



IICA-CANADA

Action Plan 1997 - Progress Report

December 1997

ACRONYMS

AAFC	<i>Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada</i>
AIC	<i>Agricultural Institute of Canada</i>
ATN	<i>Agri-food Trade Network</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>
C/LAA	<i>Caribbean/Latin America Action</i>
CLAFE	<i>Fostering Canadian and Latin America Farmers Exchanges</i>
CLAHO	<i>Expanding Technical Collaboration Among Canadian and LAC National Agricultural Health Organizations</i>
CLASAS	<i>Canadian and Latin America and Caribbean Studies in Agricultural Sciences</i>
COSAVE	<i>Southern Cone Regional Plant Protection Organization</i>
DFAIT	<i>Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade</i>
FAO	<i>United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization</i>
HACCP	<i>Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point</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>
INTA	<i>National Institute for Agricultural Technology (Argentina)</i>
LAC	<i>Latin America and the Caribbean</i>
MERCOSUR	<i>Southern Common Market</i>
NAFTA	<i>North American Free Trade Agreement</i>
NAPPO	<i>North American Plant Protection Organization</i>
NFU	<i>National Farmers Union</i>
NGOs	<i>Non-Governmental Organizations</i>
NR	<i>Northern Region</i>
OCIA	<i>Organic Crop Improvement Association</i>
OIE	<i>Office Internationale des Épizooties</i>
OPIS	<i>Organic Producers Information System</i>
PAHO	<i>Pan-American Health Organization</i>
PANAFTOSA	<i>Pan-American Centre for Foot and Mouth Disease</i>
PARTNERS	<i>Partners in Rural Development</i>
RPPO	<i>Regional Plant Protection Organization</i>
SENASA	<i>National Animal Health Services (Argentina)</i>
SPS	<i>Sanitary and Phytosanitary</i>
TCA	<i>Technical Cooperation Agency</i>
UPA	<i>Union des Producteurs Agricoles</i>
USDA	<i>US Department of Agriculture</i>
WTO	<i>World Trade Organization</i>
WVA	<i>World Veterinary Association</i>



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1 INTRODUCTION

1997 was one of the most challenging years for IICA-Canada, since this Office has been established in Canada, in 1983.

On October 3rd, 1996, the Canadian government informed IICA that Canada would withdraw from the Institute after December 31st, 1998, and that Canada would terminate its membership in IICA and payment of quota assessments at that time. This decision was based upon strict budgetary restraints following a Program Review. In the interim, Canada would remain a full member and fulfill its membership responsibilities.

This shocking news, however, did not hamper IICA's actions in Canada. A fundamental decision made by IICA Headquarters was that the strategic planning process initiated at the Canadian Office of IICA, in 1996, should not be halted in its implementation. Subsequent stages were underway aimed at progressively expanding the notion of the importance of IICA as a partner for implementing Canadian international agri-food activities in Latin America and the Caribbean.

To meet this unexpected challenge of reassuring Canada of its importance to IICA, and to the whole inter-American agricultural system, IICA-Canada has been modifying its activities and business relations over the past two years. The emphasis for the Office has been to create innovative ventures and to confront the practicalities of maintaining the momentum of purposeful change. The resulting "IICA in Canada: Action Plan for 1997" was a clear example of this new approach.

The objective of the present document is to present a brief description of the initiatives implemented in 1997 and the importance of the continuation of this partnership approach beyond 1998. IICA-Canada concentrated its efforts on the following target areas where the complementarity between Canadian interests and IICA strengths were the highest.

- Networks and strategic alliances
- Agricultural trade and agri-business
- Agricultural health
- Science and technology development

2 INITIATIVES IMPLEMENTED IN 1997

2.1. Networks and Strategic Alliances

This initiative embraces three projects:

- i. Canadian and LAC Studies in Agricultural Sciences (CLASAS), an internship program to Canadians scholars
- ii. Fostering Canadian and Latin American Farmers Exchanges (CLAFE)
- iii. Development of Strategic Alliances

2.1.1 Canadian and LAC Studies in Agricultural Sciences (CLASAS)

In 1996/1997, IICA-Canada experienced a highly positive acceptance of its proposal included in the CLASAS project. From over thirty five proposals presented by Canadian professionals, eleven Canadian scholars were selected and approved to follow their research studies in LAC universities, or agricultural research centres.

The names of the selected candidates, their proposed fields of study and the locations where they are pursuing their studies are the following:

1st semester of 1997

- a. **Dr. En-Min Zhou, MD, PhD.** Research scientist from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. Project title: "Transferring technologies for combined competitive ELISA tests for Bluetongue and Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease". Host country and institutions: Argentina, Central Laboratory, National Animal Health Services (SENASA), INTA and IICA-Argentina.
- b. **Mr. Gustavo Moran, Msc,** University of York, Faculty of Environmental Studies, Centre for Applied Sustainability. Project title: "Expanding the knowledge and participatory management style of the Canadian model forest to the Southern Cone". Host country and institutions: Chile (Universidad de Concepcion and Centro Comunal Ecologico de Los Angeles), Uruguay (Universidad Catolica) and IICA-Chile and IICA-Uruguay.
- c. **Ms. Svenja Belaoussoff,** PhD student at the University of Guelph, Ontario College of Agriculture, Dept. of Environmental Biology. Project title: "Investigation on the impact of agricultural and economic development in rural areas of Atlantic Nicaragua". Host country and institutions: Nicaragua (Centro de Investigaciones y Documentacion de la Costa Atlantica) and IICA-Nicaragua.

2nd semester of 1997

- d. **Dr. Ann Wieggers, DVM, Ph.D.,** Quality Manager for the laboratories of the Animal and Plant Health Directorate (APHD) of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. Proposal title: "Consultative Support in the Implementation of a Laboratory Quality Assurance Program in a Government Animal or Plant Health Laboratory using ISO 25". Host country and institutions: Argentina, Central laboratory, National Animal Health Services (SENASA), INTA, private sector and IICA-Argentina.
- e. **Robert Lazariuk,** Trade Policy Analyst, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. Project title: "The Canada-Brazil Agri-Food Market Access Facilitation Study". Host country and institutions: Brazil, public and private sectors, and IICA-Brazil.
- f. **Dr. Andre Palasz, MS, Ph.D.,** Research Scientist, Western College of Veterinary Medicine, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Project title: "In-vitro bovine production without products of biological origin: Cryopreservation of oocysts and embryos". Host country and institutions: Argentina, University of Cordoba, private sector, and IICA-Argentina.

- g. **Dr. Peter G. Kevan**, Professor, Department of Environmental Biology University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario. Project title: "Conservation and Management of Domesticated and Wild Pollinators of Crops for Sustainable Agricultural Development". Host country and institutions: Mexico, *Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico (Instituto de Biologia) Universidad Autonoma de Yucatan, and Universidad de Guadalajara*, IICA-Mexico.
- h. **Dr. Chantal Matar**, PhD. Chercheur, École de Nutrition, Centre de recherche sur les aliments, Chaire en biotechnologie alimentaire, Université de Moncton Project title: "Implication de l'activité protéolytique de *Lactobacillus helveticus* dans la stimulation du système immunitaire et la régression des tumeurs" Host country and institution: Argentina; Facultad de Bioquímica y Farmacia, Universidad Nacional de Tucuman, Argentina, *Instituto de Microbiología, Centro de Referencia para Lactobacilos (CERELA)*, and IICA-Argentina.
- i. **Mr. Gustavo Moran**, Master in Environmental Studies at the University of York, Faculty of Environmental Studies, Centre for Applied Sustainability. Proposal title: "Expanding the knowledge and participatory management style of the Canadian forestry sustainable practices to the Southern Cone". Host countries and institutions: Chile (Facultad Forestal, Universidad de Concepcion and Centro Comunal Ecologico de Los Angeles), Uruguay (Mesa de la Madera y Centro Interdisciplinario de Estudios sobre el Desarrollo) and IICA-Chile and IICA-Uruguay.
- j. **Mr. Daniel Gagné**, Ph.D. student, faculté de foresterie, département d'agroforesterie, Université Laval. Project title: "La pédofaune endogène et épigène; caractérisation et interactions avec la biomasse microbienne". Host country and institutions: Peru; *Universidad Nacional Agraria de la Selva*, Tingo Maria, and IICA-Peru.
- k. **Mr. Andrew A. Millward**, MSc Student, Department of Geography, University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario. Project title: "Analysis of Soil Erosion Potential in a Caribbean Watershed Under Agricultural Production". Host country and institutions: *Instituto Manantlan de Ecología y Conservación de la Biodiversidad*, Mexico, and IICA-Mexico.

The initial results of the 1997 scholarship program have been highly commendable, opening a respectable window of opportunity to Canadian scholars and consultants and the Canadian private and public sectors in LAC countries. The following initiatives are being negotiated as a result of the findings of the three initial participants of the program:

- Project on information and communication technologies was submitted to CIDA Technology Transfer Fund. This initiative was developed in partnership with Canadian and Chilean/Uruguayan Universities, IDRC International Model Forest Secretariat, Ontario Eastern Model Forest Secretariat, NGO and the private sector..
- Development of strategic alliances between AAFC, CFIA and SENASA, of Argentina, leading to training of SENASA personnel in CFIA Foreign Animal Disease Laboratory.
- Development of strategic alliances between the University of Guelph and Centro de Investigaciones y Documentación de la Costa Atlantica, of Nicaragua.

Given the excellent results already obtained in 1997, and considering the quality of the proposals and of the candidates selected, IICA-Canada expects to extend the internship program through 1998/99, therefore enabling Canadian agriculture scientists to participate in this outstanding opportunity of sharing experiences with colleagues in the Americas.

2.1.2 Fostering Canadian and Latin American Farmers Exchange (CLAFE)

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". CLAFE initiative is being carried out in collaboration with CFA, NFU and the UPA, from the province of Quebec. Two NGO's and one agriculture college also participate in the project: Partners for Rural Development, Horizons of Friendship, along with the CEGEP Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu. This initiative is an important part of the "farmer to farmer" cooperation philosophy discussed with these organizations.

From over thirty proposals from Canadian farmers associations from the provinces of Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec, IICA-Canada selected **sixteen Canadians farmers** who are receiving the benefits of the exchange program for 1997, in coordination with IICA offices in the Americas. The following is a list of the selected Canadian organizations, farmers destinations, and the purpose of their visits in Latin American and Caribbean countries:

- a. **Four young farmers from Cégep Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Quebec:** during the summer of 1997, four young farmers following a course in farm management were given the chance to spend three months in Costa Rica to work in local colleges, universities and private sector enterprises. Agreements and partnerships between the Cegep and Costa Rica *Escuela de Ganaderia* (agriculture school) are the first results obtained from this very positive experience. IICA's Training Specialized Service and Area of Sustainable Development assured the Cegep and IICA-Canada of their continuous support in this endeavor.
- b. **Three Ontario producers, associated with the North Cumberland Federation of Agriculture and Horizons of Friendship,** will visit the Democratic Farmers' Alliance of El Salvador for a period of two weeks in February 1998. Their objective is to share experiences and strategies around land use, agricultural production approaches and marketing challenges in an era of globalization.
- c. **Four Quebec producers from UPA,** will share their experiences in farmers organizations and management syndicates in Bolivia; in group commercialization and collective machinery use in Chile; cooperative organization in El Salvador; and in use of multimedia for promotion of sheep products in Uruguay. These farmers will travel in January and February for periods of two to three weeks.
- d. **Five Saskatchewan producers** will spend three weeks in January and February 1998 in El Salvador and Mexico. Two young farmers from NFU will be hosted by the Mexican Autonomous Regional Farmers Organizations National Union, and will have the opportunity to get familiar with trade issues, especially in developing two-way marketing ties between Mexican and Canadian farmers. Three farmers, associated with PARTNERS will share their expertise in gender issues, in sustainable production and in institutional organization in El Salvador.

Following our criteria of exposing Canadians to different environments in the Americas, the selected candidates are going to develop their research work in the Southern, Andean, and Central Regions. It is highly expected that they will contribute to strengthening the relationship between Canadian and Latin American farmers associations, with intensive IICA's participation.

Given also the very high interest demonstrated by both Canadian farmers' associations and individual farmers, we expect to extend the farmers exchange program through 1998/99, therefore enabling Canadian farmers to participate in this outstanding opportunity of sharing experiences with fellow farmers in the Americas.

2.1.3 Strategic Alliances

In 1997, **sixteen** strategic alliances were developed by IICA-Canada:

- a. **CCAA and IICA:** The Canadian Consulting Agrologists Association is a national Canadian association of professional agricultural consultants who provide products and services to agriculture and agribusiness, both nationally and internationally. IICA-Canada and CCAA agreed to cooperate mutually in areas of common interest and priorities, including identification, planning and execution of projects in Canada and LAC countries.
- b. **AIC and IICA:** AIC is a federation of provincial Institutes of Professional Agrologists and Agricultural Scientific Societies from across Canada. IICA-Canada and AIC agreed to cooperate mutually in areas of common interest and priorities, including identification, planning and execution of projects in LAC countries.
- c. **PARTNERS and IICA:** PARTNERS, formerly the Canadian Hunger Foundation, is a Canadian international voluntary organization that works in partnership with LAC NGO's to address poverty at the village level in developing countries. IICA-Canada, PARTNERS and some Canadian farmers are implementing a joint initiative with farmers in El Salvador.
- d. **Horizons of Friendship and IICA:** Horizons of Friendship is a NGO based in Cobourg, Ontario, which supports programs in health, education, housing, skill training, and agricultural production. IICA-Canada, Horizons of Friendship and Canadian farmers will be working on joint initiatives with farmers' organizations in El Salvador.
- e. **NFU and IICA:** The National Farmers Union represent farmers nation-wide. It works actively in cooperation projects with farmers' associations of the developing world and in stimulating agricultural trade between Canada and these countries. IICA is supporting NFU in its program aimed at giving young Canadian farmers an exposure to international cooperation.
- f. **CFA and IICA:** CFA is an umbrella organization representing eighteen provincial farmers' federations and national producers' associations and marketing agencies. IICA coordinates its farmers exchange program through CFA.
- g. **UPA and IICA:** The *Union des Producteurs Agricole* is Quebec's farmers' organization representing the totality of the province's 35.000 agricultural producers. Through its International Development Cooperation Division, NFU and IICA coordinate the farmers exchange program for the province.

- h. **University of Guelph, Centro de Investigaciones y Documentación de la Costa Atlantica (Nicaragua) and IICA:** In 1997, as a result of a study carried out by a Canadian participant in the 1996/97 IICA-Canada Internship Program, a strategic alliance between these three organizations has led to the development of studies related to the impact of agricultural and economic development in rural regions of Atlantic Nicaragua.
- i. **CFIA, SENASA and IICA:** In 1997, IICA-Canada, AAFC and SENASA (Argentina) developed a strategic alliance which led to training of SENASA staff in CFIA Foreign Animal Disease Laboratory, in Winnipeg, Manitoba; scientific exchanges in laboratory diagnosis of viral animal diseases and technology transfer in laboratory quality assurance programs.
- j. **CCAC and IICA:** the strategic alliance between the Canadian Council for Animal Care, an autonomous non-profit Canadian organization, and IICA-Canada led to the development of an initiative for the development of inter-American standards for the care and use of animals in science and technology. Also, the translation into Spanish of CCAC's manual of procedures for the use and care of experimental animals.
- k. **York University, Universidad Catolica (Uruguay) and IICA:** As a result of a study carried out in Uruguay by a Canadian participant in the 1996/97 CLASAS Program, a strategic alliance between these three organizations was made to develop a project on information and communication technology on forest models.
- l. **St.- Jean-sur-Richelieu Agriculture School, Escuela Centro Americana de Ganaderia (Costa Rica) and IICA:** In 1997, as a result of a study carried out by four Canadian young farmers participants in the 1997 CLAFE Program, a strategic alliance between these three organizations was formed. An agreement was approved, aimed at training LAC young farmers in Canada and vice-versa.
- m. **York University, Universidad de Concepción (Chile) and IICA:** As a result of a study carried out in Chile by a Canadian participant in the 1997 CLASAS Program, a strategic alliance between these three organizations aimed at developing a project on information and communication technology on forest models was implemented.
- n. **University of Montreal, Universidad de Buenos Aires (Argentina), Universidade Fluminense (Brazil) and IICA:** The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Montreal has a long tradition of cooperation work with the Francophonie, mostly in Africa. The alliance between IICA and the Faculty allows them to develop joint actions with Argentinean and Brazilian veterinary colleges.
- o. **Université Laval, Universidad Nacional Agraria de la Selva (Peru) and IICA:** The Faculty of Agriculture and Food of Laval University is very active in international cooperation, including many Latin-American countries. IICA's Internship Program in Agricultural Sciences provides the opportunity to broaden their perspectives in Latin America and to train Masters and Doctorate students in tropical agriculture and agro-forestry, a new area currently being developed in the Faculty.
- p. **Ministry of International Relations** of the province of Quebec and **IICA:** MRI strongly supported IICA-Canada actions in both CLAFE and CLASAS projects.

2.1 Agricultural Trade and Agri-Business

2.1.1 Promotion of Canadian Agricultural Products and Services

This initiative is an evolution of the 1996 priority action "Trading Information Network for Canada, Latin America and the Caribbean" (TINCLAC). It adds the highly strategic and sensitive initiative of promoting Canadian agricultural exports to LAC to the development and enhancement of a Canadian and LAC information network.

The demand within Canada for information, contacts, and networks in the Americas is increasing dramatically. The knowledge base in existence within the IICA network in key countries of the Americas, and the new initiatives being undertaken to foster regional integration, provide an important source of expertise to Canadians on the Americas. The on-going on-line initiatives on the Internet involving thousands of public and private sector LAC organizations provide a method of access and insight into the Americas markets that IICA-Canada aims to foster and to better organize for Canadians and interested people in the Americas.

In 1997, IICA-Canada focused on building a broader understanding of Canadian interests and priorities, and matching them to opportunities within LAC. This initiative had the following objectives:

- Creation of a highly visible, trilingual, IICA-Canada Internet Site (<http://www.iicacan.org>), which should be earmarked as an alternative gateway to agriculture and agribusiness in the Americas
- Promotion of Canadian agricultural products and services to LAC.

The following operating strategy was followed:

i. Meetings with Canadian agribusiness associations and organizations.

Consultations were undertaken in Ontario and Quebec, as well as with organizations from Saskatchewan and Alberta. The focus of them were to clearly understand the priorities of some key organizations in Canada, such as CCAA, AIC, PARTNERS, CFA and UPA, to identify areas of mutual interest and to establish a specific set of activities to be undertaken with the Canadian private sector. The criteria for the selection was based on the organization's interest in LAC, complementarity between IICA and LAC priorities and Canadian interests, and the commitment of the Canadian partner to the partnership.

In 1997, three strategic agreements between IICA and Canadian organizations were signed:

- a. CCAA
- b. University of Montreal
- c. PARTNERS

ii. Enhancing IICA-Canada's Internet Site (<http://www.iicacan.org>)

IICA-Canada's Internet site was an excellent initiative to increase the visibility of IICA in Canada, since it has become more specialized in agribusiness and trade, commodity futures and options and agriculture networks in the Americas. It also provides information on the Institute in general and on IICA-Canada in particular. Its links with the Canadian private and public sectors and with similar networks in the Americas, are greatly contributing to increase the flow of information between IICA and Canadian /LAC agribusinesses and to facilitate trade.

iii. Testing of the ability to mimic IICA-Canada's Internet site to other IICA offices

IICA-Canada's Internet Site is recognized by many Canadian organizations, such as Industry Canada, AAFC, AIC, CCFA, PARTNERS, and also by LAC institutions, as one of the most comprehensive sites available on agricultural matters to date. It provides information about IICA in Canada and a database of specialized links from Canada and the Americas. IICA-Canada's Internet Site also provides an on-line consultant registration form to Canadians interested in working in LAC Countries. In 1997, IICA-Canada proposed to provide technical assistance to other IICA Offices interested in implementing their own Web Site.

2.3 Agricultural Health

2.3.1 Expanding Technical Collaboration Among Canadian and Latin-American National Agricultural Health Organizations (CLAHO)

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 for animal inspection, in order to maintain and gain new markets.

In 1997, IICA developed several actions with the Canadian private and public sectors in agricultural health, aiming at facilitating the trade of animals and animal products between Canada and LAC countries by strengthening technical cooperation activities between the official veterinary services of Canada and LAC countries:

- Technology transfer for animal disease laboratory tests (Bluetongue in Argentina), through IICA's Internship program. Development of a proposal to be implemented in 1998 regarding test harmonization within MERCOSUR, in collaboration with CFIA and PANAFTOSA, Brazil.
- Development of collaborative activities between CFIA and the Caribbean in the area of animal health risk assessment.
- Organization of a visit by SENASA (Argentina) officials to CFIA: exchange of information on animal disease control programs carried out in Canada and Argentina. Elaboration of the basis for a cooperation program between SENASA, CFIA and Canadian veterinary colleges.

- Organization of a visit of SENASA and Buenos Aires University (UBA) officials. Visit of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Montreal (FMV) and of AAFC Food Research and Development Center. Agreement signed between UBA and FMV for the training of SENASA personnel at the diploma, MSc and PhD levels.
- Collaboration given to the FMV in developing their international actions in Latin America and the Caribbean. Memorandum of Understanding signed between IICA and the FMV.
- Collaboration with CCAC and the Veterinary colleges of the University of Chile and the University of San Salvador (Argentina) in writing a proposal for the establishment of inter-American standards for the care and use of animals in science and technology. Collaboration with CCAC, SENASA and the University of San Salvador in establishing animal welfare regulations in Argentina. Translation to Spanish of CCAC's Manual of procedures for the care and use of experimental animals.

2.4 Science and Technology Development

2.4.1 Networking Canada and LAC Biotechnology Research Centres and Industries - (BIOCLAC)

In 1997, IICA sponsored the participation of a CIB scientist in an international symposium held at the University of Michigan. CIB is an umbrella organization representing the interest of the Canadian biotechnology industry.

Jointly with CIB, IICA is in the process of formulation of a project aimed at fostering information exchange between Canadian and LAC biotechnology research centers and industries. The immediate goal is to foster trade opportunities and to stimulate shared research in fields of common interest. In the long term, it also aims to establish strategic alliances between Canadian biotechnology research centres and industries and LAC biotechnology organizations and associations.



MEMORANDUM

Nº RE/CA-456

DATE December 1, 1997

TO: Sr. Edgardo Moscardi, Representante
ACT del IICA en Colombia

FROM: Mario A. Seixas, Representative of IICA in Canada

SUBJECT: ***IICA-CANADA Action Plan for 1997: Progress Report***

1. We are pleased to send for your information a progress report of the implemented IICA-Canada Action Plan for 1997. This progress report highlights IICA's activities which are being implemented in Canada for 1997 and the first quarter of 1998.
2. Concrete results from the implemented action plan for 1997 are the following:
 - i. Network and Strategic Alliances, embracing three initiatives: Graduate Internship Program for Canadians in Agricultural Science (11 Canadian scholars and professionals sent to Latin America, in 1997), Fostering Canadian and Latin American Farmers' Exchange (16 farmers sent to Latin America to work with farmers' organizations), and the development of 15 new strategic alliances between Canadian and Latin American organizations and institutions.
 - ii. Agricultural Trade and Agri-business, through the continuous consultation process involving the Canadian private sector, at the provincial level. As a result, 3 new agreements were signed in 1997 and the creation of a trilingual, highly visible, IICA-Canada Internet site (<http://www.iicacan.org>).
 - iii. Expanding technical collaboration among Canadian and Latin American national agricultural health organizations
 - iv. Science and technology development, in the area of agricultural biotechnology.
3. All initiatives have been financed by IICA and respond to a great extent to Canada's request of adding value to its contribution to the Institute.
4. Finally, we would like to express our gratitude for the continuous guidance and support which we are receiving from IICA Directorate and Representatives which assists us in our efforts to interpret Canadian interest and priorities and to build a new relationship based on real partnership.
5. We avail ourselves of this opportunity to assure you of our highest esteem and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

