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IICA-CANADA

Proposed Action Plan 1999-2000

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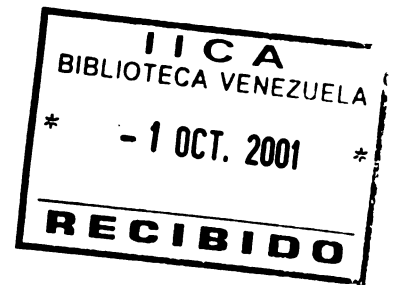
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ACRONYMS

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| AAFC | <i>Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada</i> |
| CCAA | <i>Canadian Consulting Agrologists Association</i> |
| CFA | <i>Canadian Federation of Agriculture</i> |
| CFIA | <i>Canadian Food Inspection Agency</i> |
| CIB | <i>Canadian Institute of Biotechnology</i> |
| CIDA | <i>Canadian International Development Agency</i> |
| CESO | <i>Canadian Volunteer Advisers to Business</i> |
| DFAIT | <i>Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade</i> |
| FRDC | <i>Food Research and Development Centre</i> |
| HACCP | <i>Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point</i> |
| IABA | <i>Inter-American Board of Agriculture</i> |
| ICT | <i>Information and Communication Technology</i> |
| IDB | <i>Inter-American Development Bank</i> |
| IDRC | <i>International Development Research Centre</i> |
| IICA | <i>Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture</i> |
| LAC | <i>Latin America and the Caribbean</i> |
| MERCOSUR | <i>Southern Common Market</i> |
| MTP | <i>Medium Term Plan</i> |
| NAFTA | <i>North American Free Trade Agreement</i> |
| NFU | <i>National Farmers Union</i> |
| NGOs | <i>Non-Governmental Organizations</i> |
| TCA | <i>Technical Cooperation Agency</i> |
| TFOC | <i>Trade Facilitation Office Canada</i> |
| UPA | <i>Union des Producteurs Agricoles</i> |



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1. FOREWORD

On May 11, 1998, the Canadian Government through the Office of the Prime Minister of Canada, officially informed the Office of IICA in Canada that as of that day, the Canadian Government decided to take the necessary steps to continue Canada's political and technical relationship with IICA beyond 1998. This notification was a formal announcement of the decision of Canada to maintain its membership as one of the member states of IICA.

Since January 1996, IICA-Canada has been working very closely with Canadian representatives from the public and private sectors, universities and NGO's aimed at defining IICA's future role within Canada. The continuous consultative process undertaken to date for building a strategic partnership in Canada demonstrated that IICA-Canada's approach is correct and that there is a clear belief that IICA has valuable services to offer to Canada. The interest in transforming the relationship based on partnership has been seen from both traditional government partners, as well as new partners, as extremely important, feasible and desirable.

✓ The proposed Action Plan for the biennial 1999-2000 reflects the new realities within Canada and the desire by many Canadian groups to become more exposed and integrally linked to the Americas. Given the results observed from the previous action-plans for 1996-1997 and 1998, the future of IICA in Canada as well as the Americas, provides ample opportunity for innovative partnerships in agri-food and agribusiness development. ✓

The proposed Action Plan for 1999-2000 has also been prepared at strongly supporting the implementation of IICA Headquarters' Medium Term Plan for 1998-2002. The approach and priorities reflect the new general strategy which will guide the Institute in the 1998-2002 period:

"IICA as the specialized agency for agriculture in the Inter-American System, will consolidate its process of institutional transformation so as to lead and facilitate the hemisphere dialogue and meet the countries' request for cooperation, as they put into motion a true transition towards the development model emanating from the Inter-American Summits".

The process to be followed by IICA-Canada is identical of the Institute for 1998-2002 and will rest on four elements:

- i. demand-driven service;
- ii. strengthening the hemispheric dialogue;
- iii. focus and excellence;
- iv. and strategic alliances.

Positioning IICA and Canada in the forefront of this progress for entering the twenty-first century is paramount for the Office of IICA in Canada.



2. MISSION AND VISION FOR IICA-CANADA TOWARDS THE YEAR 2000

The relationship between international organizations and member-countries has been challenged in the last few years by new priorities and attitudes from the large financial donor countries. IICA-Canada understood these challenges and since 1995 has been modifying its activities aimed at fulfilling these expectations and developing a new relationship with Canada based on partnerships. In a time of tight international fiscal restraint, the Office of IICA in Canada is fully committed to demonstrating that IICA is a reliable partner to Canada and that it adds value to Canada's affairs in the Americas.

IICA's new mandate will guide IICA-Canada to pursue a new relationship with Canada. IICA's Medium Term Plan for 1998-2002 highlights the Institute's mission as the following:

"IICA's mission is to strengthen and facilitate dialogue in the hemisphere and to cooperate with public and private organizations of the Member States, supporting their work to achieve sustainable development in agriculture and in the rural areas of the Americas".

The Canadian Office of IICA envisions the following mission:

"IICA-Canada's mission is to strengthen and facilitate the dialogue between the Canadian agri-food and agribusiness sectors and the Americas and to cooperate with Canadian public and private organizations, universities and NGO's, on their strategies, efforts and actions to establish strategic alliances with the Americas".

The new vision for IICA-Canada is that it has to be innovative, articulate, strategic and an active facilitator. Present goals are to more fully integrate Canada and Canadians into IICA programmes and to strengthen relations between Canada's agri-food and agribusiness sectors and the Americas.

IICA's Medium Term Plan for 1998-2002 also provides a focus for the Institute's actions for that period when it highlights IICA's objective as the following:

"To support public and private organizations of the Member States and help them work more effectively to make their food and fiber-production-trade systems more competitive in harmony with strategies to reduce poverty and discrimination in rural zones and ensure sustainability of natural resources".

To achieve maximum effect and impact within Canada in relation to the Institute's objectives, IICA-Canada will target its future activities on building an even closer partnership between IICA and Canada. The partnership will be based on enhancing the current relationship of Canada and Canadians as active participants within the IICA Americas network. It will also foster the development of interest within the Americas in establishing ties with Canada.

The goals of IICA-Canada Action Plan for 1999-2000 are the following:

- To support the Government of Canada's efforts to expose Canada and Canadian agri-food and agribusiness organizations and associations to the Americas
- To more fully integrate Canada and Canadians into IICA programs; and



- To strengthen relations between Canada's agri-food and agribusiness sectors and the Americas.

Given IICA's limited resources, it is important to specifically target areas where the complementarity between Canadian interests and IICA-Canada strengths are the highest. The Canadian Office will act as a window on the IICA-Americas network, proactively facilitating the establishment of linkages in four priority areas:

- **Priority 1:** Trade opportunities for Canadian agri-food and agribusiness associations and organizations to the Americas;
- **Priority 2:** Strategic alliances between Canada and the Americas;
- **Priority 3:** Entrepreneurial initiatives: enhancing strategic alliances between Canadian and Latin America and the Caribbean agricultural entrepreneurs;
- **Priority 4:** Information and Communication Technologies

3 Proposed Initiatives for 1999-2000

IICA-Canada's action plan for 1999-2000 reflects the results of the continuous consultation process started in 1995 within Canada and IICA. It demonstrates that IICA is committed to following through on its promise of gathering new partners and adding political, cultural and economic values to Canada, particularly in strategic areas such as food safety in international agricultural trade, promoting networks and strategic alliances and supporting Canada's efforts on agricultural information and communication technology initiatives in Latin America and the Caribbean countries. The current action plan is based on four priority areas and contains ten initiatives. They are the following:

3.1 *Priority 1: Trade Opportunities for Canadian Agri-Food and Agribusiness Associations and Organizations to the Americas*

3.1.1 Agribusiness Entrepreneurial Initiative: Developing Business Opportunities for Canadian Farmers and Agri-Food Entrepreneurs

This initiative is a further development of the activity included in the IICA-Canada Action Plan for 1998. It aims at expanding the participation of Canadian experts and professionals interested in developing a joint cooperative work in LAC countries, particularly to specific rural and industrial regions within the LAC, where there is a clearly defined need for a comprehensive and participatory approach to rural business development. Its goal is matchmaking Canada's interest in exporting services and expertise to the Americas with LAC agribusiness entrepreneurial needs.

The objective of this initiative is to provide the means whereby rural individuals and groups in the LAC countries can identify, develop, implement, and profit from the establishment of new economically and environmentally sustainable business and employment opportunities. The further objective is to develop strategic alliances between Canadian and LAC groups thus



enabling emerging LAC agribusiness associations and organizations to plan their own future together with government and business interests.

It is expected that through a four stage process of identification, development, implementation, and mentoring, new and expanded environmentally sustainable business opportunities will be established. Rural Development teams will be established, comprised of leaders who have a broad based business experience, and supported by the technical expertise and knowledge base as required. The Rural Development teams would be business development oriented first, but fully capable of accessing and providing the supporting technologies, training, economic analysis, and technical expertise as required.

The potential partners for this initiative are: CCAA, CESO and TFOC.

The proposed LAC countries to be enrolled in this initiative are the following:

- i. **1999:** Four Canadian specialists to spend two weeks in Caribbean countries (Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados) and in Central American countries (Costa Rica and Guatemala).
- ii. **2000:** Six Canadian specialists to spend two weeks in Central America and Caribbean countries, possibly in Panama, Honduras, El Salvador and the Dominican Republic.

The estimated costs for this initiative are the following:

- **1999:** US\$ 30,000
- **2000:** US\$ 35,000.

3.1.2: Food Safety in International Agricultural Trade

This initiative is also a further development of similar activity included in IICA-Canada action plan for 1998. Its goal is to facilitate agricultural and agri-food trade between Canada and its LAC partners.

Assuring the quality and safety of the food supply, wether produced domestically or imported, is taking on greater importance. The World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures establishes clear rules which enable the Member States of the Organization to impose on agricultural imports sanitary measures intended to protect human life and health.

Consumers' increased awareness of relationship between food safety, diet and personal health has lead them to make quality characteristics more central to their food choices. Producers and processors have a stake in providing safer and higher quality products in order to attract these consumers, to protect themselves from possible liability attached to inferior quality products, and to comply with government regulations. Meanwhile, introduction of new production and processing technologies as well as increases in international trade are altering the mix of foods whose quality must be assured.



Canada has been an active participant in international negotiations with trading partners concerning food inspection and currently participates in the Food Safety Quadrilateral discussions with the United States, Australia and New Zealand. This group has been discussing equivalency of food inspection concepts and has been negotiating with the EU regarding an arrangement for equivalency in the area of animal and animal products inspection. CFIA is interested in initiating similar discussions with the MERCOSUR countries.

Presently in MERCOSUR, all EEC-US approved plants are automatically approved. Plants not EEC-US approved can request inspection by MERCOSUR staff to be "MERCOSUR approved." In May 1997, during a G-8 meeting in Paraguay, the issue of equivalency in inspection systems within MERCOSUR countries was discussed. Since legislation and regulation are in most cases outdated, the unanimous recommendation was to evaluate and approve inspection systems based on HACCP and risk analysis. HACCP and risk analysis are relatively well implemented in Argentina and Brazil, mostly for fish and milk products.

Risk assessment principles and techniques are being discussed in regional and international standards-setting fora. Activities in IICA focus on building on the activities of these organizations, primarily in the area of information exchange and workshops to promote the use and harmonization of risk assessment and HACCP in LAC countries.

It is proposed that IICA-Canada and CFIA organize regional workshops in LAC countries on HACCP modelling. Those workshops will be designed to give participants a base on program development and insight into the whole process and at the same time aimed at providing participants:

- an understanding of HACCP principles;
- an understanding of the components of a HACCP model;
- an understanding of how a HACCP model can be developed, and
- "hands on" practice in developing a HACCP model.

The suggested partners are CFIA, AAFC-FRDC and Canadian veterinary medicine and agricultural colleges.

The following activities are proposed for 1999-2000:

1999: Participation of two CFIA and one FRDC specialist in one Food Safety Workshop, tentatively to be held in a Central American country; participation of two CFIA and one FRDC specialist in one technical mission in Argentina, Brazil and Chile; and organization of one technical mission of Southern Cone food safety specialists to Canada.

2000: Participation of two CFIA and one FRDC specialist in two Food Safety Workshops, tentatively to be held in the Caribbean and in the Southern Cone; participation of two CFIA and one FRDC specialist in technical missions in Costa Rica, Trinidad and Tobago and Dominican Republic; and organization of one technical mission of Central American food safety specialists to Canada.

The estimated costs for this initiative are the following:

- 1999: US\$ 40,000
- 2000: US\$ 45,000.

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3.2 Priority 2: Strategic Alliances between Canada and the Americas

3.2.1: Internship Program in Agricultural Science and Education

This hemispheric exchange program in agricultural science and education is an IICA-Canada initiative in collaboration with Canadian agricultural universities and agricultural colleges. In 1996, a framework for cooperation was established between IICA and the Canadian government to promote joint studies between Canadian and LAC institutions. The immediate purpose of this initiative is to promote joint studies with academic institutions on those areas of priority programs as established by the Governing Bodies of IICA, in which Canadian and LAC institutions have a special competence.

Since 1997, responding to a specific request from the Canadian government, IICA-Canada included in its work plan a scholarship program to Canadians promoting joint studies and establishing linkages between Canadian and LAC academic and research institutions. This linkage is seen as a component of an overall strategy for the development of the agricultural sector of the Americas, through the dissemination of science and technology applied to rural progress. Moreover, building stronger relationships with research and teaching institutions would be an opportunity to identify IICA as an organization with excellent technical and scientific capabilities, besides fostering joint ventures or mutual collaboration projects, and enhancing communications and timeliness of relevant information between Canada and LAC countries.

In 1998, IICA - Canada experienced a highly positive acceptance of its internship program included in its Action Plan for 1998. From 35 proposals presented by Canadian professionals, a total of 8 Canadian scholars were selected to develop their research studies in various LAC universities.

IICA-Canada, recognizing the added value of this mutually strategic initiative, both to Canada and LAC academic institutions, is proposing the extension of this initiative to 1999-2000.

The fourth phase of this Internship Program is dedicated to Canadians and LAC professors, post-graduate students (MSc. and Ph.D.) and academia working on projects in agricultural sciences. The objective is to allow Canadian and LAC scholars the opportunity to become acquainted with the physical, cultural and intellectual environment of LAC and Canada, and to contribute to the elaboration of joint projects which encourage the sustainable development of the Americas' agriculture and economy.

The following activities are proposed for 1999-2000:

1999: At least ten grants to Canada that will allow Canadian scholars to complete a two to three month period of training in a LAC teaching institution. In addition, IICA-Canada will offer two grants to LAC scholars to develop similar internships in Canadian participating institutions.

2000: At least twelve grants to Canadian scholars to complete a two to three month period of training in a LAC teaching institution. In addition, IICA-Canada will offer three grants to LAC scholars to develop similar internships in Canadian participating institutions.

The estimated costs for this initiative are the following:

- **1999:** US\$ 40,000
- **2000:** US\$ 45,000

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3.2.2: Agricultural Research Exchange Program

This new initiative is a result of the continuous consultation process of IICA-Canada with representatives from agricultural research organizations, who expressed their interest in establishing or strengthening relationships with LAC counterpart institutions. In many cases, they have limited time to travel in LAC countries to develop research projects of interest to both the Canadian and LAC institutions, or feel that results can be obtained in a two to four week mission in the host country. This Exchange Program is thus intended to complement the Internship Program in Agricultural Sciences, in allowing Canadian and LAC agricultural scientists to perform exploratory and short-term missions with specific objectives.

The initial phase of this program is dedicated to Canadian and LAC agricultural researchers, specialists from the public and private sectors, and professors. Its goal is to create new and strengthen existing linkages between Canadian and LAC research centres, as well as to promote projects of mutual interest and benefit. The objective is to allow Canadian agricultural researchers the opportunity to become acquainted with the physical, cultural and intellectual environment of LAC countries, and vice-versa, and to contribute to the elaboration of joint projects which encourage the sustainable development of the region's agriculture and economy.

For 1999-2000, it is proposed the following:

1999: At least, five grants to Canada that will allow Canadian agricultural researchers or specialists to complete a two to three month period of training in LAC agricultural research centres. In addition, IICA-Canada will offer two grants to LAC agricultural researchers to develop similar internships in Canadian participating institutions.

2000: At least, seven grants to Canadian agricultural researchers or specialists to complete a two to three month period of training in LAC agricultural research centres. In addition, IICA-Canada will offer three grants to LAC agricultural researchers to develop similar internships in Canadian participating institutions.

The estimated costs for this initiative are the following:

- **1999:** US\$ 30,000
- **2000:** US\$ 35,000

3.2.3: Bioscience and Biotechnology Exchange Program

Canada has over 400 biotechnology companies, employing 26,800 people, with revenues of over US\$ 3.0 billion. Biotechnology is federally recognized as a strategic technology essential to Canada's future international competitiveness. In Canada, CIB, a non-for-profit umbrella organization with 31 member associations, represents the interests of the country's biotechnology industry. The mission of the CIB is to assist in resource development, technology diffusion and promotion of biotechnology across Canada. One of its main goals is to insure that Canada provides an internationally competitive environment for the growth of biotechnology.

Although some LAC countries have comparative advantages and have developed expertise in many research areas, various studies on the possibilities of development and



diffusion of biotechnology clearly indicate weaknesses regarding the productive application of the result of this research. This weakness can be partly explained by a reduced capability in the management of development and technology transfer process. CIB has defined a number of training activities for their LAC partners, to collaborate in solving their management and business administration problems.

For the past three years, the IICA-Canada has maintained a close relationship with the CIB, with the objective of establishing a strategic alliance between the two institutions resulting in mutual benefits for the Canadian and LAC biotechnology industry.

Collaborating with CIB in expanding and improving the efficiency of their LAC network activities will contribute to the quality of biotechnology research and production of their LAC partners, and to foster Canadian partnership in LAC at the academic, research and commercial levels.

For the biennium 1999-2000, it is suggested to foster exchanges between CIB member organizations and selected LAC biotechnology research and/ or production centers in technical, management and commercial areas.

For 1999-2000, it is proposed the following:

1999: Four Canadian candidates will travel to LAC countries to participate in technical events with LAC counterpart/partner Biotech organizations, for periods of one to three weeks. Participating Canadian biotech organizations will receive one LAC candidate for similar periods.

2000: Five Canadian candidates in LAC counterpart/partner Biotech organizations. Participating Canadian institutions receive two LAC candidates for similar periods.

The estimated costs for this initiative are the following:

1999: US\$ 20,000
2000: US\$ 25,000

3.2.4: Agricultural Health Exchange Program: Cooperation for Safe Agricultural Trade

Canada and IICA have a long tradition of partnership in providing LAC countries technical collaboration in agricultural health, through the Canadian official veterinary and plant protection services and universities. Their involvement in international projects in association with IICA contributed to the recognition of Canada's expertise in this area and to the facilitation of trade within the region. It also greatly assisted in training field, laboratory and meat inspection staff, particularly in sanitary and phytosanitary risk assessment, and in the diagnosis of exotic animal diseases.



LAC countries are an increasing focus of Canada in terms of both trade and investment promotion and policy development. Increased trade of agricultural products will require increased preparedness of the Canadian official agricultural health services regarding prevailing pests and diseases in LAC. LAC countries, on the other hand, will have to adopt internationally accepted norms and procedures in animal inspection, in order to maintain and gain new markets.

Canada has successfully eradicated or is controlling most animal and plant pests and diseases of importance to the country's economy, and has developed sophisticated laboratory tests for their diagnosis. However, although Canada has active surveillance programs for these pests and diseases, their absence may lead to future problems regarding their early recognition in field conditions, and their accurate laboratory diagnosis by using reagents validated only in laboratory conditions.

Also, Canada has developed a very effective organizational and operative structure for its agricultural health services, with the creation in April 1997 of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). To the many LAC countries presently initiating or executing important institutional strengthening projects for their official agricultural health services, the Agency is a very interesting model of rationalization of resources and of partnership with the private agricultural sector.

This initiative aims to facilitate technical exchanges and collaboration programs of mutual benefit to the official veterinary and plant protection services of Canada and its main LAC trade partners, in view of strengthening the relationship between these countries' agricultural health services and research institutions, and of facilitating agricultural trade between them.

Activities proposed include CFIA scientists working in collaboration with a Southern Area country veterinary services reference laboratory in testing and validation of animal diseases of economic importance to both Canada and the Southern Cone. Opportunity will also be given to CFIA field and laboratory staff to participate in sanitary emergency situations in LAC countries, as part of their training in diagnostic of exotic pests and diseases and emergency measures.

For 1999-2000, it is proposed the following:

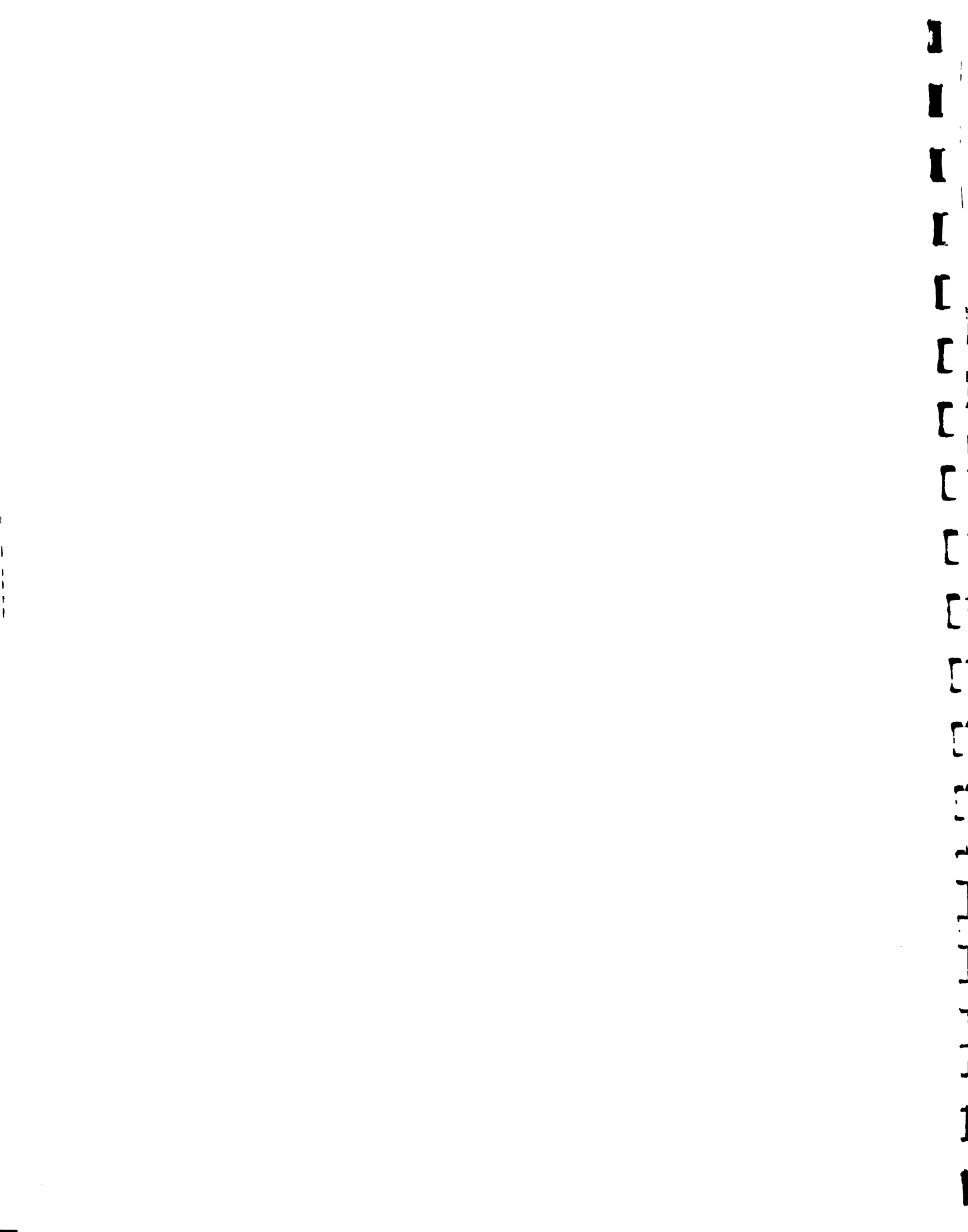
1999: At least four Canadian candidates will participate in LAC agricultural health programs for periods of one to four weeks. Participating Canadian agricultural health services will receive two LAC candidates for similar periods.

2000: Five Canadian candidates participate in LAC agricultural health programs for periods of one to four weeks. Participating Canadian agricultural health services receive three LAC candidates for similar periods.

The estimated costs for this initiative are the following:

1999: US\$ 25,000

2000: US\$ 30,000



3.2.5: Fostering Canada and LAC Farmers Exchange Program

1998 was the second year of this initiative. Although directed to mature Canadian farmers, IICA-Canada received many requests from Canadian youth organizations demonstrating their interest in participating in this initiative. After consultations with Canadian organizations, such as the Canadian 4-H Council and agricultural colleges, IICA-Canada decided to include young Canadian farmers as possible beneficiaries of this initiative for the 1999-2000 period. The involvement of young farmers represents a long term investment for future relationships. As a general rule, they are more adaptable and are prepared to try new ways of "doing things".

Canadian farmers are increasingly interested in learning about agricultural practices and agri-food opportunities in LAC – an interest shared by Latin American farmers who want to learn about the "Canadian experience". The NFU, the CFA, provincial federations of agriculture, such as the Northumberland Federation of Agriculture, and the UPA, have some experience in organizing exchanges between LAC and Canadian farmers associations. All are interested in broadening their networks within LAC and finding compatible partner associations with which to develop future relations. In addition, the CFA, the UPA and the Canadian 4-H Council have been promoting youth programmes globally. Currently, few LAC associations are participating in these initiatives.

The international component of Canadian farmers associations is an initiative that has been welcomed by both provincial and federal governments, which have contributed to most of the required financing. The Canadian farmers associations have the experience and expertise to carry out technical cooperation projects and have access to Canada's technical assistance funding by CIDA and IDRC; however, they do not have the insight on LAC countries' agricultural sector that would allow them to elaborate proposals with the desired impact, and/or to select the correct partners for the execution of specific projects. These producer associations are thus potentially key stakeholders and strategic partners of IICA.

IICA's network within LAC is extensive and provides a strong base with which to support initiatives by Canadian producer associations. In particular, youth programmes are a priority of IICA which could be directly supported by this initiative.

The immediate purpose of this initiative is to foster technical exchanges and collaboration between Canadian and LAC national farmers' organizations, by offering Canadian and LAC producers, leaders and administrators of farmers' associations, grants covering part (airfare) of the costs for travelling in LAC countries and Canada. The intention is to build long term linkages between Canadian and LAC farmers' associations.

On the longer term, it is to actively participate in the development and execution of projects resulting from such exchanges and to increase IICA's network and stakeholders in Canada.

For 1999-2000, it is proposed the following:

1999: At least twelve grants to Canada that will allow Canadian farmers to complete a two to four week period of experience in LAC farmers' organizations and associations. In addition, IICA-Canada will offer three grants to LAC farmers to develop similar internships in Canadian participating farmers' organizations.

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2000: At least fifteen grants to Canadian farmers to complete an identical period of experience in LAC farmers' organizations and associations and also five grants to LAC farmers to develop similar internships in Canada.

The estimated costs for this initiative are the following:

- **1999:** US\$ 40,000
- **2000:** US\$ 50,000

3.3 Priority 3: *Entrepreneurial Initiatives: Enhancing Strategic Alliances between Canadian and LAC Agricultural Entrepreneurs*

3.3.1: Agro-Entrepreneurial Exchange Program between Canada and LAC countries

This new initiative is also a result of the continuous consultation process of IICA-Canada within Canada. From that consultation, many representatives from the Canadian agricultural private sector demonstrated their interest in strengthening their relationship with LAC counterparts.

The initial phase of this program is dedicated to Canadian and LAC agro-entrepreneurs associated to agribusiness associations and organizations, farmers' associations and agro-exporters organizations. Its goal is to create new and strengthen existing linkages between Canadian and LAC agribusiness and agro-exporters associations and organizations, as well as to promote projects of mutual interest and benefit. The objective is to allow Canadian agricultural entrepreneurs the opportunity to become acquainted with the physical, cultural and intellectual environment of LAC countries, and vice-versa, and to contribute to the elaboration of joint projects which encourage the strengthening of strategic alliances between Canadian and LAC agricultural entrepreneurs.

The duration of the internship will be from two to four weeks. Longer periods will be at the expense of the grantee or of the Canadian or LAC institutions. These grants will cover all travel expenses including airfare, room and board, and local ground transportation. Other expenses, such as language courses, will be the responsibility of the grantee. The amount of the grants will be determined by the cost of living in the host country and, where applicable, services offered by the participating LAC and Canadian institution.

For 1999-2000, the following is proposed:

1999: At least five grants to Canadian agro-entrepreneurs in LAC counterpart/partner institutions and also two grants to LAC agricultural entrepreneurs to develop similar internships in Canada.

2000: At least eight grants to Canadian agro-entrepreneurs in LAC counterpart/partner institutions and also four grants to LAC agricultural entrepreneurs to develop similar internships in Canada.

The estimated costs for this initiative are the following:

- **1999:** US\$ 25,000
- **2000:** US\$ 35,000

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3.4 Priority 4: Information and Communication Technology

3.4.1: Partnership Program between IICA and Canada for Canadian Youth in Information and Communication Technology

On April 17, 1998, the Prime Minister of Canada announced during the Summit of the Americas in Santiago, Chile, the creation of a new program aimed at applying the energy and enthusiasm of Canada's youth in encouraging all countries in the Americas to become full participants in the information age.

IICA-Canada understands the strategic importance of this initiative to the Americas and proposes the extension of this program to the agri-food and agribusiness sectors of LAC countries.

The initial phase of this program is dedicated to young Canadians and LAC post-graduate students in ICT, interested in pursuing an internship in LAC and Canada to develop Internet capabilities in agricultural areas, such as developing web sites, computer training and related subjects. Its goal is to create new links between Canadian and LAC specialists in ICT, as well as to promote projects of mutual interest and benefit. The objective is to allow young Canadian and LAC specialists in ICT the opportunity to become acquainted with the physical, cultural and intellectual environment of LAC countries, and vice-versa, and to contribute directly to establishing the human and digital connections necessary to ensure the future prosperity of the agricultural sector of the Americas. It is expected the elaboration of joint projects which encourage the free flow of reliable information through the Internet.

The duration of the internship will be from two to six weeks. Longer periods will be at the expense of the grantee or of the Canadian or LAC partner organization. These grants will cover all travel expenses including airfare, room and board, and local ground transportation. Other expenses, such as language courses, will be the responsibility of the grantee. The amount of the grants will be determined by the cost of living in the host country and, where applicable, services offered by the participating LAC and Canadian institution.

For 1999-2000, the following is proposed:

1999: At least three grants to Canada that will allow Canadian ICT specialists to develop a two to six weeks work experience in LAC agricultural or agribusiness association. In addition, IICA-Canada will offer one grant to an LAC ICT specialist to develop a similar internship in a Canadian institution.

2000: At least five grants to Canadian ICT specialist in LAC counterpart/partner institutions and also one grant to an LAC agricultural ICT specialist to develop a similar internship in Canada.

The estimated costs for this initiative are the following:

- **1999:** US\$ 20,000
- **2000:** US\$ 20,000



3.4.2: Supporting Canada on Agricultural ICT Technologies in LAC countries

This is the second stage of a similar initiative included in IICA-Canada Action Plan for 1998.

Canada has worldwide recognition as a global leader in communication technology, distance education and rural extension training systems. Notwithstanding this fact, Canada's expertise in ICT is little known in LAC countries, where Canadian organizations can develop an important market in the provision of technology, services and training to ICT initiatives.

During a 1997 meeting of IDB "Informatics 2000 Initiative" (Agriculture Task Force), an event coordinated by the IDB aimed at encouraging the deployment of information technologies in LAC countries, it was pointed out by the Canadian representative that Canada has a number of natural competitive advantages in that region, particularly in communication technologies and ICT systems. The Canadian representative also highlighted the willingness of Canadian agricultural consultants to work in joint initiatives in LAC due to their experience and skills in the area of establishing ICT mechanisms and solutions for farmers. Also highlighted was the successful experiences of establishing the Saskatchewan AgInfoNet, the Organic Producers Information System (OPIS) and its pilot project of expanding into Costa Rica, through training of producers to comply with OCIA standards and the harmonization of regulations to enhance the trade of organic products.

The telecommunications infrastructure throughout LAC countries is still rudimentary. With the rise of the Internet, this lack of infrastructure has put most LAC countries at a major disadvantage, therefore urging their decision makers to open and modernize this sector.

There is a strong need for market research in much of the development of ICT in the region, as well as other products and services that must be developed. This was highlighted for the agro-forestry sector of Uruguay and Chile, in the work developed in 1997 by a Canadian scientist who travelled to these countries in the framework of IICA-Canada Internship Program for Canadian students and professionals in agricultural sciences. Canada has the expertise and the ability to train national consultants to do the appropriate market research in these countries. However, the capability to work in Spanish is a major requirement in the LAC region and presents a constraint in cooperative efforts.

IICA is the natural Canadian partner for this initiative, and it is beginning to partner with the private sector on project tenders as an executing agency. The Institute is an excellent window for Canadian companies and organizations who want to expand their presence and activity in the LAC. It is possible to provide LAC, through the IICA network, in-country contacts and local expertise and IICA-Canada can make the linkages with Canadian businesses. IICA-Canada has already developed a significant linkage of Canadian agri-food sites in preparation for enlarging the capability of Canada to expand their entrepreneurial presence and interest in the LAC countries.

The goals of this project are the following:

- Facilitate and assist Canadian ICT organizations and associations interested in fostering alliances with LAC organizations that will eventually lead to integrated products and services development and delivery.



- Enhance continuously the IICA-Canada Internet site (<http://www.iicacan.org>) in order to facilitate the access to quality information on LAC agricultural economics, statistics, agribusiness and trade, etc.
- Provide assistance on the identification of information products and services for which there is widespread demand in LAC

The proposed operating strategy is the following:

- Undertake consultations in selected provinces (Saskatchewan, Ontario and Quebec) with organizations and associations specialized on ICT in agriculture to determine their capacities and willingness to participate in LAC joint ventures
- Determine the degree of success the Extension Services of the provincial ministries of agriculture have had in bringing access to information and communication technology, training to guide its use, and support for specific projects which apply technology for the benefit of sustainable agriculture and rural development to the small farmer in rural areas; and further determine, where successful, if IICA could be of assistance to the provinces in developing strategies to achieve this objective where ICT is lacking
- On-going enhancement of the IICA-Canada site (<http://www.iicacan.org>). The IICA-Canada site will continue to increase the visibility of IICA in Canada since it is becoming more specialized in agribusiness and trade and agriculture networks in the Americas. Its links with the Canadian private and public sectors and with similar LAC networks will greatly contribute to increase the flow of information between IICA and Canadian /LAC agribusinesses and to facilitate trade.
- Identify appropriate Canadian specialized ICT organizations within the "Network of Centers of Excellence in Science and Technology", interested in developing joint-ventures and networking activities in LAC; identify agriculture and forestry databases produced by these centers
- Identify appropriate partners in LAC, representing the agricultural and forestry sectors at the national and/or sub-regional levels.
- Bring together the sources of information and make them available to potential users in Canada and in LAC. The information provided in databases will be available on the Internet, using IICA network in the Americas. It will allow linkages (virtual and face-to-face) of information and expertise available in Canada; IICA will provide assistance in translating the information to Spanish, whenever necessary.
- Provide a virtual workplace on Intranet for more advanced communications (voice, image, etc.) between Canada and LAC, using IICA's electronic network in its 34 Member countries. This service will facilitate access, encourage the use, production and development of ICT. It will also stimulate the exchange of information on issues related to agri-business, agri-food, forest management, government, etc. Training, translation and guidance of ICT could be a service offered through IICA offices.

The estimated costs of this initiative are the following:

- 1999: US\$ 25,000
- 2000: US\$ 25,000



4 Projected Operational Costs for 1999 and 2000

| INITIATIVES | 1999 | 2000 |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|
| <u>Initiative 1:</u> Farm & agribusiness entrepreneurial initiative: developing business opportunities for | 30000 | 35000 |
| <u>Initiative 2:</u> Food safety in international agricultural trade | 40000 | 40000 |
| <u>Initiative 3:</u> Internship program in agricultural sciences and education | 40000 | 45000 |
| <u>Initiative 4:</u> Agricultural research exchange program | 30000 | 35000 |
| <u>Initiative 5:</u> Biosciences and biotechnology exchange program | 20000 | 25000 |
| <u>Initiative 6:</u> Agricultural health exchange program: cooperation for safe agricultural trade | 25000 | 30000 |
| <u>Initiative 7:</u> Fostering Canada and LAC farmers exchange program | 40000 | 50000 |
| <u>Initiative 8:</u> Agro-entrepreneurial exchange program between Canada and LAC countries | 25000 | 30000 |
| <u>Initiative 9:</u> Partnership program between IICA and Canada for Canadian youth in Information | 20000 | 20000 |
| <u>Initiative 10:</u> Supporting Canada on agricultural ICT in LAC countries | 25000 | 25000 |
| <u>TOTAL (US\$)</u> | <u>295000</u> | <u>345000</u> |

5 Expanding Canadian Partners: Private and Public Sectors, Universities and NGO

In addition to the traditional partners of IICA, such as the DFAIT, AAFC, CIDA and IDRC, IICA-Canada is including private groups with interests in agri-food and agribusiness issues. These new partners play a key role in identifying the priorities to be pursued and in building a base of support for future linkages between Canada, Latin America & Caribbean countries and IICA.

i. Private Sector:

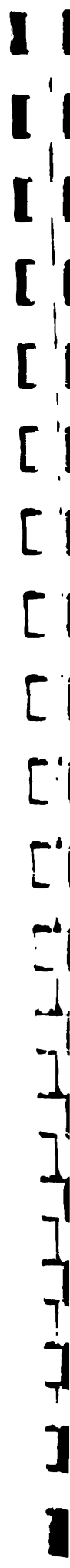
- Agricultural Institute of Canada
- Canadian Federation of Agriculture
- Canadian Consultant Agrologist Association
- Canadian Consultant Firms
- Club Export Agroalimentaire Quebec
- Canadian Institute of Biotechnology and all their associate members
- Canadian Council for Animal Care
- Canadian 4-H Council
- Canadian Co-Operative Association
- Canadian Volunteer Advisers to Business
- National Farmers Union
- Northumberland Federation of Agriculture
- Trade Facilitation Office Canada
- The Canadian Council for the Americas
- Union des Producteurs Agricoles

ii. Public Sector:

- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
- Canadian Food Inspection Agency
- Food Research and Development Centre
- Ministry of Natural Resources and Wheat Board
- Ministry of Environment
- Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)
- International Development Research Centre (IDRC)
- Provincial Ministries of Agriculture and International Relations

iii. Universities and Agricultural Colleges

- University of Alberta: Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry and Home Economics
- University of British Columbia: Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Department of Environmental Sciences and Biology
- University of Guelph: Food Sciences and Ontario Agricultural College
- Laval University: Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences
- McGill University: MacDonald College of Agriculture
- Nova Scotia Agricultural College
- University of Manitoba: Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences
- University of Moncton
- University of Montreal: Faculty of Veterinary Medicine
- University of Prince Edward Island
- University of Saskatchewan: Faculties of Crop Sciences and Veterinary Medicine
- University of York
- University of Windsor



- iv. **Non-Governmental Organizations**
 - Canadian Foundation for the Americas
 - Partners in Rural Development
 - NGOs committed to provide technical cooperation on social-economic issues.

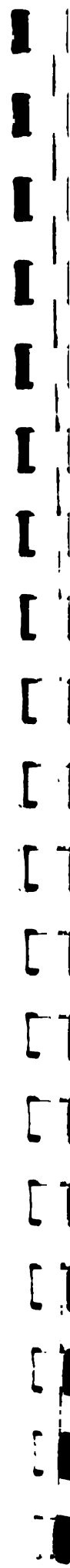
6 **Conclusions**

The consultative process undertaken to date has gained momentum by IICA-Canada's actions aimed at building strategic partnerships in Canada and the Americas. A number of IICA-Canada activities, designed to provide Canada with value-added support, have proven to be successful and effective. The belief is clear, that IICA has a valuable service to offer and this has been evident in discussions with all stakeholders. The interest in transforming the relationship has been seen from both the traditional government partners as well as new partners. The active role played by the IICA-Canada reflects the new realities within Canada and the desire by many Canadian groups to become more integrally linked to the Americas.

Canada's desires to be more actively present in IICA and the Americas and IICA Headquarters new Medium Term Plan for 1998-2002, were the major building blocks in which we built the Proposed Action Plan for 1999-2000. The approach and priorities of this Action Plan, reflect the new realities within IICA and Canada. Support from IICA Headquarters for consolidating the changes faced by IICA-Canada, as well as a solid commitment to move to a "more dynamic IICA in Canada", provides a perfect opportunity for enhancing the renewal process. Now is the time to demonstrate that IICA is committed to following through on its promise of garnering new partnerships based relationships. It is also time to confirm that Canada has valuable resources to offer in the development of agriculture in the Americas.

Conclusively, IICA-Canada proposes the following in its Action Plan for the biennial 1999-2000:

- i. **Four priorities for the biennial:** a) Promoting trade opportunities for Canadian agri-food and agribusiness associations to the Americas; b) Promoting strategic alliances between Canada and the Americas; c) Enhancing strategic alliances between Canada and LAC agricultural entrepreneurs; d) Information and communication technologies.
- ii. **Ten initiatives** are proposed to be implemented in the biennial. The core of the action plan relies upon exposing Canadians to the agri-food and agribusiness sectors of the Americas. Seven new initiatives are related to exchange programs between Canada and LAC countries. The remaining are related to facilitating agricultural trade and enhancing Canada's agricultural entrepreneurship in the Americas.
- iii. A large increase on the number of Canadians receiving support from IICA-Canada's exchange programs. It is proposed that for the year 1999, 43 grants to be offered to Canadian professionals, experts, professors, post-graduate students, farmers and young entrepreneurs. For the year 2000, 57 grants to Canadians. At the same time, IICA-Canada proposes for the year 1999, 13 partial grants to LAC candidates to develop their internships in Canada, and for the year 2000, 21 partial grants.

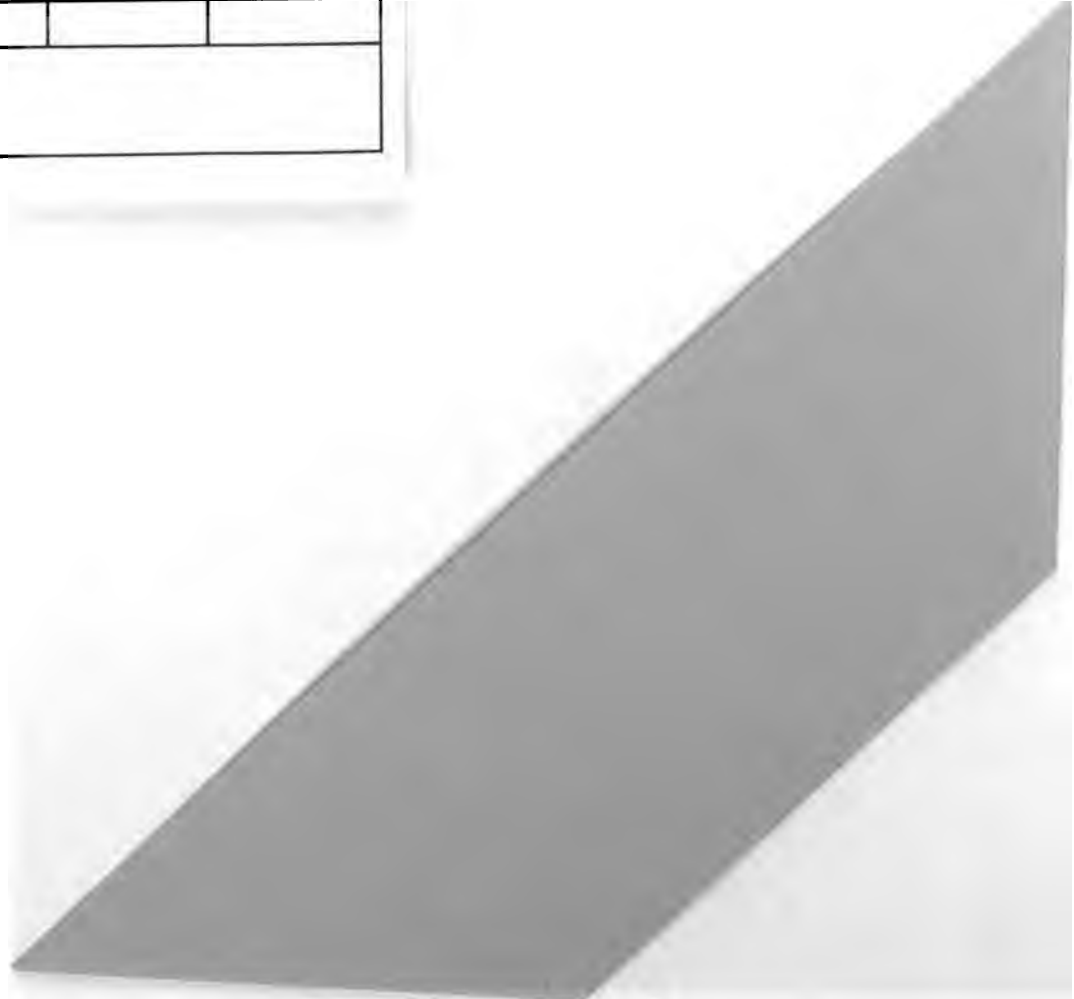


- iv. Enlarging the spectrum of Canadian partners to IICA-Canada's actions, mainly from the agricultural private sector and universities.
- v. Proposing a substantial increase in IICA-Canada's operative budget for 1999, US\$ 295,000.00 and for the year 2000, US\$ 345,000.00.

Consolidating IICA's approach and its presence in Canada will require a number of adaptations both within the Canadian Office and within the IICA network. This means moving the entire IICA network towards being a cohesive organization that leverages all of its members resources to obtain maximum impact. Commitment from the entire IICA network will be crucial to the successful consolidation of IICA's presence within Canada.

Given the results observed from the previous IICA-Canada Action Plans, the future of IICA in Canada, as well as the Americas, provides ample opportunity for innovative partnerships in agri-food and agribusiness development. On entering the twenty-first century, positioning Canada and IICA in the forefront is now paramount.

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