

2007

A n n u a l R e p o r t

S u m m a r y

IICA's contribution to the
development of agriculture
and rural communities
in the Americas



Inter-American Institute for
Cooperation on Agriculture

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About IICA

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 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.



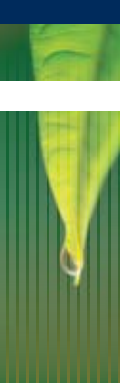
*Hemispheric team of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).
Representatives' Week 2007.*

Foreword



The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) celebrated its 65th anniversary in 2007, a year in which the technical cooperation it provided at the national, regional and hemispheric levels produced a bumper crop of results. It was also a year of events of paramount importance for the Institute, noteworthy among which were the Week of Agriculture and Rural Life, held in Antigua, Guatemala, and key meetings of the governing bodies. But it is to the prevailing spirit of constant renewal, the level of maturity achieved by the Institute and the commitment it has assumed in recent years in its various spheres of endeavor: ministerial process, technical cooperation, administration and finance and strategic partnerships, to name a few, that the significant results achieved must be attributed.

IICA continued to play a dual role in support of the countries: as a hemispheric organization for technical cooperation and also as Secretariat of the Ministerial Process “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas”. It is within the framework of the latter that the Fourth Ministerial Meeting, “Working together for agriculture and rural life in the Americas,” was held in Guatemala.



The principal results of our technical cooperation include an increase in business training programs for the private agrifood sector, the application of the Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS) instrument for modernizing agricultural health and food safety services in the countries, an institutional focus on rural development based on a territorial approach in selected reference territories and high-priority areas for the countries, and the identification of needs in the area of biotechnology and biosafety in several Member States.

Other significant technical activities were carried out in several newer areas such as agrotourism, organic agriculture, agroenergy and biofuels. In addition, the results of the report “Agriculture and the New Challenges of Development: the State of and Outlook for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas, 2007” were shared with the Member States and international organizations.

The areas of knowledge management and horizontal cooperation have also been highly productive. Here, the intensive exchange of successful experiences, intellectual training of human capital and the development of specialized information centers and services, all

of which helped to position the Institute as an organization that both facilitates and executes technical actions, have been contributing factors. The information systems operated by the Institute at the hemispheric, regional and national levels recorded millions of visits, which facilitated inter-American dialogue and the exchange of knowledge between public and private stakeholders in agriculture. The IICA Offices in the Member States carried out 44 horizontal cooperation activities, which led to enhanced cooperation among the countries. In addition, the *“Catálogo de experiencias exitosas agrícolas (identificación, sistematización, promoción y divulgación, adopción y evaluación)”* was published. Thanks to all of these results, IICA has become a reference source for new solutions to agricultural and rural problems in the Americas.

In 2007, the Institute’s financial picture was highly positive, comparable to that of some twenty years ago. Notwithstanding this positive financial situation, the Institute will not abandon its policy of austerity and accountability. Quite the contrary--we shall continue to apply that policy as a means of reassuring the countries that it is safe to invest in IICA, and that our cooperation is a contributing factor in the development of the

Americas. A state-of-the-art administrative and financial system installed at Headquarters, and scheduled to be installed in the Offices in the Member States in 2008, has made it possible to manage our resources much more effectively.

Our Offices continued to improve consistently as a result of the periodic performance evaluations, recognition of staff through the Awards for Excellence program, and the commitment assumed by the administration vis-à-vis the importance of becoming a knowledge-based organization.

Recently, Mr. Stephen Covey, present-day international management guru, participated in a dialogue with Institute personnel in which he not only helped us to discover new paths to leadership and how to find more effective and creative solutions for our Member States, but also acknowledged the great respect he has for an organization such as IICA and the role it plays.

The 2007 IICA Annual Report summarizes the most important results achieved in the Member States as a consequence of IICA's efforts. These efforts are aimed at carrying out its mission of providing innovative technical cooperation

and pursuing its vision of being the partner of choice for agricultural and rural development in the Americas.

More detailed information on the work of our Offices in the Member States and the Directorates of Regional Operations is available on our Website (www.iica.int), as well as in the respective national and regional reports.

2008 will bring with it new and more complex challenges for IICA, but we are ready to meet them head-on. Sixty-five years of experience, an administration that is focused on its people, technical cooperation that is provided in agreement with our partners and increased momentum to establish strategic partnerships will continue to give us the best credentials for agricultural and rural development in the Americas.



Chelston W. D. Brathwaite
Director General

Agriculture and rural life

Of strategic importance to development

▲ *The Ministerial Meetings on Agriculture and Rural Life are the highest level political forum for discussing priorities and strategic actions, and for positioning agriculture and rural life on the hemispheric agenda.*

During the Fourth Summit of the Americas (Mar del Plata, Argentina, 2005), the Heads of State and Government reaffirmed the strategic importance of agriculture and rural life for the integral development of the countries. They also endorsed the dialogue and consensus-building in which the ministers of agriculture have been engaged, and their commitment to implementing the Summit mandates. Specifically, in the Plan of Action adopted at the Fourth Summit, the leaders decided to make a national commitment “to support the implementation of the Ministerial Agreement of Guayaquil in 2005, Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas (AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action).”



The Week of Agriculture and Rural Life was held in Antigua, Guatemala, in July 2007.

The run-up to the Fifth Summit of the Americas (Trinidad and Tobago 2009)

As an institutional partner of the Summit process, IICA participates in the Joint Summit Working Group (JSWG), coordinated by the

Fourth Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas

In keeping with the Ministerial Agreement of Guayaquil 2005, the Ministerial Process to prepare for the Fourth Meeting focused on the promotion of state policies for agriculture and rural life, the development of an information system for monitoring and evaluating the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan, and the adjustment of regional strategies.

OAS and made up of ECLAC, the IDB, PAHO, the World Bank, the ILO and the regional banks, to which it provided information on progress in the Ministerial Process and the outcomes of the Fourth Ministerial Meeting.

The Chair of the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG) and Coordinator of the Fifth Summit of the Americas asked the partners in the process to identify the hemispheric challenges that lay ahead. IICA suggested that the countries focus on the following three challenges:

- i) Strengthening the institutional framework for the implementation of the commitments adopted;

- ii) Reappraising the rural milieu as part of the national heritage and as an essential resource for comprehensive development; and
- iii) Building a knowledge base for comprehensive sustainable development.

These challenges were included in the publication *“Towards the Fifth Summit of the Americas: regional challenges,”* prepared by the JSWG and presented by the OAS to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Americas at the XLVII Meeting of the SIRG, held in Panama.

Fora with key actors: Week of Agriculture – Antigua, Guatemala

IICA played an active role in organizing and holding the Fora with Key Actors of Agriculture, within the framework of the Week of Agriculture and Rural Life of the Americas. The fora focused on three important topics: *agribusiness, rural development and technology*, and provided an opportunity to present the results of studies conducted by IICA and to foster a dialogue between the public and private sectors on the need for national policies in these areas.

Institutional modernization and agricultural policies

Repositioning agriculture and rural life

▲ *A broader vision of agriculture and a better understanding of its multiple roles will spur greater investment in rural areas, which will benefit both the countryside and cities.*

As part of IICA's contribution to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life, the countries of Central America received support in developing a regional agricultural policy, approved by the Central American Agricultural Council, which makes it possible to coordinate actions aimed at enhancing the competitiveness of the agricultural sector and contributes to the sustainable development of the countries of the Region. IICA helped develop the methodology used and provided the ministries with technical support throughout the process of formulating the proposals. During the final stage, it assumed responsibility for the Technical Secretariat of the Competitiveness and Small-scale Entrepreneurial Agriculture components of the policy.

In the Caribbean Region, at least four ministries of agriculture defined their agricultural strategies after adopting the process promoted by the Agro Matrix. As a result, they now have a better understanding of the need for a comprehensive approach to repositioning agriculture at the national, regional and hemispheric levels.

In the Southern Region, IICA, which serves as the Technical-Administrative Secretariat of the CAS, provided the Council with support and focused its actions on addressing the regional priorities identified by CAS. This made it possible to re-launch the CAS based on the agricultural policy guidelines defined by the Ministers at the Twelfth Regular Meeting of the CAS, held in Concon, Chile.

At the national level, the following experiences were reported:

- In **Ecuador**, the process of implementing State policies was strengthened by means of the 2007-2011 National Plan for the Reactivation of Agriculture in the

Horizontal Cooperation between Canada and Chile

IICA facilitated cooperation between the agricultural ministries of Canada and Chile, and played an active role in the visit of a Chilean technical mission to Canada to learn more about institutional modernization in that country, a priority component of Chile's "Nueva Institucionalidad" project. The Institute also helped the former Vice President of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency share with the Chilean mission the more than ten years of experience that Canada has acquired in institutional modernization and in creating a national food inspection agency.

Highlands Region and the preparation of eight profiles of territorial projects that the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Aquaculture and Fisheries (MAGAP) is to implement.

- In the **Dominican Republic**, IICA and the Steering Committee of the Process to Reform and Modernize the Agricultural Sector were successful in securing approval of the policy framework for that sector and the proposal for its institutional reform, and in preparing the Plan of Medium- and Short-term Measures.

- In **Uruguay**, capacities for prospective analysis and strategic thinking were improved through the fourth cycle of lectures entitled "State policies: what lies ahead for the agricultural sector," which included a broad discussion of strategic resources for sustainable development, specifically knowledge management, water resources, and agroenergy.



Representatives of different social sectors in the countries of the region were asked to assess the Central American Agricultural Policy.

Promoting women's rights

In pursuit of gender equity



In Haiti, women from poor rural areas who have joined the Kredifann project have increased their income by more than 50%.

IICA continued to raise awareness in rural communities of the need to incorporate the gender approach into the processes of the reference territories, the education of women leaders and the strengthening of state programs to provide care facilities for the children of rural working mothers and producers.

▲ *The application of the gender focus, promoted by IICA, contributes to strengthening social actors in reference territories, including women, and encourages recognition of their ability to form organizations and implement production projects.*

At the hemispheric level, IICA strengthened cooperative partnerships with networks of rural women producers, including Mexico's National Network of Rural Women (RENAMUR) with which it organized an international meeting on the role of women in reappraising the rural milieu. The Institute also provided support to hold the First Congress of Women Entrepreneurs, organized by the 100,000 Women for Morelos Foundation and sponsored by the Mexico's *Fideicomisos Instituidos en Relación con la Agricultura* (FIRA) and Secretariat for Agrarian Reform. Roughly 1200 women from various parts of the country took part.

At the regional level, the Institute implemented training actions and formulated projects aimed at generating income that would permit the Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers (CANROP) whose Technical Secretariat IICA operates, to function more effectively. The Institute also designed a virtual interface to create a community of learning on the subject of microfinance for rural microenterprises. The members of this community include IICA specialists, CANROP producers and young people belonging to the Caribbean Agriculture Forum for Youth (CAFY).

The Institute also helped generate institution-building strategies and differentiated tools for facilitating territorial development and training processes in the countries geared to the diverse needs of small businesses, women and rural territories in LAC. For example:

- In **Paraguay**, support was provided to strengthen the capabilities of the General Planning Directorate and the Agrarian Extension Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock. These actions made the technical personnel of both Directorates more aware of the key role that rural women are playing in the new rurality. Also, collaboration was provided in formulating the concept of "family agriculture" as part of the new institutional policy aimed at strengthening this type of farming.
- In **Uruguay**, the 2007 annual competition entitled "The protagonists of rural development speak" focused on small-scale food production. Most of the people who took part were rural women producers.

Now and in the future

Taking agriculture's pulse

▲ *The Institute supports public and private stakeholders by generating and disseminating information of use to decision makers.*

For years, IICA has been calling attention to the important role played by agriculture in alleviating poverty and stimulating economic growth, a notion borne out in recent studies by international organizations.

In 2007, IICA prepared the report “Agriculture and the new challenges of development: the State of and Outlook for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas, 2007,” with a view to generating technical inputs to fuel the decisions of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) and the member countries, pursuant to the policy guidelines of the Summit of the Americas process. To supplement that report, a statistical appendix was published that shows the trends in the production, social, trade,

and environmental variables of each of the 34 countries of the hemisphere. Spurred on the need for a common vision of the state of agriculture and rural life, FAO, ECLAC and CATIE, in a joint effort, provided working documents and basic information for the analysis. Similar reports were published for the Caribbean Region and for Dominica and Trinidad and Tobago.



The electronic version of the report is available at: <http://www.iica.int>, in the section Publications and Documents.

IICA continued to host technical fora, which addressed the following topics:

- *“China and India: Challenges for agrifood trade in the Americas,”* with the participation of World Bank, ECLAC and IICA experts.
- *“Transboundary diseases: Importance of veterinary services, intersectoral action, and compensation,”* with experts from the World Bank, the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), the Latin American Association of Poultry Farmers (ALA) and IICA.
- *“Opportunities, risks and benefits of biotechnology for the countries of the Americas,”* with renowned experts from the United States, Argentina and IICA.

At regional level, in the Caribbean, IICA contributed to agricultural repositioning by supporting the Caribbean Agricultural Policy Network (CaRAPN) website and by collaborating with journalists in preparing the media kits designed to get more positive messages and information on agriculture in the media.



Forum “China and India: Challenges for Agrifood Trade in the Americas”.



Forum on Transboundary Diseases.



Speakers at the third technical forum for 2007, on Biotechnology.

In the interest of fair trade

Developing trade negotiation skills

▲ *The Institute supports the development of skills needed to formulate trade policies, engage in negotiations and analyze their impacts.*

IICA has focused its support on helping the countries tap the opportunities triggered by more open trade and the establishment of free trade areas.

From a hemispheric perspective, several training activities were carried out. Noteworthy among these was a course on trade and trade negotiations for public –and private– sector officials in Honduras, offered in coordination with the WTO in response to a request from Honduras' Secretariat of Industry and Trade. IICA also participated in videoconferences of the Global Development Learning Network (GDLN) dealing with various aspects of the

CAFTA, which were sponsored by the Central American Exporters' Federation (FECAEXCA) and the Central American Center for the Development of Micro-, Small- and Medium-scale Enterprises (CENPROMYPE).

Other activities included our participation in: the Eleventh Korean-Latin America Business Forum (Korea); a seminar on public policies



The Global Development Learning Network (GDLN), promoted by the World Bank, has served as a platform for trade-related training activities.

for family agriculture, territorial development and rural public spending in Latin America (Chile); a dialogue on tropical products, natural resource management and poverty (organized by ICONE of Brazil and the ICTSD); a symposium on institution building for the beef chains of Central America (ILRI and CFC); and the Latin American Regional Workshop of the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP), in Uruguay.

At the regional level, IICA provided technical support to the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC) and the private sector in that region in analyzing CAFTA negotiations on specific products. It helped the Federation of Poultry Farmers of Central America and the Caribbean (FEDAVICAC) prepare a document on the international context of the Central American poultry sector, and cooperated in organizing various presentations for regional workshops organized by the Costa Rican Livestock Development Corporation (CORFOGA).

Bolivia's foreign trade statistics

IICA published the "Bolivia's foreign trade statistics, 1992-2006," as a component of the Export Information System (SIEX) implemented by the Deputy Ministry of Foreign Trade (VCE) with support from the National Statistics Institute (INE).

In the Andean Region, an on-line information system on policies in support of agriculture in the five countries of the region became operational, and a comparative analysis was conducted of proposed internal/complementary agendas for the Free Trade Agreement with the United States in three countries of the region. Two other studies dealt with trade opportunities for Panama's dairy sector, and the international trade context of the Central American beef sector.

Agricultural competitiveness

Focus on agrifood chains

▲ *The Agrifood Chains and Dialogue for Action approach is a useful instrument in the design and implementation of agricultural policies and actions.*

The chains approach IICA has been promoting for more than a decade has become an effective tool for fully understanding the challenges facing agriculture in the institutional, production, trade, technological and other arenas.

In Central America, with funding from SDC, IICA began implementation of the second stage of the RED SICTA project, making it possible to promote 16 projects aimed at promoting innovation in corn and bean production through the adoption of a chains approach. The methodology consisted of bringing together the different actors in the chain (growers, marketers, processors and public and private suppliers of technology) to analyze restraints in each link of the chain. Based on that analysis, they were able to identify innovations that would address those restraints, which were implemented in a project co-financed by RED SICTA.

In the Central Region, IICA also strengthened the capabilities of fruit growers via a number of actions carried out with specialized units of the ministries of agriculture. For example, with the Nontraditional Fruits Program in Costa Rica, support was provided to facilitate a trip to Brazil to secure fruit technology, and an exchange of experiences with FEDEFRUTA/Chile.

Other experiences that have made agrifood chains at the national level more competitive were:

- In **Panama**, IICA collaborated with MIDA and the private sector to draw up an action plan for the dairy sector, and to establish a “chain committee” responsible for monitoring the “competitiveness

Study of Production Chains in Brazil

In collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Supply (MAPA), the Institute published nine studies and assessments of Brazil’s main agribusiness production chains.



Bean growers in Central America receive support from the Red SICTA project being implemented by IICA.

agreement” of the dairy chain. Similar action plans were made available for the agrifood chains of corn and sorghum.

- In **Belize**, the Belize Poultry Association and the Central American Poultry Association conducted a rapid analysis of the poultry and chicken production industries. The activity involved some 65 participants and served to identify weaknesses and strengths, with a view to improving both industries at the national and regional levels, formulate plans for their development and harmonize standards and technology in the region.
- In **Guatemala**, under the IICA-MAGA Agreement, the Office supported the creation and management of committees for 14 agricultural, six livestock and one hydrobiological chain, which performed rapid assessments and formulated action plans designed to make the chains more competitive.

Project “Coffee Quality based on Place of Origin”

Under this project, being executed with funding from the AECL, 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 for assessing gourmet coffees, thanks to which they were able to compete more effectively and enter the quality coffee market.

- In the **Bahamas**, together with the Bahamas Agricultural Producers’ Association (BAPA), the Institute helped obtain a Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF) grant from the IDB to encourage the development of producer groups into consolidated clusters for competitiveness.

Entrepreneurial Agriculture

Upgrading business skills

▲ *It is necessary to take advantage of the opportunities afforded by globalization and the opening of new and larger markets, and to meet the growing demands of consumers.*

One of the principal objectives of IICA's 2006-2010 Medium-Term Plan is to improve the performance and competitiveness of agribusinesses in the Member States.

At the hemispheric level, more than 200 private-sector stakeholders received training through the Export Platforms program; a new program to strengthen the business capabilities of small- and medium-scale producers; and the seminar "The ABCs of Preparing a Marketing Plan for Agricultural Products." Through these training opportunities, IICA gave practical and direct support to private-sector actors for upgrading their capabilities to tap market opportunities.

In the Caribbean Region, a total of 451 stakeholders, 40% of whom were women, benefited from workshops in various areas related to business and management, organized and supported by the Institute. IICA conducted a survey in 12 countries to assess the status of agribusiness-related legislation. Draft policies and proposals on agribusiness policies, including fiscal incentives, were developed for St. Kitts-Nevis and Saint Lucia. Furthermore, IICA

Market Information Organization of the Americas (MIOA)

Noteworthy among actions aimed at strengthening public and private institutions involved in agribusiness development and management are our joint efforts with the Market Information Organization of the Americas (MIOA), which has led to improvements in agricultural information systems in 19 countries of the hemisphere and training for more than 50 professionals in charge of operating them.

partnered with the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) to offer two regional training courses “**Business Opportunities in Agro-processing of Tropical Fruits, Meats, Poultry and Milk-based Products**” that benefited 100 small- and medium-scale agro-processors from 10 CARICOM countries.

Some initiatives implemented in the countries were:

- In **Mexico**, a proposal to establish the *Fundación México Fértil*, a mechanism to promote innovation and to attract investment in highly profitable sectors in that country, was completed.
- In **Paraguay**, IICA provided support to the Investments and Exports Network in evaluating the export preparedness of Paraguayan companies registered with the National Fruits and Vegetables Board.
- In **Antigua and Barbuda**, jointly with CARDI and the Ministry of Agriculture, the capabilities of the country’s agribusiness entrepreneurs for conducting successful enterprises were improved.



- In **Haiti**, a protocol was signed with the Trade Facilitation Office of Canada for the implementation of three seminars and one trade mission to Canada. Another agreement was signed with the Haitian-Canadian Chamber of Trade and Industry to seek the funds needed to implement this project.

Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

Trade and health go hand in hand

▲ *IICA attaches priority to the development of capabilities in the area of agricultural health and food safety, with a view to making the agricultural and rural sectors more competitive and promoting agrifood trade.*

The Institute continued to implement the “Initiative for the Americas,” a technical cooperation action whose purpose is to strengthen Member States’ institutional framework for SPS. To this end, it facilitated the participation of 26 countries in meetings of the WTO/SPS Committee and obtained the agreement of six countries to serve as a “Steering Group.”

Thanks to this initiative and a number of national fora and events, institutional relations between the countries and Secretariat of the

SPS Committee and the relevant international organizations (Codex Alimentarius, International Plant Protection Convention and the World Animal Health Organization), were strengthened. In addition, the countries adopted positions as a bloc in the SPS Committee; bilateral meetings were held to study trade-related problems; and efforts were made to improve the participation of the delegations of the countries of the Americas in the meetings of the Committee. Ecuador, Paraguay, and Honduras received assistance for national workshops and other SPS-related activities.

A contract was signed with the WTO, through the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF), to support member countries in strengthening institutions in the area of SPS. To this end, a new PVS tool was developed specifically for SPS.

Important actions were carried out in **Chile**. For example, under the agreement being executed

jointly with the Agricultural and Livestock Service (SAG) and the Chilean Exporters Association (ASOEX) to control fruit flies, assessments were conducted to determine the status of the pest in South America and the SAG's capacity to control them. Finally, **Dominica**, the **Dominican Republic**, **Jamaica**, **St. Kitts-Nevis** and **St. Lucia** now have functional national SPS committees and Codex committees.

Project to Improve the Productivity, Quality, Safety and Marketing of Beef in Central America (IICA-ILRI/CFC)

With a view to developing capabilities, IICA provided support for national and regional courses, workshops and seminars on HACCP and GMP, traceability, risk analysis, epidemiology, and information and registration systems.



The "Initiative for the Americas" is aimed at strengthening animal and plant health institutions in the countries, through participation in the meetings of the SPS Committee of the World Trade Organization.

National AHFS services

Improving sanitary status

▲ *Increased trade has led to more health risks and concerns over diseases that can have a major impact on health and economies.*

Improving the animal and plant health status of the Member States involves modernizing their AHFS services. To this end, IICA strengthened its strategic partnership with FAO, and new cooperation agreements were signed with PAHO, the OIE and the Universities of Minnesota and Lincoln-Nebraska, in the United States. These agreements led to joint activities with FAO in the Caribbean Region (a workshop on the application of HACCP in the tourism sector), and with PAHO and OIRSA/RIOPPAH in the Central Region (workshop to analyze risks of Avian Influenza).

In the Caribbean Region, under the framework agreement currently in force with the USDA,

IICA collaborated in implementing a pilot workshop on emergency response; was involved in launching efforts to strengthen veterinary services and national capabilities for epidemiological surveillance in some Caribbean countries; and participated in a donation of educational materials on food safety to primary schools.

At the country level, **Costa Rica** and **Jamaica** received support for preparing and following-up on the OIE evaluation of veterinary services; after that, Costa Rica was assisted in drawing up a funding proposal to strengthen those services. Technical personnel from government services in **Argentina**, **Paraguay** and **Brazil** received training to equip them to apply the “Performance, Vision, and Strategy” (PVS) tool on their own. Also, authorities from **Haiti** received the French version of the PVS tools for animal health, plant health and food safety. IICA participated in workshops on the importance of sanitary control and the strengthening of veterinary services in **Ecuador** and **Peru**, and on food safety in **Paraguay**.

In **Grenada**, the country's agricultural health and food safety legislation was brought up to date and harmonized with relevant CARICOM and FAO regulations.



The PVS instruments, which have become an important tool in the cooperation IICA provides, are available in the Publications section at www.iica.int.



Observatory of emerging issues

Improving emergency preparedness

▲ *Efforts to improve the ability to prevent and anticipate plant and animal health emergencies are a wise investment for agriculture in the Americas.*

With a view to improving emergency preparedness, IICA created an Observatory of Emerging Issues and Emergencies, which reports weekly on officially reported outbreaks of pests and diseases, as well as on new regulations, technologies, and other AHFS subjects that can impact access to agricultural markets. Also, coverage of the Codex Bulletin was expanded to include all areas of SPS.

On the topic of risk communication, IICA made presentations at and participated actively in various international meetings of animal health communicators in Italy, Panama, Guatemala, and Uruguay. Informational material on the

prevention of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) was disseminated throughout the hemisphere, including a 10-chapter radio series in Spanish and Portuguese entitled “*Better safe than sorry ... an intelligent decision*” and a video in Spanish and Portuguese called “*Avian flu: Prevention is possible.*” Both were prepared by IICA on the basis of a FAO guide, and target small- and medium-scale poultry farmers in the Americas.

With regard to transboundary disease control, many activities were undertaken to address foot-and-mouth disease and, especially, HPAI. These include joint workshops with PAHO and OIRSA on geographic information systems and rapid diagnosis; with the USDA on emergency response plans for HPAI (Caribbean Region) and management of live poultry markets; and with FAO and other regional and international organizations.

In the Caribbean, the Institute helped the countries prepare for HPAI, with simulation exercises carried out in Jamaica, Guyana and

Saint Lucia, and a desktop simulation in Trinidad and Tobago. In the Southern Region, in order to detect possible overlapping and redundancy, a comparative study was conducted of the following international technical cooperation projects related to avian influenza and/or agricultural health: WB TRUST FUND, TCP/RLA/3106, TCP/RLA/3108 and TCP STRENGTHENING CAS.

Moko and Black Sigatoka Diseases

Technical staff of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and the St. Vincent Banana Growers Association enhanced their capabilities by taking part in a workshop on the identification and management of the Moko and Black Sigatoka diseases. The MAFF implemented the Emergency Action Plan under a program for the rehabilitation of the banana fields.



Information on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza was disseminated throughout the hemisphere.

Rural territories and reference territories

Fostering social inclusion

▲ *The Institute supports the efforts of the countries to formulate development strategies that focus on rural territories and promote the prosperity of their communities.*

The Institute attaches priority to efforts aimed at strengthening institutions and formulating policies that promote rural development with a territorial approach. To this end, in the Central Region, technical guidelines were provided for evaluating the PRODERT Trilateral Program (Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala) and, in the Andean Region, a work platform was reactivated to articulate domestic agendas with regional and hemispheric agendas.

IICA participated in the Fifth Meeting of the Ad Hoc Group for Andean Rural Development. As a result, IICA's work was strengthened in reference territories, observatories, and the use of tools for planning and measuring the level of sustainable rural development in those territories. With a

view to providing systematic and dynamic support for rural development planning processes at the hemispheric level, the book *Métodos de planificación para el desarrollo microrregional* (planning methods for microregional development) was updated.

In the Southern Region, IICA worked with the Executive Secretariat of the REAF to undertake joint REAF/CAS projects in family agriculture, which included meetings held in Uruguay and Chile between representatives of both secretariats to define strategies, as well as other meetings in Paraguay.

Noteworthy national initiatives include:

- In **El Salvador**, working with the Universidad Centroamericana, HORIZONT 3000, JOVESOLIDES and the University of El Salvador, the Office executed a project incorporating the territorial approach in the Chalatenango Highlands.
- In **Paraguay**, technical personnel of the Agrarian Extension Directorate (Municipality of Paraguari) and representatives of civil society organizations received training to strengthen their

capabilities in the area of sustainable development based on the territorial approach, and in the design and execution of plans, programs and projects, using the participatory model.

- In **Ecuador**, a methodological proposal was developed to promote a program for territorial management in the province of Los Rios, which facilitated the formulation of agricultural policies that will give direction to actions in the agricultural sector over five years.
- In **Colombia**, under the agreement signed with the ADAM Program, IICA cooperated in the formulation of rural development projects based on the territorial approach in municipalities chosen for their vulnerability to illicit crops.
- In **Honduras**, the Institute consolidated the implementation of the territorial approach in the Belen Gualcho rural development project by preparing various documents (inventory of investments, inventory of actors and baseline data for the territory), strengthening the group in charge of the project and formulating the plan for the territory.

- In **Guyana and Dominica**, the Institute prepared two documents to guide the development of the Carib Community in Dominica that were presented to the Ministry of Finance and Planning; and supported the development and strengthening of rural agro-processing businesses in the Lake Communities of Guyana and the Carib Territory in Dominica.

Horizontal cooperation between Peru and Barbados

Peruvian experiences in applying the territorial approach were shared with national authorities in Barbados with a view to replicating the experience in a reference territory in that country.

Sustainable rural development

Capacity building in the rural milieu

▲ *The Institute encourages efforts aimed at ensuring harmony among agriculture, the environment and rural life.*

At the hemispheric level, IICA provided support for the design of a Master's Degree program in Rural Development, within the Graduate Program in Developmental Sciences (CIDES) of the Universidad Mayor de San Andres in Bolivia. IICA made presentations on the territorial approach to rural development to students in both the Doctor's and Master's Degree programs. In addition, a training course was designed with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) to build capacities in agro-environmental policies for implementation in reference territories, with a view to strengthening the competencies and talents of leaders of public entities, the private sector and civil society organizations and with a potential impact on the planning, implementation and monitoring of agro-environmental policies in rural territories.

In the Central Region, thirty-three managers, specialists and rural leaders from public and private entities in Central America and Mexico completed the international course "Leadership for the Development of Ecoagriculture and the Integrated Management of Rural Territories in Central America," organized by IICA, the Berkeley University, Ecoagriculture Partners, the IUCN, the National University (UNA), CATIE and the MAG's Rural Development Program (PDR).



"Leadership for the Development of Ecoagriculture and the Integrated Management of Rural Territories in Central America" was one of the courses designed for rural leaders.

Eighth Andean Regional Forum for Dialogue and the Integration of Agricultural and Rural Education (FRADIEAR)

Within the framework of this forum, the Institute shared its experience in designing and implementing Master's Degree programs in rural development that include the territorial approach.

A community of experts was created in the Andean Region, comprising national technicians involved in sustainable rural development. It will serve as a platform for launching work programs organized with national and international strategic partners, dealing with the development of capabilities for territorial management and for generating and disseminating specialized information.



With support from IICA, instruments for planning and measuring the level of sustainable rural development in the territories are being applied.



Technology and Innovation

Promoting dialogue, policy design and institutional strengthening

▲ *Technology and innovation play a key role in making agriculture competitive in the 21st century, but it is necessary to reverse the tendency to invest little in these areas in our countries.*

To support the design of technological policies and decision making related to the management, funding and organization of research and technological innovation, the updated report on the situation and performance of regional agriculture, from the technological perspective, was made available to different interest groups. This analysis shows not only the progress made in the region in the area of agricultural technology and innovation, but also the gaps between the

subregions of LAC, and between LAC and the rest of the world. The report underscores the importance of technology and innovation in improving the competitiveness of the region, the sustainable use of the natural resources, and poverty reduction.

IICA also facilitated preparation of the chapters on Latin America and the Caribbean for the International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD). Governments and civil society participated in this initiative, which aims to synthesize the principal currents of opinion on how science and technology can help improve the well-being of the LAC population, particularly the poorest, and the design of policies for the transformation of institutions and the management of innovation.

IICA and IFPRI

Within the framework of the ASTI project, these organizations worked together to update information on institutions in the countries engaged in research and technology development, on investments in these areas and on personnel assigned to both. This information will provide indicators on the progress made in the development of national capabilities.

The IICA/IDB Agreement was extended to 2009, thanks to which FONTAGRO was strengthened as a regional research fund. The studies of the socioeconomic, environmental and institutional impact of the findings of three research projects under FONTAGRO were distributed, as was a methodological proposal on the multidimensional assessment of regional research projects. Support was provided for a workshop on the technical monitoring of regional projects being implemented in Ecuador, and the findings of 12 projects of the Fund's second and third call for projects were disseminated.



A delegation from the Regional Agricultural Technology Fund (FONTAGRO) visited IICA Headquarters in February 2007.

Another result was the inclusion of LAC in a global project to strengthen small-scale producers' links with markets, implemented through FORAGRO and in partnership with the GFAR. In addition, a hemispheric project was designed to foster institutional innovations for research and innovation, through cooperation among the countries and regions of the Americas. This will make it possible to address the new issues and paradigms of the current environment for regional and global agriculture from the technological perspective.

Andean Countries Cocoa Export Support Opportunity (ACCESO) program

IICA participated in the Fifth National Meeting of Cocoa Growers, attended by producers from Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. Under the program, the countries of the Andean Region exchanged experiences and the latest information on advances in the strengthening of producer organizations and in cacao-related research and technology transfer.

In **Honduras**, IICA assisted the SAG's Directorate of Agricultural Science and Technology (DICTA) with the execution of the Productive Technology Voucher Project, under which over 90,000 producers received technical assistance, as well as fertilizers and improved seeds.

Project "Information management for agricultural R&D: indicators, success stories, and sensitization strategy for LAC".

In partnership with the GFAR, a document was published to raise awareness of the importance of information management for research and innovation.



Cooperative programs for innovation

Strengthening networks for agricultural research

▲ *IICA promotes the strengthening of the hemispheric system for cooperation between countries in agricultural technology innovation and its linkage to the international research system.*

Within the framework of the cooperative agricultural research and technology innovation programs (PROCI), reciprocal cooperation between countries focused on finding solutions to common priority problems in each region was strengthened.

In Central America, IICA provided SICTA with support in implementing its strategic plan, which involved creating eight communities of practice to promote ongoing dialogue among some 100 officials and researchers in the region, and establishing five communities for priority

products in the region: corn, beans, avocado, tomato and potato. Communities were also set up for plant genetic resources, information management and technology innovation. Worthy of special mention is the formulation, negotiation and approval of two projects with FORAGRO valued at approximately US\$1 million.

Thanks to efforts made through PROCITROPICOS to modernize the NARIs of the Andean Region, their planning and operational capabilities were improved and their technological integration expanded. Regional integration was enhanced with the incorporation into PROCITROPICOS of ECORAE (Ecuador) and IIAP (Peru). Initial steps were taken to create INIAF (Bolivia), in cooperation with PROCISUR, PROCIANDINO and PROCITROPICOS. Lastly, INIAP (Ecuador) acquired improved management systems thanks to an exchange of fruit culture specialists from EMBRAPA made possible by the IICA Office in Ecuador.

The Ninth Meeting of the Board of Directors of PROCINORTE took place in Washington, D.C., hosted by USDA/FAS. The event provided an opportunity to: (a) discuss PROCINORTE's progress in general and evaluate the results achieved by its four task forces; (b) draw up an action plan and make budget allocations to the task forces for 2008; and, (c) re-evaluate current research priorities. IICA pledged to continue



In Bolivia, IICA organized an international activity involving PROCITROPICOS, PROCISUR and PROCIANDINO.

supporting PROCINORTE and, to this end, created the position of Technical Coordinator for the Northern Region.

Together with PROCISUR, an international seminar was held in Montevideo on the technological, social and environmental challenges facing the beef chain, for the countries of the expanded MERCOSUR, the first of several programmed on this topic. Also, the Federation of Rural Associations of the Expanded MERCOSUR (FARM) and IICA signed a general technical cooperation agreement in Buenos Aires that will provide a frame of reference for addressing, at the regional level, technical, industrial and trade-related aspects of the beef chain.

Lastly, the decision was made to continue operation of the Cooperative Program for Innovation in Agricultural Technology for the Andean Region (PROCIANDINO), whose priority areas for the future were defined and assigned as follows: Venezuela: food security and sovereignty; Colombia: bio-energy; Ecuador: agro-biotechnology; Peru: climate change and water; and Bolivia: institutional development.

Agricultural biotechnologies

Development, information and dialogue for joint work

▲ *The Institute encourages the countries to develop and adopt agrobiotechnology, and the corresponding regulatory framework in order to prevent the loss of genetic diversity and avoid damage to health and the environment.*

In support of the countries' efforts to develop biotechnologies and facilitate the exchange of information related to compliance with international agreements, IICA organized a hemispheric technical meeting on liability and redress (Fortaleza, Brazil) that included discussion of aspects of the implementation of Article 27 of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB). This meeting was a necessary preparatory step for the world meeting convened by the CPB Secretariat to take place in Montreal, Canada.

AAFC, USDA and BIO helped fund the convocation of the meeting, thanks to which delegates from 15 countries of the hemisphere were able to participate. IICA prepared a working document on the legal aspects of implementation of Article 27 of the CPB, which served as the basis for meeting discussions. To encourage greater national involvement in the negotiations on Article 27 at the Montreal meeting, the delegates of the countries that met in Fortaleza agreed that each country should hold meetings to discuss that article. These prior discussions laid the groundwork for the Technical Workshop on Liability and Redress, which was held in Mexico and organized by IICA with support from the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

The Institute also participated in the task force on low-level presence of recombinant DNA-plant materials, which met in Washington, D.C., United States, as a follow-up to the meeting held in Chiba, Japan in 2006. IICA also provided technical and logistic support and facilitated the involvement

of Member States in the Seventh Meeting of the Codex Alimentarius, held in Chiba, Japan. Prior to both events, IICA held preparatory meetings to provide countries attending an opportunity to exchange information and to encourage more proactive participation.

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 video conference was held to disseminate updated information on the development and adoption of agricultural biotechnology. It is estimated that the audience totaled two million people in the

Scientific Information System on Biotechnology and Biosafety

This system distributes the Infoagro/ Biotechnology newsletter to 1154 registered users, including representatives of the public, private and academic sectors. The system is available at: www.infoagro.net/biotechnologia

Dominican Republic, and the Andean, Central and Southern Regions.

In the Andean, Caribbean, and Central regions, progress was made in identifying needs in the areas of development and appropriate use of biotechnology and biosafety. As a result, it was possible to determine the countries' current status in this area and to create a basis for sharing experiences and information on progress made in adopting biotechnology and biosafety in the Member States. This is a far-reaching process involving the private and public sectors, academia, and opinion makers.

The needs identification exercise led to the creation of regional or national multisectoral groups for biotechnology and biosafety, which receive advice and support from IICA. Groups have already been created and consolidated for the Andean and Central Regions and for Paraguay and Ecuador; their principal task is to monitor the development of regional and national strategies.

Noteworthy national actions were:

- In the **Dominican Republic**, the country's institutional and regulatory framework

was strengthened in specific relation to agricultural and forest technology, biotechnology and biosafety practices.

- In **Trinidad and Tobago**, the regional strategy for biotechnology and biosafety was implemented, and two projects on capacity building and marketing were designed and submitted to donors.

Tri-National Council of the Northern Region

Its Eighth Annual Meeting, held in Cancun, Mexico, facilitated discussions on future areas of strategic importance to the three countries at the national, regional and institutional levels. Participants from the governments of Canada, Mexico and the United States reconfirmed as priority areas:

- (1) agricultural health and food safety,
- (2) biotechnology/biosafety and,
- (3) strategic partnerships.



Photo: USDA, U.S.A.

Agrobiotechnology and biosafety are strategic items on IICA's agenda.

Agroenergy

Exchanging experiences and assessing alternatives

▲ *The Institute supports the countries in formulating national policies and the corresponding regulatory frameworks, and in promoting the adoption of good practices in the agroenergy industry.*

One of the emerging topics of greatest importance for agricultural development worldwide is agroenergy. Of particular importance are those agroenergy initiatives or projects that place emphasis on social inclusion and will improve the incomes and living conditions of the rural producers and inhabitants.

In response, IICA created the Hemispheric Agroenergy and Biofuel Program, which fosters the exchange of information and scientific expertise in support of the development of State policies on this matter, promotes the sharing of experiences and good practices, and encourages horizontal technical cooperation among the countries of the hemisphere.

First Volume of the Agroenergy Atlas

Compiles and systematizes available information in the countries of the Americas on the production of biomass-based ethanol, including information on state policies, the legal and regulatory framework and tax incentives in effect for promoting the production of ethanol.



In addition, IICA assumed the Secretariat of the Technical Committee of the Inter-American Ethanol Commission, an agency that promotes the production of ethanol from renewable sources in ways which respect and conserve the environment.



IICA promotes the development of national policies in the area of agroenergy and biofuels.

IICA technical staff made presentations at various forums and seminars in order to disseminate information on the potential, challenges and implications of agroenergy and biofuel production for agriculture, food security, and the rural environment. These included the Thirty-first Conference of the Caribbean Basin; the Second International Biofuel Conference (ENERBIO 2007); a seminar to find solutions to energy problems in isolated rural communities in Brazil; a high-level workshop on the expansion of bioenergy opportunities in the Caribbean, in Guyana; and a seminar in Costa Rica entitled “Agriculture for food or for biofuels? A question to be answered.”

In addition, IICA’s Standing Forum on Sustainable Rural Development held a series of forums and workshops for reflection on agroenergy and family agriculture, which culminated in a seminar on agroenergy and development in isolated rural communities, organized with Brazil’s Ministry of Mines and Energy.

Additionally, IICA works with the Latin American Energy Organization (OLADE) to disseminate

information on alternative energy sources, with emphasis on energy produced from biomass. In 2007, this joint effort culminated in the Latin American and Caribbean Seminar on Biofuels, held in El Salvador, which was attended by representatives from over 30 countries. The standards governing biofuel exports to the North American and European markets were explained at that meeting, and the countries presented their experiences in and lessons learned from the production and marketing of agroenergy and biofuels.

Noteworthy national actions include:

- In **Uruguay**, at a seminar organized with the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (FIPA), FIPA Directors discussed ways to strengthen agroenergy and biofuel production, based on the conviction that this will lead to better standards of living for producers and the rural environment.
- In **Argentina**, the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food (SAGPyA) and

several national institutions delved further into the study, analysis, dissemination and discussion of critical aspects, potential for use, restrictions and prospects of agroenergy and biofuels.

- In **Guyana**, the *High-level Seminar on Expanding Bioenergy Opportunities* was held and hosted by the Government of Guyana in collaboration with the IDB, CARICOM, the Technical Center for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), OAS, UNDP and IICA.
- In **Haiti**, the Ministry of Agriculture received information on agroenergy, as well as assistance in implementing renewable energy projects, most notably one to produce biodiesel from *Jatropha curcas*, a plant that also can be used as a living fence.

Finally, a wealth of information on crops with biofuel potential, lessons learned from the production and marketing of same, and good agroenergy practices was disseminated to the countries.

Organic agriculture

The need for institutional frameworks

▲ *The Institute encourages the creation and development of institutions, regulatory frameworks and policies, and the dissemination of information needed to develop organic agriculture and provide small –and medium– scale producers with access to its benefits.*

In 2007, IICA made the decision to do more to promote the development of the institutional frameworks needed to promote organic agriculture and improve the situation of organic farmers.

One of the first steps was to define technical cooperation agendas for organic farming in the Southern, Andean, and Caribbean regions. An important achievement was the presentation of a proposal to develop organic farming in Central America, which includes strengthening

the corresponding institutional framework and expanding the organic farming agenda of the recently adopted Central American Agricultural Policy (PACA).

The First Meeting of the Competent Authorities for Organic Agriculture in Latin America and the Caribbean, attended by representatives of 16 of the 18 countries of LAC with such authorities, was deemed a success. The most important outcome was the creation of the Network of Competent Authorities for Organic Agriculture in Latin America and the Caribbean, which will promote information and knowledge management and horizontal cooperation in organic agriculture in the region. IICA was asked to serve as pro tempore Secretariat and to design the project for creating the network.

The Institute also promoted and helped organize the Fourth Meeting of Competent Authorities for Organic Agriculture in South America, as well as the Fourth Meeting of Competent Authorities for Organic Agriculture in Central America and the Dominican Republic.

Other conferences and forums held in Antigua, Guatemala, Honduras (Zamorano), Paraguay and the Dominican Republic afforded an opportunity for IICA to make presentations, such as: “The context of organic agriculture in Latin America and the Caribbean,” “Organic farming and world markets,” and “Public-private partnerships for promoting organic production.”

Noteworthy among national actions were:

- In **Argentina**, 60 Argentine technical personnel participated in meetings and seminars held by PROCISUR, including the Regional Seminar “Organic agriculture: relevant aspects of certification, and experiences with soil management and nutrition,” held at the National University of Cuyo, and several research projects of interest to the agricultural sector of Argentina.
- In **Haiti**, IICA helped establish an entity responsible for organic culture.



External financing and investment projects

A solid portfolio for Latin America and the Caribbean

▲ *Through the design of projects aimed at meeting the needs of its Member States, the Institute works to create new opportunities in the rural economies of Latin America and the Caribbean.*

As part of its efforts to formulate external financing and investment projects, IICA provided support for negotiations to obtain donations and/or co-financing from Spanish agencies for the formulation and implementation of the following projects in ten countries: (i) **Bolivia**: a) traceability system for ecological farming (cacao, quinoa and coffee), b) support for the development of agricultural insurance; (ii) **Ecuador**: a) broccoli production, b) bovine traceability; (iii) **El Salvador**: a) development of fruit production, b) territorial rural development in Chalatenango and the watershed of Lake Ilopango; (iv) **Guatemala**: a) network of meteorological

stations for horticultural development; (v) **Haiti**: a) development of fruit production, b) greenhouse vegetable production; (vi) **Honduras**: a) animal traceability; (vii) **Nicaragua**: a) development of fruit production, b) development of the Guabo-Campana territory; (viii) **Paraguay**: a) biofuel development, b) promotion of local agrarian development (PRODAL); (ix) **Peru**: a) traceability of asparagus, b) traceability of citrus fruits, c) introduction of food safety assurance systems in the commercial dairy agro-production chain; and (x) **Dominican Republic**: a) support for developing the agricultural insurance market, b) post-harvest handling and packaging for exportable fruits and vegetables.

To promote investments in agriculture and rural development, IICA provided intensive support in the Caribbean Region within the framework of the Jagdeo Initiative. It also supported CARICOM in the preparation of documents for discussions and negotiations, and in the organization of the Agricultural Donor Conference, held in Trinidad and Tobago.

Table 1: Project List

Thematic area	Projects
Strengthening agricultural health and food safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the traceability programs of the Andean and Central regions; (ii) the modernization of quarantine control posts at the peripheral customs posts of the Central American Customs Union (CAC/CORECA); (iii) the strengthening of animal health services in Paraguay (SENACSA) and in Costa Rica (SENASA); (iv) the regional Avian Influenza project in support of the member countries of the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS).
Sustainable rural development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) i) the investment programs in the Ecuadorian provinces of El Río (Rural Pact for Change) and El Oro (Innovating with Inclusive Territorial Development), the lessons of which are going to be applied in several provinces of the Ecuadorian highlands, ii) the Sustainable Development Plan with a Territorial Approach in Northeastern Canelones in Uruguay.
Promoting technology and innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) the agreement with the Common Fund of Commodities (CFC) was revitalized by conducting ex-post reviews of the following projects: (i) The Use of Molecular Biology Techniques in Search of Varieties Resistant to Witches' Broom Disease of Cocoa (Brazil and Ecuador); and (ii) Bridging the Yield Gap in Irrigated Rice in Venezuela and Brazil ii) the Mesoamerican Network of Plant Genetic Resources (REMERFI) with preinvestment funds from the World Bank's Global Environment Facility (GEF); support was provided for formulating a project on the conservation and sustainable use of native and wild plant genetic resources of Mesoamerica, in partnership with the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT).
Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) PROMECAFE project on geographical indications for food exports from Central America. The IDB, CIRAD, and AECL collaborated with this project; the latter and MIF/IDB helped with co-financing. ii) Strengthening of institutional services to improve the competitiveness of fruit growing activities in Central America, submitted to the IDB's Regional Public Goods Program (IRPG) iii) "Building Capacities for Agricultural Education in the Caribbean Sector" of the Caribbean Council of Higher Education in Agriculture (CACHE), with IRPG/IDB approved funds for implementation. iv) advanced profile of the second phase of the project "Andean Countries Cocoa Export Opportunities (ACCESO project)."

Emerging topics

Seeking solutions

Agrotourism

▲ *The IICA Agro-tourism Linkages Centre seeks to strengthen the linkage between agriculture and the tourist industry, facilitating, for example, trade in both fresh and processed foods, and non-food agroindustrial products, with hotels and restaurants.*

IICA/Saint Kitts and Nevis promoted and helped strengthen the agricultural and tourism sectors by assisting them with: (i) the formulation of an agrotourism development strategy; (ii) the creation of economic opportunities during the World Cup Cricket matches; and, (iii) the hosting of activities to commemorate Tourism Month.

In **Barbados**, the second year of the OAS Agri-Tourism Project, under which progress was made in developing a national strategy for agrotourism, was implemented, and two proposals for investment in that area were prepared. Other countries in the Caribbean Region also benefited from this project.

In **Jamaica**, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, the Institute organized the 7th Caribbean Week of Agriculture, the theme of which was *"Agriculture - Harvesting Wealth through Tourism."* Over 200 participants from several countries took part in workshops on agrotourism, risk management, nutrition and youth involvement in agriculture, and a very successful trade show.



The Minister of Agriculture of Jamaica, Christopher Tufton, took part in the Seventh Caribbean Week of Agriculture, the theme of which was agrotourism.

In **Venezuela**, training was provided on the principles and importance of rural tourism with the Office of the Governor of Portuguesa and the Office of the Mayor of Andrés Eloy Blanco, in the State of Lara.

Climate change and disaster relief

▲ *Together with other strategic partners, IICA promotes reflection on and discussion of climate change and agriculture, and calls attention to the need for public policies intended to prevent and mitigate its effects.*

At the hemispherical level, in order to disseminate the findings of the Climate Change and Rural Development Project, an institutional position

paper on the social impact of climate change on rural territories was written and presented at an international workshop in Montevideo. IICA collaborated with the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research (IAI) in evaluating proposals received for a round of studies on the human dimension of climate change promoted by the IAI.

In Suriname, the activities of the OAS/Pan American Development Foundation (PADF)/IICA Flood Relief Project were intensified to continue bringing relief to communities along the Suriname River. Food production and food security and family nutrition were improved by introducing new varieties and farming techniques.

In Jamaica, two hurricane relief projects were implemented, one funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to assist greenhouse growers and poultry farmers; and another, funded by Chevron through the PADF, to deliver agricultural inputs to affected farmers. These projects were valued at US\$110,300.

Training and educating leaders

Developing human capital

▲ *One of the fundamental areas of competence of the Institute in implementing its strategic priorities is human resource development.*

Based on years of experience in the development of human capital, the Institute continues to strengthen capabilities in the countries through the ongoing exchange of knowledge.

To this end, IICA promoted the Andean Agricultural Sciences Training Program. Under the program, 450 leaders and professionals involved in rural development participated in more than 30 courses intended to improve the performance of actors in the rural milieu. These courses were made possible by a joint effort involving IICA, SIHCA and experts from the Universidad Central de Venezuela and the Universidad de los Andes (Venezuela), the Universidad de Cuenca (Ecuador) and the Universidad Nacional Agraria La Molina (Peru).

Forum of Leaders in Agriculture: Ministers of Agriculture at IICA

The new Minister of Agriculture of Saint Lucia had access to up-to-date information on agriculture and rural life throughout the hemisphere by participating in the Forum for Leaders of Agriculture. Additional priority actions were also agreed that paved the way for modernization and institutional reforms within the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Forestry and Fisheries (MALFF). Other Ministers from the Andean Region honored IICA with their presence in this type of activities during 2007.

Another important result achieved by IICA was the development of the soon to be established North American Consulting School Program, under a partnership with both the Canadian Consulting Agrologists Association (CCAA) and the American Society of Agricultural Consultants (ASAC).

Noteworthy among national actions were:

- In **Colombia**, under the cooperation agreement signed with the province of El Huila, the Institute strengthened 20 rural educational communities through the training of educators, production activities and the reformulation of institutional educational projects.
- In **Uruguay**, four training workshops provided 320 rural teachers and inspectors with new theoretical and practical tools for teaching; in these workshops, the role of rural schools in local development strategies was put into context.
- In **Venezuela**, under the leadership of the Venezuelan Foundation for Rural Education (FUNDAVER) and with the participation of universities, agricultural technical schools, the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, FAO and UNESCO, support was provided for consolidating the National Rural Education Network.

Videoconference “Preparation of professional farmers from the perspective of small- and medium-scale farmers in the Southern Region.”

With a view to making agriculture more competitive, together with the MUCECH and COPORFAM of MERCOSUR, IICA held a videoconference entitled “Preparation of professional farmers from the perspective of small- and medium-scale farmers in the Southern Region.”



The Director General of IICA converses with the Minister of St. Lucia, Ezechiel Joseph, during the Forum for Leaders.

Information for agriculture

Joining the society of knowledge

▲ *One of the cross-cutting areas of IICA's technical cooperation is the management of information, a key instrument within the societies of knowledge.*

IICA, with CTA resources, began implementing the program *“Leaders in Information Management. Strategies, digital libraries and services for agriculture in the Caribbean.”* Thirteen countries in the region benefited from the first course, entitled *“Information strategies for agriculture.”*

Another result was the organization, along with FAO and the *Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática* (INEGI) of Mexico, of the 24th Session of the Working Group on Agricultural Statistics in Latin America and the Caribbean, which took place in Aguascalientes, Mexico.

E-Agriculture

Through its strategic partnership with FAO, IICA continued to work in the area of information technologies and knowledge management. The Institute played a direct active role in the International Forum for Latin America and the Caribbean, held under the E-Agriculture project, an initiative for which the United Nations' World Summit on the Information Society assigned FAO responsibility. The objective of the forum was to harmonize and align strategies and policies related to the new model that E-Agriculture aims to implement.

Other partnerships in the field of information management during 2007 included an effort with Google's Books, Academic and Libraries programs, to make the Institute more visible to Web users. The alliance with the world's leading search engine resulted in an increase of 400 times the

number of users of the Agricultural Information and Documentation Service of the Americas (www.sidalc.net), boosting the number of daily visits to this hemispheric tool to an average of around 20,000 persons.



Observatory experiences: Peru and Bolivia

Two new experiences in this innovative field were implemented: i) The Observatory of Territories of Bolivia, headed by the MDRAYMA and validated by various actors, was consolidated as an information management and dissemination mechanism; and ii) The Peruvian Observatory of Agro-production Chains and Rural Territories, financed by MINAG and executed by IICA, allowed public and private outreach agencies for agricultural and rural development to receive information with added value that facilitates decision-making in the following agro-production chains: hard yellow corn-poultry farming-pig farming, rice-milling, cacao-chocolate, cotton-textiles-clothing, native-fried potatoes, olives-oil, and wheat-milling in the regions of Lambayeque, San Martin, Tumbes and Tacna.

At the national level, in **Venezuela**, information services on dual-purpose livestock were strengthened through the INFOAGROs and Venezuela's Virtual Agricultural Library.

Strategic partnerships

Assuming a commitment to joint action

▲ *Given the challenges of development, IICA has assumed a commitment to join forces and pursue common objectives with other international cooperation organizations.*

During 2007, the Institute strengthened and expanded its strategic partnership with Spain's central government and developed new alliances with that country's regional governments under a new strategy for working with Spanish development agencies. As a result, during 2007, project profiles were prepared on 20 topics of interest to AECI and MAPA in 10 countries, working closely with local ministries of agriculture. So far, nearly half of the projects have been submitted. This initiative has generated results institution-wide, focusing the project development process on the explicit needs of our member countries and fostering tangible cooperation from strategic partners.

Also in Spain, MOUs were signed with IRTA, a leading agricultural research and technology institution, and the ARCA Consortium, a private company specializing in the type of aid provided by Europe. These agreements will allow IICA to build relations with technical agencies in Spain and the European Union (EU).

Technical Cooperation in Mexico

A new general technical cooperation agreement was signed with the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food (SAGARPA) covering the period 2007-2012. The agreement includes implementation of various projects aimed at preventing, controlling and eradicating exotic pests and diseases, and operation of the National Information System for Sustainable Rural Development (PSNIDRUS) program.



Ambassadors and representatives of the Member States participated in the celebration of IICA's 65th anniversary, held at OAS Headquarters in Washington, D.C.

IICA strengthened existing initiatives and advanced new ones to promote rural prosperity, food security and sustainable development throughout the hemisphere. Numerous agencies in Washington, D.C. were made aware of our technical work through various conferences and forums on the themes of regional integration, hemispheric trade and the importance of agriculture and agricultural and livestock health.

Other noteworthy results are:

- The second annual “IICA Day at the OAS,” whose theme was “Realizing the Inter-American Dream of 1942,” culminated in an **OAS** Permanent Council resolution recognizing IICA’s contribution to agriculture and rural development in the Americas.
- **ENESA**, the public insurance agency of Spain, and the **MAPFRE** Foundation, which represents Spanish private insurance companies with interests in Latin America, worked closely with IICA on project proposals.
- An activity to exchange information on the status of the WTO Doha round of trade negotiations was hosted with **Caribbean Central American Action (CCAA)** and the **Inter-American Council (IAC)**.
- In the Caribbean, the signing of a memorandum of understanding between **CARICOM** and the **Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)** to advance the Caribbean Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency and Bio-energy Action Program.



- In the **United States**, the signing of a MoU between IICA and CROPLIFE, aimed at promoting the transfer of technology that will benefit farmers in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Strategic partnerships in Nicaragua

An example of the networking capabilities of IICA is visible in countries like Nicaragua, where partnerships with the governments of Finland, United States, Austria, Japan (JICA), and Switzerland (SDC) enabled various inter-institutional commissions to take action to:

- i) implement PRORURAL, which contributed to the institutional strengthening of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests (MAGFOR) and the Institute of Rural Development;*
- ii) formulate policies to promote the production and use of biofuels, livestock raising and organic farming;*
- iii) enhance technical capabilities in the institutional structure for agricultural health and food safety;*
- iv) strengthen the Seeds Commission; and*
- v) launch the Network of Producers of Improved Bean Seeds in Boaco, Cárdenas, and Cuatro Santos in Chinandega.*

IICA and CATIE

Working together

▲ *The IICA-CATIE partnership is unique; they share not only a history, but also the vision of a modern, equitable, sustainable and competitive agriculture for their member countries.*

The Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) is an inter-governmental scientific and educational institution with which we have worked very closely.

At the hemispheric level, as part of its efforts to strengthen capabilities in the management of agroenvironmental information, the Institute held the Course/Workshop on the Management of Agricultural Libraries, in which professionals from five countries of Latin America received training. In Haiti, 18 people received training in a seminar on agricultural documentation centers.

Along with CATIE and IUFRO, IICA provided managers of forestry information from Latin

America with training on RSS files, relations with the Global Forest Information Center (GFIS) and the use of metadata and tools for information sharing.

In the area of national information networks, IICA and CATIE focused their efforts on working with the Mexican Network of Agricultural Libraries (REMBA) to prepare the Mexican Agricultural Catalogue, and with the National Agricultural Information Network (REDNIA) of Costa Rica to develop that country's digital library. Support was provided to strengthen the Center for Bibliographic Information Resources on Agroforestry with Cacao, with funding from ICRAF/CATIE. With sponsorship from the Equilibrium Fund, an international NGO working since 2001 to recover lost knowledge regarding *Brosimum alicastrum* in Central America, and in collaboration with the Orton Library, an information center on this multi-purpose tree was created to facilitate research on the species.

In Central America, IICA and CATIE collaborated with the Secretariat of the Central American Integration System (SICA) in drawing up a regional environmental strategy (ERA), taking part in its Inter-agency Consultative Council.

Actions were coordinated with SICTA to promote actions of the Mesoamerican Plant Genetic Resources Network (REMERFI), with which IICA and CATIE held a course on the management of information on plant genetic resources, attended by staff from national research institutes.

Noteworthy are the following results:

- In **Belize**, the project “Improving the Cacao Industry in Central America” was presented to the National Cocoa Forum.

Orton Memorial Library

The library recorded 14,590 on-site visitors, answered more than 166,433 on-line queries and increased its catalogue of monographs to 83,619 bibliographic items, of which 3,600 are full text documents. Thanks to a generous donation from Harvard University, the library was able to acquire document-digitization technology, increased bandwidth to improve access to the library’s resources via Internet and expanded the wireless network throughout the library.

- In **Nicaragua**, farmers’ capabilities were improved thanks to aforementioned course on leadership for the development of eco-agriculture (in Central America) and another on agroecology and biotechnology.
- In **Mexico**, CATIE and IICA provided technical cooperation to cacao growers affected by floods in the states of Chiapas and Tabasco. The partnership between the two organizations was strengthened with the implementation of the project “Integrated and Sustainable Social Development (PRODESIS),” being executed with funding from the European Union and the government of the state of Chiapas, Mexico.
- In **Costa Rica**, in cooperation with CATIE, OIRSA, the National Science and Technology Council of Costa Rica and UNU-BIOLAC, IICA held a course on risk analysis and management vis-à-vis living modified organisms (LMOs) for 30 participants from Mexico, Belize, Central America, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Colombia, Peru and Bolivia.

Acronyms

AAFC	Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	CARICOM	Caribbean Community
ACCESO	Andean Countries Cocoa Export Support Opportunity Program	CAS	Southern Agricultural Council
AECI	Spanish International Cooperation Agency	CATIE	Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Center
AHFS	Agricultural Health and Food Safety	CCAA	Canadian Consulting Agrologists Association
AI	Avian Influenza	CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
APHIS	Animal and Plant Health Protection and Inspection Service (USDA)	CENPROMYPE	Center for the Promotion of Micro-Small-and Medium-sized Businesses in Central America
ARC	Audit Review Committee	CFC	Common Fund for Commodities
BIO	Biotechnology Industry Organization	CHBA	Caribbean Herbal Business Association
BSE	Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy	CIRAD	International Center for Cooperation in Agricultural Research for Development (France)
CABA	Caribbean Agribusiness Association	CNRWP	Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers
CABEI	Central American Bank for Economic Integration	COPORFAM	Office for the Coordination of Family Producers' Organizations (MERCOSUR)
CAC	Central American Agricultural Council	COSAVE	Plant Protection Committee for the Southern Area
CACHE	Caribbean Council for Higher Education in Agriculture	CPB	Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
CAF	Andean Development Corporation	CTA	Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation
CAFTA	United States and Central America Free Trade Agreement	CYTED	Ibero-American Program of Science and Technology for Development
CAFY	Caribbean Agricultural Forum for Youth	EC	Executive Committee (IICA)
CAN	Andean Community	ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
CANROP	Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers		
CARDI	Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute		

ECORAE	Institute for Eco-development in the Amazon Region (Ecuador)	GFIS	Global Forest Information Service
EMBRAPA	Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation	GIADR	Inter-Agency Group for Rural Development
ENESA	State Agricultural Insurance Institute (Spain)	GMP	Good Manufacturing Practices
EU	European Union	HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points
EVIDA	Interactive Virtual Learning Environment for Agriculture (IICA)	HBBP	Hemispheric Biotechnology and Biosafety Program
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization (United Nations)	HPAI	Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza
FAO-RLC	FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean	IAASTD	International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development
FAS	Foreign Agricultural Service (USDA)	IABA	Inter-American Board of Agriculture
FECAEXCA	Central American Federation of Exporters	IAI	Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research
FEDAVICAC	Federation of Poultry Farmers of Central America and the Caribbean	ICONE	Institute for Studies on Trade and Trade Negotiations
FONTAGRO	Regional Fund for Agricultural Technology	ICRAF	World Agroforestry Centre
FORAGRO	Regional Forum on Agricultural Research and Technology Development	ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
FRADIEAR	Andean Regional Forum for Dialogue and the Integration of Agricultural and Rural Education	ICTSD	International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development
FTA	Free trade agreement	IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices	IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
GDLN	Global Development Learning Network	IFAP	International Federation of Agricultural Producers
GEF	Global Environment Facility	IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
GFAR	Global Forum on Agricultural Research	IIAP	Research Institute of the Peruvian Amazon Region
		IICA	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture

ILO	International Labour Organization	MIOA	Market Information Organization of the Americas
ILRI	International Livestock Research Institute	MOA	Ministry of Agriculture (Dominica)
IMARK	Information Management Resource Kit	MTP	Medium-Term Plan (IICA)
INFOTEC	Scientific and Technological Information System	MUCECH	United Peasant and Ethnic People's Movement (Chile)
INIAF	National Agricultural and Forestry Innovation Institute (Bolivia)	NARI	National Agricultural Research Institute
INIAP	National Autonomous Agricultural Research Institute (Ecuador)	NBII	National Biological Information Infrastructure
INIFAP	National Forestry, Agriculture and Livestock Research Institute	NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
INR	Institutional Net Rate (IICA)	OAS	Organization of American States
IRTA	Agricultural Research and Technology Institute (Spain)	OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
IUFRO	International Union of Forest Research Organizations	OECS	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
JSWG	Joint Summit Working Group	OIE	World Organization for Animal Health
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean	OIRSA	International Regional Organization for Plant and Animal Health
LMO	Living Modified Organism	PACA	Central American Common Agricultural Policy
MAG FRUTALES	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock –National Fruit Program of El Salvador	PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
MAG	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Paraguay)	PCCMA	Central American Plant and Animal Breeding Cooperative Program
MAPA	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (Spain)	PCR	Polymerase Chain Reaction (Analysis)
MDRAyMA	Ministry of Rural and Agricultural Development and the Environment (Bolivia)	PROCI	Cooperative Agricultural Research and Technology Transfer Program
MERCOSUR	Southern Common Market	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	SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
PROCISUR	Cooperative Program for the Development of Agricultural Technology in the Southern Cone	SEPSA	Agricultural Sector Planning Secretariat (Costa Rica)
PROCITROPICOS	Cooperative Program on Research and Technology Transfer for the South American Tropics	SICTA	Central American System for Agricultural Technology Integration
PRODERT	Project for Sustainable Rural Development in Ecologically Fragile Areas of the Trifinio Region (El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras)	SIDALC	Agricultural Information and Documentation System for the Americas
PROMECAFE	Regional Cooperative Program for the Technological Development and Modernization of Coffee Cultivation	SIHCA	Hemispheric Training System for Agricultural Development
PVS	Performance, Vision, Strategy	SIRG	Summit Implementation Review Group
REAF	Specialized Meeting on Family Agriculture	SPS Agreement	Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (WTO)
RedPA	Agricultural Policy Coordination Network of the Southern Region	SPS Committee	Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures Committee (WTO)
RED-SICTA	Agricultural Innovation Network Project SICTA	STDF	Standards and Trade Development Facility
RENAMUR	National Rural Women's Network (Mexico)	UAC	Central American Customs Union
RUTA	Regional Unit for Technical Assistance	UCA	José Simeón Cañas Central American University (El Salvador)
		UNA	National University of Asunción
		USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
		WTO	World Trade Organization