



Our
Commitment
Results



Harvesting results



Annual Report
2015



2015 Annual Report of IICA

Agriculture, opportunity for development in the Americas

March 2016

Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), 2016.



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Message from the Director General

The countries of the Americas have assumed the commitment of growing better and producing more. We are convinced that the Americas are ideally placed to feed the world, and should take advantage of the opportunity to do so. If such efforts are to be successful, the people responsible for agriculture in each country need to understand the importance of finding sustainable ways to increase productivity and reduce food losses, and thus meet the dietary needs of all the continent's inhabitants.

In 2015, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), as the specialized agency for agriculture of the Inter-American System, implemented a series of actions to support its member countries' efforts to achieve agricultural development and rural well-being that are detailed in this annual report.

All the work we did last year enabled us to consolidate the Institute's new technical cooperation model, designed to deliver impactful results to the countries and, in particular, to bring about the transformations needed to achieve productive, sustainable and inclusive agriculture.

We realize that tackling the major challenges facing the agricultural and rural sectors, which include increasing productivity, adapting agriculture to climate change, reducing poverty and inequality, promoting plant and animal health protection, and achieving food security, calls for the cooperation of all the national and international stakeholders involved in the sectors concerned.

Hence, the Institute has focused its work on very specific contributions in its member countries, by means of more than 250 technical cooperation projects and actions. For example, it supported national efforts to strengthen the institutional framework linked to the agricultural and rural sectors, and promoted knowledge-intensive agriculture. It also helped to make the countries more productive by promoting the strengthening of innovation systems and health and food safety services; and more competitive by fostering the development of business skills and associative capabilities in production chains, especially among family farmers.

To meet the challenge of sustainability, IICA worked on integrated water management and sustainable soil use. It also promoted the development of a culture of risk management, as part of which it collaborated in efforts to adapt agriculture to climate variability and mitigate the effects of climate change.

All the Institute's member countries are engaged in bold efforts to reduce poverty and inequality. Since the majority of poor people live in rural areas, IICA has prioritized the development of those territories, where agriculture continues to be the predominant activity, with a view to achieving full social inclusion. This work produced highly concrete results with respect to the insertion of women and young

people into farming, which in many countries is the most important production activity.

Agriculture is the cornerstone of food security. However, increasing the availability of food is not enough. Access to foodstuffs must also be improved, as well as the use made of them. To achieve this, IICA supports the countries with actions aimed at increasing productivity through the use of the technological tools available and the use of native species, as well as others designed to improve agricultural health, promote food safety, and reduce food losses.

My administration is strongly committed to the efficient, effective and transparent use of the resources that the countries place at the Institute's disposal. For that reason, we have focused our technical cooperation on the achievement of results and promoted a culture of accountability, of which this annual report is an example.

Víctor M. Villalobos
Director General

Executive Summary

For more than seven decades, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) has been the agency of the Inter-American System specializing in the promotion of agricultural development and rural well-being in the Americas. Its aim, through technical cooperation, is to achieve competitive, inclusive and sustainable agriculture that feeds the world and creates opportunities for reducing hunger and poverty.

In 2015, IICA implemented all the cooperation instruments established in the 2014-2018 Medium-term Plan (MTP) approved by the Member States. That plan was designed to bring about an evolution in the Institute's technical cooperation model, gearing it to the achievement of results linked to the challenges faced by the agricultural and rural sectors.

To meet the sector's needs, the Institute used its own resources to execute five hemispheric projects, nine multinational projects, and 44 national actions; and implemented 190 externally funded projects and actions costing nearly USD 95 million. The entire portfolio of projects is linked to the 34 IICA country strategies agreed with the respective national authorities that, along with the MTP, establish the institutional work priorities.

The year's principal achievements were as follows:

- Assessment, design, and formulation of innovative policies and strategies for agricultural and rural development, aimed specifically at facilitating business activities and promoting innovation, participatory management, inclusion, and family farming.
- Development and linking to markets of at least eleven agricultural chains in ten countries, through the creation of committees for competitiveness; training in management, entrepreneurship, associative enterprises, and value added; and the operation of market information systems.
- Promotion of technological and commercial innovations aimed at improving agro-ecological production, agroindustry, fish farming, beekeeping, and water resource management, and reducing food loss. The improvements adopted can be seen in products such as rice, vegetables, poultry, cacao, coffee, flowers, avocados, tomatoes, potatoes, and cassava.
- Agricultural health and food safety assurance in the Americas through the training of sanitary officials, the harmonization of processes to gain access to markets, the use of good agricultural and production practices, emergency response actions, and the management of risks, particularly those associated with climate change.
- Increase in 16 countries of public sector capabilities for integrated water resource management, the use of irrigation systems and water harvesting, waste management, and the implementation of measures to combat soil degradation.

- Coordination of institutional efforts designed to achieve climate-smart agriculture, promoting capacity development within the ministries of environment and agriculture, the development of plans for climate change adaptation in agriculture, and the integration of the gender perspective to address the threat that climate change poses.
- Increased use of agricultural insurance, thanks to the implementation of training activities in at least 11 countries and studies on the performance of insurance markets.
- Promotion of knowledge-intensive agriculture through networks, grants, and information systems. Of special importance were the approval of 301 grants to enable students to take master's and doctoral degree courses under the program with Mexico's National Council of Science and Technology (CONACYT), and the enrollment of 121 students in the master's degree program in food security operated by the Open and Distance University of Mexico.
- Publication of the Declaration of Ministers of Agriculture of the Americas Mexico 2015, referring to sustainable agricultural productivity and rural inclusion, which was discussed in the Eighteenth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA).
- A 6.57% increase in IICA's quota budget beginning in 2016 and the offer by most Member States to pay over-quotas, for a global increase of 8.11%.

Some of these results on behalf of the member countries were achieved with the collaboration of Germany, Spain, France, Finland, Taiwan, the European Union (EU), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), among others. Furthermore, horizontal cooperation provided by a number of governments, including Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Mexico, and the U.S., complemented IICA's portfolio of projects and contributed to the achievement of results on behalf of the Institute's member countries.

About IICA

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) was founded in 1942 as a specialized agency of the Inter-American System. Its mission is to “*encourage, promote, and support our Member States in their efforts to achieve agricultural development and rural well-being through international technical cooperation of excellence.*”

In delivering technical cooperation services to its 34 member countries, IICA seeks and promotes the attainment of:

“competitive, inclusive and sustainable inter-American agriculture that feeds the hemisphere and the world, while at the same time generating opportunities to reduce hunger and poverty among farmers and rural dwellers.”

The services that IICA provides to its member countries are geared toward strengthening the public institutional framework, which includes the formulation of policy proposals, plans, and concrete instruments for agriculture and rural territories; the management of agricultural technical projects; the promotion of innovation; the coordination of actors and horizontal cooperation; as well as knowledge management and the training of human talent.

The Institute focuses its actions on eleven institutional contributions:

1. Strengthening the capabilities of the Member States at the national, regional, multinational and hemispheric levels to establish public policies and institutional frameworks in order to make agriculture more productive and competitive, improve management of rural territories, adapt to and mitigate the impact of climate change, and promote food and nutritional security.
2. Implementing, through public and private institutions, technological, institutional and business innovations aimed at boosting the productivity and competitiveness of agriculture and the production of basic foodstuffs of high nutritional quality.
3. Increasing the capabilities of the public and private sector to ensure agricultural health and food safety and thereby improve productivity, competitiveness and food security.
4. Strengthening the business and associative capabilities of the different stakeholders in the agricultural production chains.
5. Increasing the capacity for area-based social management among stakeholders in rural territories, especially those involved in family agriculture, in order to improve food security and rural well-being.

6. Enhancing the capabilities of different stakeholders of the agricultural production chains and rural territories in the integrated management of water and sustainable use of soil for agriculture.
7. Increasing the capacity of public and private institutions to promote and implement measures for adapting agriculture to climate change and mitigating its effects, as well as promoting integrated risk management in agriculture.
8. Improving the efficacy and efficiency of food and nutritional security programs in the Member States.
9. Ensuring that producers and consumers benefit from a greater use of native species, promising crops and native genetic resources with food potential.
10. Improving institutional capacity to address losses of food and raw materials throughout the agricultural chains.
11. Strengthening the Member States' capacity for consensus and participation in international forums and other mechanisms for the exchange of knowledge and mobilization of sizable resources for inter-American agriculture.

IICA's Headquarters are located in San Jose, Costa Rica. The Institute also has a network of 34 delegations situated in its Member States and a Permanent Office in Spain. Its current Director General is Dr. Víctor Villalobos, who leads a team of 607 staff members responsible for delivering, or collaborating in the delivery of, direct technical cooperation, all committed to securing results that will help achieve the aforementioned eleven institutional contributions.

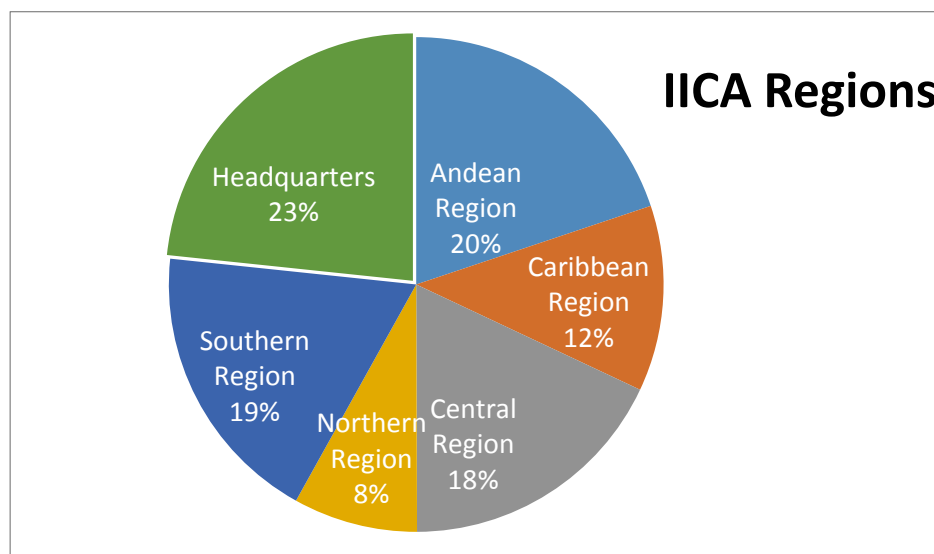
Main results in 2015

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) received a renewed mandate with the approval of its 2014-2018 Medium-term Plan (MTP). Combined with the strategic objectives¹ to be achieved by 2020, this has provided the framework for the consolidation of a new model of innovative technical cooperation, focused on the achievement of results and organized under projects and rapid response actions, all coordinated technically and corporately with our partners in order to provide an excellent service that is highly valued.

In 2015, the Institute began implementing its four cooperation instruments,² underpinned by the technical and administrative guidelines necessary to ensure their good operation. A total of five hemispheric projects, nine projects of the Competitive Fund for Technical Cooperation (FonTC), 190 externally funded projects, and 47 rapid response actions were included in the 34 IICA action strategies approved in the organization's member countries.

The portfolio of externally funded projects and actions, which include regional integration mechanisms, involved the execution of nearly USD 95 million in budgetary resources. The main financial contributions came from the European Union (EU) and several of its member states, as well as the U.S., Mexico, Argentina, and Brazil.

Figure 1
Geographical distribution of cooperation projects and actions



¹ The four strategic objectives are: a) improve the productivity and competitiveness of the agricultural sector, b) strengthen agriculture's contribution to the development of rural territories and rural well-being, c) improve agriculture's capacity to mitigate and adapt to climate change, and make better use of natural resources, and d) improve agriculture's contribution to food security.

² Flagship projects, FonTC investment projects, externally funded projects and rapid response actions.

The principal results of the Institute's cooperation efforts are presented below, organized in accordance with our eleven contributions:

Public policies and institutional frameworks

New institutions: IICA assisted a number of countries with the formulation of plans or strategies aimed at the creation of specialized institutions, including the Center for Research on Agricultural Production under Controlled Environments (Panama), the Peruvian Coffee Institute, and the Center for the Promotion of Value Added (Costa Rica).

Design of instruments for agriculture: Belize,³ Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala,⁴ Honduras, Peru,⁵ Panama,⁶ and Paraguay received cooperation from IICA for the design of policies, plans, and agreements on agricultural and rural development, which included the facilitation of agribusiness operations, agroindustrial innovation, the adding of value, and the formulation and implementation of sanitary measures. These efforts boosted institutional capabilities for managing policies aimed at promoting dynamic, market-oriented, modern, competitive, inclusive, and sustainable agriculture.

Territorial rural development policies: Mexico, Brazil, Costa Rica, Honduras, Ecuador, Guatemala, and the Dominican Republic have assessments of the institutional framework and public rural development policies. Drawing on these assessments, the Institute worked with government institutions in Mexico, Costa Rica, Honduras, and Ecuador to devise and adapt policies and institutional mechanisms for the implementation of actions aimed at inclusive and equitable rural development, the participatory management of territories, and the processes for the integration of programs in the rural territories of each country.

Political focus on family farming: Bolivia, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay, and Venezuela have made family farming (FF) a focus of public policies, as can be seen in public agendas that include FF prepared by means of participatory processes, based on studies of the state of FF in those countries and their public policies. In the Andean Region, FF was characterized by territories, to support the implementation of public intervention strategies on the subject.

Bolivia, Ecuador, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Colombia, Uruguay, and Guatemala strengthened their capabilities for the design of public policies for FF. Thirty specialists from those countries successfully completed the Diploma Program on the Design of Public Policies for Agriculture, carried out in partnership with Mexico's Center for Regional Cooperation on Adult Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (CREFAL). IICA also made available a conceptual and methodological framework to

³ National Policy for Food and Agriculture 2015-2025

⁴ Fruit-growing Policy

⁵ National Food Safety Policy

⁶ Master Plan for the Recovery of Agriculture

guide the construction of public agendas and the formulation of differentiated policies for FF.

As a result of IICA's wide-ranging efforts to promote FF, Guatemala, and Colombia reached agreement on differentiated actions for FF after at least 100 senior officials, specialists, and other public and private stakeholders discussed the importance of the FF and its public policies.

Toward results-based national programs: The planning and design evaluation processes of Mexico's SAGARPA were strengthened following IICA's evaluation of its eleven programs, training in logical frameworks and results-based budgets, and the preparation of the operating rules for 2016.

Technological and institutional innovation

National innovation systems: With cooperation from IICA, frames of reference and strategic concepts were formulated in support of the inter-American scientific institutional framework. The beneficiaries included Ecuador's National Agricultural Innovation System, Haiti's Research Consortium for Agricultural Development, and Costa Rica's National Institute for Agricultural Innovation and Transfer.

Innovative projects in Central and South America: IICA and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) supported the 2015 call for bids of the Regional Fund for Agricultural Technology (FONTAGRO), designed to generate innovations aimed at the sustainable management of natural resources in family farming in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). As many as 146 project profiles were received. Complete proposals were requested for 17 of them, with four eventually approved by the Fund's Board of Directors following a rigorous evaluation process. The projects granted funding were as follows:

- Centers for the supply of traditional seed varieties (Chile, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay).
- Technological innovations to construct resilient livelihoods among rural families in the Dry Corridor (Nicaragua and Honduras)
- Innovation platform for the sustainability of family livestock systems in Uruguay and Argentina.
- Bio-intensive cultivation for rural families in the Dry Corridor (Nicaragua and Honduras).

Innovative policy instruments: Based on an analysis of the experiences of the U.S., Brazil, Canada, Central America, China, Chile, and the European Union (EU), more than 3000 people working in the public and private sectors in 28 IICA member countries increased their knowledge of the trends, challenges, and opportunities in the field of agricultural policy management. Emphasis was placed on policy innovations for more

market-oriented agriculture, risk management, regional integration, sustainable natural resource management, and the efficient use of production inputs.

Innovation and chains: The Institute enhanced the expertise of 900 people working in the public and private sectors in eleven chains⁷ with regard to the technological options for generating innovations in the areas of agro-ecological production, the use of bioinputs, promotion of product quality, pest control, food loss reduction, and calculation of the water footprint.

Innovation and family farming: The Institute enhanced the capabilities of more than 1000 specialists and leaders of FF, enabling them to implement productive innovation strategies on farms, apply innovative extension strategies, promote leadership, and structure new commercial integration mechanisms. This was achieved by means of:

- An international event showcasing innovations in FF held in the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) in partnership with the Specialized Meeting on Family Farming (REAF), the Cooperative Program for Agrifood and Agroindustrial Technology Development in the Southern Cone (PROCISUR) and Paraguay's Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) (200 participants from seven countries).
- A virtual course on FF and rural development, with 150 participants from the Southern and Andean regions).
- The program "Associative Encounters: Agribusiness Internships in FF," which led to the creation of a network of 50 organizations offering internship services (126 members in the Southern, Andean, Central and Caribbean regions).
- Various innovative tools and approaches for knowledge transfer in FF (33 Central American specialists), among other courses and studies on policies, extension, innovation, gender, and knowledge management for FF.

New rural extension methodologies: IICA implemented several courses, coordinated via horizontal cooperation and with academia and specialized national agencies, which enhanced the skills of 98 extension workers from Chile's National Agricultural Research Institute (INIA) and the Agricultural Development Institute (INDAP).

Access to timely information: Nearly 1500 small and medium-scale producers in the Q'eqchi' territory in Guatemala now receive information on climate, prices, productive technology, and other matters of interest in Spanish and the Q'eqchi' language through the TOTOGEO platform, which is managed jointly with the Universidad Rafael Landívar, the Universidad de San Carlos, the Guatemalan Radiophonic Education Federation, the Verapaces Federation of Cooperatives, and the Association of Cardamom Producers, with financial support from the FAS/USDA.

⁷ The chains concerned were cashew (Honduras), fruit trees (El Salvador), cacao and coffee (Panama and Peru), poultry farming (Venezuela), horticulture (Argentina), cattle (Uruguay), sheep and flower-growing (Paraguay), goat milk (Trinidad and Tobago), and sweet potato (Jamaica).

Innovation in Central America: The EU-funded Regional Program for Research and Innovation by Agricultural Value Chains (PRIICA) made available to 4000 members of 24 local innovation consortia more than 25 technologies and practices validated with the national agricultural research institutes of six Central American countries. The technologies and practices were related to tomato, cassava, potato, and avocado varieties, integrated pest and soil management, fertilization, and postharvest and marketing processes, including business plans designed to generate income for smallholders.

Concrete innovations in products

IICA continues to promote innovation in the agrifood sector, as instructed in the Declaration of the Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture of the Americas 2011. Specifically, the Institute supported Member States' efforts to generate the following innovations:

Protected agriculture: Working with the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) and Guyana's National Research and Extension Institute, IICA set up two greenhouses, one at the latter institute and the other on the Tain Campus of the University of Guyana, to serve as demonstration facilities for producers and students for research on agricultural productivity and production costs. The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Water Management (MAFFW) of Barbados increased its capacity for innovation with protected agriculture systems, with IICA supplying materials and training its staff.

Rice: In the Dominican Republic, 20 producers in the provinces of Monte Plata and Duarte adopted the intensive rice-growing system on 50 hectares of land, after participating in training programs that benefited 100 producers. Research on this system is also under way in Venezuela, Colombia, and Costa Rica.

Bioinputs: Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, and Nicaragua enhanced their capabilities with respect to the use of bioinputs in agriculture, which will impact climate change mitigation and bio-business development.

Biotechnology: IICA produced and revised biotechnology and biosafety proposals in Ecuador and Guatemala that were used to make decisions about the use of genetic modification technology and its products. This will have an impact on the reduction of trade barriers, increase the supply of products and make some of them more competitive. The Institute also delivered timely science-based information on biotechnology and biosafety.

Renewable energy: Under the joint project being implemented in Peru by the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* (GIZ) and IICA, entitled "Fund for Sustainable Access to Thermal Renewable Energies (FASERT)," 8518 families acquired improved stoves that use that type of energy. In addition, 59 families whose micro-

enterprises make bricks boosted their incomes by 37% and reduced their use of biomass by 10%, avoiding 11.27t of CO₂ emissions.

Flowers: IICA promoted the use of agricultural waste for composting and beneficial fungi to control pests and diseases in Paraguay's flower-growing chain.

Dual-purpose livestock: In Venezuela, IICA worked with the Integrated Dairy Development Program to enhance the skills of 8000 producers through the application of an integrated approach based on the principles of good agricultural practices.

Honey: In several of the Institute's member countries, honey producers began using Perone hives from Argentina, an innovation for beekeepers who produce honey in barrels. In the Dominican Republic, 155 producers were supplied with 960 hives; in Guyana, 30 beekeepers learned about the technology; and in The Bahamas and St. Lucia 112 producers were trained in permapiculture.

Fish: Under the US-funded Program to Support the Improvement of the Productivity and Competitiveness of the Agricultural Sector (PRESSAC), a system for feeding fish with the aquatic plant *Lemna minor* was introduced in the municipality of Bayaguana, in the province of Monte Plata in the Dominican Republic. Fourteen demonstration farm modules were set up.

Small ruminants: IICA and the St. Lucia Ruminants Cooperative Society established a forage bank, a national-level innovation that will promote resilience in the value chains of small ruminants.

Agricultural health and food safety (AHFS)

Toward safe trade in food: Working with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), IICA trained 1043 public and private sector officials of ten member countries, to give them a better grasp of the requirements for exporting to the U.S., as well as the regulations proposed under the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). Fifty-one firms also received recommendations on how to maintain and improve access to the U.S. market. In addition, sanitary officials from 29 LAC countries studied draft international plant health standards with a view to discussing national and regional positions and sharing experiences on the subject.

A more robust institutional framework for dealing with sanitary matters: Belize and 15 Caribbean countries have draft legislation on matters related to animal health and food safety, manuals on good agricultural practices, coordination mechanisms, improved laboratories, and the support of three regional entities: the Caribbean Animal Health Network (CaribVet), the Caribbean Plant Health Directors (CPHD) Forum and the Coordinating Group of Pesticides Control Boards of the Caribbean (CGPC). In addition, IICA supported the process of strengthening the agricultural health and food safety services of Ecuador, Chile, Argentina, and El Salvador by applying the

Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS) instruments. In Bolivia, the Institute strengthened the system administered by the National Agricultural Health and Food Safety Service (SENASAG).

Harmonization of trade in the Southern Cone: IICA assisted the Plant Health Committee (COSAVE) and the Standing Veterinary Committee (CVP) with the harmonization of sanitary processes to gain access to markets and the resolution of bilateral and multilateral trade issues.

Sharing of experiences on the *Codex Alimentarius*: Thanks to five food safety twinning programs, horizontal cooperation increased among Ecuador, Chile, Uruguay, Argentina, Colombia, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Bahamas, Grenada, and Canada. Furthermore, 70 participants in Honduras and El Salvador benefited from two programs aimed at strengthening national *Codex* committees.

New food inspectors: The Regional Virtual School for Food Inspectors, which was established by the Institute with the support of seven universities (Universidad Rafael Landívar, Universidad José Matías Delgado, Universidad de Agricultura, UNAN León, Universidad de Panamá, Universidad de Costa Rica and Universidad ISA), 150 inspectors from the Dominican Republic and Central America received training in modern inspection techniques to facilitate harmonization of the safety controls of the countries concerned and promote food trade in the region.

Increased capabilities in health-related issues: More than 600 professionals in the Central, Andean, and Caribbean regions received training in good poultry production practices, how to respond to animal health emergencies (incident command system), food safety, antimicrobial resistance, good agricultural practices, traceability, and maximum residue levels, among other topics. The EU provided substantial financial support for the implementation of some of these training activities in the Caribbean.

Safeguarding the Caribbean, Central, and Andean regions: IICA enhanced the expertise of 50 plant health officials in seven Caribbean countries for the control and effective management of outbreaks of quarantine pests; and of ten plant health officers involved in monitoring infestations of red palm weevil (*Rhynchophorus ferrugineus*) in the Caribbean. In Central America, 38 technical officers were trained in plant inspection and in the compilation of lists of quarantine pests. In the Andean Region, 30 plant health inspectors improved their knowledge of international plant health standards and the implementation of inspection procedures.

Agricultural surveillance in Brazil: With the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Supply (MAPA), IICA implemented a pilot project at Brasilia's international airport involving the use of detector dogs as part of agricultural controls.

Mexico's plant health status: As it has done for the last 20 years, IICA coordinated the management of a series of programs, such as Moscamed, Moscafrut and Diagnosing-Surveillance of Exotic Pests and Diseases of the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock,

Rural Development, Fisheries, and Food (SAGARPA) and the National Service for Agricultural Health, Safety and Quality (SENASICA), thanks to which 51% of Mexico's territory has remained free from fruit flies, and the entire country free from the Mediterranean fruit fly.

Quarantine control and inspection systems in Haiti and the Dominican Republic: With funds from the U.S. Food for Progress Program, the Institute spearheaded the drafting of sanitary control legislation and regulations, the implementation of an electronic quarantine information system, the operation of incinerators, and the training of nearly 300 inspectors of the ministries of agriculture of the two countries.

Pest and Disease Control

Brucellosis and tuberculosis: Thanks to the joint cooperation efforts of IICA, Argentina's National Institute of Agricultural Technology (INTA), and the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA), the National Quality and Animal Health Service (SENACSA), the Ministry of Health and the Universidad Nacional de Asunción (UNA) have trained staff, equipment and supplies for diagnosing these diseases in **Paraguay**.

Capimannoni (*Eragrostis plana*): Experts from EMBRAPA exchanged experiences with producers and technical officers in the north of Uruguay with regard to this plant that affects grasslands, thereby contributing to the efforts to prevent and control the weed.

Foot-and-mouth disease (FMD): IICA collaborated in the efforts to maintain **Paraguay's** status as FMD-free with vaccination, which called for the use of an epidemiological surveillance system and the training of SENACSA staff.

Ticks: IICA prepared guidelines for the management of ticks in cattle and their adaptation to climate change in the Andean region.

Microsporidium parasite: IICA Canada's Research and Internship Assistance Program (RIAP) supported the construction of knowledge in Argentina, Uruguay, and Canada on the optimization of techniques for the early detection of the parasite *Nosema ceranae* that affects bees.

Mollusk pests: The official services of Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Costa Rica, the U.S. and the countries of the Andean region shared experiences and opinions regarding the status and effects of the giant snail (*Lissachatina fulica*) and the apple snail (*Pomacea canaliculata*).

Rust: Working with Jamaican, Colombian, and U.S. scientists, IICA prepared the profile of an early warning system for managing rust in 12 communities located in **Jamaica's** Blue Mountains, where 87% of the country's coffee producers are to be found. The

action marked the beginning of a three-year project aimed at gaining an understanding of the climatic and socioeconomic factors related to rust. Furthermore, **Central America and the Dominican Republic** will benefit from the EU-funded Program for Integrated Coffee Rust Management (PROCAGICA) whose implementation in 2016 has been assigned to IICA.

Business and associative development of chains

Competitive development of chains: After identifying the critical issues of eleven chains that were prioritized⁸ by ten countries in 2014, the Institute promoted the competitiveness of six of them by means of forums and committees on the competitiveness of cashew (Honduras), sweet potatoes (Jamaica), coffee and cacao (Panama), flowers and sheep (Paraguay), goats (Trinidad and Tobago) and poultry (Venezuela).

In the Andean, Central, and Southern regions, IICA enhanced the expertise of 722 development agents from 70 public and private institutions, including producers' organizations, in the areas of competitive management, business development, associative enterprises, and value added.

Enabling environments for business development in the Caribbean: The EU's Agriculture Policy Programme with focus on the Caribbean and the Pacific, which IICA is implementing in the 15 Caribbean Forum (CARIFORUM) countries, conducted research, generated baselines and crafted strategies for the pig, cereal, sweet potato, cassava, beekeeping, herbs and spices, hot pepper, and small ruminant chains. The work included the coordination of cooperation with FAO, CARDI and the University of the West Indies (UWI), among others; the sharing of experiences in implementing regional agricultural policies; the training of more than 200 individuals in best agricultural practices and value added; and the facilitation of links between producers' organizations and service providers and other actors in the chain, in order to improve the business environment. Furthermore, with assistance from the Technical Center for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), 175 public and private actors in ten Caribbean countries enhanced their capacity to insert themselves into markets, mainly those related to tourism.

Agribusiness development: By providing producers with a range of opportunities for sharing experiences, knowledge was generated that will help them to integrate into markets. For example, in the Southern and Andean regions, with the participation of 26 public institutions of ten countries, the South American Platform for Agribusiness Promotion, Knowledge Management and Commercial Prospecting was launched.

Transparency in agricultural markets: IICA strengthened the capabilities of 33 member countries of the Market Information Organization of the Americas (MIOA) in

⁸ Cashew, fruit trees, cacao, coffee, poultry, vegetables, cattle, sheep, flowers, goats and sweet potatoes.

order to provide information and intelligence related to more efficient markets. Within the same framework, the Caribbean has its own information management system, while the Dominican Republic, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines fine-tuned their market information collection capabilities (supply, demand, prices, etc.).

Integration into markets: More than 120 small and medium-scale producers in Panama, Costa Rica, and Peru are better equipped to integrate into markets, after IICA, working with national counterparts, promoted opportunities for dialogue and innovative mechanisms such as coffee and cacao fairs (Panama), the “One people, one product” initiative (Costa Rica), and the coffee and cacao agro-export route (Peru).

Export opportunities: IICA’s cooperation was instrumental in 475 Mexican exporting firms benefiting from the creation and consolidation of opportunities for penetrating markets. SAGARPA agricultural attachés at various Mexican embassies supported this effort.

Business ties between Canada and Peru and Colombia: Producers of cacao, brown sugar paste, and tilapia in Peru and Colombia forged ties with Canadian importers, which resulted in business commitments and training actions on the requirements of the Canadian market for the entry of those products.

Adding value in dairy products, cassava, and mangoes: In the Caribbean Region, IICA’s assistance facilitated advances in agroindustrial processes. For example, several training activities on dairy production management and sanitary concerns helped the Trinidad and Tobago Goat and Sheep Society add further value to its products. Moreover, under a project aimed at the development of agriculture and rural enterprises in Tapakuma, Guyana, a cassava processing plant was inaugurated that will enable 180 producers in the area to increase their income. In addition, 31 mango producers in St. Kitts and Nevis boosted their income after learning about new ways of improving the hygienic conditions of their crops, thereby adding value to their production.

Social management of territories

Synergies for inclusive rural development: The Strategic Management System for Area-based Development and Family Farming (SIGET), a platform generated by IICA, facilitated consensus among 60 participants from 15 Ibero-American countries⁹ in a forum on synergies between FF and inclusive rural development, mainly with respect to the connection between the strengthening of FF, the development of territories, and the processes of inclusion for historically excluded groups. Processes combining in-person and online training were implemented to enhance the expertise of 110 technical officers from Paraguay, Peru, and Venezuela. Furthermore, the number of people who

⁹ Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Spain, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

shared experiences on inclusive rural development through the inter-learning module on territorial FF systems rose from 29 to 290 in 13 countries.¹⁰

Coordination and training for socioeconomic inclusion: In Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, and Brazil, IICA facilitated coordinated mechanisms for drafting plans to meet the strategic needs of territorial actors. In addition, in those same countries, as well as in Guyana, Suriname, and Ecuador, individuals from both the public and private sectors received training in inclusion policies, the construction of participatory management mechanisms in territories, and economic activation and social empowerment processes.

Economic activation of territories: Under the Central American Strategy for Rural Area-based Development (ECADERT), funded by Taiwan, producers in the territories of Jucuarán, San Dionisio, Concepción Batres, and Jiquilisco, in El Salvador, enhanced their technical skills and were given access to innovations and inputs that enabled them to improve their income and food security. In Mexico, the capabilities for organization and joint action were increased to equip 21 excluded groups in territories of La Selva Lacandona, Chiapas to achieve economic integration. IICA, with support from the government and civil society, is implementing ten projects designed to stimulate family farming and rural development.

In Belize, with IICA's assistance, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, the Environment and Sustainable Development crafted proposals for the territorial economic activation of six Mayan communities.

Other territories that have benefited IICA's cooperation are:

- Bocas del Toro and Chiriquí provinces and the Comarca Gnäbe Buglé, Panama.
- Norte, El Paraíso and Yeguaré Garifuna municipal districts, Honduras.
- Mancomunidad de la Manpoliza, Guatemala.
- High Southern Region of Costa Rica.
- Intag Valley, Ecuador.
- Parallel 42 Andean Comarca, Argentina.
- Tenacinango, Mexico.
- Carirí, Seridó, and Curimataú, Brazil.

Agrotourism in indigenous communities: Under a project funded by UKAid through the CART Fund of the Caribbean Development Bank, tourism in Suriname increased by 400% in the territories of Powakka, Pierre Kondre, Redi Doti, and Cassipora. The project equipped these territories with tourism infrastructure (museums, community center, camping areas, berths for boats, and paths) and facilitated the training to 54 local actors in business matters, tours, and hospitality.

¹⁰ Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Spain, and Venezuela.

Rural territories and peace: Under the Nuevos Territorios de Paz program in Colombia, IICA prepared proposals for two projects aimed at reducing socioeconomic vulnerability and designing a territorial management model for priority areas, which will be funded by the EU (USD 370,000).

New system of indicators of territorial impact: The different investment projects designed under the Provincial Agricultural Services Program (PROSAP) have a collection of sociodemographic, geospatial, economic, and institutional information from Argentina at their disposal for defining the parameters of the model for monitoring and evaluating territorial impact.

Inclusion of women in agriculture

In **Panama**, the socio-productive conditions of women were improved. Thanks to PRIICA, an EU-funded program, 836 Panamanian producers were trained in the role played by women in food security and nutrition. Under ECADERT, a project was implemented to strengthen the Association of Women of the Palo Seco Community (district of Mariato), which benefited 25 families with training in vegetable production of community kitchen gardens, the construction of ecological stoves, solid waste management and disposal, production of handcraft goods, gender and entrepreneurship.

In **Honduras**, the Yeguaré Women's Network was organized, and in **Suriname**, jointly with the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (LVV), the Institute set up four cooperatives that benefited 84 women in Brokopondo, Marowijne and Sipaliwini.

IICA strengthened the management and associative capabilities of the national chapters of the Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers (CANROP). The specific results were as follows: a) the Network of Women Producers in **The Bahamas** has a strategic plan and at least 100 women were trained in backyard farming, empowerment, food security, and sustainable development (together with the Women's Office of the Ministry of Social Services); b) in **Dominica**, 25 women in the community of Delices received agricultural inputs and machinery after Tropical Storm Erika, thanks to humanitarian assistance from IICA staff; and c) **Jamaica's** Network of Women Producers improved its finances and the ability to secure loans with auditing processes and training in good recordkeeping implemented with the Institute's assistance.

In **Antigua and Barbuda**, IICA was instrumental in the Network of Rural Women Producers securing land for a commercial agro-processing plant and obtaining financing from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Caribbean Development Bank for renewing structures and training in business plans.

With support from the CTA, IICA enabled two networks of women producers in **Guyana** to enhance their information and communication technology skills, leading to the creation of a platform for disseminating information and sharing knowledge via the Web.

In **Trinidad and Tobago**, 65 women and young people learned how to add value to goats' milk cheese and chocolate bars with cocoa nibs. They also have a better understanding of commercial terms, which will permit them to increase their families' incomes.

Finally, IICA improved the quality of life of families in Lakatia, a community situated in **Bolivia's** Altiplano region, by enhancing their skills for providing tourism services, promoting the inclusion of women in the delivery of such services, and implementing a community shelter that uses renewable energies.



Capabilities for integrated water management and sustainable soil use

Water and soil management: more than 940 producers, officials and academics in 16 countries benefited from training activities that IICA organized on integrated water management, irrigation systems and water harvesting, integrated waste management, and soil degradation. In addition, in the Caribbean and Andean regions, the Institute validated a training module on integrated water management with 49 participants from 14 countries.¹¹

Efficient irrigation systems and water balance models: With assistance from IICA and the EU, two municipalities in Paraguay's El Chaco region implemented a rainwater harvesting project that made it possible to install and maintain drip irrigation systems. Furthermore, the MAG improved its ability to manage meteorological risks by using a new water balance model to monitor water surpluses or shortages in agricultural areas.

A number of countries, Brazil, Honduras, Ecuador and Costa Rica among them, now have proposals or projects for developing irrigation and drainage plans. In Venezuela, working with the Nestlé company, IICA trained 243 people in techniques for the conservation, use, quality control, and local management of water. In St. Vincent and the Grenadines, IICA established a demonstration model for water harvesting to train technical officers and producers in climate-smart agriculture, water harvesting, and soil management.

Conservation of Nicaraguan soils: With the participation of 12 cooperation, education and governmental organizations, IICA facilitated the creation of a national alliance for soil resources, and prioritized actions for a future strategy.

Recovery of degraded soils: Public institutions in Suriname expressed their appreciation for a project of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

¹¹ Guyana, Suriname, St. Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Antigua and Barbuda, Jamaica, Peru, Argentina, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Paraguay, Bolivia and Venezuela.

implemented by the Institute, highlighting IICA's experience in the Caribbean in recovering soils degraded by the mining of bauxite and in relation to biofuel production. In Grenada, IICA collaborated with the GIZ and the national authorities to provide assistance to 50 producers so they could improve the soil using compost produced from *Sargassum* seaweed.

Updating of agricultural soil maps: Working with the Universidad de Costa Rica (UCR), the Institute generated the agricultural soil maps (orders and suborders) that form part of a useful geographic information system for the preparation of plans and the management of agricultural production in that country.

Promotion of bioinputs: Using an analytical tool developed by IICA, Argentina, Nicaragua, Ecuador, and Guyana were able to identify the priorities for developing the institutional framework and regulations for bioinputs.



Climate change adaptation and mitigation and risk management in agriculture

Increased use of agricultural insurance: IICA promoted the use of agricultural insurance and an integrated vision of risk among agricultural producers and industries. Its efforts included inventories of risk maps in Latin America; the training of 210 people from the public and private sectors in El Salvador, Guyana, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Paraguay, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Kitts, and Nevis, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay in comprehensive risk management; the holding of the fifth annual symposium on agricultural insurance; and the publication of a study on the performance of the insurance market in the Americas between 2010 and 2014.

Management of health risks posed by climate change: Thanks to a joint effort by IICA and World Animal Protection, Latin America has a set of guidelines for helping animals in disasters. Furthermore, the Andean region, Argentina, Costa Rica, and the U.S. have an overview of the impact on health and production of the giant snail and the apple snail in the Americas, following an exchange of experiences between scientists and technical personnel tasked with combating the pests. In Argentina, a country free from Huanglongbing (HLB), IICA concluded a study of the impact that an outbreak of the citrus fruit disease would have on the domestic economy and more than 5000 producers. As a result, several sectors are expected to continue investing in efforts to prevent the entry of the disease.

Environmental risks in Guatemala: In support of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Food (MAGA), the Institute conducted an assessment of the environmental risks posed by the possible entry of genetically modified corn materials from Honduras as a result of the bilateral customs union agreement between the two countries.

Coordination for climate-smart agriculture: The Caribbean Forum on Climate-Smart Agriculture was set up and made it possible to provide training in climate change adaptation in agriculture to more than 450 technical officers from ministries of environment and agriculture, including extension workers and decision-makers. At least 109 people from the public and private sectors of Barbados, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada, Dominica, and St. Kitts and Nevis were trained in good agricultural practices (GAP) for dealing with climate change.

Strengthening of capabilities for climate change adaptation and mitigation in agriculture: Under the EU-funded EUROCLIMA Programme, more than 700 technical officers and specialists increased their knowledge of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and subjects such as the reduction of vulnerability to drought, use of the climate analogues tool, sustainable soil use, integrated water management, and the application of the water footprint concept to agriculture, among others. The ministries of agriculture of 20 countries developed national plans for the adaptation of agriculture to climate change and integrated the issue into their development plans. Moreover, within the framework of the Regional Gateway for Technology Transfer and Climate Change Action (REGATTA), IICA assisted the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in enhancing the expertise of 610 representatives of the public and private sectors in good practices for climate change adaptation, measures for mitigating the effects of greenhouse gases, climate finance, climate forecasts, and vulnerability in key LAC crops.

Enhancing capabilities for dealing with climate change

- **Bolivia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines:** Fifteen Bolivian interest groups and 573 people from ten Caribbean communities were trained in climate-smart agriculture.
- **Chile:** The “Integration of agriculture into climate change” course for trainers was held ten times, with a total of 178 participants.
- **Dominica:** More than 40 people from the public and private sectors were trained in sustainable agriculture, soil care, and methodologies for conducting assessments of adaptation to the climate.
- **Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia:** Working with the UWI, 14 people in the Caribbean were trained in methodologies for sustainable soil management, efficiency improvements, and adaptation to climate change.

Integration of gender, agriculture, and climate change: Through South-South cooperation established under the aegis of the EUROCLIMA Program, 24 women from eight countries involved in projects aimed at integrating the climate change perspective into the agricultural sector shared experiences that will make it possible to improve appreciation of women’s role in agriculture.

Clean energies and carbon sequestration: Under the agreement with Ecuador's Ministry of Electricity and Renewable Energy (MEER), through the project "Production of *Jatropha* oil for the pilot plan for power generation in the Galapagos Islands," 41,000 liters of pure *Jatropha* vegetable oil were sent to the islands. In addition, the planting of more than one million *Jatropha curcas* plants in Manabí, Ecuador, helped sequester 4000 t of CO₂.

Food and nutrition security

Combating malnutrition in children: 500 people working for food and nutrition security programs in Guatemala learned about the factors that influence chronic child malnutrition, and identified effective ways of combating it thanks to a study entitled "Systemic and territorial model of chronic child malnutrition in Guatemala," prepared by the Universidad Rafael Landívar and Canada's McGill University, with support from IICA and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

Reduction in food losses

Training to reduce food losses: With support from PRIICA, a program implemented in Central America and Panama, coordinated by IICA and funded by the EU, a training activity was held involving 22 people from Central America, including IICA specialists. The event focused on the use of the methodology for the evaluation of agrifood chains (MECA) to identify problems and projects, a systematic method for identifying and quantifying the factors that lead to postharvest losses, thus making it possible to detect problems related to product quality in a specific location. This methodology was made available to the member countries, and in 2016 the manual on its application will be updated.

Increase in sweet potato production in Jamaica: Key stakeholders in Jamaica's sweet potato subsector took part in a mission to North Carolina, U.S., to enhance their expertise for the propagation, cultivation, and postharvest management of the Beauregard and Covington varieties. It is estimated that 30 farmers growing the Beauregard variety on 93 acres will harvest 1.2 million pounds of sweet potatoes in March 2016.

Use of native species

Yam preservation: In coordination with Haiti's Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Rural Development, and with support from the EU's Asset Purchase Programme (APP), conservation plots of all the country's varieties of yam were

maintained in Salagnac, Savane Zombi, and Makary, particularly those in danger of extinction.

The potential of quinoa: Thanks to an IICA study carried out with funding from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the collaboration of Peru's National Agricultural Innovation Institute (INIA), people from the public and private sectors working in the quinoa chain have up-to-date information on production of the crop and its access to markets. IICA also supported the International Quinoa Center in Bolivia with an information system on the production, marketing, and consumption of the crop, which facilitates interaction among the different stakeholders in the chain.

Interaction with and participation in international forums

One of IICA's priorities is to strengthen its Member States' capabilities for interaction with, and participation in, international forums and regional mechanisms. The chief successes in this area in 2015 were in relation to the following events:

Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture of the Americas 2015: Representatives of the highest-level agricultural authorities in the Americas met in Mexico, where a ministerial declaration was signed that establishes eight commitments aimed at improving the productivity and sustainability of agriculture. This meeting strengthened IICA's role as an international organization specializing in agriculture and the coordinator of efforts to promote rural well-being.

Summit of the Americas: The Institute supported the Organization of American States (OAS) at the Seventh Summit of the Americas, held in Panama, where the declaration adopted emphasized the importance of agriculture, food security, and sustainable natural resource management.

Inter-American Meeting of National Animal and Plant Health and Food Safety Services (RISAVIA): This meeting enabled 34 countries in the hemisphere to harmonize their priorities with respect to animal and plant health standards, and the subsequent meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) adopted a resolution calling for efforts to strengthen technical capabilities in this area.

Codex Alimentarius: The Institute contributed to capacity building and greater use of the forum by increasing the participation of representatives of the LAC countries in *Codex* meetings. IICA supported the participation of 60 delegates from LAC and Africa in the first transcontinental colloquium; 37 representatives of 12 countries in *Codex* committee meetings; 60 delegates from 30 countries in two regional colloquia; and representatives of 16 countries in meetings of the *Codex Alimentarius* Commission. This helped enhance the countries' regulatory frameworks, develop standards to facilitate agrifood trade and production, improve consumer protection, and balance the multilateral negotiation processes.

World Trade Organization (WTO): The training of 579 development agents in various subjects (tariff quotas, sanitary measures, environment, trade regulations, food security, and trade data and statistical indicators) enabled the countries to closely monitor their commitments and increase their participation in WTO events and negotiation mechanisms.

Knowledge-intensive agriculture

In addition to the technical cooperation activities associated with the eleven contributions established in the MTP, IICA is very active in the area of knowledge production and sharing. Some of the main efforts carried out in this field are as follows:

Outlook for Agriculture and Rural Development in the Americas: The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and IICA produce this report every two years, to provide input for policies designed to address the main challenges and needs of the agricultural and rural sectors of the Americas. Detailed presentations of the report, which covers the period 2015-2016, were made to the IABA and representatives of the public and private sectors in Argentina, Canada, Chile and Uruguay.

Grants for agricultural studies in the Americas: Under IICA's joint program with Mexico's National Council for Science and Technology (CONACYT), 301 grants were processed and approved to enable young professionals from across the continent to continue their education in the agricultural and related sciences. As a result, by the end of 2015 as many as 207 students were enrolled in master's programs and 94 in doctoral programs at 47 Mexican higher education institutions (see Annex 5).

Similarly, under the joint project between IICA and the Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) entitled "Enhancing Agriculture and Rural Development through Leadership Education" (Henry A. Wallace Legacy Scholars – HWLS), 24 students from the Americas received grants for master's degree courses at CATIE.

Master's degree in food security: With the participation of FAO, ECLAC, and ten universities across the Americas that are members of the Union of Latin American Universities, IICA spearheaded the design of the study program for the International Master's Degree in Food Security. With grants from the Open and Distance University of Mexico (UnADM), 121 students are now enrolled in the master's degree course.

Agricultural capabilities in the Caribbean: With IICA's assistance, the Government of Mexico consolidated its horizontal cooperation, implementing 14 capacity-building programs for agriculture that benefited 1060 technical officers in the Caribbean and Central America. The subject matter of the programs dovetailed with the knowledge needs of the countries concerned, and included protected agriculture, rural tourism,

family and backyard farming, protection of soils and water, plant pathology, and sheep production.

Capabilities in innovation: As many as 772 people from 21 countries enhanced their expertise in innovation after participating in a series of activities organized by the Network on the Management of Innovation in the Agrifood Sector (Red Innovagro), such as the “Path to Innovation” initiative, the international seminar “Building stronger linkages between research and transfer in agrifood innovation systems,” the (online) Diploma Course in Innovation Management in the Agrifood Sector, video conferences, and technological visits. Furthermore, the Innovagro 2015 competition allowed network members to present and disseminate technological, social, and institutional innovations.

A better connected hemisphere: With its improved virtual connection across the Americas, the Institute organized 4060 telepresence activities, including training events, dialogues, the sharing of experiences, and meetings that facilitated the operational work of IICA and its strategic partners.

Governance and official meetings

Executive Committee (EC)

The Thirty-fifth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee took place from July 15-16, 2015, in San Jose, Costa Rica.¹² The most important matters discussed were as follows:

- The EC approved IICA's Annual Report for 2014, which contained a summary of the cooperation activities carried out by the Institute during the year, and information about programming, budgetary and financial matters.
- The EC recognized that the 2016-2017 Program Budget was aligned with the institutional strategic structure established in the 2014-2018 Medium-term Plan (MTP). It also recommended that the IABA consider increasing the quota budget and requested that options be explored for strengthening IICA's strategic structure, including its finances. Furthermore, it approved the Institute's financial statements for 2014 and the respective report of the external auditors, emphasizing that they attested to IICA's sound management of its financial resources and that the Administration had complied with the institutional regulations. The EC also studied the report on the collection of the Member States' annual quota contributions and appointed Mrs. Antoinette R. Hodge, of Saint Kitts and Nevis, to serve as a member of the Audit Review Committee (ARC) for the period 2016-2021.
- The technical document "Competitive, inclusive and sustainable productivity: an opportunity for the Americas," prepared by specialists from Mexico and IICA, was presented to the EC. Six recommendations were made in the document: a) strengthen the State's guiding role in agricultural matters; b) implement a process of modern educational management in the agricultural field; c) continue to invest in the creation of a culture of agricultural innovation; d) consolidate the region's leadership in international agricultural trade; e) foster an entrepreneurial and organizational culture among smallholders; and f) strengthen international cooperation for the development of productive, sustainable, and inclusive agriculture. The Member States provided contributions for the final version of the document, which served as input for the ministerial dialogue and the forum on productivity that took place during the Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture of the Americas 2015, held in Cancun, Riviera Maya, Mexico.
- The EC welcomed the biennial reports of the Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) and the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) covering the period 2013-2014, and urged IICA to continue to strengthen the implementation of joint cooperation actions.

¹² The Committee comprised the following Member States: Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Grenada, Jamaica, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA)

The Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture of the Americas 2015 and the Eighteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA were held in the city of Cancun, Riviera Maya, Mexico from October 19-23.¹³ With sustainable agricultural productivity and rural inclusion as their theme, the two events were chaired by Mr. José Eduardo Calzada Rovirosa, Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food of Mexico. The rapporteur was Mrs. Ana Isabel Gómez, Director of the Executive Secretariat for Agriculture Sector Planning (SEPSA) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) of Costa Rica.

To provide input for the ministerial discussion on the theme of the meeting, the technical forum “Toward Competitive, Sustainable, and Inclusive Productivity: Opportunity for Agriculture in the Americas” was also held. The participants included the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Agrifood and Forestry of France, Mrs. Catherine Geslain-Laneelle, and the Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Supply of Brazil, Mrs. Kátia Abreu. The panelists were drawn from the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries (MGAP) of Uruguay, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Latin American Center for Rural Development (RIMISP), the Polytechnic University of Madrid, Agroindustrias APAL Inc. (Mexico), and IICA. The ministers and heads of delegation showed great interest in the subject and made important contributions.

The ministers also considered the proposed Declaration of Ministers of Agriculture Mexico 2015, prepared at the Meeting of Ministerial Delegates.¹⁴ The heads of delegation discussed, approved and signed the text of the Declaration.

The IABA considered the report “The Outlook for Agriculture and Rural Development in the Americas: a Perspective on Latin America and the Caribbean 2015-2016,” produced and presented jointly by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the IICA.

The Board adopted agreements on the following matters:

- *Institutional policy and technical cooperation services:* A report on the ministerial meetings of agriculture and the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action was presented. The IABA also decided it was viable to revise the mechanisms for extending the contract on CATIE signed between Costa Rica and IICA. Furthermore, based on the report submitted by the Minister of Agriculture, Livestock, and Supply of Brazil on the Inter-American Meeting of National Animal and Plant Health and Food Safety Services in the Face of the Challenges of International Trade, held in Brasilia from September 2-3, 2015, the Board decided to create a working group with a view to improving the

¹³ Representatives of 30 IICA Member States took part.

¹⁴ This meeting took place in the city of Cancun, Riviera Maya, Mexico from October 19-20. The complete text of the Declaration is to be found in Annex 6.

capabilities of countries in the Americas for sanitary and phytosanitary risk assessment, coordinated by IICA and several pertinent regional organizations.

- *Budgetary and financial matters:* The IABA recognized the new program budget model duly aligned with the institutional strategies of the MTP, and approved a global allocation of income from the Institute’s Regular Fund for the 2016-2017 biennium of USD 34,364,900 per year, financed with the countries’ regular quotas and over-quota contributions. The Board also approved the report on the collection of Member State quotas, the report on IICA’s financial statements for 2013-2014, the report of the external auditors, and the reports of the ARC. Lastly, the IABA again instructed the Institute to find ways of strengthening its strategic and financial structure.
- *Matters related to IICA’s governing bodies:* The IABA considered the report submitted by the U.S. as the IABA’s representative on the Governing Council of CATIE for the period 2013-2014. It also welcomed the progress made in implementing the resolutions of the Seventeenth Regular Meeting of the IABA and the thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth regular meetings of the EC; and established that the Nineteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA would be held in Costa Rica. Finally, it thanked the Government of Mexico for hosting the Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture of the Americas 2015 and the Eighteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA, and for its support for the organization of both events.

Official meetings held in 2015

Official name	Date	Place held	Place and date of publication of the report or proceedings of the event
2015 Regular Meeting of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues (SACMI)	April 16, 2015	Virtual meeting coordinated from IICA Headquarters in San Jose, Costa Rica	IICA, San Jose, Costa Rica May 28, 2015
Thirty-fifth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee	July 15-16, 2015	San Jose, Costa Rica	IICA, San Jose, Costa Rica September 18, 2015
Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture of the Americas 2015 and Eighteenth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA)	October 19-23, 2015	Cancun, Riviera Maya, Mexico	IICA, San Jose, Costa Rica February 5, 2016

Principal corporate management results

In 2015, IICA's corporate management focused on three of the overarching challenges facing the Administration, which were the need to:

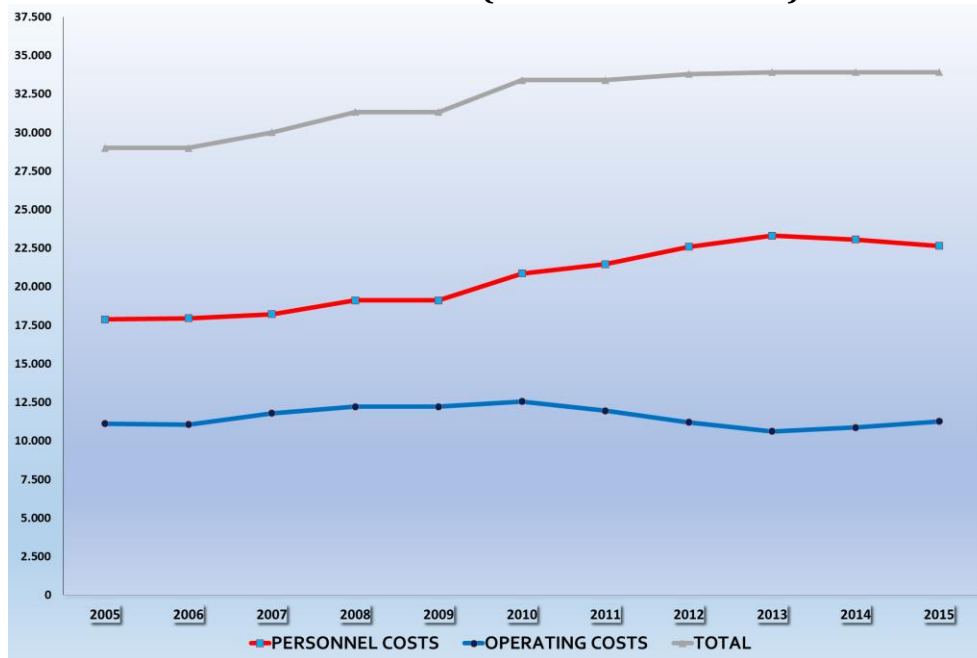
- a) Adapt the model used for IICA's program budget to the strategic structure established in the 2014-2018 MTP;
- b) Complete the accreditation process of the European Union (based on a four-pillar assessment) and opt for the fifth pillar (grants), in order to make the Institute's Administration more competitive at the international level; and,
- c) Secure the member countries' approval of an increase in their annual quotas, to allow IICA to recover its financial position and continue to provide cooperation to the countries on the same scale and of the same quality as previously.

These challenges required major efforts in relation to analysis, prospection, scenario projection, and negotiation with various government officials of the member countries. The difficult groundwork spearheaded by the Director General concluded successfully at the Eighteenth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) with the Member States' historic decision to approve a 6.57% increase in the quota budget beginning in 2016. Most of the countries also offered to pay varying sums in the form of over-quotas, which constitute not only an important form of complementary financial support for the Institute's activities, bringing the total increase to 8.11%, but also a good indicator of the degree of satisfaction of the member countries with IICA's performance.

At the same time, the Institute placed emphasis on the process of continuous improvement initiated in 2010, which has been a systematic and integral part of the work led by the Secretariat of Corporate Services, with clear results and a positive impact on the modernization of the organization. The following are some of the most important results:

- Based on an innovative proposal for the 2015 budget, strictly aligned with the strategies and instruments of the Medium-term Plan (MTP), IICA managed to further integrate corporate management with technical cooperation, resulting in a clear improvement in the use of resources. In this regard, every unit received the funds needed to implement their plan of action for the year as and when required. This important institutional effort was successful thanks to the application of the criteria of austerity, rationality, equity, and transparency in the execution of the budget, which yielded excellent results, reducing operating costs and absorbing incremental expenditures without affecting the growing need for technical cooperation in the countries.

Figure 2
Nominal evolution of staff, operating and total costs
Regular Fund resources used for Program Budgets
from 2005 to 2015 (in thousands of USD)



- IICA obtained a 6.57% increase in quota contributions, following a study of the trend in the miscellaneous income fund, an analysis of the effects of the application of the new percentages established by the Organization of American States (OAS) in its quota scale for 2016-2017, the construction of comparative scenarios to estimate the possible impact on the payment of quotas, and the efforts made with the authorities of the member countries to secure an increase.
- The Institute's financial management was based on the application of a policy of accountability and the transparent use of resources, including the preparation of audited and approved financial statements that complied strictly with U.S. GAAP (U.S. generally accepted accounting principles) international accounting standards.
- IICA successfully concluded the negotiation of an Agreement with Spain, thereby opening up new possibilities of financing for technical cooperation that will generate many benefits and opportunities for the agricultural sector.
- Various audits were coordinated and completed on time, especially the one required to renew the accreditation by the European Union based on the four institutional pillars (internal control system, accounting, external audits and procurement). The process was concluded with great success, with IICA receiving accreditation for an additional pillar (grants). Accordingly, the Institute qualifies as an organization eligible to implement technical cooperation projects with EU resources in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC).

- In the area of human talent management, the Institute reviewed and updated the main personnel recruitment and selection processes, the classification of positions, and salaries, among others. This made it possible to simplify, standardize, and homogenize processes in order to shorten control spans and improve the efficiency and quality of the services provided to the staff. These improvements were achieved through the use of SAPIENS, an automated technological platform that replaced the previous manual system. Integrating information into a single institutional management system makes innovative human talent management in the different countries possible.
- With respect to institutional procedures, progress was made in updating several documents, including the *Code of Ethics*, the *Antifraud and Sexual Harassment Policy*, and the *Manual on the procurement of goods and services* (for approval in 2016), among others.
- The actions carried out in relation to infrastructure and services included the strengthening of the system for the protection of computer equipment; improvements to a portion of the car park at Headquarters and the facilities of some delegations; and the updating of computer equipment. Various service contracts were also renegotiated (airlines, travel agency, security, printing equipment and property maintenance), achieving better prices and benefits. In line with the strategy of rationality and equity in expenditure, the above actions were complemented with various campaigns to promote savings in water, electricity, fuels and others consumables that resulted in substantial savings.

The results described above were achieved through corporate management based on commitment and teamwork, an approach that enabled IICA to achieve transformations that were pertinent to, and important for, its objectives, as a partner that efficiently provides its member countries with high-quality technical cooperation.

To comply with the mandate established in the 2014-2018 MTP of strengthening the monitoring and evaluation of all its operations, the Institute boosted its Planning and Evaluation Secretariat (SEPE). That unit provides the entire organization with regular updates on the progress being made with the four cooperation instruments and the 11 institutional contributions due to be achieved in 2018, as proposed in the MTP. The management system was strengthened by implementing three new modules for the automation of monitoring, planning, and reporting, which facilitates the delivery and review of information, and decision-making. Finally, the Institute received advisory assistance from Germany's *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* (GIZ) agency aimed at incorporating into IICA's planning, monitoring, and evaluation system the best standards of service in international cooperation.

As in every organization, there is still room for improvement and the Institute continues to seek new processes, procedures, innovations, and projects for next year within the framework of the MTP that would further strengthen it and permit it to carry out its mission of encouraging, promoting and supporting the efforts of the Member States to achieve agricultural development and rural well-being.

Annex 1

List of projects of IICA's Competitive Fund for Technical Cooperation (FonTC) implemented in 2015

Name of project	Countries involved	Amount allocated in 2015 (USD)
Institutional innovations for supporting the management of commercial processes in family agriculture and their links to markets	Argentina, Chile and Peru	75,740.00
Strengthening the official monitoring systems for veterinary drugs and promoting the responsible use of drugs in livestock production in Central America	Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama	133,219.00
Knowledge management and institutional capacity building to promote integrated water management in family farming (GIAAF)	Peru, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and OPE (Spain)	117,520.00
Development of institutional capabilities in participatory approaches, strategies, and methodologies for optimum inclusion of young people in agriculture and rural territories in Costa Rica, Honduras, Dominican Republic, and Brazil	Costa Rica, Honduras, Dominican Republic, and Brazil	97,700.00
Strengthening the agribusiness and associative capabilities of smallholder organizations in order to link them to local markets using the fair trade (FT) agribusiness model	Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama	60,103.00
Strengthening (development of institutional management and communication tools) of the implementation of good agricultural practices (GAPs) in fruit and vegetable production in the Southern Region countries + Bolivia	Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay	94,206.00
Strategic management system for area-based development and family farming	Brazil, Guatemala, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic and Venezuela	66,230.00
Innovation and sustainability in wholesale markets and their links with family farming in the Americas	Costa Rica, Brazil, Ecuador, and Mexico	68,000.00
Strengthening the management of water resources and irrigation systems for family farmers in the Chaco region of Paraguay, Argentina, and Bolivia	Bolivia, Argentina and Paraguay	75,232.00
Total allocated		787,950.00

Source: Technical Secretariat of the FonTC.

Annex 2

Rapid response actions implemented in 2015

Name of action	Country/region	Amount allocated in 2015 (USD)
Creation of the banana chain	Andean/Central	20,788.00
Rehabilitation of protected agriculture	Barbados	8,555.00
Potential for cacao production and agroindustrial processing in Belize	Belize	8,000.00
Food production policy	Belize	23,400.00
Design and implementation of an information and communication model for knowledge management in quinoa and Andean cereals	Bolivia	7,140.00
Area-based management – Deputy Ministry for Land	Bolivia	7,990.00
Technical assistance to the SENASAG	Bolivia	5,555.00
BioBolivia Fair	Bolivia	4,000.00
FORAGRO	Brazil	28,800.00
Model of governance	Brazil	5,000.00
Consolidation of the FONPLATA	Brazil	6,432.00
Inter-American Meeting for the Control and Prevention of Pests and Diseases	Brazil	30,000.00
Training in climate change	Chile	2,911.00
Coordination of the CCLAC	Chile	9,500.00
Family farming in Colombia	Colombia	10,000.00
Institution building at the CNP	Costa Rica	10,250.00
Guidelines for rural policies 2015-2018	Costa Rica	16,320.00
Reactivation of the SNITTA	Costa Rica	750.00
Redesign of the INTA	Costa Rica	23,000.00
Agricultural sector restoration initiatives for rural communities of Dominica in the aftermath of Tropical Storm Erika	Dominica	16,350.00
Technical cooperation for standardization of packaging and measurements of the main agricultural products sold wholesale	Ecuador	10,000.00
MAG single window	El Salvador	4,959.00
Forestry policy and law	El Salvador	9,720.00
USAID Observatory	Guatemala	8,000.00
National Irrigation and Drainage Plan	Honduras	9,999.00
Orange flesh sweet potato	Jamaica	7,851.00
Rapid assessment of agro-tourism possibilities in six development areas of St. Elizabeth	Jamaica	2,850.00
Generation of commercial opportunities - SAGARPA	Mexico	21,300.00
Assessment of the Selva Lacandona	Mexico	31,000.00
SIAL Mexico	Mexico	39,900.00
Design of State policies	Panama	8,292.00

Support for modernization - AHFS	Panama	5,000.00
Production of <i>Beauveria bassia</i>	Paraguay	2,976.00
Coffee-cacao chains in Peru	Peru	8,530.00
PE-agroexport services	Peru	13,000.00
Mango value added	Saint Kitts	4,770.00
Promotion and production of onions	Suriname	9,700 .00
Trade in honey	Trinidad and Tobago	5,000 .00
Competitive development of cooperatives - MGAP	Uruguay	10,000.00
U-Texas/Uruguay Exchange	Uruguay	10,000.00
Opening of sheep meat markets	Uruguay	15,000.00
Management of agrarian cooperatives	Uruguay	10,000.00
Seminar-workshop on agribusiness development	Southern Region	19,000.00
Opportunities in the European market	Central Region	10,000.00
Youth policies - AIDJA	CTL-IICA	25,000.00
Third ECADERT Week	IICA Directorate of Technical Cooperation	27,621.00
Participation in the COP21	IICA Directorate of Technical Cooperation	50,000.00

Source: Directorate of Technical Cooperation.

Annex 3

Profiles and cooperation projects prepared by IICA in 2015

MULTINATIONAL PROJECTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central American Program for the Integrated Management of Coffee Leaf Rust (PROCAGICA) • Project to Support the Development of Paraguay's Sheep Chain with Resources Contributed by FONPLATA • Enhancing Value-Added Developments for Chapters of CANROP in Roots and Tubers to Improve Market Access
NATIONAL PROJECTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program for the Development of Fruit Growing and Portfolio of Investment Projects in Guatemala
PROJECT PROFILES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment and Business Acceleration for Civil Society through Innovative Access to Capital in the Bahamas • Scaling Sustainable and Innovative Capital and Agro-Entrepreneurship for Youth in East Africa and the Caribbean (SICA) • Advanced profile, "Strategic Plan and Investment Program of the Competitive Rice Chain," in Honduras • Advanced profile, "Agriadapta Project for the Sustainable Development of the Dry Corridor in Nicaragua"

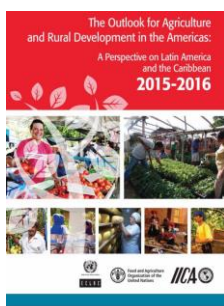
Source: Directorate of Technical Cooperation.

Annex 4

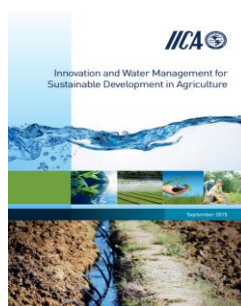
IICA knowledge products

<p>Alliance of Agricultural Information Services SIDALC www.sidalc.net</p>	<p>The alliance, comprised of 175 national institutions in 22 countries, facilitated access to 2.8 million references and 252,665 full-text documents archived in 345 databases. During the course of the year, 2.6 million unique visitors and 811,745 recurrent users benefited from this service. The participants shared 49,730 articles and documents.</p>
<p>Collection of information management resources - IMARK www.imarkgroup.org</p>	<p>Thanks to the work with the FAO and other international organizations, 11 courses on information and knowledge management are available. At the global level, the platform provides access to courses in English, Spanish, and French related to 18 subject areas.</p>
<p>AgriPerfiles http://agriperfiles.agri-d.net/</p>	<p>The Institute spearheaded the adaptation and operation of the VIVO system in LAC. Developed by the University of Cornell, the system makes it possible to administer technical and professional profiles in agriculture. Currently, 982 profiles can be accessed, related to more than 1100 institutions.</p>
<p>Network for the Management of Innovation in the Agrifood Sector INNOVAGRO Network www.redinnovagro.in</p>	<p>As many as 772 people from 21 countries benefited from different activities related to the construction of knowledge on innovation. The Network involves 81 institutions in 16 countries in Latin America, Europe, and the Middle East, as well as six regional systems and networks.</p>
<p>Food Security Observatory for the Americas http://infoagro.net/programas/Seguridad/default.aspx</p>	<p>Public and private stakeholders have access to timely and pertinent information about the food security situation across the Americas and worldwide. The site receives an average of 1200 visits per month. The monthly bulletin is sent to 604 subscribers.</p>
<p>IICA Website www.iica.int</p>	<p>In 2015, IICA published 49 books and technical documents, all available in digital format and under the system of Creative Commons licenses.</p>

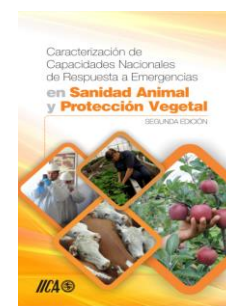
Main publications on line:



[Outlook for agriculture and rural development in the Americas: a perspective on Latin America and the Caribbean 2015-2016](#)



[Innovation and Water Management for Sustainable Development in Agriculture](#)



[Caracterización de capacidades nacionales de respuestas de emergencias en sanidad animal y protección vegetal. 2.a ed.](#)

Source: IICA's Inter-American Center for Information and Editorial Production.

Annex 5

Number of scholarship holders studying for master's and doctoral degrees at Mexican universities under the CONACYT-IICA 100 scholarships program (class of 2015)

Country	Master's Degree*	Doctorate	Total
Argentina	2	3	5
Belize	3	1	4
Bolivia	4	0	4
Brazil	2	6	8
Chile	2	1	3
Colombia	125	45	170
Costa Rica	6	2	8
Dominica	1	0	1
Dominican Republic	3	0	3
Ecuador	15	5	20
El Salvador	2	0	2
Guatemala	5	5	10
Haiti	5	0	5
Honduras	7	7	14
Nicaragua	5	2	7
Panama	2	2	4
Paraguay	2	0	2
Peru	6	5	11
United States	1	2	3
Uruguay	1	4	5
Venezuela	8	4	12
Total	207	94	301

Source: IICA's Center for the Promotion of Technical Capabilities and Leadership

* Specializations and master's degree courses added together.

** Since the program began, 50 students have graduated or are close to graduating.

*** Since 2012, the program has benefited 494 people.

Annex 6

MEETING OF MINISTERS OF AGRICULTURE OF THE AMERICAS 2015

“Grow better, produce more, feed everyone”

DECLARATION OF MINISTERS OF AGRICULTURE MEXICO 2015

We, the Ministers and Secretaries of Agriculture of the Americas, meeting on the Riviera Maya, Quintana Roo, Mexico, from 20 to 22 October 2015, to engage in dialogue, reach agreement on commitments, and request the support of international cooperation agencies in promoting more competitive, inclusive and sustainable agricultural productivity that contributes to the sustainable development of the countries of the Americas, hereby agree to issue the following declaration:

Bearing in mind that:

1. At the hemispheric level, this Declaration builds on the mandates issued by the Heads of State and Government at the summits of the Americas, the resolutions of the General Assembly of the Organization of American States, mainly those dealing with sustainable development, innovation, water and energy, and the agreements of the previous hemispheric meetings of ministers of agriculture, which were constructed in accordance with the objectives of competitiveness, sustainability, equity, and governance.
2. With respect to the global agreements on development, the Declaration seeks to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, most of which are linked to agriculture and rural development, set forth in the document *“Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”* adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015.
3. The Third International Conference on Financing for Development, July 2015, adopted the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda*, which includes topics of interest for agriculture and rural development, such as investment, financing, trade, infrastructure, science, technology, capacity building and international cooperation for development.
4. Heads of State, Ministers, and representatives of developed and developing countries, heads of multilateral and bilateral agencies, and representatives of public and private organizations adopted guidelines for the management of international development cooperation in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005), the Accra Agenda for Action (2008) and the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (2011), in which emphasis is placed on the alignment of international cooperation with national priorities, the

harmonization of international cooperation, and broad efforts to build partnerships for development.

5. The Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, September 2014, adopted the “SAMOA Pathway” (SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action), which highlighted the vulnerabilities and resource constraints of SIDS countries and called for support for their efforts to build resilience.
6. The meeting secretariat distributed among the member countries, for informational purposes and to obtain feedback, the proposed technical document entitled “Competitive, Inclusive and Sustainable Productivity: Opportunity for the Americas,” which outlines the situation and challenges facing agricultural productivity in terms of competitiveness, sustainability, and inclusion.

Mindful that:

7. Agriculture is a strategic activity for the development and well-being of the countries, makes a significant contribution to economic development with social inclusion and to rural and national prosperity, and is crucial to achieve food security and end poverty.
8. Agriculture, in general and particularly in the Americas, faces various challenges in endeavoring to maintain and improve on the productivity growth rates observed in recent years.
9. Agricultural productivity rates in the Americas vary significantly across countries and types of agriculture.
10. Raising the productivity of agriculture is a task that has to be addressed rapidly and decisively, adopting a comprehensive, collaborative approach and sustainable practices.
11. Increasing productivity calls for a transformation of agriculture through a wide range of innovations designed to ensure competitiveness, sustainability and inclusiveness.
12. The countries of the Americas have great potential to increase agricultural production and productivity; nevertheless, it should be borne in mind that while some have adequate natural resources, such as water, land, energy, biodiversity, knowledge, as well as human talent, others, particularly SIDS, are challenged by vulnerability and natural resource constraints which hinder their efforts at raising agricultural productivity.
13. Raising agricultural productivity requires the rapid development of the technical and functional capabilities of individuals, organizations and society in order to

address its complexities with sustainable solutions and adaptation to climate change.

14. Increasing agricultural productivity is multifactorial (land, capital and labor), multidimensional (economic, social, environmental and institutional) and multisectoral (public and private sectors and civil society), and achieving this goal in a competitive, sustainable and inclusive manner calls for participation, consensus-building and the joint action of the appropriate national and international public and private sector stakeholders.
15. Raising agricultural productivity in a sustainable and inclusive manner is one of the pillars essential to achieving food security of our peoples.

Call upon:

16. The cooperating countries and entities, international funding agencies and providers of funds and research centers and regional research and innovation mechanisms, and national, regional or hemispheric programs of greater scope centered on actions related to increasing agricultural productivity, bearing in mind the national priorities and development policies designed by beneficiary countries.

Commit to:

17. Strengthening, where relevant, the professional leadership, participation and proactive capacity of ministries of agriculture in the definition and implementation of national policies to improve the State's oversight of agriculture and to guide the sector through the structural changes required to enhance agricultural productivity as deemed necessary pursuant to national development policies.
18. Maintaining dialogue with the representatives of the agricultural sector and other sectors, to analyze and draw up agreed proposals on the increase of agricultural productivity in a competitive, sustainable and inclusive manner to contribute to the eradication of poverty, as well as to facilitate greater information, in order to increase public awareness.
19. Continuing to promote the implementation of policies, programs and instruments to foster productivity, investment, innovation, infrastructure, science and technology, agricultural health and food safety, as well as adaptation to and mitigation of climate change, with special emphasis on family and small-scale farming, through the following actions, as necessary, to:
 - a. Revitalize and encourage investment directed to the provision of public goods in, and for, agriculture.

- b. Modernize, as required, the institutions of the agricultural public sector and promote the appropriate priorities required to address the challenges facing agriculture.
 - c. Promote rural and territorial development through the participatory management and policies for transformation and sustainable development of the agriculture sector.
20. Evaluating, working and promoting, with the pertinent stakeholders and authorities, where necessary, a modern, inclusive educational system for stakeholders in agriculture and the rural milieu, with strategic actions to:
- a. Strengthen professional capacities, designing training programs in agriculture, rural economy and rural development studies with respect for ancestral and traditional know-how.
 - b. Promote improvements in the quality and coverage of rural education, educators' capabilities and the educational infrastructure and establish training programs for new agricultural producers, targeting young people, small family farmers and women.
 - c. Establish programs to enable farmers to acquire additional knowledge and skills.
 - d. Strengthen the entrepreneurial and organizational capabilities of agricultural and rural producers and establish programs to strengthen producers' capacity to develop and become involved in productive projects.
 - e. Promote and support nutrition education programs with a view to reducing malnutrition, obesity, food loss and waste, and emphasizing the consumption of healthy locally produced foodstuffs and improving their use.
21. Promoting and contributing to the strengthening of a culture of innovation systems, through sustainable agriculture adapted to climate change, integrating value chains that foster productivity, focusing on strategic actions intended mainly to:
- a. Develop public policy instruments that promote, based on national and regional priorities, public and private investment and mechanisms that facilitate close links between the two sectors.
 - b. Promote efficient and sustainable management of natural resources in the products, services, processes, and technologies used in agriculture and its value chains.
 - c. Strengthen the relationship between technology research and development centers and the productive sector.
 - d. Identify, assess, disseminate, and make use of local and ancestral knowledge.
 - e. Strengthen the dissemination of scientific knowledge and research systems whose work involves improvements in production and national strategic priorities.

- f. Promote the creation of interinstitutional and interregional networks that facilitate flows of information, including scientific and evidence-based information, and knowledge management among stakeholders in agriculture and value chains.
 - g. Improve the collection, availability and usability of agricultural and nutritional data to spur innovation, reduce duplicative efforts, enable better decision-making and increase transparency.
22. Supporting cooperation in international agricultural trade, by promoting and implementing actions to:
- a. Collaborate in the establishment of policies governing safety, health, and trade based on scientific principles.
 - b. Undertake efforts to achieve further inter-American trade integration.
23. Spearheading the implementation of joint initiatives with organizations and sectors that strengthen the business and entrepreneurial culture in agriculture and the rural milieu, including actions intended to:
- a. Support the business and organizational development of agricultural and rural producers in order to improve their negotiating skills, their participation in markets and their strategies for sustainable and inclusive development.
 - b. Increase opportunities for access to productive assets, financing, and integrated risk management, with the inclusion of young people and women agricultural and rural producers.
 - c. Support the implementation of programs on social responsibility for businesses and responsible investment principles in agriculture and value chains.
 - d. Strengthen the inclusion of small-scale and family producers in value chains.
 - e. Simplify formalities and improve business conditions for agricultural enterprises.
24. Promoting harmonization of the development cooperation provided by the international cooperation agencies that operate in each of our countries, and the alignment of their cooperation with our national priorities with regard to more productive, sustainable and inclusive agriculture. To that end, we will undertake the following actions:
- a. Request the international and regional organizations that operate in our countries to include in the cooperation programs an agenda for the sustainable intensification of agriculture based on the priorities of the country concerned.
 - b. Work in a coordinated manner with international cooperation agencies to close the gaps that exist in agricultural productivity.

- c. Promote the strengthening of collaboration between related international organizations on the preparation of analyses, studies, and proposals for the competitive, sustainable and inclusive improvement of productivity.
- d. Request collaboration for the design of national policies and programs for productive, sustainable, and inclusive agriculture.

Signed on the Riviera Maya, Mexico, on the twenty-second day of October, two thousand and fifteen.

Acronyms

AHFS	Agricultural health and food safety
ARC	Audit Review Committee
CANROP	Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers
CARDI	Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute
CATIE	Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Center
CCLAC	<i>Codex Alimentarius</i> Coordinating Committee for LAC
CNP	National Production Council (Costa Rica)
CONACYT	National Council for Science and Technology (Mexico)
COP20	Conference of the Parties
CREFAL	Regional Cooperation for Adult Education in Latin America and the Caribbean
CTA	Technical Center for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation
CTLS	Center for the Promotion of Technical Capabilities and Leadership (IICA)
EC	Executive Committee (IICA)
ECADERT	Central American Strategy for Rural Area-based Development
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EMBRAPA	Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation
EU	European Union
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
FF	Family Farming
FONPLATA	Fund for the Development of the River Plate Water Basin (Brazil)
FonTC	Competitive Fund for Technical Cooperation (IICA)
GAP	Good agricultural practices
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (Germany)
IABA	Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IICA)
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IICA	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
INTA	National Institute for Agricultural Innovation and Technology Transfer (Costa Rica)
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
MAG	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (Paraguay)
MERCOSUR	Southern Common Market
MGAP	Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries (Uruguay)
MTP	Medium-term Plan (IICA)
OAS	Organization of American States
OPE	European Project Office (IICA - located in Spain)
PRIIICA	Regional Program for Research and Innovation by Agricultural Value Chains
SAGARPA	Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food (Mexico)
SENACSA	National Service for Quality and Animal Health (Paraguay)
SENASAG	National Service for Agricultural Health and Food Safety (Bolivia)
SIAL	Localized Agrifood Systems

SNITTA	National System for Agricultural Research and Technology Transfer
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
WTO	World Trade Organization
UWI	University of the West Indies



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