

RESOLUTION No. 484

**COORDINATION MECHANISM FOR THE DEVELOPMENT
OF ORGANIC AGRICULTURE IN THE AMERICAS**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Twenty-eighth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

Document IICA/CE/Doc.527(08), “Network of Competent Authorities in Organic Agriculture in the Americas”,

CONSIDERING:

That organic agriculture has been experiencing significant growth in the Americas as it seeks to meet the rapid increase in the demand for organic agricultural products on national and international markets;

That IICA’s 2006-2010 Medium-Term Plan (MTP) establishes that the Institute must support the development and implementation of national plans and programs in support of the sustainable development of agriculture, as well as promote the development of technological innovation mechanisms applicable to family agriculture, with a view to strengthening the linkage among agriculture, trade and the environment;

That a significant part of the organic food supply comes from small- and medium-scale farmers and that the MTP of IICA stipulates that the Institute must support Member States in developing mechanisms that foster collaboration and shared responsibility;

That the transmission of knowledge and the dissemination of innovations in the field of organic agriculture, as well as the development of effective public policies, are limited because of the absence of mechanisms for linking public-sector institutions that have competence for the development and regulation of organic agriculture in the countries of the region;

That in August of 2007, at a meeting held in Managua, Nicaragua, the competent governmental bodies that promote, regulate and establish standards to govern the development of organic agriculture established the Network of Competent Authorities in Organic Agriculture in the Americas to monitor and address jointly the main issues that fall within their institutional purview, as well as the development of organic agriculture in

general, and that that Network is the only existing regional structure for coordinating the promotion, regulation and control of that activity; and

That the competent governmental bodies that promote, regulate and establish standards to govern the development of organic agriculture in the Member States of IICA have expressed to the General Directorate their interest in institutionalizing a technical mechanism to serve in an advisory capacity vis-à-vis the authorities in the agricultural sectors in the hemisphere and in which IICA would serve as Technical Secretariat,

RESOLVES:

1. To establish the Network of Competent Authorities in Organic Agriculture in the Americas as the Inter-American Commission for Organic Agriculture, with responsibility for coordinating the standards and procedures for promoting and regulating the production of organic food in the hemisphere, as well as trade in those products, and to serve as a technical body for knowledge management in the area of organic agriculture and as a mechanism for consultation, liaison and reciprocal cooperation with the competent governmental bodies that promote and establish standards for the development of organic agriculture in each country.
2. To instruct IICA to prepare, in conjunction with the competent governmental authorities that promote, regulate and establish standards to govern the development of organic agriculture, the bylaws and rules of procedure of the Inter-American Commission for Organic Agriculture, and to submit them to the Executive Committee for consideration at its Twenty-ninth Regular Meeting, to be held in 2009.
3. To entrust the General Directorate of IICA with providing services as Technical Secretariat to the Inter-American Commission for Organic Agriculture, using the resources allocated for that purpose in the Institute's current Program Budget, and with considering also any financial and technical contributions that Member States, technical and financial cooperation agencies, other institutions and individuals might make to the operation of that Commission and the achievement of its purpose.
4. To urge the Member States of IICA that do not have competent governmental bodies to promote, regulate and establish standards to govern the development of organic agriculture, to establish them so that they may join the Network of Competent Authorities in Organic Agriculture in the Americas and be part of the Inter-American Commission for Organic Agriculture. Countries that do have such a governmental body are urged to reinforce their institutional structure.