training in which over 130 young doctors, technicians and veterinary agents took part.
- The implementation strategy and the results of the SPS system were evaluated.
- IICA organized three bi-national meetings of the animal and plant health authorities of Haiti and the Dominican Republic.
- The operations of the laboratory of the Plant Production Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture were strengthened by installing a system supporting distance diagnosis and the identification of pests and diseases, which was integrated into the Caribbean Regional Diagnostic Network (CRDN).

Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment

IICA presented a position paper on nationwide reforestation to the CIDA with a view to securing financing.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on a territorial approach

- IICA facilitated the establishment of a tripartite cooperation initiative involving Argentina, Canada and Haiti, aimed at extending the ProHuerta project for a five-year period in five departments of the country.
- Ten training sessions were organized on the production of fresh food for personal consumption, in which 214 promoters participated.
- With financial support from the European Union, 18 fact sheets were produced in an audio format to enable groups of rural producers to teach themselves.
- Seventy young Haitians had the opportunity to participate in two sessions on leadership in agriculture.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development

- The Institute contributed to the establishment of an extensive program for the development of modern vegetable gardens in Haiti.
- IICA established a documentation center to provide agricultural students and professionals with quality information.

Honduras

Contributing to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- At the request of the Secretariat of Agriculture and Livestock (SAG), IICA prepared the 2008-2012 medium-term investment strategy for the agricultural sector, which incorporated the chains approach.
- The Institute cooperated in the formulation of the National Plan for the Dissemination and Communication of the 2008-2009 PACA, which was also delivered to the SAG.
- By implementing cooperation agreements, including one related to the Bono Tecnológico (a program involving subsidized fertilizers and seeds), IICA helped the SAG to restore the productive capacity of the country's small-scale basic grain producers.
- Working with the FAO and the SAG's Directorate of Science and Technology, IICA drafted the document "Systematization of the Bono Tecnológico."
- Working with the SAG, and with financial support from the USDA, the Institute implemented the Food for Progress Program for financial year 2005-2006, designed to develop the technical and business skills that producers need to take full advantage of the benefits offered by the DR-CAFTA.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- In coordination with the SAG and key actors, IICA formulated the action plans and updated the assessments for the cacao and dairy and meat chains.
- The Institute facilitated capacity building on trade policy issues and negotiations among junior members of the country's team of agricultural negotiators.
- In support of the CAC and the SAG, IICA helped organize the Regional Training Workshop for the Central American Dairy Sector.
- The pre-assessment of the current state of organic agriculture was prepared with the participation of the key actors in the country's organic movement: input and service providers, certifying producers, producers making the transition to organic agriculture, merchants, officials and representatives of support institutions and academia.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- The Institute helped strengthen the National Codex Alimentarius Committee by formulating the 2009 Plan of Action.
- Technical support was provided for the preparation of the STDF project, aimed at strengthening the National Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (CNMSF), which the SAG presented to the WTO.
- IICA assisted the Honduran standard-setting body by preparing the regulations governing mangoes.
- The Institute trained technicians from SENASA and the private and academic sectors in the standard-setting processes of the OIE and the IPPC.

- IICA increased agricultural actors' knowledge of biotechnology by providing the latest information on the subject and making a presentation on the potential for biotechnology and bio-energy in Honduras.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on a territorial approach

- The Standing Forum on Rural Development and Food Security (FORDESA) was set up. It involved the SAG, academics, the UNDP and other international cooperation partners.
- In coordination with the CAC, IICA supported the organization of the Central American Meeting on Territorial Rural Development, during which the first steps were taken to prepare the Regional Rural Development Strategy with a Territorial Approach.
- With technical cooperation from the Institute, PRODERT prepared its Closeout and Sustainability Strategy and a proposal for the Investment Program for the Territory.
- Participants in international meetings on rural development learned about the pilot rural development initiative with a territorial approach in Belen Gualcho, where a leadership training program got under way with 15 leaders from the Occidente region.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development

- IICA collaborated in the organization and creation of four partnerships between groups of producers and technical support institutions with a view to identifying, proposing and executing projects designed to boost bean production, processing and marketing, and enhancing the management capabilities of farmers' organizations.
- Under the projects related to the production, processing and marketing of beans executed in Honduras, national and international specialists in bean production technologies trained producers involved in the alliances of producers and technical support institutions established in Danli and Olancho.
- IICA helped strengthen the country's organic movement by coordinating inter-institutional activities, executing training activities, revising and updating plans, documents, regulations and procedures, and preparing three bankable projects for the production of cashews, cacao and plantains.

Jamaica

Repositioning agriculture and rural life

- The Minister of Agriculture visited IICA Headquarters to take part in the Forum for Leaders in Agriculture and learn about successful agricultural projects in Costa Rica. During his visit, he signed a memorandum of understanding to facilitate technical assistance from the Institute in the ministry's priority areas.

- The two Hurricane Dean Recovery Projects initiated by IICA and funded by the CIDA and the Pan American Development Foundation/Chevron, respectively, came to a successful close in the first quarter of 2008. The projects provided inputs for poultry and greenhouse farmers whose operations were devastated by the hurricane.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusiness

- At the request of the Ministry of Agriculture, the Institute developed a three-year project for the modernization of the local marine fisheries and greenhouse subsectors. The project received CND\$4.9 million in funding from the CIDA and an estimated CDN\$1.5 million from the Ministry of Agriculture.
- The Farmer to Farmer project, which over the last three years brought 65 overseas volunteers to train local organizations in the agricultural sector, ended in September. Twelve local organizations benefited from the knowledge and technology transfer that the program facilitated. They have reported improvements in several areas of their operations.
- Given the lack of market intelligence available on the greenhouse sector, enhancement work was conducted on the greenhouse production database. IICA assisted in the creation of this tool.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- Following an extensive assessment of the Veterinary Services Division at the Ministry of Agriculture, IICA developed and submitted a project containing a plan for modernizing the unit.
- IICA facilitated the production and dissemination of the Caribbean version of a radio series promoting the prevention of the avian influenza H5N1 virus for stakeholders in the agriculture sector.
- The Institute coordinated information-gathering sessions with stakeholders to assess sanitary and phytosanitary systems in Jamaica. IICA later hosted a follow-up session, dubbed the “Common Vision Workshop,” to discuss the findings of the assessment with stakeholders and develop strategies for addressing the needs and gaps.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on the territorial approach

- IICA helped the Charles Town Bee Farmers Association to source a J\$1.68 million grant from USAID’s REACT program. The money helped the bee farmers substantially increase their honey production capacity.
- Under its Rural Diversification Program, the European Union approved J\$35.8 million in funding to permit IICA to develop an agro-tourism project in the Buff Bay Valley of Portland.
- Under the IICA/OAS agro-tourism initiative, the Institute hosted two agro-tourism workshops involving stakeholders from the agriculture and tourism sectors.

Mexico

Contributing to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- Working with FAO, ECLAC and the World Bank, IICA produced the first printed version of a document on trends in agricultural policies, which contains a summary of the experience of the three international organizations with regard to policy evaluation.
- Pursuant to the provisions of the technical addendum signed with the Agri-food and Fisheries Information Service (SIAP) and with a view to implementing the National Information System for Sustainable Rural Development Program (PSNIDRUS), IICA supported the organization of the Seventh Forum on the Expectations of the Agri-food and Fisheries Sector (in this case, for 2008).
- IICA supported the organization, in Mazatlan, of the seventh meeting of the working group set up under the Hemispheric Treaty, at which information and knowledge was disseminated about fruit flies in the western hemisphere. Representatives of SAGARPA-SENASICA, the USDA, the International Atomic Energy Agency, IICA and other organizations took part in the meeting.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- The Institute supported the implementation of, and took part in, the Third Latin American Congress on Clusters: Clusters and Alliances for Development in Latin America, held in Chihuahua, to promote the sharing of experiences and expertise among the Latin American countries, Spain and Portugal (representatives of the two European countries were invited to take part as special guests).
- In Costa Rica, with the participation of CIRAD, the National University (UNA) and IICA, a course was held entitled “Local agro-industrial systems: an option for strengthening rural agribusinesses in the context of globalization.”
- Working with the organizing committee, the Institute promoted the World Dairy Summit, held in Mexico City. IICA gave a presentation at the summit entitled “Clusters and local agri-food systems” and over 500 people visited its stand.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

To boost the capabilities for preventing the spread and introduction of pests into Latin America and the Caribbean, IICA, the Plant Health Committee of the Southern Cone (COSAVE) and the USDA organized an on-line course on the standard-setting process of the IPPC under the Plant Health Treaty.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on a territorial approach

IICA facilitated the participation of six experts from Mexico, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Uruguay and Colombia in the ALFATER Congress, held in Mar del Plata, Argentina.

Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment

- The IICA-CIRAD-CATIE consortium successfully completed the Chiapas-Mexico Integrated and Sustainable Social Development Project, financed by the State Government of Chiapas and the European Union.
- Under the project Development of Sustainable Production Systems, Microenterprises and Financing Systems, IICA's direct technical cooperation focused on actions in support of microenterprises, agro-ecological issues and natural resource management.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development

- IICA and INIFAP organized the First International Meeting for the Integrated Management of Frosty Pod Rot in Cacao. SAGARPA, INIFAP, CATIE, CIRAD, the State Government of Chiapas and IICA took part in the meeting which was held in Mexico.
- Under the aegis of PROCINORTE, the following activities were carried out in Mexico:
 - Technical Meeting of the Tri-national Council, in Tapachula, Chiapas;
 - National Consultative Workshop on PROCINORTE. Technology research and transfer priorities were established for both Mexico and the Northern Region;
 - Annual meeting of the Mexican Network of Agricultural Libraries (REMBA), held in Colima. A presentation was given on the growth of the Mexican Agricultural Information Catalogue, which is supported by PROCINORTE and 15 Mexican institutions; and
 - Working meetings of PROCINORTE's Tropical Fruits and Plant Health groups.

Nicaragua

Contributing to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- IICA advised the agricultural and rural public sector on the design of public policies in the areas of organic production, stock raising, bio-energy, technological innovation, seeds, cacao, honey and basic grains.
- The Institute provided technical assistance for the design of two of the three programs established in the Government's sectoral policy: the National Food Program, which makes provision for the negotiation of US\$750 million for the next five years, and the National Agroindustry Program, for which an initial strategic proposal was prepared.
- A total of 295 training actions were carried out in different parts of the country, at which 15,895 participants learned about topics such as organic policies, coffee, innovation in beans, corn, honey and organic cacao, certified seed, strategic planning, market studies, geo-referencing of farms, internal audit, fermenting and drying of cacao, value-added, business plans, formulation of investment projects, good manufacturing practices and hazard analysis and critical control point systems.

- IICA supported the culmination of the process of evaluating the program of the agronomy course of the Catholic University of the Dry Tropical Region (UCATSE//Esteli).

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- The Institute continued to promote agribusiness development by means of a series of actions. It supported the design of business plans, organic certification processes, technical assistance for the diversification and generation of byproducts, the implementation of contact meetings and fairs, commercial contacts, technological innovation, and the provision of information and preparation of export guides. All this work directly benefited over 2500 farmers belonging to organized groups in different parts of the country who produce cacao, honey, beans, corn, vegetables (truck farms), coffee and other items.
- IICA widely disseminated technical information to support exports of agricultural products to several countries. The information included updated studies on the agro-industrial chains of plantains, honey, grapes, beans, coffee and vegetables.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- By means of videoconferences, the Institute facilitated training and the sharing of experiences with regard to the standard-setting processes of Codex Alimentarius, the OIE and the IPPC (animal health and plant health). Officials of institutions involved in the public and private productive sectors and universities took part in the activities.
- IICA supported the design of the profile of an agricultural health and food safety subprogram costing US\$90 million.
- The Institute provided technical follow-up to the MAGFOR projects aimed at promoting good agricultural practices and traceability, the eradication of classical swine fever, the control of *citrus leprosis*, the eradication of the fruit fly and the eradication, prevention and control of shrimp diseases.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on a territorial approach

- The Institute continued to support the implementation of the development strategy of the municipal districts of the “Four Saints” (north of Chinandega). It promoted bean agribusinesses, productive practices for water/tree/soil conservation and the development of both the productive infrastructure (mini-irrigation) and the social infrastructure (drinking water and communications) in the bi-national watershed of the Rio Negro, along the border with Honduras.
- IICA supported the development of cacao production and marketing in the communities of El Guabo and Ciudad Campana (municipality of Villa Sandino, department of Chontales), and in Muelle de los Bueyes, Nueva Guinea, and other regions of the RAAS, working with groups of 450 producers in five communities.
- The Institute continued to work with groups of 400 beekeepers in the territories of Boaco, Leon, Chinandega and Managua. The work focused on the process of bee certification, the geo-referencing of farms and the establishment of a system of

control for the country's organizations of producers. Other activities included continued efforts to enhance producers' capabilities by providing technical assistance and the implementation of training activities in honey production and the formulation of business plans. Training activities were also carried out to encourage the penetration of new markets and technicians from all over the country took part in courses to qualify as organic certifiers.

- In the departments of Matagalpa and Jinotega, IICA worked with groups of coffee growers to build 193 wet processing plants, for use by 482 producers.
- In the departments of Boaco, Esteli, Rivas, Rio San Juan and Chinandega, the Institute helped nearly 1000 families to improve bean and corn production.
- IICA collaborated in the organization, planning and execution of the First Forum on Rural Development, organized jointly with the National Agrarian University and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Foundation.
- The Institute continued to support the UCA's Master's Degree Program in Rural Development and the launching of the Biotechnology Institute (INBION).

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development

- IICA promoted the dialogue on policies and institution building for the organic movement and MAGFOR, and the organic certification of most of the 900 small-scale producers of organic cacao and honey in several parts of the country.
- The Institute supported the creation and strengthening of bean and corn clusters in Nicaragua under the SICTA Network project (IICA/SDC). In partnership with Amcham and the FAO, it developed vegetable gardens in over 50 schools located in various communities throughout the country, an activity that involved more than 4000 children, parents and teachers. IICA also promoted increased value added and the development of the processing of products such as beans, corn, cacao and honey; and promoted the improvement of coffee quality and environmental management by drafting plans for building 500 wet processing plants for small-scale coffee producers, 44 of which had been built at the time of writing.

Panama

Contributing to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life

As a member of the Standing Inter-agency Forum, which also involves IFAD, the UNDP, the AECID, MIDES, associations of producers, rural development projects and the Office of the President, IICA assisted the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MIDA) in organizing dialogues with the leaders of the agri-food and rural sectors to discuss the present situation and the outlook for the sector.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- IICA collaborated with the MIDA and the private sector in preparing the document "Situation and outlook for fruit growing in Panama."

- The participants in the Third Meeting of Exporters, organized by the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MICI), acquired new knowledge as a result of an expert presentation on the phytosanitary, sanitary and environmental requirements in Panama's export chains.
- The Institute helped to improve competitiveness and promote trade in agricultural products by providing support to the Committee of the Dairy Products Chain aimed at the establishment of a milk purchasing system based on quality.
- IICA provided technical cooperation to the MIDA for the formulation of export compendiums for products included in the free trade agreements signed with Central America, Singapore, Taiwan and Chile, and in the preferential schemes of the United States of America and the EU.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- Technical cooperation was provided to the Inter-sectoral Group, made up of the MIDA, the MICI, AUPSA, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and the private sector, for the application of the agreements of the WTO/SPS Committee in formulating and preparing Panama's 2008-2012 National Agenda for SPS.
- In a strategic partnership with the FAO, the OIE and the IPPC, IICA helped the MIDA and the MICI organize and implement a course on the regulations of Codex Alimentarius, the OIE and the IPPC. Officials from the public agricultural sector, associations of producers, academia, agro-export companies and NGOs were among those who took part.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on a territorial approach

IICA worked with the MIDA and the Inter-agency Group on Rural Development to systematize knowledge management in rural tourism in the province of Darien. The Institute prepared a territorial management methodology and the tools needed to apply it.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development

The Institute provided technical support to the MIDA for the restructuring of the Extension Service. It prepared an operating manual, a document on the close coordination of research and extension services and private sector actors, and the Strategy for Implementing the New Integrated Agricultural Extension Model.

Paraguay

Contributing to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) has a proposed 2008-2013 State Policy for the Agricultural and Rural Sector. IICA provided technical cooperation for the preparation of the policy and representatives of producers' organizations and family agriculture took part.

- The Institute contributed to the formulation of a strategic framework for the agricultural sector for the period 2008-2013 that will enable the MAG to chart the course of its operations during the present administration.
- Public- and private-sector actors are better equipped to take appropriate and timely decisions as they have important information readily available concerning the situation, performance and outlook for the rural sector and its communities through the IICA Observatory on the Agricultural and Forestry Sector.
- The Institute was able to consolidate the incorporation of the libraries and documentation centers of the UNA's schools of agricultural and veterinary sciences and the MAG's "Moises Bertoni" National Agricultural Library into the Agricultural Information and Documentation System of the Americas (SIDALC).

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- The members of the Sectoral Forum on Fruits and Vegetables of the Investment and Export Network (REDIEX) of the Ministry of Industry and Trade learned how to identify business opportunities and make better decisions to position themselves in overseas markets at a course designed to enhance the business capabilities required for exporting.
- With support from IICA, the MAG's General Planning Directorate held a seminar-workshop entitled "International Trade Negotiations and Agriculture" at which public-sector specialists were able to enhance their expertise.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

The national services responsible for quality, animal and plant health and food safety were strengthened as staff were trained, infrastructures improved and harmonized measures were applied. These actions had direct and indirect benefits inasmuch as they underpinned production and trade in agricultural products and byproducts.

Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment

IICA enhanced the capabilities of professionals from the SEAM, the MAG and various universities who took part in the workshop-course "Planning for Watershed Management," carried out jointly with CATIE.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on a territorial approach

With support from IICA, the Technical Secretariat for Planning, the MAG's Directorate of Agricultural Extension and the UNA's School of Agricultural Sciences strengthened the Municipal District of Paraguari by providing it with a Development Plan that was prepared with the participation of the community.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development

- Under a cooperation agreement involving the MAG, Alter Vida and IICA, the National Strategy for Developing Organic and Agro-ecological Production was prepared with the broad participation of the public, private and academic sectors and producers from the family agriculture subsector.
- IICA, PIPRA, PARPOV, and APROSEMP held a workshop-seminar entitled “Intellectual Property Rights: A Challenge for Incorporating Technological Innovations into Agribusinesses” to improve the knowledge management processes of public and private institutions related to agricultural technology.

Peru

Contributing to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- The Peruvian Observatory of Agricultural Production Chains and Rural Territories has more tools at its disposal for analyzing markets, competitors and the performance of agricultural producers, and the conditions that territories provide for the competitiveness of chains and the development of the capabilities of rural families. The Web portal on agricultural production chains and rural territories was visited over half a million times and currently has a tutor to facilitate queries.
- The services of the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAG) improved following the implementation of the pilot plan (180 processes) to simplify the administrative procedures of the MINAG and its decentralized agencies, programs and projects.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- IICA improved the institutional capabilities of PRONAMACHCS and agricultural producers in the regions of Ayacucho, Huancavelica and Apurimac by conducting baseline studies of the priority chains and acquiring 18 tractors and their implements.
- The Institute supported the campaign for the consumption of native varieties of potato. Small-scale producers benefited from the resulting rise in potato consumption (up from 85 kg. to 90 kg. per capita per year).

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

Following the application of the PVS tool, work plans were drawn up for the implementation of the WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures.

Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment

Under the terms of a letter of understanding signed with the MINAG, IICA supported the construction and implementation of hi-tech forest nurseries in Lambayeque, Ayacucho,

Apurímac and Huancavelica, each of which can produce 500,000 high-quality seedlings per year.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on a territorial approach

In the territory of Huaura, IICA strengthened local cooperation networks that developed viable and sustainable proposals for rural development with a territorial approach.

Saint Kitts and Nevis

Contributing to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- IICA provided senior Ministry of Agriculture officials with a forum at the Caribbean Week of Agriculture to dialogue with other stakeholders in the region, highlight successful experiences and promote the importance of agriculture.
- The Director of Agriculture and one of his senior staff enhanced their leadership skills by participating in the Forum for Young Leaders, held at the Institute's Center for Leadership.
- Sixty-eight farmers and agro-processors have a greater understanding of the current issues that impact their enterprises after participating in a number of seminars and consultations.
- Actions to incorporate production for the tourism market led to a 6% expansion in the agri-food sector.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- The development of the cassava food chain was greatly enhanced because of the resources provided to a small entrepreneur.
- Selected farmers and agricultural producers enhanced their networking with potential clients and increased product sales by 15% thanks to their increased participation in festivals and special events.
- IICA provided training in crop scheduling and post-harvest technology that led to the strengthening of the marketing contract between the St. Kitts Farmers Cooperative and the Marriott Hotel and an increase in sales of produce.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- The Institute enhanced the management program for the Ministry of Agriculture's Coconut Lethal Yellowing Disease Rehabilitation Project by providing technical input to the task force that was set up and planting materials valued at EC\$5000.00.
- Eighteen farmers are more aware of the principles and procedures of good agricultural practices and have incorporated them into their farming activities.
- Three veterinarians enhanced their capacity to improve the surveillance of targeted animal health diseases through the regional VEP.

- Twenty persons from various government ministries participated in a Codex Alimentarius workshop and are now better informed of the standard-setting process and how to improve the functioning of the local committee.
- Strategies to improve the performance of the veterinary, food safety and phytosanitary protection services were developed at a visioning session for private- and public-sector personnel.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on the territorial approach

- The St. Kitts Farmers Cooperative is better able to develop and source funding after IICA helped it to secure EC\$49,000.00 in grant funds for capacity building and infrastructure development.
- The Nevis Agro-Processors Cooperative is better able to develop and source funding after IICA helped it secure EC\$56,000.00 in grant funds for capacity building, skills training, HACCP and infrastructure development.
- Twenty-eight members of the St. Kitts Farmers Cooperative and the Fahies Women Producers Association participated in an educational visit to Nevis and were able to increase their networking.
- The Nevis Growers Association was able to develop project proposals for funding after IICA helped it secure grant funds totaling EC\$58,000 for fencing wire, mist blowers, weed-eaters and other agricultural equipment for members.
- The Project Strong beekeeping program, initiated by IICA, continued to be a source of revenue for the school. An additional hive and protective clothing were donated to the school.
- Sixteen persons, including three youths, were trained in soap making and are now utilizing certain local fruits and vegetables in the manufacturing of soap.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development

- IICA collaborated with CARDI (CARDI/IICA Agreement) in procuring two shade houses, which would be used for technology generation and transfer.
- The Institute procured a small stainless 2 HP steel mill to grind a variety of agricultural foods.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

Repositioning agriculture and rural life

As a member of the Alliance and in support of the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, IICA hosted the Eighth Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA) and the National Agricultural and Agro-based Industrial Exhibition (NAIE), which gave a significant boost to agriculture and rural life.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusiness

- The linkage between tourism and agriculture received a boost as a result of the partnership between IICA and the Hotel and Tourism Association in implementing “Vincy Flavours” 2008.
- Having attended the Regional Investment Forum for Agro-tourism in Barbados, the Chairman of the National Agro-tourism Committee is better prepared to advise and guide the other members of the Committee regarding investment opportunities.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on the territorial approach

- The national chapter of the Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers (SVG CANROP) and the Caribbean Agricultural Form for Youth (SVGAFY) elected their new executives. IICA continues to provide secretariat services to those organizations and to assist in the implementation of their work plans.
- During the CWA, both CANROP and CAFY convened meetings in St. Vincent and the Grenadines and elected new executives to guide their activities over the next year. The Institute facilitated their attendance at CWA and continues to provide secretariat support in the execution of their work plans prepared jointly with IICA.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development

- Under the IICA/CARDI Technical Cooperation Agreement, vegetable farmers/seedling producers are benefiting from the CARDI Country Representative research, using several media mixes to prepare vegetable seedlings for production, and are better able to select the medium that gives the best seedling development.
- In collaboration with FAO, under the Technical Cooperation Project entitled “Strengthening and Expanding Rural Income Streams,” UDs Plantain Chips received support in overhauling and modernizing its operations, bringing them into line with the requirements of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Bureau of Standards.

Saint Lucia

Repositioning agriculture and rural life

- Through a national agriculture symposium with the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Forestry and Fisheries (MALFF), stakeholders in the agriculture and related sectors gained a better understanding of the challenges facing the Ministry of Agriculture and its capacity to advance development of the sector, including the constraints it faces in doing so.
- IICA received an endorsement for implementation of the recommendations made following presentation of the report on the Institutional Review of the MALFF to the Cabinet.

- Stakeholders' understanding of the provisions of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), the process of negotiating the agreement and its potential impact on the development and sustainability of the agriculture sector was enhanced through several expert presentations.
- Following broad consultation across the Eastern Caribbean States (ECS), the inter-agency agenda was strengthened with the formal signing of the Consortium Agreement and the launch of the activities aimed at developing an Information Observatory. Eleven agencies whose work impacts agricultural development in the ECS signed the Agreement.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusiness

- IICA supported the efforts to expand the dialogue among entrepreneurs across the region in the first of a three-part workshop series aimed at building entrepreneurship in agriculture in the Caribbean.
- The income streams of two women entrepreneurs were strengthened and their capacity to diversify their product range increased through the direct injection of capital coupled with technical and managerial support.
- The Institute assisted 39 women from the rural community of Babonneau in building their capacity and enhancing their creative and marketing skills to add value to fresh fruits and vegetables, through a series of workshops on the preservation and processing of products.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- Saint Lucia's capacity to modernize its agricultural health and food safety (AHFS) mechanism was strengthened through the development and implementation of a study of national agricultural health and food safety systems (NAHFSS) and the drafting of recommendations to improve them.
- The capability to provide safe food to consumers was also strengthened through the reappointment of the pesticide control board and its representation at the meeting of the Coordinating Group of Pesticide Control Boards of the Caribbean, held in Belize.
- The Institute enhanced the capacity of stakeholders in the banana industry to identify Moko and Black Sigatoka disease by involving them in training workshops to initiate the survey on the presence of the disease in Saint Lucia.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on the territorial approach

- Membership of the St. Lucia Agriculture Forum for Youth (SLAFY) increased and governance was strengthened with the holding of constitutional elections and the appointment of a new Executive Committee.
- Coordination and cooperation were strengthened within the St. Lucia Network of Rural Women Producers (SLNRWP) through a series of meetings held in various communities across the island. The formation of a number of active clusters has increased membership of the group to approximately 90.

- The Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI) Project continued to increase the income-earning capacity of approximately 38 women and 35 young people through the provision of 196,171 seedlings, fertilizer, chemicals and small farm equipment.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development

Progress was made with the effort to incorporate low-cost technology into the agriculture sector under a partnership with the United Nations Development Programme and the Bank of Saint Lucia that made it possible to send a mission to Costa Rica. The members of the mission, who included farmers, executives of the pig farmers cooperative and officers of the MALFF, received training in the construction and installation of biogas digesters.

Suriname

Contributing to the repositioning agriculture and rural life

- IICA organized a national seminar for youth in agriculture, as follow-up to its Young Leaders of the Americas initiative and to encourage the participation of Suriname youth in the agricultural sector.
- The Institute operated an agro-tourism booth at an international tourism fair sponsored by the Tourism Foundation of Suriname. The theme of the fair was “Suriname: Where the Amazon meets the Caribbean.”

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- The Institute facilitated a seminar entitled “Farm to Table” for agricultural producers and exporters at the monthly post-harvest management training event sponsored by the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries (MoLVV).
- The IDB Trade Sector Support Program (IDB/TSSP) approved funding for the publication of a handbook entitled “Farm and Airport Storage and Treatment of Vegetable and Fruit,” paving the way for the export of quality Surinamese products.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- IICA supported the ongoing Carambola Fruit Fly Surveillance Program in the Guyana/Suriname border region.
- The Institute facilitated and supported the participation of senior MoLVV technicians in WTO/SPS meetings in Geneva.
- IICA facilitated the implementation of two on-line courses on standard setting, related to the Codex Alimentarius and animal health.
- Under the STDF/SPS project, the Institute facilitated an assessment of the national SPS system and organized a follow-up seminar.

Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment

- IICA's proposal for the rehabilitation of mined-out areas in the Moengo Community was presented at a seminar sponsored by the Bauxite Institute of Suriname.
- At the request of the Suriname Airport Authority, terms of reference were prepared and presented for financing a wildlife survey and a land use plan for the area surrounding Johan Adolf Pengel Airport.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on the territorial approach

- IICA implemented two projects related to food security in the Upper Suriname River communities: a family chicken cooperative project, in collaboration with Peace Corps Suriname, and a vegetable production project as follow-up to the PADF/IICA/OAS Flood Relief Project.
- IICA prepared and submitted to the MoLVV a proposal for agricultural diversification activities in the Coronie District.
- The Institute completed the WWF/IICA Small-scale Income Generation Project.
- The second phase of the IICA/OAS Agro-Tourism Linkages Project was completed with a workshop aimed at strengthening links between farmers and hotels, and phase three got under way with a survey and workshop in Commewijne District.
- IICA conducted a rural appraisal and food security assessment in the Marowijne River Communities in Eastern Suriname. At the communities' request, a proposal was prepared and submitted to the Ministry of Regional Development for the further development of regions in the country's hinterland.
- The Institute facilitated the revitalization of Suriname Rural Women Producers (SUNROP) - the Suriname chapter of the Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers (CANROP).

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development

- IICA organized and implemented a seminar on pasture management and provided advice and information to private- and public-sector livestock operations.
- The Institute facilitated and supported the process of sourcing small ruminant breeding stock in the Caribbean Region for the MoLVV Livestock Upgrading Programme.
- IICA supported the testing of upland rice varieties in the Upper Suriname River Region.
- The Institute sourced information and planting material for selected crops from Brazil and Guyana.

Trinidad & Tobago

Repositioning agriculture and rural life

- IICA assisted the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources (MALMR) with the preparations for its participation in the IABA meeting and the Forum for New Leaders. Two young people from Trinidad and Tobago were selected to take part in the Forum for Young Leaders in Agriculture, which drew participants from across the hemisphere.
- IICA conducted training programs aimed at improving the Extension Service's capabilities in the area of project planning and management. Thirty-six extension and technical officers received training over a six-week period and two projects prepared during the training process were submitted to the Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP) for consideration.
- The Institute implemented a project under the IICA/CARDI Technical Cooperation Agreement designed to enhance information and communications for food security in Trinidad and Tobago.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusiness

- In an effort to support policy formulation and agribusiness planning at the enterprise level, IICA supported the Division of Agriculture, Marine Affairs, Marketing and the Environment of the Tobago House of Assembly in developing cost of production models for a range of root crops, vegetables and livestock.
- A program was developed in collaboration with the NAMDEVCO to strengthen the agribusiness sector and develop an export promotion platform. The program will strengthen the National Agricultural Marketing Information System (NAMIS), build agribusiness capacity among farmers and exporters through training and technical assistance, and provide for the institutional strengthening of NAMDEVCO.
- IICA hosted two students of the University of the West Indies under the Agribusiness Internship Program. The students contributed significantly to research work done in preparation for the program with NAMDEVCO.
- Two agro-tourism investment profiles were prepared and presented to a regional investment meeting in Barbados.
- Two Farm-to-Table workshops were held - one in Trinidad and the other in Tobago - to bring farmers, purchasing managers and chefs together to build partnerships and establish business relationships.
- The development of the herbal industry was pursued through a project formulated for implementation under the IICA/CARDI Technical Cooperation Agreement, which focuses on the marketing of two herbs (shadon beni and lemon grass). This project is being implemented in close collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, the University of the West Indies (UWI), the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT), the Trinidad and Tobago Agribusiness Association (TTABA) and other collaborators.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- IICA continued to play an active role in the activities of the Cabinet-appointed National Agricultural Health and Food Safety Committee (NAHFSC).
- The Institute conducted an assessment of the food safety system in Trinidad and Tobago using the IICA-developed PVS instrument.
- Some 20 people benefited from two key webcasts: a two-day workshop entitled “The Codex Alimentarius and You” and a one-day activity called “The OIE Normative Process and You.”

Promoting the development of rural communities based on the territorial approach

- IICA completed a baseline study in the Brickfield community (which includes former CARONI 1975 Ltd. workers) and presented the results to the members of the community.
- IICA continued to provide technical and administrative support for the activities of the Network of Rural Women Producers (NRWP) and young people involved in agriculture. Executive members of the youth group took part in a training session dealing with computer and Internet use.

United States of America

Contributing to the Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life

- As part of a series of events organized to commemorate the Institute’s 66th anniversary throughout the year, IICA coordinated high-level sessions with key partners such as the USDA, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the Organization of American States (OAS) and the International Food Information Council (IFIC). The topics discussed included animal health and food safety, agro-tourism, biotechnology and risk communication. These activities were centered around the USDA’s World Agricultural Outlook Forum.
- The Institute hosted an event during the USDA’s weeklong World Agriculture Outlook Forum aimed at raising awareness of the importance of partnerships. The audience included ambassadors to the OAS, strategic partners and representatives of the public and private sectors.
- IICA facilitated linkages among U.S. institutional, financial, professional and technical resources, the donor community, the public and private sectors, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the USDA to raise awareness of the growing concern regarding food security and the effects of climate change on agriculture in the region.
- The Institute proposed and secured approval for two projects with the USDA: 1) a joint IICA/USDA accessible database of technical information intended to form the basis of a virtual extension service for member countries and research institutions; and, 2) a formal review of IICA/USDA-FAS national agendas.

- Working in tandem with NAL-USDA, IICA published a new version of the Spanish Thesaurus.
- The Institute initiated and facilitated a visit by senior officials from both the Government of Haiti and IICA to the OAS, the Government of Canada, the Bahamas and strategic partners, including the IDB and World Bank, to discuss the state of agriculture and recommendations for improvement of the agriculture sector in Haiti.
- The Institute used its annual IICA Day activity at the OAS to raise Member States' awareness of the growing global concern regarding food security and climate change. Senior IICA officials made specific recommendations in light of the threat posed by climate change to agriculture and food security in the western hemisphere.

Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusiness

- IICA secured support from the Vice President and Minister of Agriculture of Uruguay for a conference on agriculture insurance in Montevideo, which will be held in 2009. To strengthen this effort, the Institute also developed a relationship with the new head of ALASA, the hemispheric insurance organization.
- Thanks to the Institute's efforts, a number of Spanish insurance companies (ENESA, Agroseguros and POLITECNICA) agreed to provide advisory or consulting services in developing agricultural insurance programs for Latin America and the Caribbean.
- IICA spearheaded a comprehensive analysis and review of the state of agricultural insurance in Chile and presented recommendations to strengthen the program to both the Government of Chile and the private sector insurance community.
- Throughout the year, the Institute took part in and supported the sessions of the Joint Summit Working Group (JSWG) aimed at addressing the issues under negotiation for the Fifth Summit of the Americas. In this way, the organization helped to facilitate the advancement of agricultural concerns for the Americas.
- An article published recently in *ComuniICA* magazine analyzed agricultural insurance throughout the hemisphere and how it helps reduce poverty by enabling farmers to recover more quickly from economic losses in the event of natural disasters and other phenomena.
- The document "Agriculture Insurance in Latin America - Observations and Critical Success Factors," was presented to over 200 small producers, government officials and members of the private sector at the Eighth Annual Meeting of Chile's Agricultural Development Institute (INDAP). The theme of the event was "Managing Risk for Small Producers in Chile."
- IICA facilitated the successful launch of a distance education course in agro-tourism sponsored jointly by the Institute and the OAS. Four virtual classrooms were created and 96 students were able to participate.
- IICA participated as a presenter in the first Annual Caribbean Tourism Summit, held in Washington, D.C. The unique event provides a significant opportunity to develop the Caribbean tourism infrastructure.

Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

- As part of the efforts to strengthen the veterinary infrastructure in the Caribbean region, IICA played an important role in obtaining a one-year extension of the APHIS-IICA Agreement for the VEP Project, involving funding worth US\$200,000.
- As a result of coordinated efforts spearheaded by IICA, the USDA-APHIS approved funding of US\$75,000 for the LAC Codex Coordinating Committee.
- The Institute raised awareness of animal health and food safety concerns in the Americas by initiating and contributing to the successful completion of the Fifteenth Inter-American Meeting at the Ministerial Level on Health and Agriculture (RIMSA) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

The Institute produced a video on climate change and food security for IICA Day at the OAS.

Uruguay

Contributing to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- IICA helped enhance the country's capacity for prospective analysis and strategic thinking by holding the fourth series of lectures entitled "State policies: what lies ahead for the agricultural sector."
- The current situation and outlook for agricultural, forestry and meat chains were discussed at an activity on the agricultural model.
- The "Uruguay Alimentario al Mundo" Distance Learning Platform was consolidated. This is an alliance of a number of public and private institutions involved in the country's agricultural and rural sectors. Nine courses were held that benefited 163 students (mostly young professionals in Spanish-speaking countries).
- IICA assisted the Agricultural Plan Institute (IPA) in implementing a project designed to validate an IDB-financed technology transfer system for the agricultural sector involving the use of ICT, particularly distance education. Some 150 representatives of livestock Small and Medium Enterprises in the country's hinterland received training in the use of modern management tools.
- The third edition of the "Casa del Periodista" was held. The aim of this joint effort with the Rural Association of Uruguay is to help improve the working conditions of 700 journalists accredited for the Expo Agro, the biggest Uruguayan agricultural fair held in the capital.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- An ad hoc Meat National Institute (INAC)-IICA working group was set up to draw up strategic documents on trade negotiations involving the meat subsector.

- Some 120 national technicians were trained in topics related to international regulations, especially the standards of Codex Alimentarius (in partnership with FAO), the OIE and the IPPC.
- IICA supported the Technical Secretariat of the CAS, the regional forum in charge of articulating and coordinating the work of the ministers of agriculture, and REDPA.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- IICA helped prepare the National Plan for Animal Health Research (PLANISA), which is the result of an inter-institutional effort spearheaded by the UDELAR's School of Veterinary Medicine and the General Directorate of Agricultural Services of the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries (MGAP). Execution of the plan is making it possible to identify the animal health research needs of the main production chains.
- The Institute supported the implementation of the program to accredit 863 private-sector veterinarians headed by the UDELAR's School of Veterinary Medicine. The National System for the Accreditation of Private Veterinarians is a new way of involving these professionals in sanitary programs. The MGAP's Directorate of Livestock Services is responsible for the system.
- IICA strengthened the region's health systems by providing support to the Standing Veterinary Committee and to the project Control and Eradication of Avian Influenza and Other Transboundary Diseases (the latter is being financed by the World Bank).

Promoting the development of rural communities based on a territorial approach

- The fourth competition entitled "What the protagonists of rural development have to say" was held. On this occasion, the theme was successful experiences related to food production and sustainable development, and 21 entries were received. Three articles received prizes and another five earned honorable mentions, based on the criteria of creativity, sustainability and replicability.
- The Network of Departmental Development Offices (RODDE) was consolidated. The network's function is to promote local and/or regional development actions aimed at building the capacity of departmental governments to formulate and manage development projects.
- IICA helped train agents of local development by holding a course for 40 rural schoolteachers that consisted of both onsite and distance work, based on the "training of trainers" concept. The teachers learned how to use the Information System of the Agricultural Census and computer-based tools, consistent with the Ceibal Plan.
- Some 120 municipal officials were trained at a course on project management using a territorial approach.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development

- With funds from the European Union and working with PROCISUR, the Institute held a series of national workshops and seminars under the BIOTECH Program to establish the priorities for biotechnology development in the region.
- Working with the Model Market of Montevideo, IICA prepared the project Democratization of Access to the Use of the Model Market's Information, which won first prize in the Latin American competition "ICT for Business," sponsored and financed by the IDB.
- In coordination with various public and private institutions, the Institute held the workshop "Developing a Digital Agenda for the Rural and Agricultural Sector." It marked the first step in a line of action aimed at generating a network to promote development of ICT among the different sectoral institutions involved in the area.
- IICA generated input for the preparation of a strategic seed plan for Uruguay by holding a one-day activity entitled "Possibilities for the national seed industry: drawing on Chile's experience." The event was organized jointly with INASE, the NARI and PROCISUR.

Venezuela

Contributing to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- Working with the National Assembly's Directorate of Legislative Research and Development, the Ministries of People's Power for Agriculture and Lands (MPPAT), Science and Technology (MPPCT) and Development Planning and other entities of the Executive Branch, IICA analyzed and responded to the problems caused by rising food prices and their effects. Various meetings were organized in collaboration with FAO, PAHO and the Latin American Economic System (SELA).
- IICA promoted the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action and the use of the Agro Matrix as a management tool among different government institutions.
- The Institute played an important role in coordinating actions with higher education institutions by holding workshops, seminars, forums and talks, working with both the Andean Regional Forum for Dialogue and the Integration of Agricultural and Rural Education (FRADIEAR) and the Sectoral Rural Extension Committee of Venezuelan Universities.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- In the state of Portuguesa and the municipal district of Andrés Eloy Blanco in the state of Lara, IICA provided training in the principles and importance of quality in rural tourism as part of the efforts to promote the balanced sustainable rural development approach, incorporating the territorial perspective.
- The Institute promoted the creation of mechanisms to develop rural businesses by means of activities aimed at strengthening the dairy chain, creating the Rural

Tourism Association of Portuguesa and fostering micro-financing tools for rural tourism.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- Working with the MPPAT, the MPPCT and the Ministry of Health, IICA organized the Workshop for Training Multiplier Agents in Food Safety, Public Health and Good Agricultural Practices and in the Management of Productive Schools, targeted at teachers, students and personnel involved in rural education programs.
- In collaboration with the Universidad Centroccidental Lisandro Alvarado (UCLA), the Institute carried out a diploma course in food engineering.
- Under the Biosafety Program for Markets of Live Birds, IICA strengthened the National Plan to Prevent Avian Influenza and Pandemic Influenza.
- The Institute supported the efforts of the Autonomous Agricultural Health Service (SASA) to promote organizational change and strengthen sanitary programs.
- Working with the MPPCT, IICA identified the pilot project and strengthened the capabilities for implementing good practices in dairy operations and in fruit and vegetable production.
- The Institute gave a series of lectures on the importance of the WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and its standard-setting bodies (Codex Alimentarius, the OIE and the IPPC).

Promoting the development of rural communities based on a territorial approach

- The territorial approach to rural development remained the linchpin of IICA's technical cooperation in the country, as reflected in the following activities: a) implementation of the First Venezuelan Seminar on Development and Territorial Management - Portuguesa 2008; b) implementation of workshops and seminars aimed at harmonizing concepts and sharing knowledge and experiences; and, c) the promotion of partnerships of institutions committed to the sustainable rural development of territories.
- The Institute prepared and disseminated the proposal "Universities and territories," approved by the Council of Deans of Venezuela, which focuses on education and training and the role of universities in sustainable rural development.
- IICA signed a technical cooperation agreement with FUDECO for the formulation of the Rural Development Plan with a Territorial Approach for the Service Area of the Sisal, in the northern semiarid region of the state of Lara.
- The Institute continued to work with the National Assembly to construct the conceptual base that will help generate tools aimed at improving the design and implementation of laws and public policies in territories throughout the country, with special emphasis on the food security issue.
- Working with the CVG, EDELCA, PDVSA, the MPPCT, the MPPAT, the Ministry of Development Planning and the Office of the Governor of Portuguesa, IICA laid the groundwork and established criteria for identifying future reference territories.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development

- Under the PTA/IDB agreement, IICA helped strengthen the NARI's capabilities as a catalyst of the agricultural technology system in Venezuela.
- Working with national universities, the IVIC, the MPPCT and the Ministry of Environment, the Institute provided technical support to the National Agro-biotechnology and Biosafety Network. Venezuelan scientists were involved in the work.
- National efforts in the field of knowledge and information management and reciprocal technical cooperation were strengthened following a technical mission to the headquarters of IICA and CATIE by several NARI officials.
- In coordination with the Central Bank of Venezuela, the Agricultural Research Institute and the Central University of Venezuela, IICA made progress in setting up the Virtual Agricultural Library of Venezuela, which will facilitate access to important agricultural information at the national level.

4. Relations with strategic partners

During 2008, the Directorate for Strategic Partnerships (DSP) advanced on a series of ongoing actions. It enhanced relationships with existing as well as with new partners by means of comprehensive dialogues on critical issues such as food security, climate change, poverty reduction, Agro-tourism, agricultural insurance and risk management, technology transfer and knowledge management.

Among the new partnerships implementing actions, IICA facilitated the signing of an Agreement between IDB and CACHE. The US\$400,000 grant from the IDB's Regional PGP aims to enhance the capacity of the Caribbean labor force to improve competitiveness of the agriculture sector. As a result, Barbados, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago have joined forces to collectively develop a regional strategic plan that will include a tool box with public policy guidelines, an information sharing system and a set of pilot training events.

IICA signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the University of California in June and has delegated a number of intentions with the College of Natural Resources to promote two-way learning, scientific exchange and innovation in the field of Sustainable Agriculture, Rural development, Environmental Management and collaborative leadership. IICA will also be collaborating with Cornell University and the University of California, Berkeley in the preparation of case studies in agriculture as part of the Agriculture Bridge Program financed by the USDA.

The Institute led the development of a promising partnership with the WFP. The Directorate of Strategic Partnerships met with WFP senior officials in Rome and Panama City which resulted in the preparation of a MOU that identifies IICA as the technical advisor on agriculture in the Western Hemisphere. The first major project under this MOU is the execution of the Purchase for Progress (P4P) program in four Central American countries that is funded by the Howard Buffet Foundation. The signing of the MOU and approval of the Action Plan for the P4P program are expected in early 2009.

Also, IICA succeeded in the development of a joint collaboration role with senior World Bank officials from the Agriculture and Rural Development unit for Latin America and the Caribbean to move forward on agriculture insurance initiative for the Latin America and Caribbean region.

Other exploratory sessions included meetings with senior officials from organizations such as IFAD, PAHO, OAS, IFPRI and Technoserve.

IICA and the Alberta Association of Colleges and Technical Institute Institutes agreed on several initiatives for 2009. These discussions took place after IICA participation in a conference organized by the Canadian Young Farmers Forum.

IICA signed an Agreement with the governments of Brazil and Argentina and with Oxfam Quebec to develop and execute projects in Haiti where strategic partnership is welcomed for food security advancement.

Finally, IICA held substantive high level discussions with FAO officials in Rome, Chile and the United States to develop a more constructive model of collaboration. These meetings resulted in a series of proposed actions for 2009 that were approved by IICA's Director General, and then presented to FAO for their approval.

IICA-CATIE joint work

The Directors General of IICA and CATIE established clear guidelines to continue strengthening the working relationship between the two institutions. To that end, a technical group comprising representatives of the two organizations was set up in 2008 to define and provide follow-up to inter-institutional actions under a new cooperation agreement. The following fields of action were established: i) territorial rural development, natural resource management, the environment and climate change; ii) technological innovation, value chains and competitiveness; and, iii) information and knowledge management.

In the first field, IICA and CATIE made a major contribution to the formulation of the Regional Agro-environmental and Health Strategy (ERAS) for Central America and to the definition of areas of joint interest with directors of forestry in the same region. Both organizations played a key role in the implementation, in partnership with Berkeley University and Ecoagriculture Partners (EP), of the second international course "Leadership for the development of ecoagriculture: integrated management of rural territories in Central America," which took place in Turrialba, Costa Rica.

In the field of value chains and competitiveness, IICA and CATIE joined the project "Harmonization of initiatives to support the economic progress of rural women in value chains in the Central American Region." They also concluded their joint management of the project "Development of sustainable production systems, microenterprises and financing systems," in partnership with the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD) and with financial support from the Government of the State of Chiapas, Mexico, and the European Union.

In the same field, the "First International Meeting on the Integrated Management of Moniliasis in Cacao" took place in Mexico. Other training events related to cacao were held in El Salvador and Belize, while in Paraguay the work focused on watershed management.

With regard to the management of technical information, the two institutions continued to run the Orton Commemorative Library (BCO), which celebrated the 65th anniversary of its founding and has a new 2008-2010 work plan. Over the course of 2008, more than 10,631 people visited the library's premises, while the website received over 167,000 visitors. The number of bibliographic entries contained in the catalogue of monographs increased by more than 85,110, including full-text versions of 4400 of the documents concerned. The library collection was kept up to date by acquiring 36,026 scientific and technical documents in printed and electronic formats, subscribing to 90 scientific journals,

exchanging a further 200 titles and acquiring two international databases (CABI and TEEAL). There are also agreements in place with prestigious universities that complement the supply of information services available to users in the Member States.

The digitization projects carried out with the USDA/NAL and Harvard University made it possible to incorporate 37,755 scanned pages into the collection. The virtual bookstore sold 1756 publications produced by IICA, CATIE and other institutions.

The BCO is spearheading the Agricultural Information and Documentation Service of the Americas (SIDALC) initiative, under which 94 databases were updated and 48 new ones incorporated. Altogether, this service has 265 databases, 2,155,266 entries and over 88,000 full-text electronic resources. The number of visitors to the SIDALC increased dramatically in 2008 following the indexing exercise with Google. From a few thousand visits per year, the number rose to nearly seven million, with over 14 million pages accessed during the same period. As many as 158 Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) institutions are now sharing their information through Agri2000, making it one of the largest agricultural information networks in the world.

The BCO completed its first phase of modernization with the implementation of the CATIE ARS project of USDA/NAL, designed to preserve the Orton inter-American collection and improve its infrastructure. IICA and CATIE also played an active part in: a) the “Leadership in agricultural information management” program financed by the CTA, which permitted over 40 professionals from 12 Caribbean countries to take part in three specialized courses; b) the identification and promotion of the Global Forest Information Service (GFIS); and, c) the development of the Information Resource Center on Cacao, Trees, Forests and the Environment. The two institutions also contributed important information for the world report on plant genetic resources.

Working with CATIE’s Graduate School, important project proposals were formulated aimed at improving the BCO’s services. The proposals were presented to possible donors, such as the Elsevier Foundation and USAID-ASHA.

CATIE’s Training Area and IICA’s Distance Training Center collaborated in the preparation of virtual courses, including the “Course on Agroforestry with Annual and Perennial Crops” and “Introduction to Agroforestry Systems.

Furthermore, institutional interaction increased considerably with actions such as the meeting of IICA’s Executive Committee held at CATIE’s headquarters in Turrialba. The organizations also carried out a high-level joint mission to Paraguay and Bolivia to present a different interagency cooperation strategy.

Finally as part of the joint work, IICA’s General Directorate supported CATIE’s efforts to amend the first clause of the law under which it was created in Costa Rica.

5. Financial information

In 2008, the Institute again achieved positive financial results. To obtain those results and ensure effective implementation of its programs, IICA continued to promote and consolidate an institutional culture of efficiency, financial prudence and accountability, and to focus the use of resources on the delivery of direct technical cooperation services.

As part of its modernization program, the Institute continued to enhance its financial information system. Implementation of the SAP ERP application was concluded successfully in two IICA Offices that have a high volume of operations, making it possible to record and control 40% of consolidated operations.

The Administration's actions to collect overdue quotas and the Member States' positive response to those actions, which were endorsed by the Institute's governing bodies, resulted, for the fifth consecutive year, in an improvement in IICA's financial position. This allowed the organization to continue executing more effective cooperation actions and implementing work programs in its priority areas.

In 2008, the execution of external resources from governments and international organizations continued to increase. The activities and projects financed with those funds constituted a sizeable proportion of the Institute's actions, in accordance with the topics of interest to the counterpart institutions in the member countries.

The following tables present information about the different types of resources that IICA administers: a) quota resources and miscellaneous income for financing the Institute's operations and actions under its technical cooperation programs agreed with the Member States; b) external resources obtained under agreements signed with counterparts for specific activities and projects; and, c) the Institutional Net Rate (INR), used to cover the cost of managing external resources and to strengthen in-house capabilities.

**Table 1. Execution of quota and external resources
in 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008
(in millions of US\$)**

Resources	Year			
	2005	2006	2007	2008*
Quotas	26.1	26.8	26.7	27.0
External	125.5	134.1	180.5	206.0

* Estimated

Table 2. Execution of quota resources by chapter in 2008*
(in millions of US\$)

Chapters	Budget	Execution	
		Amount	%
Chap. 1: Direct technical cooperation services	24.3	24.3	90.0%
Chap. 2: Management costs	1.3	1.2	4.4%
Chap. 3: General costs and provisions	1.1	1.1	4.1%
Chap. 4: Renewal of infrastructure and equipment	0.5	0.4	1.5%
Total	27.2	27.0	100%

* Estimated

Table 3. Execution of resources by source of financing in 2008*
(in millions of US\$)

Type of resource	Execution	
	Amount	%
External	206.0	82.9%
Quotas	27.0	10.9%
INR	11.4	4.6%
Miscellaneous	4.1	1.6%
Total	248.5	100%

* Estimated

6. Human resources

The following tables provide information about the Institute's human resources over the last seven years:

Table 1. Distribution of human resources by category in the period 2002-2008

Classification	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
International professional (IPP)	100	97	91	95	95	94	91
Local professional (LPP)	237	217	198	219	225	234	279
General services (GSP)	501	385	366	379	383	374	407
Total	838	699	655	693	703	702	777

Source: Division of Human Resource Development

Table 2. Distribution of human resources by category and sources of financing in 2008

Category	Source of financing				Total	Percentage
	Regular funds		External funds			
	Number	%	Number	%		
IPP	87	11.20	4	0.51	91	11.71
LPP	203	26.13	76	9.78	279	35.91
GSP	345	44.40	62	7.98	407	52.38
Total	635	81.73	142	18.27	777	100.00

Source: Division of Human Resource Development

Table 3. Distribution of human resources by duty station and sources of financing in 2008

Location	IPP		LPP		GSP		Totals	
	Regular funds	External funds						
Headquarters	29	0	88	3	113	1	230	4
Andean Region	11	0	32	1	79	3	122	4
Caribbean Region	15	1	20	0	54	0	89	1
Central Region	15	1	22	42	28	37	65	80
Northern Region	7	0	5	0	20	0	32	0
Southern Region	10	2	36	30	51	21	97	53
Totals	87	4	203	76	345	62	635	142

Source: Division of Human Resource Development

7. Major meetings

Official meetings

Official name	Date	Place held	Place and date of publication of the report or proceedings of the event
2008 Special Meeting of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues (SACMI)	22 April	IICA Headquarters	Report: Recommendations of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues (SACMI) Place: IICA Headquarters Date: 22 April Proceedings: Digital audio recording of the verbatim proceedings / photographs
2008 Regular Meeting of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues (SACMI)	23 April	IICA Headquarters	Report: Recommendations of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues (SACMI) Place: IICA Headquarters Date: 23 April Proceedings: Digital audio recording of the verbatim proceedings / photographs
Twenty-eighth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee	22-24 July	IICA Headquarters CATIE Headquarters	Report: Final Report of the Twenty-eighth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee Place: IICA Headquarters Date: Third quarter of 2008 Proceedings: Digital audio recording of the verbatim proceedings / photographs
Representatives Week 2008 - Annual Strategic Planning Meeting: The New Institutional Challenges	22-29 October	IICA Headquarters	Proceedings: Digital audio recording of the verbatim proceedings / photographs
First Forum for Young Leaders of Agriculture from the Americas	24-28 May	IICA Headquarters	Proceedings: Digital audio recording
Visit by the President of Chile, Michelle Bachelet	29 October	IICA Headquarters	Report: N/A Date: Third quarter of 2008 Proceedings: Digital audio recording of the verbatim proceedings, photographs and video of the meeting

Other technical meetings

Official name	Date	Place held	Place and date of publication of the report or proceedings of the event
Chains Workshop in the Lambayeque Region: Analysis of Information Critical to the Competitiveness of Agricultural Production Chains	21-22 January	Auditorium of the Irrigation Board of Lambayeque, Peru	IICA Web page January 2008
First Congress on Innovation in Fruit Growing in El Salvador	30-31 January	Hotel Holiday Inn, Antigua Cuscatlan, El Salvador	Antigua Cuscatlan January 2008
OAS-IICA workshop on agro-tourism	31 January	Hotel Tower, Georgetown, Guyana	Georgetown, Consultant's report - February 2008

International Meeting on the Role of Women in the Reevaluation of the Rural Milieu	6-7 February	Hacienda Cocoyoc, Morelos, Mexico	Morelos, Mexico February 2008
Meeting on National Agri-tourism Strategic Partnership	6-7 February	UN House, Barbados	IICA Office in Barbados February 2008
Regional Forum on Agro-tourism Investment	18-19 February	Hotel Grand Barbados, Barbados	IICA Office in Barbados June 2008
Workshop: Stimulating Entrepreneurship in Agriculture	3-6 March	Hotel Bay Gardens, Saint Lucia	IICA Office in Trinidad and Tobago - March 2008
Course to Train Inspectors in Organic Agriculture, with Emphasis on Cacao and Organic Honey	10-26 March	IICA Office in Nicaragua	IICA Office in Nicaragua March 2008
Training Course in Agro-environmental Policies	25-28 March	Boca Arenal, San Carlos, Costa Rica	--
Workshop: Strengthening of the Tourism Sector through the Development of Linkages with the Agricultural Sector in Suriname - Managing the Farmers-Hotel Partnership	26-28 March	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries Experimental Station, Suriname	--
Seminar on Quarantine Treatments and their Importance to Exports and Fresh Vegetables	26-28 March	Guayaquil, Quito, Santo Domingo de Los Tsachilas, Ecuador	2008 Annual Report, Ecuador - January 2009
Presentation: "National Strategy for the Development of Organic and Agro-ecological Production in Paraguay" (MAG, Alter Vida NGO and IICA)	1 April	Joint Chamber of the Paraguayan National Congress, Asuncion, Paraguay	Asuncion September 2008
First Symposium on Climate Change and Desertification in the semi-arid region of Brazil	15-17 April	Petrolina, Pernambuco Brazil	--
Regional Seminar on the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (organized by the IDB-Intal, the WTO, IICA and the Government of Paraguay)	22-24 April	Hotel Granados Park, Asuncion, Paraguay	Asuncion April 2008
Course: Financial Management and Product Formulation and Costing	23 April	Grenada Bureau of Standards, St. George's, Grenada	IICA Office in Grenada May 2008
National Agricultural Symposium	30 April and 1 May	Royal Antigua Resort, Antigua	IICA Office in Antigua May 2008
First National Seminar to Combat Desertification	5-6 May	Brasilia, Brazil	--
Workshop: Sensitization and Chains in the Cusco and Apurimac Regions	5-9 May	Auditorium of the Regional Governments of Cusco and Apurimac, Peru	Web page of the Peruvian Observatory of Agricultural Production Chains Peru - May 2008
International Seminar on Biosafety in the Live Bird Market	6-8 May	Santo Domingo de Los Tsachilas, Ecuador	2008 Annual Report Ecuador January 2009
International Symposium on Pulses, Health and Nutrition	20 May	Puerto Vallarta, Mexico	Website of the IICA Office in Canada May 2008
National Forum of Agricultural and Rural Education: Ecuador Chapter (CONFCA-IICA)	21-22 May	Manta, Ecuador	2008 Annual Report Ecuador January 2009
Launch of the Biotechnology Institute (INBION)	22 May	IICA Office in Nicaragua, Managua	IICA Office in Nicaragua. May 2008
Forum: National Strategies and Rural Development	27 May	Auditorium of the Ministry for Women and Social Development (MIMDES), Peru	INFOIICA e-bulletin Peru May 2008
Seminar-Workshop to Validate the Plan of Action for the Rice Sector	27 May	City of Knowledge, Panama	CD with expert presentations Panama - May 2008
IICA/CIRAD Workshop: Launch of Information Observatory Project	27-28 May	Bay Gardens Hotel Saint Lucia	Signed agreement Saint Lucia May 2008
International Seminar on Rural Development and the Territorial Approach	28-29 May	Hotel Radisson, Bolivia	---
Workshop to Enhance Capabilities for Preparing Profiles and Proposals in Response to the Calls for Proposals by the Regional Agricultural Technology Fund	28-30 May	Caracas, Venezuela	Caracas June 2008
Seminar: Risks and Management of Rural Insurance	June	Campinas, Sao Paulo, Brazil	--

Lecture Series on the Importance of the WTO/SPS Agreement and the Standard-setting Agencies	June-November	Caracas, Venezuela	Caracas November 2008
Tri-Lakes Agro-Tourism/Environmental Awareness Workshops (W. K. Kellogg Foundation-IICA)	12-18 June	Lake Mainstay Complex, Essequibo	Consultants' reports: June 2008 and July 2008 Final report of W. K Kellogg: July 2008
Theoretical and Practical Seminar: Areas Free from and with a Low Prevalence of the Fruit Fly	16-20 June	Quito, Guayaquil, Santo Domingo de Los Tsachilas, Ecuador	2008 Annual Report Ecuador - January 2009
Entrepreneurship and Business Planning Workshop	17 June	Grenada Bureau of Standards St. George's, Grenada	IICA Office in Grenada July 2008
Codex Alimentarius Standard Setting Process Workshop	18-19 June	Heritage Hotel, Antigua	IICA Office in Antigua June 2008
Forum: Repositioning Salvadorian Agriculture in Response to the Agrifood Situation (Association of Agronomists of El Salvador-IICA)	20 June	Hotel Sheraton-Presidente San Salvador, El Salvador	---
Course-Workshop on Preparing Agricultural Enterprises to Export (organized by IICA and REDIEX/MIC)	25-27 June 30-31 July 1 August	Ministry of Industry and Trade Asuncion, Paraguay	Asuncion 9 December
Second Portugal-Brazil Seminar on Family Agriculture and Desertification - II SEMILUSO	25 June-1 July	Joao Pessoa, PB, Brazil	--
Fourth Course on Digital and Virtual Libraries for Universities and INIAP (Manabi University - INIAP - IICA)	1-4 July	Manta, Ecuador	2008 Annual Report Ecuador - January 2009
Latin American Initiative in Science and Technology for the Application of UNCCD	7-9 July	Salvador, Bahia Brazil	--
International Course on Irrigation	7-12 July and 13-8 October	Esteli, Nicaragua	IICA Office in Nicaragua October 2008
Workshop to Prepare for the OIE Assessment of the Veterinary Service of Honduras	10-11 July	Conference Room IICA Office in Honduras	Tegucigalpa July 2008
First National Forum for Young Leaders of Agriculture	18 July	Hotel Santo Domingo Santo Domingo Dominican Republic	Santo Domingo August 2008
Workshop: Rural Development with a Territorial Approach: Methodologies and Tools for Working in the Comuna de Corral, Los Rios Region	24-25 July	Southern University of Chile, Valdivia, Chile	--
Fifth International Meeting of FORAGRO: Institutional Innovations for Agriculture with Knowledge in the Americas of the 21st Century	28-30 July	Hotel Radisson, Montevideo, Uruguay	--
Andean Forum for Young Leaders of Agriculture and Rural Life	28-30 July	Quito, Ecuador	2008 Annual Report Ecuador - January 2009
Fifth Series of Lectures "State Policies: What lies ahead for the agricultural sector: Developing a new model." Lecture 1: Agriculture	8 August	MERCOSUR Building Montevideo, Uruguay	DVD - Montevideo August 2008
Annual Meeting of the Bolivian Association of Higher Education in Agricultural Sciences (ABESCA)	14-15 August	IICA Office in Bolivia	La Paz, Bolivia August 2008
International Seminar "Intellectual Property Rights: A Challenge for Agribusinesses to Incorporate Technological Innovations" (APROSEMP, PARPOV, PIPRA and IICA)	18-19 August	Carmelitas Center, Asuncion, Paraguay	Asuncion December 2008
First Seminar on Research on the Production, Processing and Use of Barbados Nut as Biofuel (INIAP-IICA)	21-22 August	Portoviejo, Ecuador	2008 Annual Report Ecuador January 2009
First Chilean Rural Development Congress	25-27 August	Edificio Diego Portales, Santiago, Chile	--
Seminar-Workshop on the National Animal Health Research Plan (PLANISA)	29 August	MERCOSUR Building Montevideo, Uruguay	--
Series of refresher and training courses in agricultural health and food safety (with support from IICA in Bolivia ²)	September-November	IICA Office in Bolivia and SENASAG	IICA Website La Paz, Bolivia November 2008

² a) Entomology Applied to the Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures; b) International Standards for Trade in Pesticides, Geographic Information Systems for the Mapping and Distribution of Fruit Flies; c) Inspections for the Export and Import of Plant and Animal-based Products and Food Safety; d) Application of the ISPM 15 Standard; e) Use of Phosphamine as a Quarantine Treatment; f) Area free from foot-and-mouth disease; g) Inspection

Fifth Series of Lectures: "What lies ahead for the agricultural sector: Developing a new model." Lecture 2: Forestry	12 September	MERCOSUR Building Montevideo, Uruguay	DVD, Montevideo September 2008
Workshop to Train Facilitators, held under the Leadership Training Program	17-19 September	Belén Gualcho Town Hall, Ocotepeque, Honduras	Tegucigalpa September 2008
Presentation: "Global Food Security Crisis: A perspective from the Americas" (by the Director General of IICA, Dr. Chelston W. D. Brathwaite)	23 September	University of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada	Website of the IICA Office in Canada September 2008
Seminar: "Current Situation, Challenges and Outlook for Food Safety in the Agriculture, Livestock, Aquaculture and Fisheries Sector" (PAHO-OIRSA-IICA)	23-24 September	Mexico City	Mexico City September 2008
Seminar on Agrifood Policies: "Food Security in the Dominican Republic: Turning the Crisis into a Business Opportunity"	29-30 September	Hotel V Centenario Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic	Santo Domingo December 2008
IICA Day at the OAS	1 October	OAS United States	Washington, D.C. October 2008
Seminar: The Distance Diagnostic and Identification System (DDIS) for Pests	6-7 October	Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Rural Development Haiti	--
Fifth Series of Lectures: "State Policies: What lies ahead for the agricultural sector: Developing a new model." Lecture 3: Meat	10 October	MERCOSUR Building Montevideo	DVD, Montevideo. October 2008
First Venezuelan Seminar on Development and Territorial Management - Portuguesa 2008	14-16 October	Guanare Portuguese State Venezuela	Guanare October 2008
Action - Training Program for Rural Leaders: Unleashing Local Energies	14-17 October	ICAES Coronado, Costa Rica	--
Course Workshop: Territorial Identity in FUDECO	20-21 October	Barquisimeto Lara State, Venezuela	--
Seventh Meeting of the Working Group on Fruit Flies of the Western Hemisphere	2-7 November	Mazatlan, Sinaloa Mexico	Mazatlan, Sinaloa, Mexico November 2008
Induction Workshop on the Organic Production of Cashew	5 November	Esfuerzo Languño Credit Union, Valle, Honduras	Tegucigalpa November 2008
Workshop: "Information Tools for Better Decision-making in the Development of Agricultural Production Chains"	12 November	Association of Engineers of Piura, Peru	--
Workshop: "Possible Impact of Higher International Prices of Raw Materials and Food in the Municipal Districts of Papelon and Guanarito"	12-14 November	Guanare Portuguesa State, Venezuela	Caracas November 2008
First Forum for Leaders of Agriculture in Guatemala	13-14 November	Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala (USAC), Guatemala	--
National seminar: Youth in Agriculture - Securing the Future of Suriname's Agriculture	15 November	Guest house, The Anton de Kom University of Suriname	<i>De Ware Tijd</i> (local newspaper) November 2008
Second International Course "Leadership for the Development of Ecoagriculture: Integrated Management of Rural Territories in Central America"	16-26 November	CATIE, Turrialba Costa Rica	--
Course: Practical training for veterinarians in the departments of the South-East (Jacmel) and Nippes	17-20 November	Jacmel, Nippes	--
Course: The Use of Cost of Production Models	18-20 November	Tobago House of Assembly, Tobago	--
National Workshop on Organic Crop Farming and Stock Raising	20 November	Hotel Plaza Libertador, Tegucigalpa,	Tegucigalpa December 2008

and Certification of Bananas for Export; h) Introduction to the International Standards of Codex Alimentarius; i) Introduction to the International Standards of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC); j) Introduction to the International Standards of the International Organization of Animal Health (OIE); k) SENASAG procedures for Issuing Export Permits, pursuant to ISO Standard 9001:2000; and l) Application of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) and the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) System.

		Honduras	
Business Management Course	26 November	IICA Office in Grenada St. George's, Grenada	IICA Office in Grenada December 2008
Course: Producing fresh food for personal consumption	26-28 November	IICA Office in Haiti	--
Seminar-Workshop to Validate Panama's Proposed 2008-2012 National Agenda for Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures	27 November	City of Knowledge, Panama	Expert presentations November 2008
First International Meeting for the Integrated Management of Moniliasis in Cacao in Mexico	1-5 December	Rosario Izapa Experimental Station, Tuxtla, Chico, Chiapas, Mexico	Tuxtla, Chiapas, Mexico. December 2008
International Congress: Regional Policy Management in the MERCOSUR and the European Union	3-5 December	Brasilia, Brazil	--
Course: "Management of Live Fences and Barbados Nut for Small-scale Stock and Crop Farmers of Manabi, INIAP-IICA"	9-10 December	Camotillo Manta, Ecuador	2008 Annual Report Ecuador - January 2009
Ceremony to launch the National Agriculture and Forestry Innovation Institute - INIAF	10 December	IICA Office in Bolivia	La Paz, Bolivia (pending)

Acronyms

AAFC	Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
ACICAFOC-CICA	<i>Asociación Coordinadora Indígena y Campesina de Agroforestería Comunitaria de Centro América</i> -Central American Indigenous Council
ADAM	Municipal Alternative Development (Colombia)
ALFATER	Food, Family Agriculture and Territories
ACCESO	Andean Countries Cocoa Export Support Opportunity Program
AECID	Spanish International Cooperation Agency for Development
AGEXPORT	Guatemala Association of Exporters
AGROCALIDAD	Agricultural Quality Assurance Agency
AGROTUR	Social network of agro tourism and rural tourism
AHFS	Agricultural Health and Food Safety
ALADI	Latin American Association for Integration
ALASA	Latin American Association for the Development of Agricultural Insurance
APHIS	Animal and Plant Health Protection and Inspection Service (USDA)
APROSEMP	Association of Seed Producers (Paraguay)
AUPSA	Panamanian Security Food Authority
BAHA	Belize Agricultural Health Authority
BELTRAIDE	Belize Trade and Investment Development Services (Belize)
BIO	Biotechnology Industry Organization
BOPA	Association of Organic Farmers (Belize)
CABA	Caribbean Agribusiness Association
CABEI	Central American Bank for Economic Integration
CAC	Central American Agricultural Council
CACHE	Caribbean Council of Higher Education in Agriculture
CAN	Andean Community
CANROP	Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers
CARDI	Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CAS	Southern Agricultural Council
CATIE	Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Center
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CICAD	Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIRAD	International Center for Cooperation in Agricultural Research for Development (France)
CLUSA	Cooperative League USA
CORPOICA	Agricultural Corporation of Research (Colombia)
CPB	Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
CVP	Permanent Veterinary Committee
CTA	Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation
DFEPI	External Financing and Investment Projects Directorate (IICA)
DORI	Directorate of Operations and Integration (IICA)
DR-CAFTA	Dominican Republic, United States and Central America Free Trade Agreement
EC	Executive Committee (IICA)
ECS	Eastern Caribbean States
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EMBRAPA	Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation
ENESA	State Agricultural Insurance Institute (Spain)
EP	Ecoagriculture Partners
EU	European Union
EVIDA	Virtual Learning Environment for Agricultural Development (IICA)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization (United Nations)
FAS	Foreign Agricultural Service (USDA)
FEDAVICAC	Federation of Poultry Farmers of Central America and the Caribbean
FODEMIPYME	Special Fund for the Development of MSM enterprises (Costa Rica)
FOMILENIO	Millennium Fund
FONTAGRO	Regional Fund for Agricultural Technology
FORAGRO	Regional Forum on Agricultural Research and Technology Development
FRADIEAR	Andean Regional Forum for Dialogue and the Integration of Agricultural and Rural Education
FTA	Free trade agreement

FUDECO	<i>Fundación para el Desarrollo de la Región Centro-Occidental</i> (Venezuela)
FUNDE	<i>Fundación Nacional para el Desarrollo</i> (El Salvador)
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GFAR	Global Forum on Agricultural Research
GMP	Good Manufacturing Practices
GMO	Genetic Modified Organism
GTZ	<i>Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit</i> (Germany)
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points
HBBP	Hemispheric Biotechnology and Biosafety Program (IICA)
HPAI	Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza
IAASTD	International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development
IABA	Inter-American Board of Agriculture
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IDRC	International Development Research Center
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IICA	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
INASE	National Institute of Seeds (Uruguay)
INDOSAIA	Dominican Institute of Food Safety and Plant Health
INFOTEC	Scientific and Technological Information System
INIAP	National Agricultural and Forestry Innovation Institute (Bolivia)
INIAP	National Autonomous Agricultural Research Institute (Ecuador)
INIFAP	National Forestry, Agriculture and Livestock Research Institute (Mexico)
INR	Institutional Net Rate (IICA)
INTAL	Institute for the Integration of Latin America and the Caribbean
INVIMA	<i>Instituto Nacional de Vigilancia Médica y Alimentos</i> (Colombia)
IPPC	International Plant Protection Convention
IRTA	Agricultural Research and Technology Institute (Spain)
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IVIC	Venezuelan Institute of Scientific Research
JSWG	Joint Summit Working Group
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
MAG FRUTALES	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock –National Fruit Program of El Salvador
MAG	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Paraguay)
MAGAP	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (Ecuador)
MAGFOR	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Forestry (Nicaragua)
MALFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Forestry and Fisheries (St. Lucia)
MAPA	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Supply (Brazil)
MAPA	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (Spain)
MERCOSUR	Southern Common Market
MIDA	Ministry of Agricultural Development (Panamá)
MIDES	Ministry of Social Development (Panamá)
MIOA	Market Information Organization of the Americas
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSMEs	Micro, small and medium enterprises
MTP	Medium Term Plan (IICA)
NAMDEVCO	National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation (Trinidad and Tobago)
NARI	National Agricultural Research Institute
NAYA	National Association of Youth in Agriculture (Dominica)
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
OAS	Organization of American States
ODEPA	Office of Agrarian Policies and Studies (Chile)
OECS	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
OIE	World Organization for Animal Health
OIRSA	International Regional Organization for Plant and Animal Health
OLADE	Latin American Energy Association
PACA	Central American Common Agricultural Policy
PADEMER	Rural Microenterprise Development Programme (Colombia)
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PARPOV	<i>Asociación Paraguaya de Obtentores Vegetales</i>
PDVSA	<i>Petroleos de Venezuela Sociedad Anonima</i>
PIPRIA	Public Intellectual Property Resource for Agriculture

PROCI	Cooperative Agricultural Research and Technology Transfer Program
PROCIANDINO	Cooperative Agricultural Research and Technology Transfer Program for the Andean Subregion
PROCICARIBE	Caribbean Agricultural Science and Technology Network System
PROCINORTE	Cooperative Agricultural Research and Technology Transfer Program for the Northern Region
PROCISUR	Cooperative Program for the Development of Agricultural Technology in the Southern Cone
PROCITROPICOS	Cooperative Program on Research and Technology Transfer for the South American Tropics
PRODERT	Project for Sustainable Rural Development in Ecologically Fragile Areas of the Trifinio Region (El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras)
PRODESIS	Integrated and Sustainable Social Development Project (Mexico)
PSNIDRUS	National Information System for Sustainable Rural Development Program (Mexico)
PROMECAFE	Regional Cooperative Program for the Technological Development and Modernization of Coffee Cultivation
PVS	Performance, Vision, Strategy
RAAS	Autonomous Region of the South Atlantic (Nicaragua)
REACT	Rural Enterprise, Agricultural and Community Tourism Project (USAID Jamaica)
REDPA	Agricultural Policy Coordination Network of the Southern Region
RED-SICTA	Agricultural Innovation Network Project SICTA
RENAMUR	National Rural Women's Network (Mexico)
RPG	Regional Public Goods
RUTA	Regional Unit for Technical Assistance
SACMI	Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues (IICA)
SAG	Secretary of Agriculture and Livestock (Honduras)
SAGARPA	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food (Mexico)
SAGPYA	Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food (Argentina)
SAP ERP	Executive Resource Planning Systems, Applications and Products
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SEAM	Secretariat of Environment (Paraguay)
SELA	Latin American Economic System
SENASA	Plant Health National Service (Costa Rica, Honduras)
SENASICA	<i>Servicio Nacional de Sanidad, Inocuidad y Calidad Agroalimentaria</i> (Mexico)
SENAVE	Quality, Plant Health and Seed National Service (Paraguay)
SIALNET	Special network on Agro food systems
SICTA	Central American System for Agricultural Technology Integration
SIDALC	Agricultural Information and Documentation Service for the Americas
SIRG	Summit Implementation and Review Group
SPS Agreement	Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (WTO)
SPS Committee	Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures Committee
SRD	Sustainable Rural Development
STDF	Standards and Trade Development Facility
TF	Territorial Focus
UCA	Jose Simeon Cañas Central American University (El Salvador)
UDELAR	<i>Universidad de la República</i> (Uruguay)
UN	United Nations Organization
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNICAMP	<i>Universidade Estadual de Campinas</i> (Brazil)
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
VEP	Veterinary Epidemiology Project
WTO	World Trade Organization
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature