



Institutional Affairs

▪ IICA strengthens its team in Representatives' Week

The Institute's most important annual strategic planning meeting, known as Representatives' Week, concluded on November 1 in Costa Rica. The senior staff of Headquarters, the Institute's Representatives in its 34 Member States and the Regional Specialists participated in the week-long event. The agenda focused on leadership and institutional modernization and how they related to meeting the challenges of agriculture and rural life. Two of the main events of the week were a four-hour talk by renowned expert and author Stephen Covey, and a 3-day seminar/workshop on management through leadership, negotiation, analysis of political risks, planning and positive thinking, taught by faculty from the INCAE Business School. Other activities included the announcement by Director General Chelston Brathwaite, of the launching of a Program for Young Leaders; a tour of a novel agrotourism project conducted by Café Britt, a local coffee company; and the presentation of the 2006 Director General's Awards for Excellence 2006 to both teams of staff members and individuals. The agreements reached during the Week call for specific actions aimed at promoting the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action and its Agro Matrix; efforts to reinforce the formulation of cooperation projects and make the Institute's work more visible; and the official launching of the Program for Young Leaders.

▪ IICA places hope in young people

During Representatives' Week 2007, Director General Chelston Brathwaite presented the Program for Young Leaders involved in the Sustainable Development of Agriculture of the Americas in the 21st Century, the goal of which is to enhance the capabilities of young people, instilling in them a global vision of issues related to agriculture. The Program will contribute to the operation of an inter-American network of young leaders with the ability to effectively transform agriculture in the hemisphere. The premise of the Program is that investment in young people is fundamental in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The Institute wants to invest in brilliant young minds today in order to have effective leaders in the future, and believes that a failure to do so would be a waste of talent and of the chance to develop important agents of social change. The development of young leaders will be an important part of the agenda of the Institute as it seeks to create and promote a new vision for agriculture and rural life in the Americas. The first activity of the Forum/Program is scheduled for March 2008.

▪ Covey states that communication is the key to leadership

As keynote speaker for Representatives' Week 2007, Stephen Covey invited his audience to put into practice the eighth habit of highly effective people "to find one's own voice, and inspire others to find theirs." According to Covey, this constitutes the basis of communication, which, in turn, is essential for capable leadership. For almost four hours, the leadership guru spoke with IICA personnel at Headquarters and in the countries (over the Internet). Covey has sold some 15 million copies of his acclaimed book "Seven Habits of Highly Effective People," and has been named by Time magazine as one of the most influential men in the world. Agriculture and principle-based leadership are similar in that in both there are no quick fixes and no shortcuts to our goals. Speaking to Covey at the conclusion of his presentation, Director General Chelston Brathwaite said, "The principles you have shared with us today will help us to improve this organization, which is committed to the development of our member countries."

▪ Director General of IICA at FAO Conference

The Director General of IICA, Chelston W.D. Brathwaite, will participate in the 34th Session of the Conference of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), to be held in Rome from November 17 to 24. One of the topics to be addressed is the state of agriculture and food worldwide. The FAO Conference, one of the governing bodies of the organization, seeks to ensure that its objectives and policies are carried out effectively and transparently, in pursuit of its commitment to help build a world without hunger.

Regions and countries

▪ Caribbean Week of Agriculture a success

The Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA), held in Jamaica in October, brought together 250 participants from the region, including nine ministers of agriculture and producers and agribusiness operators. The event was organized by Ministry of Agriculture and Lands of Jamaica, with support from IICA, FAO, the CARICOM Secretariat, the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) and the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI). The week included workshops and seminars on topics such as agrotourism, risk management and agriculture in the Caribbean. Other events included a meeting of the Caribbean Agricultural Forum of Youth (CAFY), an exhibition on agroindustry, and the 20th Special Meeting of

the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED). At the COTED meeting, one of the topics addressed was policies related to fishing and commodities.

▪ **IICA posts texts on Google.**

Google Inc. received almost 900 texts from IICA, including books and journals edited by the Institute, which will be digitized and posted on line at www.books.google.com. Google Books is a powerful communication tools for authors, publishers and readers, according to the Director of Google Book Search International, Marco Marinucci. This service makes it possible to “open the pages of books” on Internet for millions of users worldwide. In addition to being able to consult the book, and in this way further disseminate its contents, information will be available on where the book can be purchased, or what libraries have the book available. This tool is used by the libraries or documentation systems of the University of Michigan, Harvard, Stanford, New York Public Library and the University of Oxford, which have scanned all or part of their collections.

▪ **Regional Agricultural Policy will be endorsed at Presidential Summits**

The 2008-2017 Central American Agricultural Policy will be submitted to the Presidents and Head of State at their next summit, scheduled for December 7. The Ministers and Secretaries of Agriculture of the region approved the policy during the regular meeting of the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC) held on October 19 in Guatemala. The regional policy is viewed as one tangible success of the economic and political integration process being promoted by the presidents of the region. IICA has participated as part of the technical team that drafted the instrument.

▪ **Argentina acquires new knowledge in area of food safety**

On October 2-3, the IICA Office in Argentina, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the National Agrifood Health and Quality Service (SENASA) held a seminar/workshop “Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS) of the National Food Safety Services.” The PVS is an instrument used to assess the level of performance of the veterinary, phytosanitary or food safety service of a country. Thanks to the application of this instrument, some of the principal weaknesses of such services have been detected, and attention has been called to the need to strengthen them in order to meet the demands of the countries and consumers. The event was attended by 37 SENASA officials, who were trained in the use of the PVS.

▪ **Training in the design of national policies**

The Institute is supporting Paraguay in its efforts to design national policies on agriculture. A second seminar on the subject, held on November 13, was attended by representatives of the Agricultural Advisory Council, created by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG). IICA consultant Celso Gimenez conducted the seminar. At the first seminar, also held in Paraguay, the Deputy Director of the Office of Studies and Agricultural Policies of Chile (ODEPA), Ema Laval, and the Director of Horizontal Technical Cooperation of IICA, Guillermo Toro, participated as speakers, presenting the experiences of different Latin American countries in the design and implementation of national policies.

▪ **Peru promotes rural development from a territorial approach**

Under the program “Red de Pueblos,” 18 leaders from cooperation networks in Santa Naria, Barquin, Vegueta, Huara, Sayan, Ambar and Paccho, located north of the capital city of Lima, participated in an internship in the districts of Sincho and Jarpa in the Department of Junin, in the heart of the country. The goal of the activity was to exchange experiences and learn about the different activities being executed with a territorial approach in these places. The main goal of the Red de Pueblos is to contribute to strengthening the local capabilities, promoting self-management, and preserving the cultural and natural values with a gender approach.

Coming events

- **December 3-6.** 31st Annual Miami Conference on the Caribbean Basin. The Director General of IICA will serve as moderator for the session on “Agribusiness – Balancing Food Security and Biofuels.”
- **March 2008.** First Forum/ Program for Young Leaders involved in the Sustainable Development of Agriculture of the Americas in the 21st Century.

More information

- **IICA reflects on its first 65 years**
- **Opportunities for harvesting wealth through tourism discussed during Seventh Caribbean Week of Agriculture**