

Infoletter

from the Desk of the Director General

Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture



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Institutional Affairs

▪ Director General takes part in European meeting with strategic partners in Spain

On 17 June, IICA Director General Chelston Brathwaite participated in the first European Meeting of IICA's Strategic Partners, held in Madrid, Spain. The event was attended by representatives of various European institutions specializing in the promotion and development of agriculture and technical cooperation in that field. During the activity, Brathwaite gave a presentation entitled "New Vision of Agriculture in the 21st Century and Food Security" and discussed possible strategic partnerships with the participants. IICA's Permanent Office for Europe (OPE) has operated for eight years in Spain, a gateway to the rest of the continent created to channel support from the European Union countries for the development of agriculture and rural life in Latin America and the Caribbean. Brathwaite's visit to Madrid was his first stop on a tour that took also in France, Italy, Switzerland and England. He held meetings throughout June with key executives of government agencies, development organizations and private companies.

▪ IICA participates in 39th OAS General Assembly

A delegation headed by the Director General, Chelston Brathwaite, took part in the 39th General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS), held 2-3 June in the Honduran city of San Pedro Sula. The Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG) met before the event to discuss the status of the decisions set forth in the Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain, during the Fifth Summit of the Americas, held in Trinidad and Tobago in April of this year. Adopted by consensus by the Heads of State and Government of the Americas, the declaration contains mandates related to food security, agriculture and rural life, energy security, environmental sustainability, international cooperation and summit follow-up, all of which have implications for the work of IICA. A few days before the OAS meeting, IICA - represented by its Deputy Director General, Christopher Hansen - and the other members of the Joint Summit Working Group (JSWG) met with U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton to provide follow-up to the commitments adopted at the summit.

Regions and countries

▪ IICA and Peru's Ministry of Agriculture set to expand areas of joint work

The Minister of Agriculture of Peru, Carlos Leyton, established priorities for expanding the cooperation agenda of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) in his country. Those priorities include the formulation of public policies for the sustainable development of rural territories, the analysis of the impact of climate change on agriculture and the development of mechanisms to make smallholdings in Peru more competitive. During a visit to IICA Headquarters on 28-29 May to participate in the Forum for Leaders of Agriculture, Leyton met with senior IICA officials. In the weeks ahead, Minister Leyton will meet with IICA staff again to define specific actions. It has already been decided that the first activities will focus on training and education. One such activity is the Forum for Young Leaders of Peru, which will be held in September of this year and bring together enterprising young people from different social sectors in Peru. The forum was also attended by the Peruvian Ambassador to Costa Rica, Moises Tambini del Valle. On the morning of Friday, May 29, the minister and the ambassador met with the Director General of the Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE), Jose Joaquin Campos. In the afternoon, they visited the INCAE business school, where they had meetings with the Regional Manager of Executive Programs, Sylvia Poll, and with the Coordinator of the INCAE/CATIE Agribusiness Master's Degree Program, Bernard Kilian.

▪ Minister of Agriculture of Trinidad and Tobago visits Costa Rica, accompanied by agricultural entrepreneurs from his country

The Minister of Agriculture, Lands and Marine Resources of Trinidad and Tobago, Arnold A. Piggott, accompanied by Trinidadian government officials and agricultural entrepreneurs, visited Costa Rica from 8-11 June to acquire know-how they will now be using to grow their country's agricultural sector. Along with his delegation, Piggott participated in the Forum for Leaders of Agriculture, a mechanism for discussion that IICA promotes through its Center for Leadership. Inaugurating the event, the Director

General of IICA called on the participants to adopt an expanded vision of agriculture and rural life. As part of the visit, Minister Piggott met with the Minister of Agriculture of Costa Rica, Javier Flores, and discussed, among other things, certain actions aimed at reducing the cost of producing food. The Trinidadian delegation also undertook a field trip on Tuesday, 9 June and Wednesday, 10 June, visiting various locations where they observed modern farming techniques and the processing of vegetables, tubers and fruits. The Ambassador of Trinidad and Tobago in Costa Rica, Sandra Honoré, also participated in the forum.

▪ **Territorial Development Strategy for Central America**

Preparation of the “Frame of reference to guide the formulation of the Central American Strategy for Sustainable Territorial Development (ECADERTS)” has been completed. The document was drafted by a team of professionals from IICA, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Spain’s ETEA Foundation for Development and Cooperation, the Regional Technical Assistance Unit (RUTA) and the Executive Secretariat of the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC). The frame of reference was presented on 4-5 June in Nicaragua, during a meeting of the Intergovernmental Technical Group, comprised of representatives of Central America’s ministries of agriculture.

▪ **Report on global trade in biotech crops in 2008 to be discussed**

At the end of June, specialists and decision-makers from the public, private and academic sectors of various South American countries will be sharing data about the trade in biotech and transgenic crops and its benefits, and discussing the study entitled “Global Status of Commercialized Biotech/GM Crops in 2008.” The findings of this study, carried out by the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA), will be disseminated on 25 June in Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia; and on 30 June in Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, Paraguay and Chile. Both activities will take the form of webcasts coordinated from the Distance Training Center (CECADI) at IICA Headquarters.

▪ **IICA signs technical cooperation agreement in Uruguay to spur agricultural insurance**

IICA and the Latin American Association for the Development of Agricultural Insurance (ALASA) - whose members include insurers based in both Europe and the Americas - signed a technical cooperation agreement under which they will share information, provide training and design projects to secure resources for the development of agricultural insurance. According to the press office of the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS), the agreement was signed during the national and regional seminar-workshop on weather risk management and agricultural insurance, organized by Uruguay’s Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries and the IICA Office in that country. The activity took place 4-5 June in Montevideo. The document was signed by the President of ALASA, Nestor Abatidaga, and the Assistant Deputy Director General of IICA, David Hatch. The Minister of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries of Uruguay, Ernesto Agazzi, took part in the inaugural and closing ceremonies of the event. The nearly 300 participants in the activity included representatives of government and international agencies, insurance and reinsurance companies, and producers’ organizations.

Coming events

- **14 - 16 July, 2009.** Nineteenth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee of IICA, Costa Rica.
- **18 - 21 August, 2009.** Representatives’ Week, 2009, IICA, Costa Rica.
- **25 - 30 October, 2009.** Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture and Fifth Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Life, Jamaica.

More information

- **Nevis Minister of Agriculture expresses appreciation for international assistance provided to local producers**

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