

## IICA AND NAPPO TO WORK TOGETHER TO ENCOURAGE COUNTRIES OF THE AMERICAS TO ADOPT AND IMPLEMENT PHYTOSANITARY STANDARDS

*"Every country needs regulations to protect consumers from unsafe imported food and to prevent the dissemination of pests, parasites or invasive species." – David C. Hatch*



**L to R:** IICA's David C. Hatch and NAPPO's, Ian MacDonnell sign Agreement to promote agriculture and food safety in the Western Hemisphere.

**Washington, DC – November 18, 2009** – The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and the North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO) today signed a Letter of Agreement aimed at promoting agriculture health and food safety in North America and the Western Hemisphere. The Agreement will serve as a framework to facilitate the dissemination of key information on plant protection and increase technical cooperation in that area, with a view to encourage countries of the Americas to adopt and implement international phytosanitary standards.

Created in 1976 as a regional organization of the International Plant Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), NAPPO is the phytosanitary standard setting organization recognized by the North American Free Trade Agreement. Comprised of the public and private sectors in Canada, the United States and Mexico, the organization serves as a forum for collaboration in the development of science-based standards intended to protect agricultural, forest and other plant resources against regulated plant pests, while facilitating trade.

IICA, the specialized agency for agriculture of the Inter-American System which focuses on providing innovative technical cooperation to its 34 Member States in the Western hemisphere, and NAPPO have enjoyed a long history of successful collaboration. Specifically in the implementation of international phytosanitary standards by the countries of the Americas and in organizing, promoting and presenting international science seminars on current and emerging pest issues which have threaten the plant resources of the Americas.

"The ongoing collaboration between NAPPO and IICA represents an opportunity to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of both organizations and will contribute to the achievement of our objectives," explained Ian MacDonnell, NAAPO Executive Director. He continued, "IICA's expertise and experience in technical cooperation compliments our track record of regional and international effectiveness and so, together, we can create a very effective team to share relevant information to strengthen trade through sound regulatory development and training."

The promotion of sustainable agriculture, trade and competitiveness and improved agriculture health and food safety are common goals shared between the two organizations. According to IICA's Associate Deputy Director General, Director of the Northern Region, Director of Strategic Partnerships and Representative in the United States of Americas, David C. Hatch, the signing of the 2 year Agreement is of critical importance. "Small farmers in the region often lack resources to respond to the many changes of our rapidly evolving world." He continued, "IICA will work closely with NAPPO to increase capacity of our organizations to provide technical cooperation in the field of plant health and protection so that our farmers are in positions to take advantage of today's highly competitive markets." He also added, "It is fundamental to trade that countries have the confidence that imported foods and other products do not contain pests or invasive plant species."

The areas of cooperation of the Agreement focus on identifying and assessing technical needs of countries with regard to the implementation of phytosanitary standards; Assisting with the promotion of relevant seminars and events and, in some cases, facilitating the participation of country specialists to the events and seminars; Disseminating information among countries of the Americas; Providing organizational and technical expertise for seminars related to current plant protection issues; Promoting the implementation of regional and international phytosanitary standards and; Collaborating on research needs, as necessary.

## **ABOUT IICA**

Established in 1942, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture is the specialized agency for agriculture and the rural milieu of the Inter-American System, whose purpose is to provide innovative technical cooperation to the Member States, with a view to achieving their sustainable development in aid of the peoples of the Americas. Today, 34 IICA offices the length and breadth of the hemisphere are working to meet the needs of the countries in areas such as: trade and agribusiness development; sustainable rural development; agricultural health and food safety; technology and innovation; education and training; and information and communication.

For additional information on IICA, please go to: [www.iica.int](http://www.iica.int)

### **More information**

alondon@iicawash.org

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