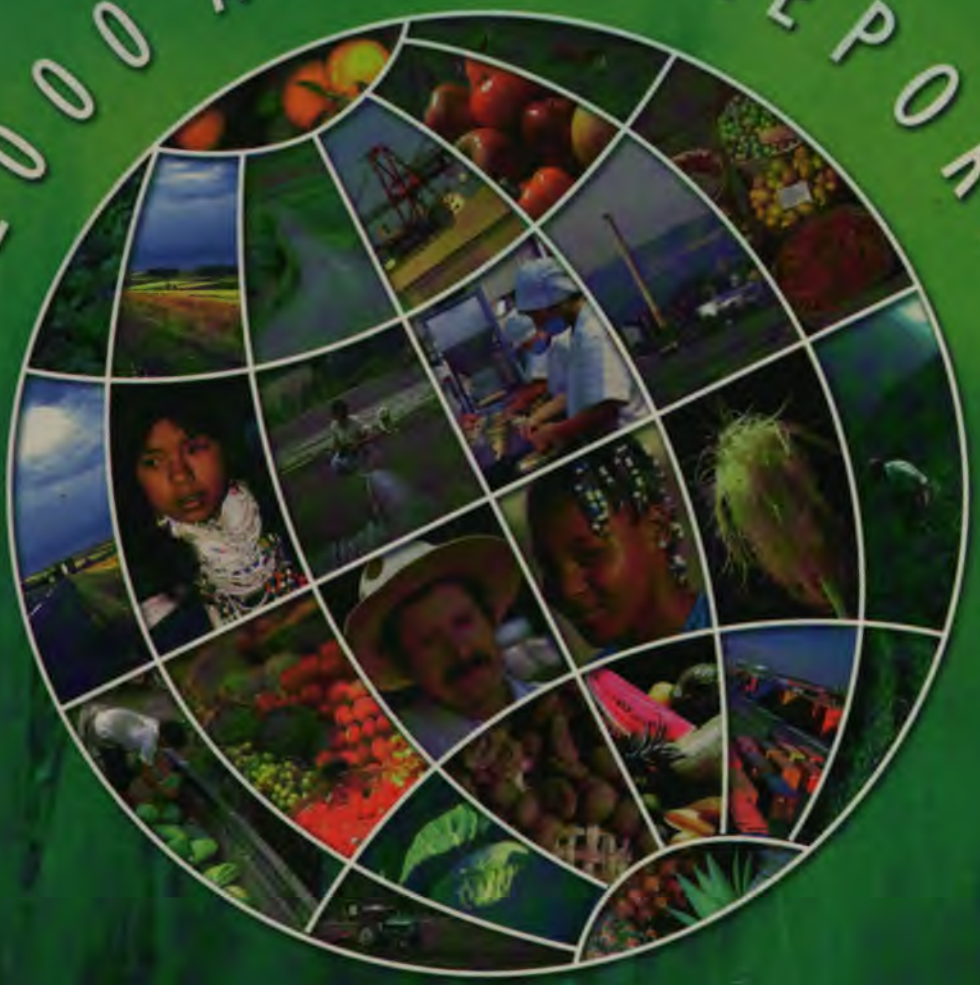
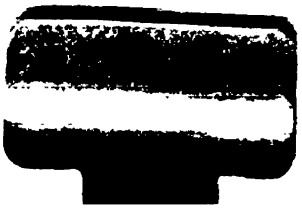
2000 ANNUAL REPORT



IICA

INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR COOPERATION ON AGRICULTURE



2000 ANNUAL REPORT

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INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR COOPERATION ON AGRICULTURE

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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

As the last year of the twentieth century and of the millennium, 2000 was a very special year for the international community. Ideas fostering change gained considerable force, as did the need for cooperation agencies to find new ways to project themselves into the future.

In approving IICA's Medium Term Plan, the Inter-American Board of Agriculture made it possible for the Institute to participate in efforts to draw up an inter-American strategy for agriculture.

On that important occasion, IICA embarked on an effort to reassess the value of agriculture, drawing attention to its importance in creating prosperity, and as a way of life for millions of rural families in the countries of the Americas. The Institute also focused on finding ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its endeavors to achieve its objectives and provide services to the member countries.

During 2000, the Institute analyzed its strengths and the opportunities available to it for providing technical cooperation to agricultural sector institutions, taking into account the priorities defined in each country relative to the new role of the greater agricultural sector, its contribution to economic development and to improving the quality of life for the rural population.

One outcome of this analysis was the development of the Institute's corporate strategy for 2000-2001, the main purpose of which was to define ways to revitalize the thematic focus of the Institute and to upgrade the efficiency of the Institute's operations through strategic actions that enable the Institute to play an active role in building the future.

Another development that contributed to strengthening and revitalizing the Institute was the approval of Resolution AG/RES 1728 during the thirtieth session of the OAS General Assembly, held in Windsor, Canada in June 2000. By means of this resolution, the OAS recognized the IABA as the highest-level ministerial forum on agriculture of the inter-American system, replacing the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Agriculture (ICMA).

Thus, the IABA is now the forum responsible for "analyzing and building consensus on policies and strategic priorities" for agriculture and rural life in the hemisphere. In the same resolution, IICA was instructed to develop and strengthen mechanisms of cooperation and exchange with other organs and organizations of the inter-American system and associated with the Summits of the Americas process.

It is important to note that this new situation enables IICA to do more to support the efforts of its Member States to foster agricultural development and improve living conditions for the rural population.

Faced with this challenge, as well as a growing demand for technical support and economic and human resource limitations, IICA decided that it could increase the effectiveness of its services by working to strengthen and expand agreements and strategic alliances with other organizations, and in this way improve its capacity to meet the increased demand for support to bring about change in the sector.

In its efforts to strike a balance among coverage, the quality of technical services and the resources available, the Institute has attached priority to meeting two of today's most pressing challenges: to make agriculture both competitive and equitable, and to improve living conditions in the rural milieu.

In compliance with IABA guidelines calling for the provision of succinct, analytical and concrete information on the Institute's actions, this Annual Report provides an overview of its work during the year 2000, specifying achievements made by each Institute unit, at the national, regional and hemispheric levels.

I am confident that the information compiled in this report is both useful and timely. Pursuant to IABA guidelines, more detailed information is also available in the Annual Report Annexes, which can be found on IICA's web site.

Carlos E. Aquino G.
Director General

Strategic Challenges Faced by Agriculture in the Americas on the Threshold of the Twenty-First Century

Dramatic Changes in the Agricultural Setting

During the last two decades of the twentieth century, agriculture and the rural milieu in the Americas were caught up in a whirlwind of unprecedented changes that altered the conditions and game rules of their economic, political and social stakeholders. Not only were these changes rapid and sweeping, it now appears that they will be a constant. Occurring at the international, regional and national levels, they pose threats and create uncertainty; however, they also offer a range of opportunities that can be tapped to advance toward the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu.

The international and inter-American settings have changed

Agriculture must adapt to **globalization and trade liberalization**, which have increased trade flows in goods, services, investment and financial capital, spurred changes in consumer preferences, given rise to new products, fostered technological development and changes in the nature of relations among countries. Globalization is a phenomenon, and trade liberalization a strategy adopted by the countries. Interaction between the two results in an internationalization of the effects of economic and social phenomena that transcend national borders. This leaves national governments with little leeway for establishing controls or corrective mechanisms to modify the undesired economic, social and environmental effects of globalization.

As part of this process, a new international institutional framework is developing, one that addresses the issues of environment, poverty alleviation, production and trade. One of the clearest manifestations are the rules being created under the agreements of the WTO. Agriculture and rural development policies are affected directly by the Agreement on Agriculture and others dealing with sanitary and phytosanitary measures, trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights, trade in services, technical barriers to trade, dispute settlement mechanisms, etc. The countries are also negotiating a new generation of trade agreements that will modify the game rules of the present institutional framework, as well as the ways of it operates.

Agriculture must also address a **new technological revolution.** Breakthroughs in communications, informatics, information and communication networks, and genetic engineering are revolutionizing the structures of production, trade and finance, to the point that the parties involved in production and trade do not need to have direct contact with, nor the physical presence of, the goods that are to be traded. Biotechnology and genetic manipulation are also altering the comparative and competitive advantages stemming from natural resources. Access to information can determine whether an agent remains in or is excluded from the market.

As a result of the technological advances of the last twenty years (including the progress made in improving seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and irrigation), more food is available and there is less hunger than in previous decades. However, some analysts suggest that this progress has been achieved at the expense of natural resources, and there is growing concern about the **limits of the natural resource base.**

Generally speaking, the amount of land given over to agriculture is declining. There are several reasons for this: a) the degradation caused when land is used for activities to which it is not suited; b) floods and other natural disasters; and, c) the expansion of urban areas. In regard to the latter, in addition to natural population growth, cities absorb small farmers that leave the countryside because of the declining productivity of their land or because they are attracted by industrialization. In some regions, pover-

ty is due in part to the poor quality of natural resources vis-à-vis the size of the population.

At the inter-American level, during the 1990s (and especially since the 1994 Miami Summit) efforts were made to strengthen regional dialogue and there is a renewed commitment to integration and development in the hemisphere. Presidential agendas are replete with agreements and proposals aimed at reversing negative environmental trends, ranging from global warming to desertification. Moreover, given the widely held view that **the living standards of the rural population are steadily declining,** many international organizations and governments are making bold efforts to adopt innovative agendas to activate the rural economy, based on agrifood and agricultural activities.

The countries and international agencies are developing new visions of and groundbreaking agendas for the rural economy, which include agricultural and agribusiness activities as well as the concept of a new rurality. They also take into account the enormous potential of agricultural and non-agricultural employment and revenues in rural areas, and the all-important links between the rural economy and biodiversity, natural resources and the environment[1].

One of the priority objectives of the region's presidents is to achieve **greater economic integration and free trade.** This is, in fact, the area in which most progress has been made, through the efforts to construct the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), the negotiations for which should conclude at the latest in 2005.

The national context has also changed

Most Latin American and Caribbean countries have endeavored to **reform the State and adjust their economic policies,** since these have had a major impact on the performance of agriculture and living conditions in the rural milieu. Although significant progress has been made in stabilizing macroeconomic conditions (the key to economic growth), different analyses have shown that there has been no improvement in the distribution of the fruits of growth in the region. On the contrary, inequality and poverty have grown and there are serious gaps in the areas of education and social investment.

Agriculture is one of the sectors that has been most affected by economic and institutional reforms, mainly because State intervention in domestic and external markets was one of the chief characteristics of the previous development strategy. **The reforms in agriculture** have impacted the performance of production activities, the way of doing business in agriculture, and even the sources of revenues in rural areas, especially for small-scale and subsistence farmers. The effects, however, have not been uniform.

While it is true that examples can be found throughout the hemisphere of agricultural activities that have succeeded in a more open environment with less State support (e.g., non-traditional export crops), most agricultural production units (especially those that sell their output for domestic consumption) have encountered difficulties in coming to terms with this new competitive setting and, in many cases, have folded and disappeared from the market.

The Strategic Challenges

The main challenge for the countries of the Americas is to achieve a sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu. This means improving the living standards of the rural population on a sustainable basis, taking the territorial dimension into account, and endeavoring to satisfy the needs of both present and future generations. This means ensuring that use of natural resources today does not jeopardize their use in the future. Improving rural living conditions will require upgrading the capabilities and efficiency of agrifood systems in order to be able to respond to specific demands from the domestic and international markets; it will also require ensuring that the process benefit all participating social actors and that there are no negative social and environmental externalities.

To meet the challenge described above, two obstacles must be overcome: a) agriculture must become more competitive, but it must promote equity and make rational use of natural resources; and b) rural poverty must be reduced and living standards improved in rural areas.

The first of these challenges, making agriculture more competitive with equity, calls for a wider, integrated and

1 See, for example, the documents dealing with the new rurality, prepared by the IICA/IDB/ECLAC/FAO/IFAD Inter-agency Commission, or the proposals put forth by certain developed countries to introduce concepts such as "the multifunctional nature of agriculture" and "territorial competitiveness."

systemic vision of agriculture, one that extends beyond the farms, crops and animals. The countries need specific strategies for modernizing agriculture. They need sectoral policies to be in line with macroeconomic policies, and these policies must recognize the heterogeneity of agricultural activity. The different links of production chains need to be articulated, starting with primary production and ranging to processing, services and, finally, to getting products to their end markets (domestic or international).

Competitiveness in agriculture is based on the capacity of an agrifood chain (and its respective enterprises –links– and economic agents) to maintain and steadily expand and improve its market share, performing the actions needed to conserve and sustain its production base, and generating enough revenues to steadily raise living standards. To ensure a better quality of life and human development with equity, all actors must be able to compete in commercial circuits. This means that family agriculture (medium-, small-scale and microenterprises) must also be able to address issues such as agricultural health, total quality, food safety and innovation. Government policy must also contribute to improving their participation in development processes.

In most of the countries, this capacity is dictated by a set of factors that come into play at the national, regional and local levels. At the national level, issues such as governability, education, science, technology and macroeconomic policy[2] play a determining role. At the regional level, the natural resource base is particularly important (per capita availability and quality), as is the location of production units in relation to markets, and communications and transportation facilities. At the micro level, the factors that determine competitiveness are largely determined by the enterprises' capacity to innovate and produce goods of the quality demanded by the market (organization, productivity and profitability).

Pressure is also growing for competitiveness to include matters such as environmental management (at all levels) in enterprises. For example, ISO 14000 standards establish new conditions for clean production processes, designed to minimize or eliminate negative environmental externalities.

With regard to the second challenge, improving living conditions in the rural milieu, the premise is that the development process must benefit all the economic agents and social actors involved. This concept of rural milieu is different from the traditional one of primary small-scale and micro-producers and the rural poor. It is a physical concept that includes the population in a given territory made up of non-urban regions and spaces; it may also consist of untouched natural areas, farmland, forests, small towns and cities, industrial nuclei and decision-making centers.

The rural milieu, then, is a diverse economic and social fabric, in which a series of stakeholders interact: production units of different sizes, businesses, commercial and service enterprises, and small- and medium-sized agroindustries. The production base comprises the existing cultural and farming traditions, the natural resources and their habitat, and an institutional framework comprising different rules and forms of organization that orient and give cohesion to the social aggregates. Since it encompasses more than natural resources and the productive-commercial activities of agriculture, this broader, physical concept of the rural milieu provides new alternatives for rural dwellers to improve their lot, such as through the provision of environmental services and activities related to eco- and agro-tourism. Under this view, the added functions of rural territories (productive, social and environmental) are the basis for revitalizing rural development strategies and policies.

2 Exchange rate, monetary and tax policies, in particular.

The above shows that there is a clear link between competitiveness with equity and better living conditions in the rural milieu. Equity must be an integral part of agricultural competitiveness, and achievement of substantial improvements in such will depend on eliminating the innumerable bottlenecks that prevent the rural population from accessing the benefits of development. For example, the construction of roads, bridges, ports and airports in regions at a great distance from the dynamic centers of development is necessary to facilitate access to the inputs and products markets. It will also contribute to reducing the cost of, and the time involved in, transporting products and people. Similarly, the establishment of electric power and telephony services will provide access to information which, in turn, will help improve decision making on investments and production.

However, the idea of equity as an inherent characteristic of competitiveness is quite abstract in strictly economic terms, given that under that perspective, reducing production costs is the fastest way, in the short term, to offer a product with a lower end price. This is obviously one way to be competitive, but it addresses only one aspect of the problem, since competitiveness –in the broad sense– can be viewed from different perspectives and from different levels.

In fact, competitiveness cannot be achieved solely by reducing salaries and relative prices (input/product), nor can it be thought of only in terms of the management of risk and the uncertainty of production (fluctuation of prices and losses due to climatological reasons). The concept of equity and its bearing on competitiveness also needs to be understood and incorporated by the agents of different links in the chains, the various groups of producers linked to these chains, and the different processes in which they participate.

The territorial characteristics of equity are often overlooked. This has to do with the real possibilities of certain regions to be involved in specific chains with some degree of success, and the importance of designing specific economic instruments to promote development in the poorest regions.

The need for institutional Change

The first of the challenges (making agriculture more competitive) calls for a wider, integrated and systemic vision of agriculture, one that extends beyond the farms, crops and animals. The countries need specific strategies for modernizing agriculture. They need sectoral policies to be in line with macroeconomic policies, and these policies must recognize the heterogeneity of agricultural activity. The different links of production chains need to be articulated, starting with primary production, moving on to processing, incorporating services and, finally, getting products to their end markets (domestic or international).

To tackle this challenge, we must get away from the *public agricultural sector's narrow view of competitiveness*. We must acknowledge that many of the elements that impact sectoral competitiveness lie outside the sphere of responsibility of the public agricultural sector (macroeconomic policy, infrastructure development, poverty alleviation, planning, natural resource management, etc.). This requires adjustments to be made in institutions, roles to be redefined, and mechanisms to be developed for articulating public actors and for linking them with those in the private sector. As building competitiveness through agrifood complexes is something that lies beyond the traditional scope of action and specialization of the ministries of agriculture (MoAs), they need to be redesigned.

The task of the public agricultural sector (the MoA plus specialized institutions) is to foster increased efficiency of services to improve the competitiveness of agriculture; it must also promote a culture of quality. This calls for modernizing the services associated with technological innovation (as technology is the main source of productivity increases), agricultural health and product quality, among other things. Efforts are also needed to promote the development of service markets, upgrade business management skills, and incorporate environmental concerns.

In tackling the second challenge, we must recognize that development of the rural milieu does not depend, necessarily and exclusively, on activities related to agricultural production. The *institutional aspects of the new rurality must be taken into account*. Rural development also exceeds the scope and capabilities of the MoAs, which are usually assigned responsibility for this issue. Other stakeholders must be involved, including other ministries, local governments, regional agencies and civil society organizations. New institutional arrangements are also needed for coordinating, formulating and implementing policies and strategies for developing the rural milieu.

Both challenges call for *efficient, influential and transparent markets*. Markets need to be developed and require

innovative instruments to make them more efficient and transparent. This can include commodity exchanges, futures markets and arbitration mechanisms. Producers' capabilities also need to be upgraded to enable them to make use of information technology, apply new instruments efficiently, channel their investments, minimize their risks and maximize their benefits.

Institutional reforms need to be adjusted. Trends in institutional agricultural reform observed throughout the hemisphere raise justified concerns about: a) the declining importance given to agriculture by politicians; and b) the development of an exclusionary process modernization (islands of modernity in a sea of poverty). Therefore, the course of these reforms needs to be corrected.

The traditional view of agriculture fails to recognize the sector's true importance to national development because it does not take into account agriculture's many dimensions and interrelationships with rural society and the rest of the economy. Therefore, further efforts need to be made to promote *a new vision of agriculture and to reposition the sector.* Leaders, public servants, businesspeople and society as a whole must recognize the true importance of agriculture; this can be achieved by promoting a dialog aiming to build consensus, and develop and implement action strategies.

The new institutional framework must be built with the cooperation of all, as it can only be achieved by means of a joint effort between the public and private sectors. The public sector needs to determine the MoA's strategic role in these new circumstances, as the competitiveness of agrifood complexes and rural development are issues that the MoAs have neither the institutional organization nor the capabilities to address alone.

With the reform of public institutions, the MoAs lost highly trained professionals, which diminished their capacity to provide leadership. Now, *new capabilities are required for formulating appropriate policies.* Therefore, the ministries and private sector organizations must upgrade their capacity for analysis and strategic thinking, and put into place consensus-building mechanisms for formulating policies and in support of trade negotiations. This will require investing in human resources, upgrading information systems, and improving the capacity to conduct research to support policy decision making.

There is considerable variety in the performance and characteristics of stakeholders in the agricultural sector. Therefore it is essential that, *in formulating policy, the heterogeneity of agriculture's principal players be taken into account.* Some farmers are competitive (commercial agriculture), others can become competitive but must first overcome certain hurdles (transitional agriculture), and some are subsistence farmers who are unlikely to ever become competitive, given the enormous structural constraints they face.

Farmers need to be attuned to the market: they must produce what the market demands. Two things are essential for this. Farmers must be able to access market intelligence so that they can identify products for which there is strong demand. Second, they must develop a business approach that enables them to: a) maneuver in dynamic and changing markets; b) anticipate events; and c) be flexible enough to incorporate innovations and changes to transform threats into opportunities.

Adjusting IICA's Vision for its Work in the Thematic Areas

While the Institute's work is obviously focused on "agriculture," we must understand that the issue in question –competitiveness– is the result of a complex matrix of relationships that encompass producers, businesses, chains, the relationships among all of these, and the relationships of rural dwellers with their territory. Once we understand the factors that influence or affect the level of competitiveness of specific enterprises, products or agroindustries (or types of agriculture), it will be easier to determine the "strategic activities" that the MoA and the private sector should undertake in order to successfully promote competitiveness in agriculture.

Agrifood chains and territorial spaces as units of analysis and operation. The agrifood chain is key to the concept of systemic agriculture, including as it does both primary production and the different types of processing that a given product undergoes from its point of origin (the farm) to the end consumer. It not only involves the most immediate links for the processing of raw materials (milk, yogurt, cheese, etc.) but also production activities and/or services associated with complementary processes, such as for packaging, etc.

On a practical level, the concept of chains facilitates the design and establishment of clusters around specific chains, which can play a crucial role in driving development in specific territorial units. Successful operation of

each link (and enterprise) in the chain requires a skillful handling of specific activities in negotiating processes that foster an "equitable" distribution of the benefits among all the agents (actors) involved in the different links (and enterprises) of the production process.

"Territorial spaces" normally consist of units of analysis and operation having more or less homogeneous, and typically rural, social, productive-economic and environmental, characteristics. For practical purposes, they sometimes correspond to administrative units, such as municipalities (cantons or counties); in other cases, they are defined by agroecological homogeneity (micro-regions); while in yet others, this space is a micro-watershed or watershed adopted as a unit for planning and action.

Faced with this enormous challenge and the growing demand for technical assistance, IICA will strengthen its supply of services through actions to upgrade the technical structure with which the Institute supports sectoral change. In an attempt to strike a balance among coverage, the quality of technical services and the resources available, the Institute has established the two pressing challenges described earlier in this document as its strategic objectives: a) agricultural competitiveness with equity and b) better living conditions in the rural milieu. The aim is to more clearly orient and focus the Institute's activities so as to ensure that it achieves its core objective, which is to contribute to the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu.

In adapting the institutional framework to the challenges of competitiveness and the new concept of rural development, the roles of the public and private actors must be clearly defined, as must the mechanisms to be used for building consensus and upgrading the collaboration that is required for successfully implementing strategic actions. As mentioned earlier, such action is well beyond the scope of the MoAs (which provide IICA with its mandate). The Institute must therefore expand its clientele to include other public and private actors with whom it can work in coordination.

HEMISPHERIC ACTIONS

HEMISPHERIC ACTIONS

INTRODUCTION

As the last year of the twentieth century and of the millennium, 2000 was a very special year for the entire international community. Inasmuch as it also represented a new beginning, ideas about change gained momentum and institutions sought new ways to project themselves into the future.

For its part, IICA set out to reassess the value of agriculture as a driving force for the development of the countries of the hemisphere, focusing on ways to become more efficient and effective in achieving its institutional objectives. To this end, during 2000, the Institute conducted a thorough analysis of its strengths and of the opportunities available to it for providing technical cooperation to institutions in the agricultural sector, based on the priorities defined in each country regarding the new role of the expanded agricultural sector, and its contribution to economic development and to improving the quality of life in rural areas.

One outcome of this analysis was the development of the Institute's corporate strategy for the 2000-2001 period, whose purposes are: a) to define ways to revitalize the thematic focus of the Institute, and b) to improve institutional operations and make further progress in developing the vision of the IICA of the future.

In this report, particular attention is paid to the progress made and the proposals developed for IICA's different strategic areas of action, the impact of which was strengthened by the dialogue and synergies resulting from the process to identify common objectives associated with the thematic focuses that prioritize the Institute's actions. The first thematic focus is the competitiveness of agrifood chains within a framework of equity and sustainability; the second is improving the quality of life in rural areas.

IICA's Technical Consortium (CONTEC) took on the task of defining the thematic areas more specifically, with a view to providing a more effective response to demands generated at the hemispheric and regional levels; determining the appropriate response to demands placed on the Cooperation Agencies (CAs) in the countries; and providing support to the CAs in the execution of their technical cooperation programs.

As follow-up to this effort, all the mechanisms needed for reaching agreement among the operating units of the Institute (CONTEC, the Regional Centers and the CAs) will be established, so as to ensure effective implementation of the corporate strategy, especially through the synergetic action of the strategic areas of IICA.

Below is a summary of what the Institute accomplished in 2000 within the framework of a course of action aimed at achieving excellence in the two thematic focuses mentioned above.

Toward Sustainable Development

IICA has attached special importance to doing more to conceptualize the approach to the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu through institutional articulation and coordination, in order to develop conceptual and methodological frameworks, computer-assisted instruments for monitoring and evaluation, information systems, and training. This work has been carried out under the coordination of the Technical Secretariat of the Sustainable Development Committee (CODES), and by experts in the fields of competitiveness, trade and environment, eco-labeling, information systems, and integrated natural resource management.

In the area of competitiveness, emphasis was placed on equity and on improving the standard of living of the rural population. To this end, a number of working documents were prepared and incorporated into a technical document on agricultural competitiveness, agri-food chains and the impact of the spatial localization factor. Also, work continued to develop a methodology for measuring the competitiveness of agrifood chains and for studying and updating the economic, social and institutional factors associated with it.

The IICA Group on Competitiveness (competitividad@infoagro.net), made up of IICA professionals stationed in Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Panama, Peru and some Caribbean countries, continued to serve as a forum for discussion, reflection, analysis and distribution of materials on this topic. Information on competitiveness was made available on the official IICA web page devoted to sustainable development. As part of this documentation effort, a file of bibliographic references, executive summaries of the documents contained in the file, and a list of links to the web pages of organizations specializing in competitiveness were prepared.

In the area of trade and environment, IICA worked during the second half of 2000 in preparing a document that analyzes the new rules governing trade and the environment. As each chapter was finished, a technical booklet was prepared to facilitate understanding of the topic, and for use in training activities on the relationship between the environment and these new rules, as well as their impact on small farmers. Also prepared were executive summaries of the chapters, a list of selected readings and a bibliographic file.

Stemming from the efforts in the area of trade and environment, a study on eco-labeling programs was launched, and a technical document on eco-labeling as an instrument for differentiating products and spurring competitiveness is currently being prepared. Additionally, a specialized bibliographic information system, a data base containing important readings on the topic, and a website on eco-labeling are being created.

Information systems provide technical support to each of the topics, facilitating the use of the methodologies and bibliographic resources produced by CODES. The web page of the Technical Secretariat was updated to include new links to sites addressing the areas of trade and environment, competitiveness and sustainable development. Also, special importance was attached to developing and updating software programs.

As regards hemispheric action, mention should be made of the cooperation agreements signed by IICA and the University of California at Davis, as well as the strengthening of relations with the OAS, and of the institutional mechanism for joint preparation of documents monitoring the agreements of the Presidential Summits. A progress report was written on the plan of action for sustainable development in the Americas.

Along with the Earth Council, IICA participated in and provided support for the NCSD Sustainable Development Collaborative: Strategy Meeting, in which the Institute presented a paper on agriculture and sustainability at the national level. Also, CONTEC and the CA/Honduras drew up a proposal for conducting technical and financial feasibility studies and designing a natural resource management program for priority river basins of Ulua, Chamelecon and Nacaome (IDB project HO-0129).

In the area of education, support was provided to the Universities of Costa Rica (UCR) and Wageningen in drafting the document "Workshop on Sustainable Animal Production." A group of students from the UCR School of Economics received guidance in writing a graduate thesis on the evaluation of the environmental impact of agrifood chains. Lastly, a book on microregional rural development was written. It will be used as a textbook for the distance master's degree program in rural development developed around the book, offered by the Universidad Nacional (UNA) of Costa Rica and the Universidad Austral, in Valdivia, Chile.

POLICIES AND TRADE

The trade opening and economic modernization processes under way in IICA's Members States have led to a reassessment of the role played by international markets, be they global, hemispheric or regional, in the allocation of resources and in the competitiveness of the agrifood sector. In this regard, the WTO agreements of 1995, and the commitments assumed by the member countries under same, have become the new paradigm for designing and executing sectoral policies. The re-opening of agricultural trade negotiations under the WTO, the continuing efforts to establish the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), and the formal establishment of numerous multilateral agreements among the countries of the hemisphere, have increased the demand for, and the priority attached to, technical cooperation in the area of trade negotiations, including institutional support for same and the participation of the agrifood sector in these processes.

In this context, the objective of IICA's cooperation in this area is to collaborate with its Member States in upgrading their capabilities to conduct two interrelated, simultaneous processes: a) to tap existing opportunities and ensure access to international markets by correctly administering trade agreements, applying trade regulations, and participating in the new negotiations mentioned above; and b) to define and adopt sectoral policies that, while upholding the countries' international commitments, contribute to making the agrifood sector, and the chains that make it up, more competitive, with a view to diversifying and modernizing production or re-entering foreign markets.

HEMISPHERIC ACTIVITIES

The Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), at its Tenth Regular Meeting, held in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, approved Resolution 348, which instructs IICA to follow up on the agricultural trade negotiations. Accordingly, during 2000, the Area of Policies and Trade continued to serve as Technical Secretariat of the Informal Consultative Group of Agricultural Negotiators of the Americas (GINA), which held five meetings during the year, each attended by more than 40 national delegates.

The number of subscribers to the electronic forum designed for this consultative group rose to 220. Each subscriber is informed daily, via e-mail, of developments in the agricultural trade negotiations being conducted under the WTO and the FTAA.

The sixth and seventh meetings of the Pan American Association of Commodity Exchanges (APBP) were held in February and December, respectively. IICA's Area of Policies and Trade served as Technical Secretariat for both events, during which twelve studies on different aspects of the marketing of agrifood products were presented. IICA prepared and presented seven of them.

NEW TECHNICAL COOPERATION AGREEMENTS

In keeping with the policy of establishing strategic alliances, two technical cooperation agreements were signed in the year 2000. The first, with FEPALE, will foster training for dairy entrepreneurs in the area of agricultural trade negotiations. It will also include preparation of a document on the negotiating position of the dairy sector for the WTO and FTAA negotiations.

The other agreement was signed with the Economic Research Institute of the University of Costa Rica (IICE/UCR), and aims at developing methodologies for analyzing the current situation in agriculture.

DIRECT TECHNICAL SUPPORT

IICA continued its work in 2000 to modernize domestic markets, providing advice and support to the com-

modity exchanges of El Salvador (BOLPROES), Venezuela (BOLPRIAVEN), Colombia (BAN S.A.) and Costa Rica (BOLPRO) for developing new financial instruments negotiable on the agricultural commodities market. The Institute also cooperated with the ministries of agriculture of Chile and Bolivia, and their respective commodity exchange promotion groups, in developing the legal framework for establishing commodity exchanges in those countries, and in addressing other aspects of the effort to establish and operate agricultural commodities markets.

At the request of the Ministry of Agriculture of Honduras, IICA provided advice on and helped design the Honduran Business Information System (SIEH), which is administered by the Economic Policies and Productivity Project, funded by the USAID.

Training and dissemination

During the year, specialists from the Area of Policies and Trade participated in 27 seminars and workshops, making presentations on trade negotiations, domestic market development and institutional modernization, and providing training to some 2,720 officials from the public and private sectors of 18 countries. Most of these events were organized by public or private sector organizations, which requested and funded the participation of IICA specialists; others were sponsored by IICA, with support from international organizations and/or private-sector associations.

Publications

Eight documents were published in the newly created "Technical Documents on Policies and Trade Series," and two quantitative studies on agrifood trade in the Americas were published on CD.

Strategic alliances

In order to enhance the implementation of IICA's activities, strategic alliances were established or strengthened with international organizations (Secretariat of the WTO, FAO), hemispheric organizations (IDB, Intal, FLACSO, UC/OAS, ALADI), regional organizations (CORECA/CAC, SIECA, RNM CARICOM, CAN, Secretariat of MERCOSUR), and national organizations (IICE, of the University of Costa Rica), as well as private-sector associations of hemispheric or regional scope (FEPALE, ALA, APBP).

Science, Technology and Natural Resources

Technology innovation is the principal source of productivity increases in all fields of economic activity, especially agriculture. In order to ensure the sustainable development of agriculture and rural areas, and to respond to increased competition, scientific and technological advances must be complemented by effective measures for assuring access to and use of natural resources by present and future generations. Cognizant of this, the Area of Science, Technology and Natural Resources focused its efforts on the following:

Policies and institutional strengthening for the development of national and regional technology innovation systems

The Institute's position as a provider of technical cooperation in the area of technology innovation and its impact on agricultural competitiveness was strengthened. During the first half of the year, the document "Technological Innovation for Technical Change in Agriculture – Technical Framework for Action," which sets out the conceptual and operating framework for IICA's action in this field, was distributed Institute-wide. PROCIANDINO and PROCISUR incorporated the concept of innovation into their institutional adjustment actions, as did Costa Rica, El Salvador, Bolivia, Ecuador, Venezuela and Nicaragua.

Documents were written on the design of technology innovation policies for the following subjects: a) agricultural research and intellectual property in South America (prepared jointly with the regional cooperative programs for agricultural research and technology transfer (PROCIs)); b) intellectual property and biotechnologies from the perspective of agricultural trade; c) impact of the new technologies: the case of transgenic plants in Latin America and the Caribbean; d) institutional management for the new biotechnologies: the case of transgenic plants; e) funding for technology innovation in the agrifood chains of citrus crops (Brazil), potatoes (Colombia), and milk and coffee (Costa Rica); and f) economic valuation of plant genetic resources. The documents were given wide distribution and served as reference materials for seminars and workshops held in the Regional Centers.

A project entitled "Census of Extension Capabilities and Models in Selected Countries of the Americas: Costa Rica, Colombia and Argentina" was launched, funded by the Regional Agricultural Technology Fund (FONTAGRO) and coordinated by IICA's CA/Colombia. Censuses were taken in the countries of the Southern, Andean and Central Regional Centers, and training continued on the management of technology innovation.

Under the IICA/IDB agreement in support of FONTAGRO, by late 2000 several multinational research projects were under way. Of these, 12 were in full operation: six coordinated by the Andean Regional Center and the CA/Colombia, three by the Cooperative Program for the Development of Agricultural Technology in the Southern Cone (PROCISUR) and the CA/Uruguay, one by the CA/Chile and another by the CA/Costa Rica. Guidelines (including a plan of action for preparation of reports and audits) were formulated for administering the projects, and project coordination in the countries was monitored. Support was provided to the Executive Secretariat of FONTAGRO, located in Washington, D.C., in the use and expansion of the project data base and information system.

Institutional models of the PROCIs and equivalent networks were designed; support was given for adjusting them and for developing future work plans. IICA collaborated in efforts to adjust the Cooperative Agricultural Research and Technology Transfer Program for the Andean Subregion (PROCIANDINO), and to create a regional banana and plantain network (MUSALAC) along with the International Network for the Improvement of Banana and Plantain Production (INIBAP). IICA also participated with the Collaborative Vegetable Research and Development Network for Central America (REDCAHOR, Stage II). It held discussions with FAO and IFPRI regarding the articulation of the plant genetic resources networks (REMERFI, TROPIGEN, CABGERNET and REDARFIT) and the PROCISUR subprogram on plant genetic resources. IICA also provided support in creating the Cooperative Agricultural Research and Technology Transfer Program for the Northern Region (PROCINORTE) by designing its organizational model and providing support to the NORGEN plant genetic resources network.

Institutional strengthening for integrated natural resource management (soil and water resources)

Through joint actions with the Technical Secretariat of CODES, the Area of Science, Technology and Natural Resources worked to enhance IICA's capability to provide technical cooperation in the area of integrated natural resource management. In doing so, it promoted and supported regional and hemispheric discussions on soil and water conservation; prepared and disseminated institutional analyses and organizational proposals for management of such resources in river basins and agricultural and rural production systems; and proposed the establishment of cooperative mechanisms among countries for improving water resource management in agriculture.

Support of and participation in FORAGRO

The operations of the Regional Forum on Research and Technology Development (FORAGRO) moved forward with meetings of its members, preparation of documents, development of an information system, discussions and electronic forums. IICA's Area of Science, Technology and Natural Resources serves as Technical Secretariat of this organization, and in this connection prepared and disseminated information and studies to stimulate discussion on topics such as: the role of FORAGRO in regional and global cooperation, the technological challenges and opportunities facing agriculture and the rural milieu, institutional trends and courses of action related to technology, the technological premises of the shared vision of agriculture, and multinational, inter-institutional articulation for research. Six successful cases were documented: PROCISUR, FONTAGRO, PROMECAFE, the Regional Cooperative Potato Program (PRECODEPA), the Latin American Conservationist Agriculture Network (RELACO), and "Direct Planting," which were presented at the meeting of the World Forum held in Dresden.

The second international meeting of FORAGRO, entitled "Agriculture with Knowledge," was held in Mexico in September, attended by representatives of 30 countries in Latin America and some 50 national, regional and international organizations. One outcome of the meeting was the Declaration of Mexico 2000, which creates an alliance among the members of FORAGRO to promote research and development in the Americas.

Steps were taken to establish INFOTEC through the formulation of the respective project, the holding of a regional consultation workshop, preparation of a preliminary directory of research and development institutions and specialists, the placement of these data bases on a web page, and the establishment of the first stage of the administrative unit. In addition, first steps were taken to secure external funding from the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR) and the Web-based Information System for Agricultural Research for Development (WISARD).

Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Agricultural health and food safety are topics that deserve the full attention of the public and private sectors of the hemisphere, not only because attention thereto must be observed as a requirement for gaining competitive access to global markets, but also because of the importance they hold for public health and well-being.

In this context, IICA's Directorate of the Area of Agricultural Health and Food Safety focused its actions on five priority areas, all aimed at achieving competitiveness with equity and at improving the standard of living of rural populations.

The first consisted of *offering assistance to the countries in updating and modernizing their sanitary, phytosanitary and food safety systems (SPFSSs)*, in particular as pertains the development of their technical, regulatory and institutional components, with active public and private sector participation. An initial evaluation revealed that the SPFSSs in the Americas have technological, regulatory and institutional imbalances, meaning they are fragmented systems that have difficulties in identifying and prioritizing actions to protect consumers, increase competitiveness and expand trade. The data from the study show that, of the 33 countries providing information, seven make up a group that, on average, meet 76% of the requirements for proper operation of the SPFSSs, in that they comply with 93% of the regulatory requirements, 77% of the technological requirements and 59% of the institutional requirements. The remaining 26 countries, on average, meet barely 36% of the requirements, complying with 49% of the regulatory requirements, 44% of technological requirements and 16% of the institutional requirements.

The information from the study was used to write two documents intended to provide input for national and regional decision making in this area. They were distributed in printed and electronic form, and submitted to the third regular meeting of the WTO Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, and to the Informal Consultative Group of Agricultural Negotiators of the Americas (GINA) of the FTAA. In addition, materials were prepared for courses on animal health, plant protection and food safety, available at the Agrihealth digital library. A data base of experts in agricultural health and food safety was developed and is available through the Agrihealth site and the Caribbean Agricultural Health Information System (CARAPHIN), which promotes transparency and is a model that can be replicated in other regions.

A strategic alliance was established with the Program to Eradicate the Mediterranean Fruitfly in Guatemala, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), with a view to implementing pilot projects for the control and eradication of this pest in Central America. Lastly, three documents were published electronically on the Agrihealth site, reporting on successful cases of public-private sector coordination in this field. They constitute a portion of the material used to support modernization of the SPFSSs in the Americas.

The second priority strategic action was the work with the countries regarding *the practical application of the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS)*. To this end, IICA participated on the SPS Committee and in relevant regional organizations such as the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), the OIE and Codex Alimentarius. It also collaborated in implementing sanitary and phytosanitary standards at the regional and national levels, and offered assistance to the FTAA. Of particular note was the establishment of a forum for informal discussions between IICA and the member countries. IICA participated actively in informal meetings, submitting two documents to the SPS Committee, prepared and disseminated printed and electronic versions of four documents as input for meetings, as well as three issues of the ACCESO bulletin. IICA organized and participated in a round table discussion on

the SPS Agreement at the Pan American Congress of Veterinary Sciences (PANVET), in September.

The third action consisted of *strengthening technical orientation and developing leadership in the area of food safety.* Assistance was provided in developing food safety policies and agrifood chains. As a result, a strategic alliance was established with Georgetown University in the United States for the organization of a hemispheric forum on leadership in food safety. This alliance produced the training program "Executive Series on Leadership in Food Safety," the objective of which is to upgrade the leadership capabilities of professionals involved in food safety and to promote the development of comprehensive policies in this area. The training program was presented to the aforementioned hemispheric forum, and was well received by participating countries and international organizations. A professor from Georgetown University and another from the University of North Carolina are spending their sabbatical years at IICA in 2001, where they will contribute to the actions of the Institute in the field of food safety.

The fourth action was the *promotion of alert bulletins on emerging issues and actions to address sanitary and phytosanitary emergencies.* In the year 2000, the regions and countries made considerable use of the Emergencies and Emerging Issues Fund. For instance, the Caribbean Region launched emergency programs against *Paracoccus marginatus* and black sigatoka; the CA/Panama did the same in the case of citrus leprosis, the CA/Peru for migratory locusts, and the CA/Mexico for equine encephalitis.

The fifth and final priority action was *the promotion and improvement of the "Agrihealth" Agricultural Health and Food Safety Network.* Two important actions were the creation of a digital library and a data base of experts, and the support provided to the Caribbean Agricultural Health Information Network (CARAPHIN). A document was drawn up for a project to integrate more modern concepts into agricultural health thinking, extending beyond the traditional view of controlling and eradicating pests and diseases, providing a rapid response to outbreaks of exotic pests and diseases, and implementing quarantine actions. To this end, a multidisciplinary group was set up in September 2000.

The New Rurality

The International Center for Rural Development (CIDER), which includes IICA's Directorate of Sustainable Rural Development, is responsible for leading the Institute's actions to improve the quality of life in rural areas.

CIDER was established on August 25, 2000, as a specialized mechanism for technical cooperation. It is located in the City of Knowledge, Panama, a decision ratified under the IICA/City of Knowledge General Cooperation Agreement, and was inaugurated during the Fifth Ibero-American Forum of Ministers of Agriculture. Its work focuses on eight thematic areas: rural economy, rural poverty alleviation, gender equity, rural youth, development of human and social capital, sustainable natural resource development, construction of networks and alliances, and cooperation services for rural development.

During the year, CIDER worked to prepare and update conceptual frameworks, research and teaching materials addressing the topics of the new rurality, gender and rural youth. Its focus was on the new rurality, which comprises the following elements: a) rural territory; b) human beings: the heart of sustainable rural development; c) equity: as a basis for economic growth; d) the strengthening of democracy and citizen participation; and e) social capital: foundation for the new rurality.

Training activities

At the hemispheric level, more than 40 events (workshops, forums, conferences) were held in IICA's five regions, involving more than 3,000 people, including ministers and deputy ministers of agriculture, politicians, senior officials from agrarian and rural development institutions, organizations working with the issues of gender, women and youth, entrepreneurs, leaders of social organizations, officials and technicians from the public and private sectors, leaders of governmental and nongovernmental organizations, IICA technical staff and university students. CIDER also participated in a conference on rural development held in Hanover, Germany (July); in the Tenth Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government, held in Panama (November), and in the Fifth Ibero-American Forum of Ministers of Agriculture, at which IICA exercised the Technical Secretariat.

Development and strengthening of strategic alliances

Cooperative relations and exchanges with Spain were strengthened through an agreement with the Board of Andalucia, the establishment of an initial cooperative pro-

gram with representatives of Basque organizations, and the drafting of profiles for a joint IICA-CODER/Spain cooperation project. Relations were established through the European Union (EU) with 20 representatives of territorial organizations in Latin America and Europe. CIDER worked with the technical staff of the Leadership Program to systematize its documents, later disseminating them in Latin America.

The Interagency Group on Rural Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, comprising IICA, FAO, ECLAC, IFAD, GTZ and IDB, was consolidated. Its goal is to step up joint activities to address the issue of gender and women in rural areas, and to continue to promote the development of youth and youth leadership. Also, the project "Regional and Municipal Development in Rural Areas" was launched with the IDB; with the World Bank, joint actions began in July to increase IICA-CIDER's technical participation in programs addressing lands, legal security and poverty alleviation.

In November, CIDER, GTZ, ECLAC and IDB worked together to draft a proposal for a workshop to build inter-agency consensus for a proposal to support implementation of the convention on desertification and of mechanisms to improve access to land. Under the project "Gender in Sustainable Rural Development," which receives support from the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA), amendments were proposed for introducing the gender perspective in different documents submitted to the review of IICA's Executive Committee in November, in compliance with Resolution 342. At the same time, efforts were undertaken to sensitize IICA management, executive, administrative and technical staff to gender issues.

CIDER contributed to coordinating, preparing and providing technical assistance to the CIDI/OAS project "Training for Rural Women Leaders in Gender and Sustainable Rural Development," which provided training to 200 women and 150 specialists from governmental organizations in the preparation of projects with a gender perspective, as well as in the topics of leadership, agrarian legislation, labor duties and rights, and rural undertakings. In Costa Rica, a personal and business training program was launched for 40 rural women entrepreneurs, under IICA's alliance with the National Women's Institute (INAMU) and the Costa Rica agricultural sector.

Relations were strengthened with Panama's Ministry of Agricultural Development (MIDA) through the facilitation and provision of technical orientation, at the request of the government, for its process to prepare strategic guidelines for the development of agriculture and the rural milieu. This process involved MIDA officials, representatives of the public and private sectors, and international experts; the results were set out in the document "Rural Panama Plan 2001-2004." Under the strategy for the IICA/MIDA relationship, a Strategic Committee was created, comprising 15 members from MIDA, the Ministry of Planning, the Trade Policy Office, the National Livestock Breeders Association (ANAGAN), the National Poultry Producers Association of Panama (ANAVIP), the National Union of Agricultural Producers (UNPAP), the Rice Growers Association of Chiriqui (APACH) and IICA.

Creation and strengthening of information systems and national, regional and international networks

During the year 2000, the Technical Reference Center was established, information on sustainable rural development was compiled, the CIDER web page (www.infocider.org) was created, a data base of specialists in sustainable rural development was created, as were a virtual library and a news item data base; statistics on sustainable rural development were also gathered.

Between October and November, under an alliance between CIDER, IICA/Uruguay, ECLAC, the Ibero-American Youth Organization (OIJ) and the IDB, the "Electronic Inter-American Consultation on Rural Youths: Youths in the New Rurality" was conducted with broad participation and a fruitful horizontal exchange of experiences and information among participants. This forum recognized youths as key players in development and considered comprehensive and preventive public policies for youths an urgent need.

CIDER's Virtual Observatory launched operations, and the following networks were strengthened: RURALNET, SIDERSO, CAC/CORECA, CIM, OAS, First Ladies, NGO and GO. In addition, the information systems of CIDER and INFOAGRO were upgraded.

Education and Training for Competitive and Sustainable Agriculture

Considerable progress was made in the year 2000 by the Directorate of Education and Training (DECAP).

Cooperative and educational activities were undertaken in close collaboration with IICA's CAs in the countries and its five Regional Directorates. These activities involved public and private, national and international organizations working in the field of education and training for agriculture and rural well-being in the hemisphere. DECAP contributed to developing a shared conceptual and strategic approach for technical cooperation in education and training, to which end it consolidated three lines of action: dialogue on and integration of agricultural and rural education in the hemisphere; transformation of the educational supply; and training in strategic subject areas.

ACHIEVEMENTS

A total of 96 educational and training activities were held in the year 2000. Of these, 64 were national in scope, 22 were regional and 10 were hemispheric.

Under the line of action *dialogue on and integration of agricultural and rural education in the Americas,* 27 activities were held: 14 national, 3 regional and 10 hemispheric. IICA brought the topic of education and training of human resources for agriculture and the rural milieu in the hemisphere to the fore by creating the Standing Forums for Dialogue on and the Integration of Agricultural and Rural Education in the Americas. One hemispheric, five regional and nine national forums were created, and work to establish same in five other countries got under way.

Under the line of action *transformation of the educational supply,* 36 activities (32 national and four regional) were held. Through these events, IICA contributed to changing the educational supply in 13 countries by means of organizational strengthening, strategic planning and curriculum development. Also, a number of educational transformation processes under way were concluded, and others continued, with impact at the national and regional levels. With IDB financial support and IICA guidance, support was also provided for formulating and implementing the diploma program in education; the doctoral program in higher agricultural sciences education at the Autonomous University of Chapingo, Mexico; and the master's degree program in agricultural services management at the Universidad Centroamericano (Nicaragua) and Texas A&M University.

Under the third line of action *(training in strategic subject areas),* 33 activities were held (18 national and 15 regional). Organizational strengthening activities were carried out in at least six countries, with training in topics of strategic importance including leadership, negotiation and conflict resolution.

The supply of agricultural training courses for the year 2000 was included in the Virtual Agricultural Training Market (www.sihca.org). SIHCA's web page was upgraded to incorporate an interactive data base that can be tapped by members of the Hemispheric Training Network for Agricultural Development.

Contacts were made with the Polar Foundation for establishing a strategic alliance between it, the CA/Venezuela, SIHCA, the University of the Andes in Venezuela, and Laval University in Canada, for the purpose of organizing a Latin American course on analysis of agrifood circuits and policy analysis matrix. SIHCA also facilitated 14 courses on a variety of topics including trade, agricultural negotiations, environmental management, environmental impact, regional development, agricultural policy, agrifood chains, information technology applied to training, project formulation and evaluation, and development of sustainable agricultural systems.

DECAP also provided technical and financial support for two case studies: a) self-financing of the School of Agronomy of the University of Chile, and b) study on the modernization of the Higher Agricultural Institute of the Dominican Republic.

Another noteworthy accomplishment was achievement of the goals of the scholarship program to strengthen human resource capabilities for sustainable and global-

ized agriculture in Latin America and the Caribbean. A total of US$131,000 helped fund studies related to 17 undergraduate degrees, 24 post-graduate degrees and 19 short internships. Scholarship beneficiaries were citizens of Belize, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Panama, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago.

The Institute also expanded its distance education and training services with the creation of the Mexico Distance Training Center; the consolidation of the Inter-American Network of Distance Training Centers (IICA Headquarters, Colombia, Barbados and Dominican Republic); and the strategic alliances established with the Regional Adult Education Center for Latin America and the Caribbean (CREFAL) and the World Bank's Global Development Learning Network (GDLN). Under an agreement signed with IICA, Costa Rica's State Distance University (UNED) received support in establishing four distance training centers, training professors of distance education, and adapting materials to video-conference format.

The Mexico Distance Learning Center at IICA Headquarters offered 30 video-conferences and three teleconferences (1,650 participants) during the year. Noteworthy among these were the teleconference "Creating a Virtual Campus," transmitted from the University of California; one offered by the Universidad Latina of Costa Rica involving the participation of Phillipe Kotler; and a video-seminar on telemedicine. Eleven high-levels courses and workshops (560 participants) were also held, including CREFAL's first and second courses on distance education and training via video-conference; a workshop on adaptation of materials for distance education and training, held at the Twelfth International Meeting of Librarians and Documentalists; the first international course on official certification for trainers in the development and implementation of hazard analysis and critical control point (HACCP) plans for the food industry, which was attended by 30 professionals from the public and private agricultural sectors of Costa Rica and Uruguay; and an international seminar on finance, taught by Dr. James Van Horne.

Agricultural Information System

The agricultural sector requires information systems and tools to enable it to meet the challenges posed by the opportunities offered by globalized markets and integration processes, as well as investment possibilities and lower costs for fostering a more competitive agriculture in the Americas.

To this end, IICA focuses its efforts on promoting the use of modern systems and tools to access, manage, analyze and disseminate information of importance to agriculture; SIDALC was consolidated for this purpose. Sponsored by the Kellogg Foundation, 31 countries are involved. Fourteen national networks are already in operation, another 14 are in the development stage, and one that is being reactivated. The National Agricultural Library (NAL) of the United States and the Canadian Agricultural Library (CAL) are also members of the system.

The SIDALC web page was redesigned and translated into English, a discussion list was established for system members (sidalc@egroups.com), a compact disc with a prototype of the web page was prepared, and mirror servers were installed in Chile and Peru. The search engine was adapted to enable simultaneous searches in all the data bases contained in Agri2000, and the metabase was updated (this contains more than 900,000 bibliographic references, not including United States and Canada). This undertaking involves some 37 institutions operating 73 data bases, as well as the Directory of Agricultural Information Units of Latin America and the Caribbean, which links 450 libraries and documentation centers. Agri2000 also includes a catalogue of journals, which can be consulted simultaneously or independently.

The first workshop was held for SIDALC coordinators. Two more workshops were held to promote creation of the SIDALC Consortium of Libraries, whose members are: the Orton Memorial Library in Costa Rica; the CAL (Canada); the NAL (United States); the Autonomous University of Nuevo Leon (UANL), CIMMYT, IICA and the Antonio Narro Autonomous Agrarian University (UAAAN), in Mexico; the Colombian Agricultural Research Corporation (CORPOICA) and CIAT, in Colombia; the Brazilian Agricultural Research Institute (EMBRAPA); the Honduran Agricultural Research Foundation (FHIA); and the National Agricultural Research Institute (INIA) and IICA, in Chile. In addition, SIDALC was accepted as a member of the Agriculture Network Information Center (AgNIC).

The web page of the Inter-American Reference Center for Agricultural Information (CRIIA) was redesigned and translated into English. The directory of IICA professionals and specialists was incorporated into

the web site, and 74 links and a new consultation mechanism were added. Information was also made available on the completed and ongoing projects of IICA's 34 CAs (currently, the data base contains details on 999 projects). The Directory of IICA Professional and Technical Personnel can also be accessed online (it currently has 146 entries). The number of links or new sites available rose from 74 to 300, and 81 new members registered.

In 2000, the Venezuela Library acquired 250 periodicals and received 420 books containing statistics and other relevant information. It also updated and maintained the CIDIA, REVIS and AGRI2000 data bases, and prepared 750 summaries of IICA publications. In coordination with CRIIA, work began to create IICA's virtual library, which will contain a collection of documents produced by the Institute and the electronic files of documents provided by users of the CRIIA web page. So far, 100 full-text, cross-referenced documents have been made available.

The Orton Memorial Library received 8,723 copies of periodicals and 1,403 books, and sent out 2,624 documents and 1,575 tables of contents. The REVIS, TEMPC and Orton data bases reported a large number of hits.

The IICA web site was redesigned, incorporating links to the CAs and translating the pages into English. Support was provided to the CA/Colombia in preparing templates for the design and installation of its web site. The web pages for COMUNIICA and the Center for Integration and Agribusiness Development (CIDAE) were designed and posted on the web site.

In 2000, the INFOAGRO network expanded its information on the topic of policies and trade, adding sections on agricultural health (AgriHealth XXI), FORAGRO, INFOTEC, CIDER, CODES and Strategus. Support was provided to the CAs in Mexico and Venezuela and the commodity exchanges of Colombia and Venezuela. A mission was sent to Peru in connection with the multinational project on policies and trade, and another to Honduras, in conjunction with the Area of Policy and Trade, at the request of the CA and USAID/Chemonics (PEP Project). A CD was produced to disseminate a study on the evolution and performance of agrifood trade in the Americas between 1961 and 1997.

Agribusiness Development

Agribusiness development has been advancing thanks to some important accomplishments by IICA. In 2000, the Institute's Center for Integration and Agribusiness Development (CIDAE) focused efforts on three projects: a) the Hemispheric Network of Organizations of Agrifood Exporters; b) the Export Templates Project; and c) the joint IICA/Spanish International Cooperation Agency (AECI) project entitled "Strengthening the Institutional Capabilities of Business Organizations in the Agrifood Sector."

CIDAE moved forward in setting up the Hemispheric Network of Organizations of Agrifood Exporters, the purpose of which is to contribute to the growth and diversification of exports, increase the number of agrifood exporters in the Americas, and represent the interests of export organizations at the hemispheric level.

Under the Export Platforms Project, a program was implemented to train trainers, targeting Institute technical personnel and officials from public and private entities selected by the representatives of the CAs in Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and Peru. In Costa Rica, the project was sponsored by several public and private organizations. Fourteen agribusiness operators participated who, after their training, attended the SIAL Fair in Montreal, Canada, in March, with a view to penetrating this market and developing other business activities.

In order to regulate the right to use and adapt AgFITT training materials, IICA signed a letter of understanding with the Forum for International Trade Training (FITT). These materials comprise eight training modules: Getting Ready, Your Business Plan for Export Marketing, Assessing Export Opportunities, Getting to Market, Making the Sale, Getting Paid, Export Marketing for Specialized Industries, and Implementing your Business Plan. Each module contains five booklets, for a total of 40. CIDAE translated the materials from English into Spanish, and adapted some concepts for use in Latin America.

The training workshops on export platforms provided a means to disseminate, among representatives of private enterprises, public organizations and IICA, modern technology for accessing markets.

In collaboration with the Federation of Food and Beverage Industries (FIAB) of Spain, the IICA/AECI project made arrangements for entrepreneurs from Latin America to take part in the Food and Beverages Business Meeting, held during the Feria Alimentaria 2000, in Barcelona, Spain.

Other project achievements were: a) completion of the technical studies on the agrifood industries in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras; b) improvements in the Ibero-American Directory of Agrifood Organizations (DIGA), of which 500 copies were distributed; c) distribution of 150 copies of a compact disc containing the final report of the project; and d) publication of 11 documents in the Agrifood Series of the IICA/AECI project, several training modules (export templates project) and other documents on successful inter-professional experiences with organization and funding in the agrifood sector.

New Dimension of IICA's Governing Bodies

As part of efforts to strengthen and revitalize the links between IICA and other OAS organs, in Resolution AG/RES 1728, approved by the General Assembly of the OAS during its Thirtieth Regular Session, held in June 2000, the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) was recognized as the foremost ministerial forum for agriculture within the OAS,

replacing the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Agriculture (ICMA).

Accordingly, the IABA was entrusted with "analyzing and building consensus on policies and strategic priorities" for agriculture and rural life in the Hemisphere. For its part, IICA was instructed to develop and strengthen mechanisms of cooperation and exchange with other organs and organizations, in the context of the inter-American system and the Summits of the Americas process.

Regional and National Action

ANDEAN REGIONAL CENTER

Events organized by the Andean Regional Center in the year 2000

	EVENTS		PARTICIPANTS		N° DAYS
	Number	%	Number	%	Total
Andean Regional Center	**118**	**100.0**	**3788**	**100.0**	**249**
Directorate	19	16.1	492	13.0	44
Bolivia	11	9.3	304	8.0	19
Colombia	37	31.4	1084	28.6	53
Ecuador	30	25.4	965	25.5	81
Peru	13	11.0	635	16.8	31
Venezuela	8	6.8	308	8.1	21

Source: DIPRE

DIRECTORATE OF THE REGIONAL CENTER

In 2000, the actions undertaken by the Andean Regional Center (CReA) were framed by the strategic guidelines set out in IICA's 1998-2002 Medium Term Plan. The following is a summary of the main actions and achievements of the regional projects it implemented.

Policies and Trade. The principal actions taken at the regional level in this subject area were: a) a seminar on the multilateral trade agenda, held together with the General Secretariat of the Andean Community, IDB-INTAL and the WTO; b) the support provided to the General Secretariat of the Andean Community for organizing a mission of more than 60 agribusiness entrepreneurs of the Andean countries to attend the III Americas Food and Beverage Show and Conference, held in Miami; c) participation in the XXV Expocruz International Fair, held in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia; d) completion of an electronic directory of over 1,200 agribusiness entrepreneurs of the Andean countries; e) preparation and publication of documents on issues of strategic importance, including: the sugar and sugar-substitutes market in the Andean countries; the relationship between trade, environment and genetically modified organisms; the status of the trade in dairy products in the Latin American countries; f) joint publication with the GTZ of a manual on foreign agricultural trade, in CD-Rom format; g) participation in a the workshop on multilateral and regional trade negotiations, held in Uruguay with FEPALE; and h) completion of the design stage of the AGRICOM electronic platform for agri-trade.

The Regional Directorate provided support to the CAs in the Andean countries in carrying out the following: a) in Bolivia, an event entitled "Bolivian Agriculture: Vision of the Future" and a workshop entitled "Dialogue

for Action in Production Chains with Rural Women"; b) in Ecuador, the seminar "Analysis of the Factors of Competitiveness of Beef in the Ecuadorian Humid Tropics"; c) in Peru, analysis of the census on asparagus production, the "Fifth National Congress on Agroindustrial Engineering" and the "Seventh Annual National Forum on Fruit Cultivation," and a course held together with GTZ entitled "Agricultural Research: Project Development and Experimental Methodologies." In addition, technical-economic proposals were prepared in Peru and Bolivia for developing agro-export platforms in accordance with the methodology of the Quebec Exporters' Club.

The Directorate promoted modernization of the institutional framework for agriculture, through studies and projects addressing the management of change. It collaborated in organizing several strategic planning workshops in support of: a) Peru's Office of Agricultural Information (OIA), together with the GTZ project on advisory services for agricultural planning (PROAPA); b) the National Natural Resources Institute (INRENA) of Peru, in collaboration with the GTZ projects PROAPA and FAMPE; c) ICA, in collaboration with the PAEN project of the GTZ; and d) the Multisectoral Commission for the Northeastern Border Area. The Directorate also cooperated in the strategic planning process of the nongovernmental organization (NGO) in Huancayo, Peru, called Educational Services, Promotion and Rural Development (SEPAR), which involved 20 people. It also facilitated the organization of an event on rural agroindustry convened by the Rural Agroindustry Network (REDAR) of Peru, which was attended by 30 participants.

As part of its support for the planning processes within the CReA and IICA, the Directorate collaborated with the CA/Ecuador in designing a workshop on chain methodologies; with the CA/Honduras, in preparing, together with specialists at Headquarters, a proposal for a project on the sustainable management of natural resources, which will be submitted in response to a call for bids by USAID; and with the CA/Bolivia in organizing, together with CONPLCA, a participatory evaluation meeting. In collaboration with a GTZ specialist, it also supported the organization of a hemispheric workshop on dispute settlement procedures, which was attended by 18 people; cooperated in the elaboration of a program of joint activities with CIDER; formulated, in collaboration with CIDER and CUSO, the technical cooperation and investment proposals for a municipalization project; and concluded the first draft of a book on strategic planning.

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. Under PROCIANDINO, agreement was reached on the renewed vision of the Program and the basic elements for the third stage of the agreement (1998-2001). New public and private actors were involved in different aspects of the innovation agenda and began to play a key role in the Program. The Program's cooperation actions focused on plant genetic resources, biotechnology, biosafety, intellectual property and the development of capabilities for technological agribusiness activities. The new approach of the Andean Plant Genetic Resources Network (REDARFIT) and the corporate strategy of the Export Fruit and Vegetable Network (FRUTHEX) were formulated with a view to fostering intersectoral linkages. A more integrated vision was attained of the impact of the sustainable management of fragile ecosystems in watersheds. Moreover, within the framework of the Natural Resources Information System (SIRENA), significant progress was made in the management of technology and information.

During 2000, 319 professionals (public- and private-sector managers and specialists) participated in 13 PROCIANDINO events. By late 2000, a total of 477 events had been held since Program start-up, involving a total of 5,680 people. The Program worked closely with the national agricultural research institutes and the national agricultural research and technology transfer systems in promoting cooperation and technological integration in the Andean Community. To this end, it supported regional and hemispheric initiatives through FORAGRO, FONTAGRO and the Global Forum. Strategic alliances were also consolidated with PROCITROPICOS, PROCISUR, SICTA, PROCICARIBE and PROCINORTE.

Under the IICA-GTZ project to orient agrarian research, the main achievements were as follows: a) partial funding, monitoring and evaluation of three participatory micro-research projects with small farmers in five communities of Peru's Ucayali region; b) implementation, in the cities of Tarapoto and Pucallpa, Peru, of two courses on methodologies for participatory agricultural research, attended by 49 participants; c) implementation, with the San Cristobal of Huamanga National University (Ayacucho, Peru), of three activities to promote the establishment of the institutional framework needed to spur technological innovation in the valley of the Apurimac River, attended by 129 people; d) participation in a GTZ-IFPRI meeting in Washington, D.C., the purpose of which was to conceptualize and evaluate the impact of research and development projects; e) promotion of

research on and the production and certification of organic products, in Peru; and f) organization of a regional event on markets.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. Under the Andean Regional Agricultural Health Project, the Fifth Andean Agricultural Health Forum (FASA) was held in Lima, Peru. There was a 60% increase (to 372 hits) in the number of requests for information through SANINET; and the Technical Cooperation Program for Agricultural Health in the Andean Region (PROFASA) was launched. A proposal was formulated for establishing the Andean System of Studies on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Risk Analysis and Equivalence, with the participation of IICA, FAO, APHIS and SAGAR. The Chile-Peru fruit fly project continued, and APHIS-IICA agreements on phytosanitary surveillance along Colombia's borders with Ecuador and Venezuela were implemented. Assistance was provided to the national health agencies of the five Andean countries, and 30 project profiles were drawn up with FAO.

Rural Development. Under the Rural Agroindustry Cooperative Development Program (PRODAR), with support from CIAT and the University of the Andes, an international course was held in Cali, Colombia regarding the promotion of rural agribusinesses for sustainable development in micro-regions; it was attended by 25 professionals from 11 countries. In the area of information, the PRODARNET information platform and the PRODAR web site launched operations; the Standing Forum of Coordinators of the Rural Agroindustry Network (REDAR) was set up; and the Special Network of Localized Agrifood Systems (SIALNET) was established. In the area of research and technology development, the Rural Agroindustry Research Fund (FIAR) commenced operations; a diagnostic study of rural agroindustry in Oruro, Bolivia was completed; and the projects to improve the quality of cheese in Salinas, Ecuador and the production of granulated brown sugar in Guatemala, were completed. Significant improvements were made in designing localized agri-food systems and establishing links with rural agroindustry.

In the area of institutional development, progress was made in creating the REDAR Corporation in Ecuador; relaunching the REDAR of Colombia; conducting strategic planning exercises for the networks of Colombia, Ecuador and Peru; establishing and implementing the network support fund (APORED Fund). In the area of marketing, noteworthy was the design and implementation of Foodlinks, a mechanism for co-financing research projects on the marketing of the products of rural agroindustry. Finally, in the area of dissemination, members of PRODAR's Technical Support Group participated as speakers at 24 events in Peru, Colombia, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Bolivia and Chile. Moreover, 12 documents were published in the Rural Agroindustry Handbook Series, the Working Document Series and the Technical Separata Series.

The Alternative Rural Development Unit made major progress in identifying and analyzing national and international cooperation and financing initiatives available (USAID, UNDCP, CAF, IDB) for fostering alternative forms of development for farmers growing illicit crops in Peru, Bolivia and Colombia. In Peru, IICA's position in the important field of rural development was strengthened through the recognition it received from the Ministry of Agriculture, the agency "Contradrogas" (government counterpart for alternative development issues), business organizations, agricultural associations, the Andean Council on Alternative Development (CADA) and other important institutions and cooperation agencies.

Important progress was made in Argentina, Peru and Bolivia in the context of Phase III of the Regional Program to Promote the Development of South American Camelidae (PRORECA). The "Weavings with Identity" Collection was shown at the Palermo 2000 and Sol Fairs in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and networks of businesspeople were promoted in support of the Rural Microenterprise Program (PROMER). A course-workshop was given on the training of llamas for trekking and for use by tourists visiting the Lauca and Chungara nature reserves and the rock paintings of Vila Cabran.

In Peru, through a joint venture with the Association of Andean Camelidae Breeders of Chocoaquilla, in Juliaca, selected llamas and alpacas were purchased and then sold at the Sixth International Camelidae Festival, held in Arequipa. This joint venture also led to efforts to establish a network of entrepreneurs who export llamas and alpacas to regional and international markets, which include Argentina, Bolivia, Chile and Peru. A business meeting was held in Lima with the Association of Cooperatives of Alpaca Services (CECOALP) and 12 representatives of garment manufacturing companies. The high quality of the weaving, a very important characteristic for competitive export products, was displayed at the event.

In Bolivia, workshops on modern marketing techniques were held for micro-entrepreneurs; an in-service

training program was offered under the agreement between IICA and the Municipality of Potosi to provide beneficiaries with information on the experience of the Regional Association of Camelidae Breeders (ISQANI) of Cochabamba, Bolivia. Program beneficiaries included producers and specialists from Jujuy (Argentina), producers from Potosi (Bolivia) and university students from Cochabamba, who also visited, in the city of El Alto, a tannery and a small workshop that process, manufacture and market camelidae hides and leather. The executing unit of the project "Development of Camelidae Breeders in the Andean Highlands of Bolivia (UNEPCA)" received technical assistance for the purpose of reactivating the project.

Training and Education. Under SIHCA, the number of universities, schools and other training and education institutions belonging to the Hemispheric Network of Agricultural Training Institutions rose to 130. A new electronic portal (www.sihca.org) was made available to participating institutions. As the former SIHCA web site, it had provided a range of services (Virtual Market of Agricultural Training, visitors' book, links to international and training organizations). New services were added, including forums, chat rooms, news, books, and an interactive job market section.

A total of 14 training courses were held on strategic topics (trade, agricultural negotiations, environmental management, environmental impact, regional development, agricultural extension, agricultural policies, agrifood chains, information science applied to training, project design and evaluation, development of sustainable agricultural systems), attended by 364 university professors and agriculture sector officials. The SIHCA newsletter was published and links were maintained with training institutions throughout the hemisphere, as well as with the CIARA Foundation, the Ministry of Production and Trade, and the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of Venezuela.

BOLIVIA

In 2000, the CA's actions in Bolivia further consolidated the new approach to technical cooperation adopted in 1999. Some of the most important actions and achievements for the year are summarized below.

Policies and Trade. A study on the current situation and outlook for agriculture and the rural milieu in Bolivia was prepared and presented at a seminar on the future of agriculture in the country. At this seminar, organized under an agreement involving IICA, the Bolivian Catholic University and the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Rural Development (MAGDR), the outlook for agricultural trade between Bolivia and other countries was analyzed in depth. The CA also assisted the MAGDR in preparing a study regarding the inclusion of the General Directorate of International Affairs in the ministry's new organizational structure. In addition, IICA supported the efforts of the nation's securities commission and the MAGDR in drafting the legal instruments needed to establish an agricultural commodity exchange in Bolivia, which is scheduled to commence operations in 2001. Further efforts were also made to strengthen the Andean Agribusiness Network and support the operation of the Bolivian Agribusiness Network, which is administered by the Agricultural Association of the Eastern Region. Considerable progress was made in consolidating these networks.

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. Further support was provided to the Bolivian Agricultural Technology System (SIBTA), which was created in March 2000 by Executive Order. Agricultural technology development foundations were established for the highlands, valleys, humid tropics and the El Chaco region. SIBTA uses these financial mechanisms to execute resources provided by the IDB and other international technical and financial cooperation agencies.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. The CA assisted the MAGDR in establishing the National Agricultural Health and Food Safety Service (SENASAG). Created under legislation enacted in February, its implementing regulations were issued in April by Executive Order. As part of its cooperation with the SENASAG, IICA helped design the national agricultural laboratories to be established in Trinidad, Beni, and managed the process of selecting their management personnel, who took up their posts in December.

Rural Development. The Rural Development Unit established at the CA in Bolivia began to promote local development initiatives in the departments of Potosi

and Santa Cruz, as well as others related to microenterprises, young people and rural women. The National Network of Rural Women Producers was created as a result of the workshop "Dialogue for Action in Production Chains for Rural Women," which was held in Cochabamba in November. The groundwork was also laid for establishing the Tropical Agroindustry Program, which will begin operations in 2001, particularly in the Los Yungas region of the department of La Paz.

As part of the actions carried out in Bolivia by the Regional Program for South American Camelidae (PRORECA), financed by the IFAD, the value added chain, especially for llama wool, was strengthened; support was provided for the efforts to organize llama breeders in southern Potosi, and to position the llama meat market in several regions of the country. In addition, the Association of Bolivian Camelidae Producers was established and support was provided for restructuring and reorganizing the executing unit of the project "Development of Camelidae Breeders in the Andean Highlands of Bolivia" (UNEPCA), which is headquartered in Oruro. Under the aegis of PRODAR and the Rural Agroindustry Network of Bolivia (REDARBOL), affiliated groups in Oruro and Potosi were strengthened and another was set up in Tarija, made up mostly of financial organizations of small farmers. The Regional Fund for Appropriate Technologies for the Conservation and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (FOMRENA), financed by the GTZ, launched operations and approved its first six projects, which are to be implemented in 2001.

Training and Education. A standing forum was established as a result of the meeting for dialogue on and the integration of agricultural and rural education in Bolivia, held in Santa Cruz de la Sierra in September, made up of representatives of education and research institutions and the public agribusiness sector.

Information and Communications. The National Agricultural Information and Documentation Network of Bolivia (RENIDAB) was established, involving the libraries of the schools of agronomy and veterinary medicine of the Gabriel Rene Moreno (Santa Cruz), San Simon (Cochabamba) and Tomas Frias (Potosi) universities. Its reference unit is the Agricultural Information and Documentation Center of Bolivia (CIDAB), located at the Bolivian House of Agriculture (Casa de la Agricultura).

Creation of the Rural Development Unit enabled the CA to provide cooperation to enhance the competitiveness of the Bolivian agricultural sector, and to implement a number of activities to reduce rural poverty. To this end, the CA's technical team generated and promoted a number of development projects. The Casa de la Agricultura de Bolivia, where the CA is located, has become a center for studies and conferences promoting the modernization of the country's agricultural sector, and offers an environment conducive to the work of professional and technical personnel responsible for fostering competitiveness and combating poverty.

COLOMBIA

The activities undertaken in 2000 by CA/Colombia and its administrative and technical development units responded to the different needs expressed by Colombia's agricultural institutions and other IICA units. This contributed to strengthening the image and technical, organizational and administrative potential of the Institute, through an ongoing process of improvement, modernization and teamwork. The technical team placed special emphasis on transferring its knowledge of the orientation and the progress of each of the projects under way, through participatory technical meetings and actions to harmonize the projects.

Policies and Trade. The CA supported the establishment of regional agreements on competitiveness through 24 regional committees representing the different chains and nuclei; the CA agreed to co-finance the seven technical secretariats making up a regional chain, providing them with financial and methodological support. Studies were conducted on the conditions needed to make the sector competitive and pave the way for new agreements. IICA became a member of the management committee of the Agricultural Supply Program (PROAGRO), which deals with coordination of sectoral policies. It also exercised the technical secretariat of a committee addressing the competitiveness of the oilseed, fats and oils chain; and conducted an exercise to develop a competitiveness agreement for developing the banana agribusiness nucleus.

Other important actions and achievements during the year were: a) the assistance provided to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MAGDR) in drafting the Basic Law for Agriculture and in developing the institutional framework for productive chains; b) the progress made in identifying indicators for measuring the competitiveness of chains; c) the assistance provided to the Colombia International Corporation (CCI) in formulating the terms of reference for implementing an Observatory of Competitiveness in 2001; d) the organization of national workshops to evaluate PROAGRO, an international seminar on agricultural policy in support of the work to formulate the new basic law for the agricultural sector, and two workshops to coordinate and share methodological information on the agreements on competitiveness, which involved representatives of the MAGDR, the coordinators of chains and the regional coordinators of PROAGRO; and e) the continued implementation of the project "Globalization and Technological Scenarios," co-financed by FONTAGRO.

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. The most important achievements of efforts to promote organic agriculture were as follows: a) conceptual breakthroughs and the consolidation of strategic alliances with teachers of agroecology, in order to disseminate information and provide training on the subject; b) consolidation of the bibliographical inventory and the inventory of videos on agroecology, organic agriculture and stock raising, solar energy, agroindustry, the timber and fiber industries, and other topics important to the country's strategic rural development model; c) 18 courses on organic agriculture and related topics, attended by roughly 500 people (small-, medium- and large-scale farmers, agriculturists, and professors and students of agricultural universities and vocational schools); d) creation of an information network to disseminate the principles of agroecology and organic agriculture via Internet; e) design of a model course on organic agriculture for distance learning, via videoconferences broadcast from the Distance Training Center (CECADI) in Bogota to other Colombian cities and countries in the Americas; and f) broadcasting, on national television, of three IICA programs on natural agriculture and "sun-and-weeds agriculture."

The CA also continued to support the work of the country's national agricultural science and technology system (SNCTA), and efforts got under way to reach agreement with various trade associations regarding their technology agendas (the one on potatoes was concluded). Progress was made in implementing an extension project in Latin America and the Caribbean,

co-financed by FONTAGRO. In collaboration with the National Agricultural Technology Transfer Program (PRONATTA), the 2000 call for presentation of projects was made. This includes projects on technological training, best practices, and adaptive and applied research. Emphasis was placed on initiatives identified by stakeholders in the agricultural production chains regarding their sectoral agreements on competitiveness under PROAGRO. Efforts were also made to encourage the formulation of projects to complement those already co-financed by PRONATTA. A total of 714 projects related to a wide range of topics was appraised. A study was published on the establishment of a training program for Colombia's palm oil agroindustry (FEDEPALMA-IICA-CCI Agreement).

Under PROCIANDINO, the development of organizational models for increasing cooperation between the public and private sectors was completed; these mechanisms will serve to systemically articulate the stakeholders in the chains. The chains chosen in Colombia were those of cotton, palm oil, dual-purpose livestock, brown sugar and citrus fruits. The CA also took part in the Consortium for the Integrated Management of the Tachira River Binational Watershed, and efforts were undertaken to modernize the Andean Plant Genetic Resources Network (REDARFIT) and to adapt the production chains approach for research agendas.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. Some of the most important actions and achievements in this area were: a) participation of IICA specialists in various conferences, symposiums and meetings on the subject organized by the Colombian Agricultural Institute (ICA); b) support for the ICA in setting up a unit for the study of equivalence and risk analysis, and for the consultants who wrote a document on risk analysis for ICA; c) cooperation with APHIS and ICA in organizing a course on the pink mealy bug; d) monitoring of the implementation of decisions taken at the Fourth Andean Agricultural Health Forum (FASA); e) assistance to the CA/Venezuela and the Independent Agricultural Health Service (SASA) in formulating the second phase of the loan document on competitiveness and the sustainability of technology and agricultural health management.

Rural Development. The CA provided technical assistance to projects under way in areas of government priority. Meetings were held with officials from the Investments for Peace Fund, the Office of the Ombudsman for Human Rights, and the Office of the Presidential Advisor on Equity for Women, to discuss the presentation of proposals for IICA cooperation and administration of resources available under various initiatives. IICA also formulated the National Program for Women Micro-entrepreneurs and Women Heads of Rural Households, as well as policy guidelines for programs targeting rural youth.

The CA reactivated the country's Rural Agroindustry Network (REDAR) and issued a call for the presentation of projects to be financed by the competitive funds of the Rural Agroindustry Program (PRODAR). It organized the Second International Course on Agribusiness and Local Development, in collaboration with CIAT, the Carvajal Foundation and the University of the Andes (UniAndes); the course was attended by participants from 15 Latin American countries. It also presented and promoted the Renewable Natural Resource Improvement Fund (FOMRENA).

Through investments in small-farmer organizations that provide working capital to reactivate production processes and generate employment, IICA assisted the MAGDR in developing the agricultural and fisheries sector. Under a program implemented with the Office of the Governor of Cundinamarca to generate rural and urban employment, 38 microenterprise projects were approved and launched, with savings and credit funds being set up in the executing organizations. The CA assisted the Colombian Agrarian Reform Institute (INCORA) through training and agribusiness development activities for small farmers and the identification of 18 small-farmers' organizations of the agrarian reform sector, with which 19 project profiles were prepared. Five of these projects were implemented with resources from the IICA-INCORA agreement, and involve training, assistance and the generation of seed capital for establishing businesses and consolidating producers' groups. Under the Pilot Project on Small-farmer Reserves, methodologies were adopted for the identification, formulation and implementation of investment projects in communities in El Pato (Huila-Caqueta) and Calamar (Guaviare). The groundwork was also laid for launching operations in the Cabrera region (Cundinamarca), and work began to draft preliminary documents on the methodological results of the project.

Training and Education. IICA signed an agreement with the Ministry of National Education for implement-

ing the Rural Education Project (PER), which is financed with World Bank funds and counterpart resources (nationwide and local agencies). The CA also began to design and develop special software for administering PER resources, and designed the conceptual, methodological and operating framework for a university scholarship program. It also began to make administrative arrangements and those for regional operations in the first five provinces of the country where the PER will be implemented.

Information and Communications. A forum was held on agricultural information and documentation, with support from IICA and the Colombian Agricultural Research Corporation (CORPOICA), attended by representatives of the national agencies that IICA worked with to consolidate the Colombian Agricultural Documentary Information Network. Efforts continued to modernize and upgrade the services of the Rodrigo Peña Information and Documentation Center.

At the CA itself, with regard to actions taken for organizational change, further adjustments were made, the complementarity among projects was analyzed, and a negotiating system was designed. Efforts to develop a system for project monitoring and support continued; the role of the coordinators and managers of the respective agreements was defined; experts were invited to speak at the CA on the definition of strategies for cultural and educational change; a proposal was presented for improving in-house training, and progress was made in reviewing the CA's internal regulations.

The strategic-technical unit for cooperation evaluated and updated the data base of agreements corresponding to the 2001 annual plan of operation. Twenty-nine professionals were included in the in-service training program, who provided assistance in areas such as rural development, research and extension, health and food safety, documentation, competitiveness and administration. More funds were provided for the agreements to cover the second half of 2000. Finally, the CA continued to settle concluded agreements and contracts and add new ones scheduled to end in December 2000 or later.

ECUADOR

In 2000, the CA/Ecuador provided cooperation services in response to an analysis of the trends and demands in agriculture, a self-assessment of institutional capabilities, the guidelines of IICA's current Medium Term Plan, and the guidelines of the Andean Regional Center. The strengthening of the CA's Groups for Reflection and Strategic Action (GRAEs) was an important step in this regard. The following is a summary of the CA's main actions and achievements in the Institute's strategic areas of action.

Policies and Trade. The CA continued to collaborate with the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) in carrying out a study on the competitiveness of the cocoa-cocoa butter-chocolate chain, for which a participatory approach was adopted. A general agreement was negotiated and signed with the National Association of Cocoa Exporters. To evaluate the progress made in implementing this agreement, a seminar-workshop was held in December to analyze experiences with product-specific studies of competitiveness. A general agreement was also negotiated with the National Association of Coffee Exporters with a view to promoting improved competitiveness in the coffee chain.

The project "Processing and Commercialization of Agricultural Products" (financed by COSUDE) got under way. In addition, the CA contributed to consolidating the Andean Agribusiness Network, and a number of its senior officials participated in several regional events organized by the Andean Regional Center and the CA/Ecuador. Producers interested in legalizing the status of their associations (22 organizations of small farmers in the highland and coastal regions) received technical assistance for forming and organizing agribusinesses. A study on the current status of agriculture and the rural milieu in Ecuador was completed and will be published in the first quarter of 2001.

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. As part of efforts to support the Autonomous National Agricultural Research Institute (INIAP), various proposals were presented regarding the approach and components of the agricultural technology innovation system; the aim was to develop a consortium model and to establish national portfolios of consortia for innovation. In collaboration with the INIAP, MAG and the Ministry of the Environment, the CA contributed to formulating the Environment and Biodiversity Act, and assisted the National Agricultural Directorate in conducting a review and analysis of the Seeds Act and its implementing regulations.

The Regional Fund for Appropriate Technologies for the Conservation and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (FOMRENA), sponsored by the GTZ and IICA, commenced operations in January. An international public bidding process was conducted to procure equipment for the geographic information system. Actions continued under a MAG/IICA agreement on the sustainability of information science equipment and systems, and another on the modernization of the Ministry's electrical system and computer network.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. At the express request of the MAG, the CA continued to draft the new Agricultural Health Act, in conjunction with members of the Ecuadorian Agricultural Health Service (SESA) and representatives of the private and university sectors. Discussions were held to examine the possibility of formulating a project with MAG on the certification and inspection of banana exports, involving the Association of Ecuadorian Banana Exporters (AEBE), SESA and IICA. The CA has since received an official go-ahead from MAG and the technical proposal is being prepared.

Rural Development. The National Rural Development Program (PRONADER) was concluded. The Local Development Fund (FONLOCAL) was created and its manuals for project formulation and evaluation, and for the assessment and supervision of financial agencies, were approved. The first disbursements were made and all the corresponding regulations were established. The CA continued to support the "Ecuarural" rural information system and implement the Saraguro-Yacuambi and Upper Cañar River Basin rural development projects. Lastly, the PADEMUR study was completed.

Information and Communications. The committee of the national agricultural documentation network was set up, and the Andean Higher Agricultural Institute (IASA), of the Army's Higher Polytechnic School (ESPE), was selected to participate in SIDALC as an agricultural documentation center.

PERU

In 2000, the CA/Peru concluded the actions called for under the 1998-2000 Strategic Plan of Action. As a result, a new type of relationship has been established with the public- and private-sector actors responsible for well-being in the rural milieu.

Policies and Trade. Through the CA/Peru, IICA helped the Export Promotion Commission (PROMPEX) organize the event "Agroexports in the 21st Century," at which IICA specialists made presentations and hosted a stand to publicize IICA's work in Peru. IICA worked with the Association of Agricultural Entrepreneurs, the linchpin of Peru's chapter of the Andean Agribusiness Network, in conducting a strategic planning process to formulate a medium-term plan of activities for agribusiness organization. Similar efforts were undertaken with the MoA's Agrarian Information Office and, as a result of workshops held, a profile was prepared for the "Rural Peru" informatics platform project with public- and private-sector representatives. Through a similar exercise, a strategic plan was drawn up for modernizing the Transitory Regional Administration Council (CTAR) of the Department of Piura; the same process was undertaken in the Department of Ica, involving two workshops.

An international seminar and a round table were held, the first on contract planting and the second on the basic elements of an agreement on the competitiveness of the rice chain in Peru (the latter with support from the La Molina National Agrarian University). Presentations were made at the Andean Meeting of Coffee Producers, organized by the Andean Community, and at the First Congress of Stock Raisers of Peru, in a joint effort with the Peruvian Association of Stock Raisers. Finally, the CA took part in the ECLAC-organized Seventh Regional Conference on Women in the Americas: Challenges and Opportunities in the 21st Century.

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. Under the project "Gearing Agricultural Research to Alternative Development," two courses were held on participatory agricultural research methodologies and, with San Cristobal de Huamanga National University, three workshops on technological innovation in the Apurimac River valley were held. Five books were also published on the subject. Under the same project, three participatory research micro-projects were conducted in areas where illicit crops are produced, involving small-scale producers from five communities in the Department of Ucayali.

Technical and financial proposals were prepared for the competition promoted by the Andean Community for implementing the project "Regional Biodiversity Strategy for Countries of the Andean Tropics." An international seminar was held entitled "Project to Foster the Transfer of Technology to Highland Small-farmer Communities (FEAS): An Important Contribution by Peru to the Development of the Rural Market of Technical Assistance Services." A workshop was held entitled "Water Management in Peru: Organization and Funding," organized by FAO and the irrigation project serving the Chao, Viru, Moche and Chicama valleys (Chavimochic project). A study was carried out to characterize and conduct a partial analysis of the asparagus agroindustrial chain in Peru. Technical and financial proposals were prepared for the bidding process on the extension program for irrigation and technical assistance on cultural practices in the coastal valleys of Peru, with financing from the World Bank. Strategic planning was undertaken with the Natural Resources Institute (INRENA), and information was disseminated on the regional fund for appropriate technologies for natural resource conservation and sustainable management (FOMRENA). Applications for FOMRENA funding were processed and financing was approved for three projects.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. IICA continued to provide institutional support to the binational team made up of the Agricultural and Livestock Service (SAG-Chile) and the National Agricultural Health Service (SENASA-Peru), as they continued to implement the Binational Chile-Peru Border Area Fruit Fly Eradication Program. The authorities of the two national services strengthened the program following the phytosanitary emergency in the Metropolitan Region of Chile; thanks to their joint efforts, the province of Arica, Chile was again declared free of the Mediterranean fruit fly and substantial reductions were achieved in the population of the pest in the departments of Tacna and Moquegua, Peru. IICA contributed to the binational program by producing a video showing the objectives,

the actions implemented and the possibilities of this binational program.

A meeting on health and food safety was held for agricultural and agroindustrial producers, in order to familiarize both sectors with this important subject. In addition, the Fifth Andean Forum of Agricultural Health (FASA) was held, and the CA responded to an emergency request from the MoA to help combat migratory locusts in the departments of Ayacucho, Cajamarca and Lambayeque.

Rural Development. At the request of the re-population program (Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Human Development), the CA formulated a program to improve the participation of rural women in the departments of Apurimac, Huanuco and Huancavelica. Consisting of 25 production sub-projects involving 72 enterprises in areas of extreme poverty, it was submitted to the rural women support committee chaired by the First Lady of Peru. Two publications were produced and presented at the preparatory technical meeting of the First Ladies of the Americas: "Rural Women in Peru" and "The Situation of Rural Adolescent Women in Peru" (both in Spanish). The CA also formulated an integrated development project for the Monzon area in the department of Huanuco.

Training and Education. With assistance from SIDALC, and implemented by the National Agricultural Library (BAN) of La Molina National Agricultural University, the Network of Agricultural Libraries of Peru (REBIAPE) was created, bringing together 11 national universities with schools of agricultural sciences. The network held four courses on BAN premises, on the management of AGRIS in the Win-ISIS environment, and five training courses at provincial universities.

At Central National University, in Huancayo, department of Junin, a seminar-workshop was held on curriculum design for the teaching staff of the schools of agricultural sciences. The CA also supported the efforts of the School of Animal Husbandry of La Molina National Agricultural University in updating its curriculum, and the National La Selva Agricultural University in designing its curriculum. Finally, with support from SIHCA and the Agricultural Development Association (ASPA), a course on rural microenterprise management was held for the third consecutive year, targeting agribusiness leaders.

Information and Communications. In a joint effort involving the Agricultural Information Office of the Ministry of Agriculture, the GTZ and IICA, and with a view to democratizing the information required and generated by the rural sector, a new informatics platform was created called Rural Peru.

VENEZUELA

In 2000, this CA achieved positive results in its different areas of action, the most important of which were as follows: a) INFOAGRO was extended to different regions of the country; b) three agreements were renewed or expanded (agreement to contribute to the development of the new institutional framework for agriculture, particularly the Ministry of Production and Trade (MPC); agreement with the Governor's Office of Monagas State for a third stage of the Strategic Plan for Expanded Agriculture in Monagas State; and the INIA/FONAIAP agreement for consulting services to support institution building); and c) the groundwork was laid for efforts to strengthen local development actions and links with the private sector in different states of Venezuela. This will be strengthened in 2001 to collaborate in the implementation of a program to consolidate rural communities, approved by IDB.

Policies and Trade. Direct support was provided for redesigning and strengthening the public institutional framework for the expanded agricultural sector, which comes under the responsibility of the Vice-ministry of Agriculture and Food (VMAA). In this connection, the following studies were conducted: a) core structure and authority at the central level; b) decentralized units of the MPC; c) restructuring of agencies subordinate to the MPC; d) production support services; e) information systems; and f) human resources and institutional strengthening of MPC. The CA also continued to implement activities with the Venezuelan chapter of the Andean Agribusiness Network, and formulated proposals for enhancing the technical capabilities of the VMAA's general directorates for rural development, agrifood chains, and policies and food. A proposal was also drafted for the Agricultural Economic Constituent Assembly of the state of Monagas, and technical assistance was provided to the MPC in presenting the bills for the Para-fiscal Contributions Act and the Land Act.

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. Technical and administrative support was provided to the National

Agricultural Research Institute (INIA), formerly FONAIAP, relative to the external evaluation of institutional performance, the strengthening of human capabilities, the economic impact of research, socioeconomic aspects of research, and the evaluation of the animal health research program. The CA contributed to the formulation of the Competitiveness and Food Safety Program, which will be financed by the IDB.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. The CA provided support to the Autonomous Agricultural Health Service (SASA) with regard to the Basic Law on Sanitary Protection; the FAO Plan of Action for Modernization of the Agricultural Health Services and Food Control; and the program to combat foot and mouth disease, in alliance with APHIS and PAHO. It also facilitated the participation of officials in various international courses and meetings, including the 13th Course on the Fruit Fly (in Mexico) and the Course on the Management and Biological Control of Pink Mealy Bug (offered by CABI Bioscience in Trinidad). Other important actions were training workshops and courses offered with national and international experts, including a seminar on brucelosis, courses on the promotion of health programs, on the management and control of the pink mealy bug, and an international course on the epidemiological surveillance of food-borne diseases.

Rural Development. The CA sent a support mission to the Government of Venezuela for responding to the emergency caused in December 1999 by the heavy rains in the northern coastal region; a proposal was presented for implementing projects on rural development and competitiveness. The CA worked with the Polar Foundation to implement the rural development project in the Barlovento region, holding community workshops for designing and organizing rural enterprises and drafting the report, which included technical recommendations. Technical assistance was provided to the states of Trujillo, Merida and Yaracuy, and to national organizations including the Agricultural, Fisheries and Forestry Fund (FONDAPFA), the Industrial Credit Fund (FONCREI), the National Educational Cooperation Institute (INCE), the National Agrarian Institute (IAN), the CIARA Foundation and the MPC, especially in regard to the formulation of proposals for strategic planning, organizational development, rural development, training, and information systems. The CA also participated in a meeting of APRORURAL, on the PRODAR Management Committee, and in the Latin American Seminar on Training Methodologies and Technical Assistance for Rural Microenterprises, organized by the National Small-farmer Training Institute of Ecuador. It provided support to the CIRAD-SENTIA mission to develop a project with the universities and production sectors; and agreement was reached on IICA's participation in implementing a rural communities program recently approved by the IDB.

Training and Education. In this area of action, the CA assisted The Autonomous Agricultural Health Service (SASA) in implementing workshops on the following: a) strategic planning for institution building; b) food safety and international agrifood trade; c) organization of an Andean risk analysis system and studies on animal and plant health equivalence; and d) executive leadership seminars on food safety. In the area of policy and trade, courses addressed the following: a) strategic vision of the hog raising and beekeeping circuits in the State of Monagas; b) basic considerations for designing the operations of parafiscal funds; c) management of agrifood chains: agreements on competitiveness; d) economic analyses of agrifood circuits and policy analysis matrix; and e) analysis of the cooperation agreement for expanding economic relations between Chile and Venezuela.

Workshops were held in several states on the design and implementation of the Expanded Agriculture Information System; a forum was held on the vision of micro-, small- and medium-sized agrifood enterprises in Monagas state; and a workshop was offered on globalization and technological scenarios. Finally, the CA supported the activities of SIHCA, providing officials from national agencies with training on topics of strategic importance for the country.

Information and Communications. The SASA web site was created (www.infoagro.info.ve/sasa); those of the CA itself (http://www.iica.int.ve), of REDAR/Venezuela (http://www.redar.info.ve) and INFOAGRO/Venezuela (http://www.infoagro.info.ve) were upgraded and consolidated. Under an agreement with the Polar Foundation, the first module (directory of organizations) of the Rural Enterprise Information System (SIPER) was developed, as were different mechanisms for disseminating information via the web site (www.infoagro.info.ve/siper). Work continued for designing an agricultural information system for the states of Zulia and Trujillo, and a technical proposal for the establishment of an agricultural information system in the central region of Venezuela was presented to the Central Region Development Corporation (CORPOCENTRO) and Simon Rodriguez University.

The CA's newsletter, IICA Informa, was published weekly. In collaboration with the Aragua Foundation for the Development of Science and Technology (FUNDACITE), IICA coordinated Venezuela's participation in developing SIDALC and in creating the Agricultural Information and Documentation System of Venezuela (SIDVen), whose web site address is www.sidven.info.ve.

Caribbean Regional Center

Events organized by the Caribbean Regional Center during the year 2000

	EVENTS		PARTICIPANTS		N° DAYS
	Number	%	Number	%	Total
Caribbean Regional Center	**121**	**100.0**	**3584**	**100.0**	**299**
Directorate	8	6.6	357	10.0	16
Bahamas	1	0.8	48	1.3	2
Barbados	1	0.8	34	0.9	14
Dominican Republic	12	9.9	831	23.2	30
ECS	39	32.2	828	23.1	100
Guyana	18	14.9	377	10.5	44
Haiti	4	3.3	201	5.6	15
Jamaica	16	13.2	350	9.8	21
Suriname	10	8.3	75	2.1	24
Trinidad and Tobago	12	9.9	483	13.5	33

Source: DIPRE

Regional Directorate

The Alliance for Sustainable Development of Agriculture and the Rural Milieu in the Caribbean was formally inaugurated during the Second Annual Caribbean Week of Agriculture, held in Jamaica in October. Creation of the Alliance completes the actions of the Caribbean Regional Center (CaRC) to establish an enabling environment for the development of Caribbean agriculture. The major objectives of the Alliance are to keep agriculture on the front burner of national and regional discussions and to strengthen the cooperation and collaboration among all stakeholders in the sector. Its aims include serving as an important mechanism for strengthening the institutional framework for sustainable agricultural and rural development, providing a forum for dialogue among stakeholders on critical issues affecting agriculture, and fostering the collective development of strategies to address these. It will also serve as a vehicle to further the process of cooperation for agriculture at the national and regional levels and as a link for integrating agriculture into the global market. At the aforementioned meeting, the Alliance agreed to develop appropriate strategies and mechanisms for integrated rural development in the Caribbean, addressing issues related to water for agriculture, attracting youth to agriculture, and developing the rural milieu.

Also featured at the Second Annual Caribbean Week of Agriculture were a two-day AgriDevelopment Conference, an exhibition featuring fruit and value-added fruit products, and annual general meetings of the Caribbean AgriBusiness Association (CABA), the Caribbean Council for Higher Education in Agriculture (CACHE) and the Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers (CNRWP), as well as a meeting of the OECS Ministers of Agriculture.

The Caribbean Differentiated Strategy (CDS) 2000-2001 was finalized and distributed throughout the region, although it was refined at year's end to adjust to the Institute's corporate strategy. The six regional priorities identified include supporting the regional and global trade and economic integration processes, with a view to maximizing benefits for Member States; promoting and supporting actions conducive to the development of competitive, sustainable and equitable agri-food systems; and developing the human resource base needed for facilitating agricultural development.

Policies and Trade. Under the project "Policy and Trade Support for Agri-Food Sector Competitiveness in the Caribbean," a chapter entitled "Socio-Economic Experiences of Agriculture in the 1990s" was completed for ECLAC. Certain of its sections will be further detailed for a follow-up report on the situation of and outlook for Caribbean agriculture. The final stage of the "Study to Inform Changes in the Common External Tariff (CET) for Agricultural Products in CARICOM," which is to be used to guide the reform process of the CET regime, was initiated in late 2000. The report analyzes the direction and magnitude of changes that occurred in imports and revenues when CET rates on competing products were increased, as well as their implications for the process of trade policy reform in member countries.

Also under this project, and in order to increase understanding of the trade agreements and ongoing negotiations, major emphasis was placed on fostering dialogue on same. This was achieved through two regional workshops held in Jamaica and Grenada, and national consultations in Barbados, Bahamas, Dominican Republic and Trinidad and Tobago, where publications and lectures pertaining to the multilateral trade agreements and trade negotiations were presented.

The project strengthened its collaboration with the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery (CRNM), providing technical support to technical studies on negotiating options and interests for CARICOM and small OECS States in WTO and FTAA negotiations. An IICA/CRNM agreement was signed in June, formalizing IICA's support for the CRNM's Associate Professional Trainee (APT) program, which included placement of one trainee within the unit.

The Regional Projects, Planning and Programming Unit (RPPPU) completed agricultural sector plans for Antigua and Barbuda and Barbados. It also formulated several major project proposals including a regional agricultural marketing information system project, a sub-regional project on OECS youth, an orchid industry development project in the Bahamas and a goat development project in Jamaica, among others. The unit also collaborated in managing and reviewing several national and regional projects.

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. At the request of the CARICOM Ministers of Agriculture, the CaRC facilitated (logistically and financially) the review of CARDI by an independent team of experts. The Ministers accepted the recommendations of the review team, developed an action plan for implementing them, and appointed a subcommittee to monitor implementation.

The CaRC refocused its strategy for science and technology to include a processing and value-added focus for the Tropical Fruits Project and to incorporate new areas of action, such as genetically modified organisms and intellectual property rights, which impact on regional trade.

In collaboration with the Centre for the Development of Industry (CDI), CIRAD/FLHOR and Caribbean Business Services Limited (CBSL), the Tropical Fruits Project hosted an international technical workshop on the processing of tropical fruits in Trinidad and Tobago. The workshop brought together processors of tropical fruit products from the English-, Spanish-, French- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean countries, European buyers, and equipment and packaging suppliers. The meeting increased technical and commercial linkages among producers, boosted awareness of trading opportunities for Caribbean producers in EU markets, and provided clear opportunities for greater intra-regional trade.

Another significant achievement was the establishment of the Caribbean Fruit Industry Association (CFIA), the aim of which is to facilitate closer collaboration among Caribbean producers and processors and other key industry players in the fruit industry subsector. The Association later presented the Fruit Industry Position Paper at the aforementioned first Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture and the Alliance for Sustainable Development of Agriculture and the Rural Milieu.

Some 38 persons from the public and private sectors throughout the Caribbean attended a "train-the-trainers" workshop on tropical fruit propagation and nursery and orchard management. The Fruit Project and FAVA/CA collaborated in hosting this event, which was facilitated primarily by University of Florida lecturers.

The Fruit Project continued to support the operation of national fruit committees and the CARIFruit Network. The Network's first research project "Alternatives to Methyl Bromide" was completed for FAO. CARIFruit and the IICA Regional Fruit Crops Project joined the International Tropical Fruits Network (TFNET), and the CaRC is now represented on the network's provisional management committee.

In collaboration with CIRAD/Martinique, IICA is reviewing selected fruit industry systems with a view to developing and implementing intervention strategies to improve the sustainability of the fruit subsector. Contact was also made with ISNAR and other strategic partners in Europe and North America to develop models for selected countries (for possible replication) to upgrade the performance of non-traditional agriculture in the Caribbean.

Through the project "Technology Transfer Management Supporting Regional Agricultural Production and Trade Competitiveness," the CaRC continued to sensitize the region regarding the importance of intellectual property rights and genetically modified foods for Caribbean agriculture. This was done through workshops and oral presentations in many countries, including Bahamas, Barbados, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago. Government agencies in Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago received assistance in developing policies pertaining to genetically modified organisms.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. The regional project "Improving Caribbean Agricultural Health Services to Facilitate Trade and Protect Health" continued to address food safety issues as they affect international agricultural trade. A seminar on food safety requirements for international trade was held in Trinidad and Tobago, with resource persons from McGill University and the University of Florida; it was facilitated by FAVA/CA. Together with the Caribbean Poultry Association, a regional workshop on animal health, food safety, food standards and the environment was conducted in Trinidad and Tobago.

A regional "training-for-trainers" workshop for Caribbean extension officers was held in Trinidad to address improvements in the quality and safety of fresh fruits and vegetables. The workshop was jointly organized and sponsored by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and IICA's Agricultural Health Program, and involved resource persons from the FDA, various U.S. universities and IICA.

A legal consultant was hired to draft, for CARICOM countries, model animal quarantine legislation harmonized with the WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures.

The project coordinator participated in a series of regional meetings and consultations to design a new Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency, later collaborating with the CARICOM Secretariat to present the proposal to the Caribbean Ministers of Agriculture and to the XXII Consultation among Regional Plant Protection Organizations, held in San Diego.

A workshop was held in St. Kitts and Nevis on the biological control of the papaya mealy bug (Paracoccus marginatus) in the Caribbean. It was attended by participants from 16 Caribbean countries and regional organizations including IICA, CARDI, USDA and CAB International.

A regional workshop on salmonella diagnostic techniques was held in collaboration with CIRAD-EMVT, the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources of Trinidad and Tobago, and the School of Veterinary Medicine of the University of the West Indies (UWI). The occasion was also used to launch the Caribbean Network of Veterinary Laboratories and Animal Disease Surveillance. Participants were drawn from the government veterinary laboratories of 12 Caribbean countries as well as private poultry industry laboratories in Jamaica and Trinidad.

Under the auspices of CIRAD, IICA and the Caribbean Network of Veterinary Laboratories, and sponsored by FAVA/CA, an expert from the State Veterinary Laboratory of Florida visited the laboratories in Guadeloupe, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, the Dominican Republic and Jamaica, where he assisted in implementing quality assurance measures and developing an accreditation system for the regional laboratory network.

October 23, 2000 was an important date for the Carambola Fruit Fly (CFF) project, being the date Guyana was declared free of the carambola fruit fly as a result of project efforts. Detection and exclusion activities remain in effect throughout the country. In Suriname, trapping was significantly expanded to cover the greater Paramaribo area, and the information gained from trapping was used to plan eradication in urban areas. Since employing the male annihilation technique in 1999, the population of CFF in the Oiapoque zone disappeared from all areas except St. Georges. However, no flies or larva have been detected in St. Georges since September 2000. In Brazil, surveillance activities continue in the north of the country with Jackson traps installed in all high-risk areas. At the Belém and Macapá airports, all baggage arriving from Suriname and French Guiana are inspected by customs and agricultural officers. Further details on the success of CFF eradication in the north of South America can be found at www.carambolafly.com.

Rural Development. The aim of the Regional Rural Development Program is to provide seed monies for the development and subsequent implementation of regional and subregional projects, and to facilitate dialogue among clients throughout the region. A sub-regional project on youth in the Eastern Caribbean States was developed, and several project proposals were formulated and submitted to various agencies to source external funds on behalf of the CNRWP. At its first Annual General Meeting, held in Jamaica during the Second Caribbean Week of Agriculture, the CNRWP agreed to address some of the numerous constraints facing rural women producers by focusing its activities in 2001 on a small machinery/small equipment needs assessment, conducting market studies, and providing support for product development and quality control.

Training and Education. The CaRC continues to support CACHE, which held its third Annual General Meeting in Jamaica in October, at which time a dynamic work plan aimed at promoting greater collaboration among the various agricultural faculties in the region was approved.

During the year, CACHE supported the participation of Board member from Haiti at the Board of Directors Meeting (Suriname) and the Annual General Meeting (Jamaica). Student exchanges were arranged, with one student from Trinidad being sponsored to conduct research in Haiti and another, from Suriname, to attend a 3-day seminar at UWI. A proposal was submitted to the Caribbean Regional Human Resource Development Program for Economic Competitiveness in support of the accreditation process.

In collaboration with the Northern Regional Center, the CaRC arranged for eight participants from the Caribbean to receive short-term specialist training under the USDA Cochran Fellowship Program. The topics of study included HACCP program development both in meat and poultry, as well as non-meat and poultry and dairy herd management. According to the participants, the training added significantly to their professional skills and knowledge, something they are prepared share with their companies and communities.

The Agricultural Distance Learning Centre (ADLC) in Barbados continued to administer courses developed in 1999 and new courses initiated in 2000, including on vegetable production (in collaboration with CARDI) and organic farming. The Jamaica and St. Lucia ADLCs were commissioned, and the centers in Grenada and Trinidad and Tobago are scheduled to open in early 2001.

Information and Communications. Almost all member countries in the CaRC began establishing national networks under the hemispheric project to implement the Agricultural Information and Documentation System for the Americas (SIDALC); the sharing and transmission of information among these networks has begun.

In collaboration with the AgriFuture Foundation, the CaRC assisted many young people and women in rural communities throughout the Caribbean to gain access to the information superhighway by providing them with computers equipped with Internet capabilities. In addition, three issues of the AgriView Newsletter (750 copies/issue), two issues CARAPHIN News (1,200 copies/issue), four issues of the Tropical Fruits Newsletter (1,500 copies/issue), three issues of the IICA Caribbean News (1,200 copies/issue), and 500 copies of a reprint of the "In a Nutshell" brochure on Caribbean Agriculture and the WTO Agreement, were produced and distributed.

BAHAMAS

The year 2000 was a busy one for the Bahamas CA because a change of minister and a fusion and expansion of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries into the Ministry of Commerce, Agriculture and Industry required a reassessment and adjustment of the CA program in the Bahamas. During the year, the CA received a request for support in preparing a proposal for reorganizing the ministry. In collaboration with the RPPU in Barbados, a proposal, still under discussion, was presented; it is expected to be implemented in 2001.

Policies and Trade. The CA was asked to organize a workshop on agricultural trade for ministry staff and private sector representatives; the two-day workshop was attended by some 60 participants. In addition, the CA arranged and participated in a three-week visit by the Ministry's Deputy Director for Agriculture to Costa Rica.

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. The ministry requested assistance in developing an agricultural project involving commerce and industry. Accordingly, a proposal was prepared and subsequently approved in principle to support the cultivation and marketing of orchids for the local tourist market. A pilot project will be executed to determine the growing conditions of orchids in the Bahamas; the know-how and plants will be made available to interested local private sector entrepreneurs.

As an outgrowth of this proposal, the idea arose of establishing a tissue culture laboratory for work on orchids and other plants. The CA formulated a second proposal and arranged for the pertinent technical assistance from the National Training Institute in Costa Rica. The laboratory is scheduled to be established in the year 2001. Finally, the outline of a proposal for a permanent orchid exhibition was submitted to the ministry for consideration; the idea is to showcase the beauty of orchids for the Bahamian people and tourists.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. After the pink mealy bug was detected in the Bahamas in late 2000, the CA arranged for immediate technical support in Trinidad and Tobago for two ministry technicians. This is expected to be a major area for technical assistance in 2001.

Rural Development. Late in the year, the CA arranged for technical support from FAVA in Florida for the Department of Cooperatives' course to upgrade the management skills of Bahamian executives working in the cooperative sector.

Training and Education. In collaboration with the Distance Learning Center in Barbados, a nine-module, English-language CD course called "Organic Farming for Entrepreneurs" was developed.

Information and Communications. Throughout the year, the CA also continued to disseminate relevant information to both the private and public sectors. Toward year end, the IICA representative was asked to head up a high-level ministry committee to determine the information needs of the ministry and to recommend a plan for improving its flow of information and use of communication. The committee is expected be launched in 2001. In addition, an agricultural information center was designed for the ministry. The center will be able to store at least

5,000-10,000 items organized in accordance with the AGRIS international agricultural information system. With support from the SIDALC regional project, modern computer and communications equipment was purchased and the documentalist received one-month intensive training at the Orton Library in Turrialba, Costa Rica. Center operations are supervised by the IICA representative.

BARBADOS

During 2000, the activities of the CA/Barbados were framed by the three priorities that guided its work plan, as follows: a) improve the viability of agri-commercial chains; b) promote and support the empowerment of rural communities; and c) improve the understanding of strategic issues impacting on national agriculture. In addition, the CA was also in charge of developing and managing the Caribbean Agro-entrepreneurs Distance Learning Centre (ADLC).

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. The CA participated in preparing activities for the control of the CAE virus in goat population in Barbados. In addition, through the Regional Projects, Planning and Programming Unit (RPPPU), the CA assisted the Ministry of Agriculture by participating on a task force set up to analyze the effects of the pink hibiscus mealybug in Barbados.

Rural Development. The CA assisted the Barbados Agricultural Society (BAS) in restructuring the organization. Assistance was also provided to the Association of Women in Agriculture (AWIA) in its effort to build an association that is responsive to the needs of women involved in the agricultural sector. With assistance from the RPPPU, the CA was able to analyze the needs of marketing structures for agricultural products and prepare a project proposal for AWIA to submit to donor organizations. The CA participated with the MoA in efforts to improve linkages between the tourism sector, agriculture and the food industries. It also financed Barbados 4-H Foundation activities in projects to develop business capabilities among rural youths.

Training and Education. Through the ADLC, IICA promoted the establishment of training centers in six Caribbean countries, and assistance was provided for opening the centers in Jamaica and St. Lucia. A 45-hour course on information and extension methods in agriculture was prepared during 2000, which is available in English on CD-ROM. The following courses will be available in 2001 via the internet or in CD-ROM format: Health and Occupational Safety in the Agribusiness Sector; Organic Farming for Entrepreneurs; E-Commerce for the Agribusiness Sector; as well as courses on the production of three vegetables: hot pepper, dasheen and onions (being prepared in collaboration with CARDI).

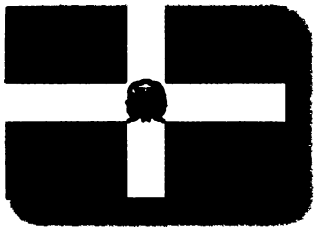
Also through the ADLC, and with assistance from the CA/Jamaica, a framework was prepared for a promotional program for IICA's distance learning activities in the Caribbean. Assistance was provided to CACHE for developing an agricultural training policy for the Caribbean. With the assistance of RPPPU, a project proposal was submitted by Barbados (in collaboration with five other Caribbean countries) to the OAS for financing.

With the support of the MoA, the CA provided computer training to ADLC students, as well as tutorship sessions to three training groups involved in the farm management course prepared in collaboration with McGill University (Montreal, Canada). This course is available via Internet. The students targeted were mainly technicians from the MoA, managers from Barbados Agricultural Management Co. Ltd. (BAMC), members of AWIA and students from the private sector.

Information and Communications. The SIDALC network of agricultural libraries, a project financed by Kellogg Foundation, was developed. The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development is the National Coordinator of this network for Barbados.

The CA participated in a CARDI workshop to analyze strategic issues in information and communication technologies for developing the Caribbean agribusiness sector and to identify the role of each country and institution in its development.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC



IICA provided the new government with support in defining priorities and projects; developing a methodology for implementing the Government Plan for the Agricultural Sector; preparing the Sectoral Plan for Immediate Action, the Medium Term Plan and the Budget and Plan of Operations for 2001 of the Secretariat of State for Agriculture (SEA); conducting and publishing studies on the marketing of agricultural products in the Dominican Republic; and identifying 35 short-term measures to be implemented by the centralized and decentralized agencies of the new government. The President of the Republic, Hipolito Mejia, visited the CA on two occasions, participating in presentations on these measures, on the current situation in and the needs of the Agricultural Credit Program, and on the Special Program for Fruit Crop Development in the Dominican Republic (PRODEFRUD).

Policies and Trade. The Institute contributed to the process to modernize the agricultural sector, which yielded the following results: a) the creation of the Secretariat of State for Environment and Natural Resources, the National Council on Agricultural and Forestry Research (CODIAF), the Dominican Institute for Agricultural and Forestry Research (IDIAF), and the National Agricultural and Forestry Research Fund (FONIAF), all components of a new national agricultural and forestry research system; b) the updating of the national map, by the Dominican Institute for Water Resources (INDRHI), with the use of satellite technology; and c) the transfer of all irrigation systems from the INDRHI to Irrigation Boards, which have become business management centers offering greater services to producers.

In the area of agrarian reform and rural development, all actions were framed by the concept of the "new rurality." With support from the Rural Development Program, important progress was made in the following: a) an in-depth analysis was made of the history, mission and vision of the Dominican Agrarian Institute (IAD), with a view to its possible transformation into a rural development institute; and b) drainage facilities were installed in settlements in order to accelerate the process of granting final title to land awarded to small farmers under agrarian reform programs.

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. In support of new government authorities, the CA formulated the profile for the Special Program for Fruit Crop Development in the Dominican Republic (PRODEFRUD), which was approved by the President of the Republic, the SEA, the Agricultural Bank (BAGRICOLA) and the IAD. Because the cost of the project is US$400 million, IICA cooperated with the Dominican government in its efforts to secure funding from friendly nations (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Norway, the Republic of China, Spain, United States and Venezuela) and from international technical and financial cooperation agencies such as the IDB, the World Bank, GTZ, USAID, and others.

A proposal was formulated for the program "Support for Small Farmers," and eight projects profiles were prepared and delivered to BAGRICOLA, dealing with agro-forestry, apiculture, rural housing, credit for fruit crops, commercial fishing, land leveling, improvement of irrigation systems, and ornamental plants for export. A form was designed for collecting data and information for an inventory of private nurseries. Also, the questionnaire for commercial fruit growers, and the instrument for collecting data on plantations and new planting areas, were designed jointly with the technical team from PRODEFRUD.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. IICA worked with the SEA and the Animal and Plant Health departments to strengthen the Dominican plant and animal health system, helping to prepare, manage the funds of and implement several national and regional projects. One of the most important was the project "Strengthening the Agricultural Health System," which gives continuity to the efforts carried out in this area since 1998 by the CA and the SEA. In this connection, the sum of US$1.27 million was secured from the United States Food Aid Program, which is administered by IICA under an agreement with the SEA. The project, whose total cost is US$2.28 million, will consolidate and expand progress made to date to: a) prevent, control and eradicate pests and diseases; b) strengthen laboratory analysis capabilities, c) strengthen activities to control internal traffic, d) organize, manage and analyze sanitary information, e) provide technical training, and f) bolster quarantine capabilities in the border area with Haiti.

The country's agricultural health system also received support in developing a training plan for the great majority of quarantine inspectors stationed at ports, airports and the border with Haiti; in modernizing epidemiological surveillance by improving notification and registration procedures; in training government veterinarians; and in institutionalizing the preparation of periodic epidemiological reports. Also, the CA provided technical and logistic support for formulating, reaching agreement on and gaining official approval for the national system for the accreditation of government veterinary services. It also contributed to preparing a quarantine procedures manual and an index of weeds, plant pests and diseases in the Dominican Republic, with economic support from the US Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS) and Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). The CA helped formulate and seek funds for the following projects: a) Epidemiological Surveillance of Classic Swine Fever on the Border between the Dominican Republic and Haiti; b) Pilot Modular Project for the Prevention, Control and Eradication of Classic Swine Fever in the Northeastern Region; and c) Project for the Control of Classic Swine Fever in Hispaniola and Surveillance in the Bahamas, Belize and Jamaica.

Rural Development. The project "Milk Bank: the Milk that Reforests" received considerable support from IICA in its efforts to create jobs, improve nutrition for the 100 participating families, produce food, reforest deforested areas and promote environmental health. Under the project, some 36,500 liters of milk were delivered to beneficiaries in the provinces of Elias Piña and Pedernales. In addition, 62,952 fruit and timber-producing trees were planted in communities and on family plots through eight separate reforestation activities; 22 workshops were held with technical support from the Foundation for the Comprehensive Development of Pedernales (FUNDACIPE) and the Foundation for Community Development (FUDECO), which are executing the project; and vegetable seeds were distributed for family and community gardens.

Other important actions carried out under this project were: a) the formulation of three project profiles aimed at involving the indigent in community development and environmental conservation; b) the design of a form for collecting project data and information, which will serve as a foundation for monitoring and evaluating activities; c) the collection, through various activities, of some US$40,000 to expand project cover-

age; d) with support from the Special Fund for Agricultural Development, the distribution of 1,500 young laying hens; and e) three medical campaigns, with the support from the Rotary Club, which benefited more than 1,000 low-income people.

Training and Education. IICA helped organize and hold 17 training and education events, which were attended by a total of 3,051 technical personnel, agribusiness operators and agricultural and livestock producers. It also collaborated with the National Rural Development Training Network (sponsored by CIARA-IFAD) in organizing and holding different activities, including two meetings to program and monitor activities; four workshops on the culture of water (for 160 producers and agricultural technicians); and two workshops on gender and environment, for members of the National Watershed Management Association.

IICA also cooperated in organizing and holding, as part of the Eco-tourism and Production Fair, a workshop on self-management, environment and sustainable development of agrarian reform. It coordinated and supported the participation of an expert in the national and regional conference on sustainable development, held in Caracas in November. Also, support was provided for the visits of three Haitian delegations: the purpose of the first exchange mission from the Haiti national network was to learn more about the agricultural development project in San Juan de la Maguana (PRODAS) and to establish ties with the Irrigation Boards in the southeastern part of the country. Another exchange mission from the Haiti national network visited the SEA Extension and Training Department. Finally, a group of Haitian agribusiness operators visited the country in order to learn about melon cultivation techniques and to discuss the possibility of hiring a Dominican advisor to help them develop a plantation.

Information and Communications. The main accomplishments of the CA in this area were: a) creation of the Dominican Network of Agricultural Information Units, whose membership includes nine agricultural sector organizations and institutions of higher learning; and b) consolidation of the information and documentation system, which provides network members with support in organizing, classifying and cataloging materials; creating data bases in their respective documentation centers; and ensuring the timeliness of periodic information on prices for the principal agricultural products; the progress made through the projects under the CA's responsibility; and a daily summary of agricultural information published in the country's most important newspapers. Under the Kellogg project, eight computers were assigned to network members; three courses were offered (in Trinidad and Tobago, St. Lucia and Dominica) on the use of Win-ISIS and Ariel; equipment was obtained to create a mirror server for improving the service of the SIDALC metabase in the Caribbean; and five workshops were held on the use of microcomputers, Windows, Office and Internet for 60 technicians from the SEA and BAGRICOLA.

Eastern Caribbean States (ECS)

In the year 2000, IICA's strategy in the ECS recognized the importance of the OECS Agriculture Diversification Programme as a vehicle for targeting its interventions. With this approach, corporate services were provided to IICA's clients in the form of training, improved information and dissemination of technology, and optimized use of resources among inter-institutional partners in the sector. Through the use of methodologies and tools introduced by IICA in collaboration with other partners, the countries now have improved capacities to select commodities with potential for development as well as to identify the most appropriate technologies. Greater capacity to manage the production and marketing of certain commodities was manifested in increased levels of production and farmer incomes. IICA's clients in the countries benefited from training to improve agri-enterprise management capabilities, and linkages were forged between agriculture, tourism and processing.

Significant networking among farmer groups, communities and non-governmental agencies (including credit institutions), benefited farmer communities engaged in sustainable development processes as well as farmers engaged in commercial production of export and non-export commodities. In terms of policy and institutional support, four countries are in the process of institutionalizing national quality control and inspection systems for fresh produce exports. Agricultural sector plans were prepared for one country and agriculture policy options defined for another. Support was also given for strengthening agricultural health programs with a view to reducing threats from pests of economic importance to agriculture.

Policies and Trade. Agriculture policy options prepared for Saint Lucia were discussed and accepted for finalization by the National Agricultural Advisory Committee, and an agriculture sector plan prepared for

Antigua and Barbuda

Antigua and Barbuda was accepted for incorporation into that country's National Sustainable Development Plan. Through the IICA/CARDI collaborative arrangement, all six ECS countries have the capacity to identify and develop projects for the commercialization of selected commodities by targeting strengths and weaknesses along the agri-food chain, using a commodity-systems approach. In addition, with the application of the AGSYS tool promoted by IICA, the Planning Unit in the MoA in Saint Lucia has enhanced ability to provide advice to farmers regarding the profitability of producing commodities with established technologies. The Planning Unit is also better able to support policy decisions on technologies to be adopted, based on comparative cost-analysis of efficiencies along the agri-food chain, up to the farm gate. In collaboration with the Bureaux of Standards and the MoAs in the Windward Islands, a model policy framework for a quality control and inspection system for fresh produce exports was prepared and disseminated; IICA is also facilitating the process to put in place appropriate legislation for this system. Through IICA/Canada, assistance was provided for the design of a Water Unit in the MoA in Saint Lucia.

Dominica

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. Dasheen is the second-most important crop after bananas in St. Vincent and the Grenadines and among the two most important crops after bananas in Dominica. In this connection, the CA assisted in organizing trade missions to explore intra-regional and extra-regional markets for dasheen and in Dominica, the Dominica Export Agency, the MoA and CARDI collaborated in an IICA-led initiative to complete the first stage of a computerized monitoring system for dasheen production and yield forecasting. The OECS Agriculture Diversification Program received a significant boost with the introduction of 12 new varieties of hot peppers, 12 new citrus varieties, one variety of plantain for Grenada, seven varieties of mangoes for the tree crop program in Saint Kitts and Nevis, one new variety of passion fruit for Saint Lucia, herbs and spices for Antigua and Barbuda, and inter-country exchanges of germ plasm of breadfruit, jujube and sweet potato for Antigua and Barbuda and passion fruit for Saint Lucia.

Under an agreement signed with the Caribbean Program for Human Resources Development and in collaboration with national institutions, capacities were strengthened to establish and manage a quality control and inspection system for fresh produce exports in the four Windward islands. Other aspects of the system completed were a fee schedule for the Grenada Quality Control Inspectorate and model job descriptions for quality control officers who will work in the respective national systems. OECS grades and standards for nine crops were reviewed and modified and an agreement reached among the countries for adopting them.

Poultry producers also received support under diversification efforts. Some 20 producers in Saint Lucia received training in how to develop a HACCP system for meat and poultry producers and processors, and one of the three processing facilities was assessed and recommendations made for improving its operations. In Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, collaboration with IFAD enabled the Poultry Producers' Association to access services from the Caribbean Technical Cooperation Services of the Caribbean Development Bank for conducting a study to determine the economic feasibility of the poultry industry in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

Grenada

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. In Grenada, 50 persons participated in sessions to discuss WTO/SPS measures and their implications, with a view to improving the country's understanding of same. ECS countries benefited from an action plan to implement a biological control program, including survey strategies to determine the presence of papaya mealy bug, the identification of local taxonomists, the examination and positive identification of samples, and the identification of key cooperators to participate in releasing exotic parasites and evaluating impact thereof. Additional assistance was provided to Antigua and

Barbuda for assessing the economic importance of the incidence of the pest in that country. In Saint Lucia, assistance was provided in leading a team that investigated spraying options for the control of yellow sigatoka of bananas; recommendations were proposed. Under the National Fruit Committees, a control and eradication program for mango seed weevil and a program to manage fungal attacks on grapes were prepared in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

Rural Development. Seven community groups/farmers organizations' received technical support for activities ranging from organization, management and diversification of farm activities to creation of new income-generating activities. In collaboration with UNDP and the OECS and using a sustainable livelihoods approach, five community groups comprising 117 persons (mainly rural women in three countries - Dominica, Grenada, St. Vincent and the Grenadines) received training in farm management, crafts, principles of cooperatives, small-scale project identification and management. Through introduction to credit and savings, most of the women in the participating groups became involved for the first time in the traditional banking sector. Three NGOs received support for upgrading their responsiveness to the needs of communities with basic social and economic needs. Using the same approach and in collaboration with the MoA and the Ministry of Community Development in Saint Lucia, a group of 29 rural women who received training in agro-processing for cottage industries, cooperatives, marketing and project management are now actively involved in a green seasoning initiative. The Young Beekeepers Association in Grenada received training in business management, secondary bee products and advanced apiary management. Draft bee legislation was prepared for Grenada and the status and potential of beekeeping was assessed in Saint Kitts. In Antigua and Barbuda, a strategic plan was prepared for the Beekeepers Association.

In collaboration with Saint Lucia Heritage Tourism, Ltd. and the Saint Lucia MoA, farmers from three adjacent communities in the southern micro-region were assisted in examining options and opportunities for diversifying farm income by tapping family free time to include agro-tourism activities in their daily operations. Also in collaboration with the MoA and IICA/Canada, two volunteers from the IICA/Canada Farmer Program reviewed farmer organizations in Saint Lucia, recommending programs to assist local organizations strengthen such areas as education, marketing, administration and strategies for financial viability. Through donations from the Agri-Future Foundation, small farmers and rural schools in Saint Lucia and Antigua and Barbuda received donations of approximately 386 kilograms of vegetable seeds.

Training and Education. In Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, 34 dasheen producers and merchants received entrepreneurial training in dasheen production and marketing, and participated in sessions on the impact of trade liberalization and competition on the marketing of agricultural commodities, with emphasis on dasheen. In addition, technicians, farmers and exporters received training through several workshops in managing the production, marketing and processing of selected commodities. In Grenada, 16 persons were trained in hot peppers processing and in integrated pest management for hot peppers. In Antigua and Barbuda, 40 persons received training in the production and marketing of herbs and spices, hot pepper seedling production, and integrated pest management for sweet potatoes.

Workshops and field days were conducted in Saint Kitts and Nevis and in Saint Lucia to train 30 persons in tree crop propagation and nursery orchard management, and ten persons in flower induction in mangoes, respectively. Another 30 passion fruit farmers in Saint Lucia are expecting higher yields in that crop as a result of training received in pruning techniques and hand pollination. Training in the production, marketing and processing of peanuts was also facilitated by the CA in Saint Kitts and Nevis. A total of 77 persons were trained in post-harvest handling techniques, another 89 in quality control inspection, and some 50 persons also received training in HACCP for fresh produce. In support of the process to modernize educational tools used in rural schools, ten rural primary schools received computers from the Agri-Future Foundation.

Information and Communications. Four countries (Dominica, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) are now able to receive and transmit information within the SIDLAC system through equipment and software they received, and the training of 13 technicians in the use of Ariel software and Win-ISIS. Eight regional offices of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries received computers in support of its service modernization process.

GUYANA

IICA's activities in Guyana benefited both the private and public sectors. Priority attention was given to strengthening non-traditional production and marketing systems and promoting a more effective transfer of technology through rural organizations. Public sector institutions were assisted in improving their information and planning systems and their agricultural health support services. Important achievements were recorded during the period.

The CA in Guyana made significant progress in 2000 toward meeting both its short- and longer-term development goals. Of particular importance was the integration of inter-institutional and inter-disciplinary efforts to develop sustainable production and marketing systems for specific crops having market opportunity.

Policies and Trade. In 2000, IICA/Guyana made significant progress in its efforts to contribute to strengthening institutional systems and services. In the area of planning, assistance was provided for formulating and implementing action plans for peanut, cashew and organic cocoa development; project documents were prepared for the development of peanuts and organic cocoa and the establishment of the Guyana Agricultural Information Network (GAIN); and continued support was provided for monitoring the Strategic Plan for Sustainable Agricultural and Rural Development in Region 9.

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. A joint undertaking by the National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI), the British High Commission (BHC) and IICA led to the first national effort to produce and market organically grown agricultural products (cocoa beans). A pilot project was initiated at Mabaruma, with priority attention focusing on actions to strengthen a group of 26 cocoa farmers, establish cocoa nurseries, document natural resources, rehabilitate 100 acres of abandoned cocoa, certify cocoa farms as organic, train farmers in organic agriculture, and construct a centralized fermentation and semi-solar drying facility. Significant progress was made in all these areas during the year.

A multi-institutional effort led by IICA/Guyana resulted in improved organization and more effective transfer of technology to peanut farmers in the North Rupununi micro-region. Technical assistance was provided by four University of Florida Extension Program volunteers, with funding from FAVA/CA. The Ministry of Fisheries, Crops and Livestock (MFCL) and NARI provided local expertise to peanut-related research and training, with funding from UNDP and the European Community's Cariforum Agribusiness Research and Training Fund. Peanut farmers organized into a cooperative and actively participated in research on peanut seed varieties, planting densities, drip irrigation, and application of improved equipment for peanut harvesting, hulling and grinding into peanut butter. At least one farmer reported productivity increases exceeding 100% over his 1999 crop.

The CA coordinated and facilitated the development of a pilot cashew processing industry at St. Ignatius with financial support from UNICEF, among others. During the year, a storage bond and processing plant were constructed, appropriate processing and drying technology was introduced, 15 women received training and nearly 10,000 lbs of raw materials were processed. Over 1,600 lbs of cashew kernels were packaged and marketed to 26 retail outlets in Georgetown and locally, yielding a gross return of US$10,000 and giving full-time employment to 11 indigenous women.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. In the area of agricultural health, the joint efforts of MFCL and IICA resulted in Guyana being declared free of the carambola fruit fly (CFF) on October 23, 2000. IICA also supported the government's successful, integrated effort to become

declared free of the foot-and-mouth disease, and facilitated a series of training events to upgrade the skills of human resources working in agricultural institutions.

Rural Development. A joint project, funded by the BHC, facilitated the expansion of an ongoing coffee processing and marketing project to three new communities in the hinterland. A survey of some 60 coffee farmers was completed and maps were prepared on three of the communities. Four coffee pulping machines were imported from the Dominican Republic and construction commenced on a small processing center at Waramuri in Region 1. A preliminary design for an improved package for marketing retail coffee was produced with University of Florida support.

Dairy farmers along the coastal strip of Guyana's agricultural belt continued to receive technical and financial support from IICA for their dairy development effort. Important achievements included laying the groundwork for establishing a National Cattle Farmers' Association; setting up the management committee; building a demonstration dairy farm at St. John's Secondary School in Anna Catherina; and launching a project for establishing a mini milk-pasteurization plant at Dantzig, East Coast Demerara, with FAO funding.

Information and Communications. Thanks to support from the AgriFuture Foundation, the CA furnished public and private sector institutions with 70 recycled computers, which are being used for training students of agriculture, facilitating the work of agricultural extension officers and, most importantly, developing the sector's GAIN information network promoted by IICA. GAIN will be linked to SIDALC, which is sponsored by the Kellogg Foundation and IICA.

HAITI

In 2000, IICA's technical cooperation in this country focused on: a) direct support to the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Rural Development (MARNDR) as specified below, b) cooperation with the private sector, mostly in order to promote alliances between the private and public sectors, and c) direct technical assistance to producers through projects.

Policies and Trade. Throughout the year, the CA supported the organization of, and participated in, meetings with associations of mango and coffee exporters, and with agricultural input import and distribution firms. Alliances were promoted among private sector enterprises, with an eye to promoting private sector investments in the agricultural sector. Support was provided for Haitian agribusiness operators to participate in regional meetings, including of the Caribbean Agribusiness Association (CABA), held concurrently with Caribbean Week of Agriculture in Jamaica. Special attention was given to promoting meetings and exchanges of experiences between Haitian and Dominican entrepreneurs, the aim of which was to give Haitian entrepreneurs the opportunity to see how the Dominican agricultural sector was strengthened by the action of the Dominican Agribusiness Board (JAD), an experience which, adapted to local conditions, could be replicated in Haiti.

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. In coordination with the MARNDR, improved varieties of bean, corn, sorghum, cassava and tropical grass seeds were introduced into Haiti and validated on farms in different ecological zones. Those that perform the best will be multiplied and then planted for commercial ends. In this way, IICA is contributing to boosting the productivity of the staple crops most consumed by part of the population.

In addition, 3,500 young Rhode Island Red and Plymouth Rock laying hens were imported and distributed to 300 families. The hens lay, on average and with no need for dietary supplements, 20 eggs per month, which are used to cover the families' needs and for sale at market. At the draught animal (donkey) crossbreeding centers, which continued to operate normally, 48 cases of crossbreeding were reported. In the fisheries sector, the Jackzyl Fishing Cooperative was strengthened; it reported increased catches after the introduction of modern equipment and training in how to use it.

The 84 production and animal health agents trained by the CA and stationed throughout the country participated in two refresher seminars on production, management and preventive medicine. The CA also participated in two agricultural fairs organized by the MARNDR; included in the exhibitions were the donkeys imported for use at the draught animal breeding centers and a photographic display of an improved banana and plantain transportation system that is more

economical, provides environmental benefits and causes less spoilage. Lastly, support was provided for a MARNDR specialist to attend a regional seminar on rice production, and for a specialist from the CA to receive training on milk production in the United States.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. IICA supported the MARNDR by arranging for a technical assistance mission to visit Haiti to address the matter of animal quarantine. For two weeks, a specialist from the CA/Canada participated in the mission, working with Haitian specialists, offering a number of recommendations which the MARNDR's plant protection unit has begun to implement. Also, IICA collaborated in the collection of samples of flies as part of efforts to control the screwworm through a project being implemented by the MARNDR with financial and technical support from FAO.

In the area of plant protection, actions got under way to control black sigatoka in plantains. To this end, a group of MARNDR specialists traveled to the Dominican Republic where the Secretariat of State for Agriculture (SEA) is working with producers to control this disease. The CA also provided assistance in updating the action plan for controlling the coffee berry borer, together with MARNDR specialists and a CIRAD specialist stationed at the CA/Dominican Republic. Under this plan, the CA/Haiti will be responsible for managing the project and providing technical assistance. The project document has been submitted to two sources for funding.

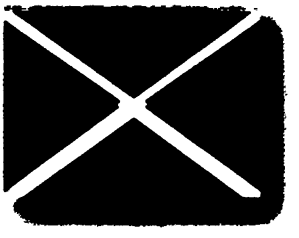
The CA coordinated the participation of four MARNDR specialists in two regional seminars: one in St. Kitts (on paracoccus) and the other in Trinidad (training trainers in good agricultural practices).

Rural Development. The CA continued to bolster the institutional capabilities of the organizations created under technical instruments, such as the Maribaroux Rice Production and Processing Association; the Jackzyl Fishing Cooperative: the Jacmel, Viallet, Henri, Desbarrieres and Tapaion producers' associations, and all the credit committees of the Kredifanm project. The Kredifanm Foundation (which provides loans to rural women who, to date, have maintained a 100% repayment rate) was institutionalized. IICA also provided support to the IFAD/CIARA National Rural Development Network, and organized a visit to the Dominican Republic to analyze the experiences of the San Juan de la Maguana Agricultural Development Program (PRODAS).

Training and Education. Computers acquired by the AgriFuture Foundation were delivered to the MARNDR's Middle School for Animal Production and Health. The national committee of the Caribbean Council on Higher Education in Agriculture (CACHE) held several meetings and appointed a representative to attend the Regional Council meeting in Jamaica. The CA also served as a liaison with CATIE to ensure that Haitian students fulfilled the requirements for competing for scholarships to attend that Center; it also was responsible for administering the tests given to the students. Similarly, the CA participated in an inter-institutional national committee set up to select students to compete for scholarships to study agronomy at the Simon Bolivar Agricultural College in Venezuela.

Lastly, the CA worked during the year to promote further exchanges of experiences between Haitian specialists from the public and private agricultural sectors and their counterparts in the Dominican Republic, as a means of promoting the sustainable development of agriculture in both countries.

JAMAICA



During 2000, IICA/Jamaica continued to implement the technical cooperation agenda developed in 1998 together with the MoA and other agricultural sector representatives. The objectives of this agenda are to support better use and management of natural resources and the environment, in particular hillside and watershed areas; contribute to rural development, food security, poverty alleviation and social stability; improve middle management and technical capabilities in the sector, as well as farmers' skills; promote agribusiness development and private sector participation in agriculture; contribute to fostering dialogue and coordination between the public and private sectors and regional and international agencies for agriculture; and strengthen linkages between Jamaica's agriculture and those of the wider Caribbean and Latin America.

More specifically, IICA's strategic areas for action are to assist the Jamaican agricultural sector prepare for free trade and for participating in the global economy; promote hillside farming sys-

tems and watershed management; support agribusiness micro-enterprises, with emphasis on incorporating women and youth into agricultural development; and facilitate cooperation and the exchange of technology and experience among Jamaica, the wider Caribbean and Latin America, in cooperation with national authorities, as well as regional and international representations in Jamaica.

Policies and Trade. One of the major highlights of the year was the celebration of IICA's 25 years of service to Jamaican agriculture, which was marked by the hosting of the Second Caribbean Week of Agriculture in October.

IICA and the Caribbean Regional Negotiation Machinery (RNM) signed a technical cooperation agreement to establish a strategic alliance aimed at assisting Cariforum member states, particularly through training and capacity building, to more effectively participate in agricultural trade negotiations. IICA's agricultural trade specialist continued delivering WTO-awareness seminars across the island in collaboration with MoA staff. Youth received special attention in sessions conducted at high schools, agricultural schools, colleges and other educational centers.

The "Forum for the Discussion of New and Emerging issues in Agricultural Trade" continued in 2000 to address relevant issues including the future of Caribbean agriculture, the future of IICA, CARICOM Single Market and Economy (implications for the agricultural sector of Jamaica), needs analysis of the readiness of Jamaican institutions for WTO-SPS, financing for agricultural production, and local food production for the tourism sector.

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. IICA Jamaica facilitated a trip to Brazil for the Minister of State and the Chief Technical Director of the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAG), to observe first hand agricultural enterprises and technology in that country. Among other agricultural institutions, the officials visited the National Center for Cassava and Fruit Production Research and the Agricultural Development Enterprise, both in the state of Bahia. On their return, they expressed great interest in the excellent opportunities for cooperation and technology exchange between Brazil and Jamaica, especially in regard to cassava processing, tropical fruit production, and equipment for small-farm cultivation and agroindustry.

With regard to goat production, the Jamaica Bauxite Institute indicated interest in supporting an IICA project to promote goat production in the Mocho area of Clarendon, by providing J$20 million to support the project over a five-year period. In addition, work continued to develop a goat agroforestry production system and a vermicomposting facility in the Rio Cobre area. Technical assistance was also provided to the Rio Cobre Goat Breeders Association for upgrading local management capabilities.

Rural Development. Two agricultural awards were granted in the year 2000: the Youth in Agribusiness Award, to the vice-president of Duncan's Mushrooms Ltd. for his pioneering efforts to produce and market mushrooms in Jamaica; and the Agribusiness Award, to the Jamaica Agro-Processors Association, in recognition of its contribution to the development of the agro-processing industry in Jamaica.

A US$90,000 grant was received from the OAS under the project "Support of Agribusiness Micro-enterprises with Emphasis on the Incorporation of Women and Youth into Agricultural Development." These funds are being used to operate the Rural Women in Agriculture/Informal Credit Project, which provides loans to women in the Jamaica Network of Rural Women Producers, and is carried out in collaboration with the OAS, the Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA), and the Integrated People's Cooperative Banking Network.

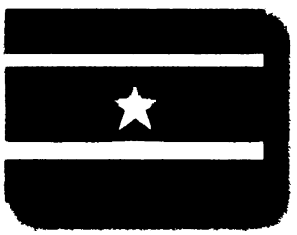
Training and Education. As part of its commitment to contribute to the advancement of agriculture in Jamaica, the CA established an Agribusiness Training Center at its office in Hope Gardens. It will become operational in 2001, offering clients in Jamaica multimedia courses in the field of agribusiness, both on CD-ROM and via the Internet.

IICA completed the final draft of two project proposals which were submitted to the Caribbean Regional Human Resource Development Program for Economic Competitiveness. The first, "Strengthening the Extension Services in Jamaica by Developing a Mobile Agricultural Research and Extension Service (AgriTech Express)," will be a collaborative effort with RADA, the Jamaica Agricultural Society and the Jamaica Agricultural Development Foundation. The second, "Strengthening the Business Capacity of Rural Women

in Jamaica through the Provision of Business and Computer Training" seeks to improve the capacity of rural women in Jamaica to produce value-added products and to increase the marketability and competitiveness of these products.

Information and Communications. The CA's information specialist visited the Knockalva Agricultural School to assist in upgrading its library. Local, regional and international sources of agricultural information were contacted in an effort to obtain book resources for the school's library collection, which is critical at this stage. The CA will continue to provide technical assistance, with additional support from library and information professionals of the Jamaica Agricultural Documentation and Information Network. Also as part of its efforts to strengthen agricultural libraries in Jamaica, the CA provided the Agricultural Library at the College of Agriculture, Science and Education with a computer.

SURINAME



The CA's activities during the year 2000 focused primarily on revising and upgrading not only IICA's projects and activities, but also its image and relationship with the Government of Suriname and important private sector agencies and stakeholders, with a view to making a realistic and practical contribution to the development of agriculture and agribusiness in Suriname.

Policies and Trade. A strategic plan was designed and developed for the fruit and vegetable subsectors in Suriname, and the rice subsector received support to help it understand the new challenges of the international market and the need for appropriate organization.

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. The Suriname component of the Tropical Fruit Development Project undertook important efforts during the year, including the study of demand-led commodity system for passion fruit; technical and organizational support to the National Fruit Crop (NFC) Committee; support to private sector and parastatal fruit crop producers and processors; and development of a proposal for the implementation of a strategic plan for the fruit and vegetable sub-sectors in Suriname, in partnership with the Ministries of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries (LVV), Planning and Development Cooperation, and Trade and Industry.

With regard to the fruit crops project, data was collected, a preliminary analysis made and a draft report submitted for the study on passion fruit in Suriname. In consultation with IICA, the Ministry revised the structure of the National Fruit Crop Committee and installed the new members for a two-year term; in addition, NFC members were included in the strategic planning exercises. In response to a Ministry request, the project also obtained seed of select cashew varieties from Brazil, establishing a pilot demonstration plot and an on-farm demonstration plot for the crop. In addition, technical assistance was provided for establishing a 3.5 hectare farm and a pilot demonstration plot for passion fruit, and for expanding pineapple cultivation.

Short-term support was provided for revising and reorienting the dairy project, and zoning of the country for different crops and economical production was promoted.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. The regional headquarters of the Carambola Fruit Fly Program (CFF) is located in the CA/Suriname, from which activities in Guyana, French Guyana, Brazil and Suriname are coordinated. During the year, CFF control in Suriname progressed rapidly and trapping of the fruit fly (Bactrocera carambulae) significantly expanded. By year-end, the greater Paramaribo area was under intensive control. Outside of this, only 15% of the country remained infected. The National Agricultural Health Program was reinforced by means of the transfer of two trucks and one Pentium computer to the Ministry of Agriculture/Quarantine Service. An intensive and effective public relations campaign was mounted through radio, newspaper and television spots, for increasing public acceptance of the control program. The program's Steering Committee met to review program status and the recommendations of the Scientific Advisory Panel, to approve the work plan for year 2001, and to make recommendations for the coming year. Additional intensive action was taken in the area of agricultural health and food safety in support of Suriname under the regional project based in Trinidad and Tobago. More information on these activities can

be found in the pertinent section of the report on the Caribbean Regional Center.

Rural Development. The Integrated Rural Development Project established and successfully ran an agro-forestry demonstration and training unit, an expansion of IICA's development and training efforts in the Upper Suriname River Basin. This was carried out in partnership with the Abenaston Foundation for Development (ASO), the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries (LVV), the Ministry of Regional Development, the Moravian Church Centre for Community Development (CCD), the National Women's Movement (NVB) and the Farmers and Agricultural Workers Union (FAL).

Overall, the project made a substantial impact during the year and the village communities, at all levels, have become more competent and efficient in food production, marketing, processing, and small business management. In addition, the rural communities have been sensitized to and instructed in the principles of agro-forestry, sustainable agriculture and organic farming. For the first time, Maroon families have moved beyond a subsistence economy and are earning cash incomes with a consequent improvement in their standard of living.

By year end, these activities had produced significant results. The main products were construction and furnishing of an agro-processing facility; establishment of a produce marketing service covering 25 villages; provision of accessory equipment to six villages and general assistance in the transportation of people and produce; construction and equipping of the first of five village kitchens (Gangasas) at Yaw Yaw with resources from the Canada Fund - CIDA; establishment of two plant nurseries; and distribution of citrus, coconut and cashew plants in furtherance of the crop diversification program. With the farmers mentioned above and many other farmers progressively adopting improved practices, there has been a substantial increase in acreage planted, particularly to peanuts and cassava, and a concomitant increase in marketing out of the area. In association with these activities, the project provided several villages with chain saws, wheel barrows, brush cutters, irrigation pumps, cassava mills and peanut hullers, with financial assistance from various partners.

Training and Education. Under the Integrated Rural Development Project, training was provided to women's marketing groups in 12 villages and women operators of plant nurseries in five villages. Fifteen farmers received training as community extension field assistants; on-farm agricultural training was provided to four village groups (10-15 persons each); and six instructors and ten farmers received training in agro-forestry systems (the systems were introduced on eight farms). In cooperation with the private sector, men and women farmers were trained in handicraft production and marketing.

Information and Communications. The communications system of the CA was modernized with the establishment of an office network having one wireless communication to a server to create IICA/Suriname's independent domain on the Internet. One booklet and two new IICA bulletins were produced and distributed during the year to enhance the image of the Institute by publicizing its activities in Suriname and in the region.

IICA/Suriname participated with booths in two national fairs: the AGROFAIR 2000 and the Industrial Fair 2000, which also served to increase and improve awareness of IICA in the country. Some 120 children presented works for 8 special prizes in a painting contest organized by the CA among school children in Paramaribo to promote awareness of the concept of agriculture and the environment; the prizes were presented at the AGROFAIR 2000.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

The results of a CA workshop to reflect on and conduct a participatory evaluation of IICA's performance in Trinidad and Tobago for the 1998-2000 period revealed the CA's comparative advantages in four main areas, namely: crisis management, maintaining the viability of agri-food chains, empowering rural development, and facilitating dialogue and consensus building. An implementation plan was devised to enhance the performance of the CA through internal adjustments and tapping of identified opportunities.

Policies and Trade. Major emerging international trade issues were brought to the attention of the wider national community, IICA's partners and clients

in a five-part lecture series entitled "Agriculture: Beyond a Sectoral Approach." Leading experts addressed topics including dispute settlement and agricultural trade; the WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (implications for the Caribbean); and the scope for the agricultural and food sectors, among others. A WTO Watch Group was formed by seminar participants to monitor the effect of trade liberalization on local agriculture and to make recommendations to government on same.

The impact of changing the Common External Tariff (CET) for agricultural commodities produced locally was highlighted in three reports prepared as part of a CARICOM-wide study on the subject. The reports are entitled: "Situational Analysis of the Regional Agricultural Sector"; "Examination of the External Trade Environment affecting CARICOM's Agriculture Sector" and "Structure and Operational Features of the CET of CARICOM."

In a report titled "Import Competition and Impact on the Poultry and Pork Industries in the Caribbean," the evolution of the local pork and poultry industries was traced and a profile developed for the performance of the broiler industry production chain. After establishing a local chapter, the Caribbean AgriBusiness Association (CABA) assisted various local commodity groups, including poultry and ice-cream producers, in successfully making their case to national and regional policy-makers for assistance in the context of free trade, especially relative to unacceptable import surges.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources (MALMR), the Tobago House of Assembly and others, the CA successfully hosted an international workshop on agro-tourism, highlighting how the region as a whole and agriculture in particular can benefit from the growth in tourism.

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. Progress was made in developing selected commodities. For example, a CIRAD specialist conducted an assessment and made recommendations for expanding the pineapple industry, and efforts continued on behalf of MALMR to introduce improved coconut germ plasm into Trinidad and Tobago as part of a wider plan for developing the local coconut industry. The CA also continued collaborating with the National Fruit Committee (NFC), the Citrus Growers Association, and Caroni (1975) Ltd. in developing the local citrus industry, which included initiating preparation of a workshop entitled "Expanding Regional Trade in Fresh Citrus and Selected Minor Fruits." The CA worked with the International Network for the Improvement of Bananas and Plantain (INIBAP) -France- in assisting the MALMR obtain morphological information to characterize two local banana varieties ("sucrier" and "silk fig"). INIBAP is prepared to provide virus-indexed tissue culture plantlets of sucrier to IICA for transmission to the MALMR.

The CA collaborated with the Trinidad and Tobago National Fruit Committee (NFC) and 13 other NFCs in an IICA/FAO scoping study entitled "Identification of Alternative Tropical Fruit Disinfestation Treatments in the Caribbean." An international workshop on the processing and marketing of non-traditional fruit products was held in Trinidad.

The CA's involvement in the dairy sector resulted in the strengthening of the Cattle Farmers Association and the National Dairy Committee; the introduction of mulberry (Morus indicus) as a high protein-yielding forage for improving dairy nutrition; the establishment of two model farms for transferring technology; and completion of a feasibility study for small-scale milk pasteurization.

Through collaboration with the regional project "Technology Transfer Management, Supporting Regional Agricultural Production and Trade Competitiveness," the CA provided assistance throughout the year to the Trinidad and Tobago Consumer Affairs Division of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce on various issues pertaining to genetically modified organisms and regulation thereof in the country.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. In May, over 60 persons from both the public and private sectors benefited greatly from a seminar on sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures and food safety organized by the CA in collaboration with MALMR. In November, a one-day seminar on the WTO SPS Agreement was held in Tobago with resource persons from the Caribbean Regional Center and an expert from FAVA/CA. MALMR's Plant Protection Section prepared and submitted to IICA the first draft of their national emergency plan for exotic plant pests.

The CaRC also supported the MALMR with its citrus black fly control program. Two training workshops were held in March and November for personnel from MALMR's Crop Protection Section on the identification of Coleopteran pests of forestry products; a leading expert with the FAVA/CA was the main resource person. Fifteen persons attended the initial workshop; seven went on to receive advanced training in a second workshop. In collaboration with PAHO/WHO, the IICA Agricultural Health Project supported a visit by a senior laboratory technician from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency to the MALMR veterinary laboratory for resolving problems encountered with brucellosis testing.

The National Dairy Committee asked the CA to coordinate a working committee on brucellosis comprising representatives of public, private and international organizations, for the purpose of sharing information on the brucellosis campaign and determining how technical agencies, such as PAHO and IICA, can assist.

Rural Development. The CA's activities in rural development continued with the strengthening of the Network of Rural Women Producers, which included the successful launching of a revolving credit facility and winning first prize (educational category) in the prestigious National Flower Show hosted by the Horticultural Society of Trinidad and Tobago. Additionally, the CA provided training to five community groups that, for the first time, included teenage students from rural and suburban communities immediately surrounding the capital, Port-of-Spain.

The work of the CA with respect to rural women was recognized in a government report to the Committee on the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Additionally, IICA's inputs in the national round table to address the strengthening of women's capacities in production and trade, as well as in the regional youth enterprise seminar, were regarded as invaluable by the respective organizers.

The recently concluded project "Supporting the Rural Development Process through Institutional Strengthening of Farmers' Groups and Supporting Agencies" was reviewed. Highlighted was the training in business management, food preservation and gender. The 16 rural communities with which the project interfaced cover a wide geographical spread, and their progress was commended by the review team. Through the project, three groups and over 15 individuals successfully initiated or expanded production in food preservation.

Work on the role of agriculture in poverty reduction continued. In this connection, a preliminary document titled "Rural Household Food Access: A Case Study of Rural Food Entitlements in Trinidad and Tobago" was finalized and presented to key clients.

Training and Education. In collaboration with the Northern Regional Center, the CA arranged for four nationals to receive short-term specialist training under the USDA Cochran Fellowship Program. Three participants received training in HACCP program development and one in dairy herd management. The participants found the training added significantly to their professional skills and knowledge and have indicated an eagerness to pass on the knowledge and skills gained through the program to others in their companies and communities.

The project "Supporting Fruit Industry Expansion in the Caribbean" continued to work to upgrade the capabilities of human resources with a view to accelerating the local development of tropical fruit crops. In this connection, the CA provided project-writing training to two members of the National Fruit Committee (NFC) so as to increase the committee's capacity to secure funding. It sponsored the participation of one MALMR technician and partially supported two private sector representatives in the regional IICA/FAVA/CA workshop "Tropical Fruit Propagation and Nursery and Orchard Management," held in Jamaica in October. A specialist was hired to develop a training module on research project management for field demonstration and research plots as a first step in improving nation-wide research capabilities to support modernization of agriculture with emphasis on fruit crops research, pineapple germ plasm and technology transfer.

The CA continued to provide secretariat assistance to CACHE, including ongoing financial and administrative support to its operations, and facilitating the visit of CACHE's Chairman, the Dean of Faculty of Agriculture and Natural Resources/University of the West Indies (UWI), to

attend CACHE's Annual Board Meeting in Suriname. Under CACHE's staff and student exchange program, it also facilitated the attachment of one UWI student to Haiti and a student from Suriname to Trinidad and Tobago.

Information and Communications. The national component of SIDALC got under way with the full participation of six national libraries and documentation centres. Ariel software was procured and distributed to the six participating centers, with compatible scanners in five centers. Eighteen information specialists received training in a workshop entitled "Use of Ariel and Win-ISIS for Disseminating Agricultural Information in Agriculture," which was regarded as timely and useful by all participants.

During the year, the CA continued to provide information on a range of subjects, and the Agricultural Distance Learning Centre (ADLC) was furnished and all infrastractural works completed.

Central Regional Center

Events organized by the Central Regional Center during the year 2000

	EVENTS		PARTICIPANTS		N° DAYS
	Number	%	Number	%	Total
Central Regional Center	**90**	**100.0**	**3472**	**100.0**	**257**
Directorate	22	24.4	1108	31.9	75
Belize	7	7.8	167	4.8	8
Costa Rica	5	5.6	265	7.6	5
El Salvador	25	27.8	1140	32.8	81
Guatemala	4	4.4	73	2.1	15
Honduras	18	20.0	547	15.8	54
Nicaragua	4	4.4	67	1.9	12
Panama	5	5.6	105	3.0	7

Source: DIPRE.

Regional Directorate

The differentiated cooperation strategy adopted by the Central Regional Center is in keeping with IICA's general objective of supporting the efforts of the Member States in achieving sustainable agricultural development, within the framework of hemispheric integration and as a contribution to human development in rural areas. Also, it actively supports the countries in their actions to bring about further changes in production, trade and institutions, with a view to making agriculture more competitive, sustainable and equitable.

In order to respond effectively to the regional agricultural agenda of the Forum of Ministers, IICA focused its technical cooperation in the region on a smaller number of strategic areas. This flexibility made it possible to review and adjust cooperation services as needed throughout the year.

Policies and Trade. Further support was provided for upgrading capabilities for analyzing and articulating policies and programs intended to make the public and private agrifood sectors of the region more competitive, modern and productive. Efforts to transform trading practices in order to boost competitiveness involved the development of strategies and mechanisms for domestic and international trade. In this connection, IICA collaborated in: a) identifying the impact of global reforms and other regional and bilateral agreements on world trade; b) designing and harmonizing policies at the regional level, with a view to improving the capacity for tapping new opportunities; c) upgrading skills required for participating in agricultural trade

negotiations; and d) monitoring compliance with the different international commitments, bilateral agreements, and the process to promote Central American integration vis-à-vis its participation at the hemispheric level in the creation of the FTAA 2005.

As part of the Regional Agricultural Integration System, the Central Regional Center continued to provide technical and financial support to the CORECA and CAC Coordination Secretariats. Also in support of regional integration, it adjusted its supply of technical cooperation to the priority areas of the Central American Agricultural Plan.

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. In this strategic area, efforts were made to ensure that regional technology innovation and natural resource management processes produced sustainable and competitive production systems for agriculture.

Under REDCAHOR, the following results were outstanding: a) suitable genotypes of priority crops, including tomatoes, peppers, cucurbits and onions, were tested for adaptability, selection and reproduction with a view to developing the capability to produce seeds for each; b) germ plasm from indigenous plant species believed to be subject to genetic erosion and in danger of extinction were collected and distributed, classified, characterized, evaluated and maintained; c) onion production increased 200%, and tomato production between 80% and 150%, thanks to the incorporation of technological options such as drip irrigation, pest management and modern nutrition practices; d) at least five promising cultivars were identified as sources of resistance to the gemini virus of tomato; e) new biological control methods were developed, including Plutella parasitoids in cabbage (which has the potential of reducing pesticide application by 75%), and for work to control the pepper weevil, and tomato and onion larvae; and f) the Regional Vegetable Information System (SIRCAHOR) was launched, linking documentation centers in the region and providing information on individuals, services and institutions with information on vegetables.

In Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, REMERFI made in situ characterizations, diagnosed and collected materials of high quality varieties for reproduction in clonal gardens; similar actions were undertaken in Costa Rica and Panama. A regional diagnostic study was conducted on a germ plasm bank, an economic evaluation was made of plant genetic resources, and farmers were surveyed in Honduras and Nicaragua regarding the agricultural biodiversity lost as a result of Hurricane Mitch. Together with the University of Wageningen, a project profile was submitted to the EU to encourage the participation of Central America rural communities in conserving and making sustainable use of cucurbits. Further support was provided to formalize the national plant genetic resource commissions in Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras and, with support from the national agricultural research institutes of those countries, efforts were made to sensitize decision makers regarding the importance of strengthening conservation mechanisms and the sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity in Central America.

PROMECAFE provided plant protection support to coffee cultivation through the validation and selection of the type of trap to be used in combating the coffee berry borer (Hypthenemus hampei), defining application at the farm level. This is part of the process to integrate and validate biological control agents (parasitoids, fungi) with crop management and trapping techniques. In addition, the parasitoid P. coffea is being bred in the laboratory, to which end two technicians from the Salvadoran Coffee Research Foundation (PROCAFE) received training through horizontal cooperation with the National Coffee Association (ANACAFE) of Guatemala.

As for actions related to genetic breeding, a catalog of clones obtained from F1 elite hybrids among wild types and varieties of C. arabica was prepared and distributed in member countries; the trials and evaluation of CICA2...CICA6 began; and the somatic embryogenesis trials were concluded. The creation of varieties by means of embryogenesis continued and 50,000 vitroplants were shipped to the countries of Central America and the Dominican Republic. In the area of biotechnology, the ANACAFE laboratories in Guatemala maintained and multiplied pure populations of Meloidogyne sp in tomato plants in order to study their resistance; vitro-plants of F-1 hybrids received in 1999 were acclimated, and four experimental inoculations of Meloidogyne sp. were carried out. Seeds from twenty-three F2 families were received for the purpose of evaluating the effect of heat on resistance to nematodes. In Costa Rica, the Coffee Institute (ICAFE) continued to study genetic introgression/cup quality, finding that the cup quality of progeny is linked to the content of introgression markers of progenitors.

The results of studies on the management of trees on coffee plantations in Honduras and El Salvador were analyzed in support of the development of agroforestry systems in coffee cultivation. In connection with the systems for producing, marketing and certifying organic coffee, a regional training workshop was held in Costa Rica, attended by two specialists from each PROMECAFE member country. The Salvadoran Coffee Council and two experts from the New York Coffee and Sugar Exchange provided support to the Second Regional Course on Coffee Quality and Tasting, which was attended by 10 specialists from coffee organizations in Central America (two per country). Also, by initiative of PROMECAFE, during the regular meeting of the Association of Central American Coffee Growers, agreement was reached to create a network of coffee tasters; the PROMECAFE Executive was given responsibility for monitoring and strengthening the network.

With the French cooperation agency CIRAD, a project profile on carbon fixing in coffee plantations in the region was prepared and submitted to the EU. In addition, USAID's Regional Environmental Program for Central America (PROARCA5) collaborated in a study on policies for promoting environmentally friendly coffee growing practices. A seminar-workshop was held in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, on the effect of drying and storage on the quality of coffee, attended by 65 operators of coffee mills, entrepreneurs and coffee experts from Honduran Coffee Institute (IHCAFE), ICAFE (Costa Rica) and ANACAFE (Guatemala).

The project Integrated Management of Coffee Berry Borer, sponsored by the International Coffee Organization and the Common Commodities Fund, along with the Southern Border College (ECOSUR) of Mexico, evaluated 16 parcels worked by small farmers, releasing 32,600 Cephalonomia stephanaderis parasitoids. Also, an ECOSUR specialist received training in the in-laboratory breeding of the parasitoid Phymasticus. During the second semester, sufficient individuals had been produced to begin experimental field releases. With ANACAFE/Guatemala, efforts were stepped up to disseminate information on manual methods for controlling the borer. Such methods proved to be highly effective in reducing, at a lower cost, damages by the pest. In addition, biological studies continued on the adaptability, parasitism and dispersion in the field of Phymaticus coffea. Initial observations revealed that adaptation and colonization had occurred in three areas, with parasitism rates of from

15% to 47% at 90 days. At IHCAFE, 109 coffee growers received training on the integrated management of the borer, marketing and the modernization of coffee mills. Also, laboratory and field research revealed new natural enemies of the borer, making it necessary to conduct studies on parasitization of the borer with Phymaticus coffea and unidentified nematodes. Lastly, the Coffee Industry Board of Jamaica began experimental releases of parasitoids, and plans got under way to introduce P. coffea.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. The focus was on actions to ensure that efforts to modernize agricultural health services were sufficiently dynamic to facilitate the trade of agricultural products at the national, intra- and extra-regional levels, within the context of trade integration, the FTAA and the WTO. To this end, IICA worked with other specialized organizations, including APHIS, OIRSA and ICGPP, and received support from specialized agencies of the governments of Canada, Mexico and the United States, under agreements signed to combat the Mediterranean fruit fly and other pests that threaten the Central Region.

Support was provided for strengthening animal and plant health systems, with the aim of facilitating national, regional and international trade, overcoming plant and animal health barriers, and ensuring the uniform application of plant and animal health rules in the trade of agricultural products, both in Central America and between this region and the rest of the countries of the hemisphere.

Rural Development. In this field, IICA's cooperation in the Central Area aimed at strengthening efforts to bring about transformations in production and trade, in order to effectively link producers with new markets and production chains. In this connection, institutional transformation was supported, with a view to bringing about changes in public agencies (especially municipal governments), private institutions and NGOs involved in rural development activities. Mechanisms were developed for managing and strengthening civil society organizations, aiming to upgrade the effectiveness of their decision making processes at the local level. Finally, under the Hillsides/Holland project, support was provided for improving the capabilities of project beneficiaries to manage businesses, design and implement mechanisms for adding value to primary production, and make rational use of natural resources and the environment.

BELIZE

The activities executed by the CA/Belize under its 2000 plan of operation were based on the needs of the agriculture sector, as defined in consultation with the Ministry of Agriculture and its partners.

In addition to its achievements under IICA's priority areas of action, described below, the CA made other important contributions to agricultural development through its participation in assessing the damage caused by Hurricane Keith, and in a subsequent ECLAC mission to validate the preliminary damage assessments and to prepare project profiles for reconstruction of the agricultural sector. The damage assessment and the profiles for reconstruction were presented in December 2000 at the consultative donor group meeting, hosted by IDB in Washington, D.C.

Policies and Trade. The CA contributed to upgrading national capacities for participating in development and international trade through a variety of activities. A workshop on project monitoring and evaluation was attended by 24 technicians from the MoA, who learned about the principles of effective project monitoring and evaluation. A seminar was held on methodologies for formulating legislation for organic agriculture, at which 12 technicians from the public and private sectors reported on requirements and procedures for preparing internationally recognized organic farming legislation. The committee formed as a result of the seminar is now actively involved in drafting such legislation. Finally, two technicians attended a workshop on good handling practices for fruits and vegetables, held in Trinidad and Tobago.

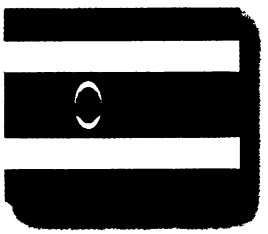
Science, Technology and Natural Resources. Support was provided to enhance the competitiveness of Belize's agricultural sector through product diversification. Specific activities included field days and demonstrations countrywide on plant propagation techniques, nursery and field management, and the processing of selected fruit and root crops. In addition, 172 farmers and extension officers received training on intensive management practices for fruit and root crops; germ plasm propagation material was selected for fruit trees (plantain, cashew and sour sop) and root crops such as cocoyam; the dairy industry received support through the training of 75 farmers and technicians on methodologies for establish-

ing and managing improved pastures and forages. In addition, technicians received training for improving the quality and productivity of milk and milk products processed in Belize. The CA also helped identify improved dairy cattle for importation into Belize; through this effort, 40 dairy heifers were imported from Costa Rica.

Agricultural Health. The CA collaborated with the modernization of Belize's agricultural health services, having submitted an application for qualifying as an able institution for the technical cooperation and training component of the Agricultural Health Services Modernization Project financed by IDB. It provided technical assistance for establishing an information system for the Belize Agricultural Health Authority (BAHA). A full report containing the recommendations was submitted to BAHA, the contents of which will be used when identifying and installing the system.

Rural Development. Support was provided for the development of entrepreneurial skills of rural women and youth. Seminars and demonstrations, attended by 81 people, were hosted on hydroponics vegetable gardening. Five women completed the first phase of a training workshop on community development held in Panama as part of a three-phase effort to equip human resources to facilitate training on the subject in Belize.

COSTA RICA



During 2000, the CA/Costa Rica consolidated its position as a pioneer in the region. Through the implementation of initiatives in support of organic farming and in developing information systems; the Institute's strengths and leadership in these areas were recognized. It also worked to strengthen relations with the private sector, through activities carried out with leading organizations, mainly in the areas of policy and trade, information and communication, and food quality and safety.

Policies and Trade. The actions of the CA in this strategic area centered on policy formulation and strategic planning in support of organic farming, both in Costa Rica and in the rest of the region. A strategic planning process got under way in conjunction with the National Organic Movement and the National Organic Agriculture Program (PNAO), to develop a medium- and long-term development strategy. The CA also exercised the technical secretariat in charge of coordinating efforts to formulate a draft legal framework for organic livestock production in the country. The CA formulated the regional project "Fostering Organic Production in Central America and Developing Markets for Organic Products," which aims to foster development of the organic production system by correcting structural weaknesses hindering its growth. This will be done by establishing institutional structures, implementing policies and legal and technical-regulatory frameworks, and promoting actions to develop local markets and improve access to international ones. All the countries of the region expressed interest in the project; a number of activities were carried out with support from the governments and cooperation agencies that support the initiative.

Other important activities included the promotion of exports and alternatives for solving the problems of local commerce. In collaboration with CIDAE, government agencies and producers' organizations, the CA implemented the program "Creating Exporters to Canada." This entailed providing training and validating the products of 14 small- and medium-sized firms to enable them to penetrate the Canadian market and participate in an international fair on food, beverages and spirits (SIAL) to be held in Montreal, Canada. The CIDAE views this experience as a pilot program that can be replicated in other countries. With regard to domestic commerce, IICA assisted the National Production Council (CNP) in formulating the "Regional Marketers" project. In collaboration with the Area of Policies and Trade, it began a study on the performance of the prices of agricultural products during the liberalization process and helped formulate the terms of reference for a study on the hydro-biological chain in Costa Rica.

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. The CA helped organize two meetings in support of REDCAHOR: the first regional seminar on post-harvest technology, and a symposium on the results of REDCAHOR/ Phase I and the outlook for its future, at which the CA presented the results of the network's socioeconomic component. The CA also helped draw up a proposal for a second phase of this project. Other activities included organization of the First Meeting on Ecological Livestock Activity and support for the Area

of Science, Technology and Natural Resources at Headquarters in conducting a study on technological change in the agrifood chain of milk and dairy products.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. In this area, cooperation focused on creating and strengthening the institutional framework for food quality and safety. In collaboration with public agencies and private institutions, the CA promoted creation of the Intersectoral Commission on Food Safety (CIIA), a body composed of the main public- and private-sector players in this field. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) relative to food safety in the country were analyzed, with the results being used to plan the CIIA's future activities.

Rural Development. The World Bank approved funding for the project "Institutional Strengthening of Indigenous Communities in Costa Rica." Responsibility for the project "Conserving the Biodiversity and Improving the Quality of Life of the Inhabitants of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor" was transferred to CATIE, which is in a better position to implement it. The CA collaborated in formulating an investment program for rural development in the Caribbean region, together with the Regional Technical Assistance Unit (RUTA), the Rural Development Program (PDR), the Caribbean Port Authority (JAPDEVA), the Costa Rican Tourism Institute (ICT), the Ministry of the Environment and Energy (MINAE) and the National University (UNA). A short-term plan was implemented to pave the way for launching the program. A proposal was formulated to support development of priority settlements of the Agrarian Development Institute (IDA), aimed at generating revenues by integrating the services of public agencies and improving market access. The last two initiatives will be locally funded.

Training and Education. In collaboration with the National Chamber of Agriculture and Agroindustry (CNAA) and the CNP, the CA launched a series of conferences aimed at providing agricultural professionals with refresher training. Lectures were given on the current situation and outlook for genetically modified organisms and how this relates to intellectual property rights, and on the certification of agricultural processes using ISO 9000 and ISO 14000 standards. The CA also collaborated with the sectoral program to upgrade human resources (PSFRH) in preparing and distributing the proceedings of workshops held as part of a nationwide process to consider and discuss the profile of the new agricultural science professional needed for the 21st century, and a similar process on education in rural vocational high schools for the 21st century. The publications were presented to education sector officials as input for the analysis of such problems.

Information and Communications. The CA's activities focused on strengthening the government's Agricultural Information System (INFOAGRO), and on ensuring its effective transfer to the CNP, the agency that will administer it. The CA also assisted the ministries of agriculture (MAG) and of public education (MEP) in formulating a project to incorporate agricultural rural vocational high schools into INFOAGRO. Some of the most important activities undertaken to strengthen INFOAGRO were: a) collaboration with the National Women's Institute (INAMU) in developing a geographic information system for rural women and in formulating a project for upgrading its information system; b) development of three electronic markets in INFOAGRO (agricultural, forestry and rural women); c) support for a training system for system users; and d) incorporation of information from various public agencies. CNP officials received training in the use and administration of the INFOAGRO system and the CA helped prepare a strategy for upgrading this system under CNP administration.

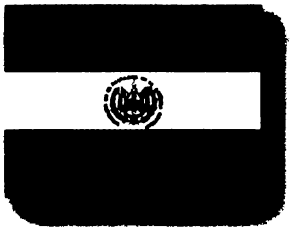
These efforts were complemented with initiatives to involve the private sector in the generation, administration and dissemination of information. The CA helped several organizations design their web pages, data bases and information systems. In order to further strengthen the information and communication component for private-sector actors, a project was prepared aimed at developing business capabilities and enhancing competitiveness through the provision of information services to leading private-sector organizations. The aim of this project, which was submitted to the IDB for funding, is to enable the organizations to develop the tools and skills needed for taking advantage of information and communication technologies.

In addition to these activities, the CA/Costa Rica promoted the idea of extending INFOAGRO to other IICA member countries, presenting information on same to agricultural officials at the World Bank and the IDB, and to IICA's Steering Committee. Proposals were prepared for establishing similar information systems in Panama and the Dominican Republic, and

another was presented to CIDER, with a view to creating an information system for rural development in Central America.

Other important activities included: a) development of the Regional Vegetable Information System (SIRCAHOR), as part of the CA's support for the REDCAHOR; b) formulation of a project for developing an information system on organic production; c) support for PNAO in implementing its Plan of Action for 2000 relative to information and communication; d) assistance to the Area of Science, Technology and Natural Resources in developing and formulating a project to establish the information system on science and technology for the Americas (INFOTEC); and e) support in reactivating Costa Rica's National Agricultural Information Network (REDNIA).

EL SALVADOR



The actions implemented by this CA in 2000 focused on two strategic lines of action: fostering competitiveness with equity and improving living conditions in rural areas and the environment.

Policies and Trade. The CA made a major contribution to efforts to train public and private sector agricultural specialists in analyzing and developing processes to facilitate consultation and decision making with regard to the creation of free trade areas. In this connection, 2000 was a particularly important year for the country because trade agreements were signed with Mexico and the Dominican Republic. Progress was also made in drafting legal texts for possible trade agreements with Canada, Chile and Panama.

The CA worked hard to consolidate the Committee for Rural Development (CDR), the country's most important body for dialogue and consensus-building on rural policy. Representatives of 16 national and international, public- and private-sector organizations, all specializing in rural development, sit on the CDR. The CA also assisted the Agricultural and Agroindustrial Chamber (an organization of the country's main producers' associations and private enterprises) in setting up the agribusiness management services unit, which will provide market information and technical assistance, and training in post-harvest management and in agribusiness development. It will also promote rounds of negotiations for establishing commercial contacts that enable small farmers to position themselves better in negotiations.

A project for the development of fruit crops also got under way, focusing on the use and management of high-quality plant material to ensure production of competitive fruits for sale on international markets. The main project achievements include: a) organization of fruit producers, who are already receiving technical assistance for their production activities; and b) identification and establishment of contacts with counterparts that use the best practices worldwide for growing cashew nuts, lemons and coconuts.

Although not related to specific projects, the CA also worked intensively at different times during the year to formulate a strategy for the country, defining the corporate strategy for action and positioning the Institute so that its work in the rural sector is recognized. The output of these efforts was used to define the national strategies of the other countries in the region and the strategy of the Central Regional Center.

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. Under the Environmental Program of El Salvador (PAES), the soils and agroforestry component being implemented by the IICA/CATIE/UCA/CRS Consortium continued to strengthen local development associations and committees, as well as community production and marketing committees, primarily through the training of extension agents who will extend the Program's coverage. Five short courses were given to equip participating specialists with the skills needed to administer incentives effectively.

The project "Institutional Development for Sustainable Agricultural Production on Central American Hillsides (IICA-Holland/Hillsides)" increased its support for local committees by creating, developing and implementing mechanisms for cooperation, consensus-building and consultation, with the aim of promoting sustainable development in the municipalities of Nueva Concepcion, Chalatenango and Jocoro, in

Morazan. A network was established of 200 facilitators of sustainable development at the local level, including farmers' representatives, educators, local authorities, clerics and merchants. The CA helped a sizable number of project participants and partners implement innovative activities for improving land productivity and conserving natural resources, such as through waste management on hog and poultry farms, the processing of stubble for animal fodder, the production and sale of biofertilizers, and locally managed watershed management systems. The project also provided technical assistance and methodological support to other projects, such as the Agricultural Development Project for Small Farmers in the Para-central Region (PRODAP) and PAES, which are funded by the IFAD and the IDB, respectively.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. In this area, the CA's efforts focused on providing direct technical assistance to El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, in particular, regarding the control of the lethal yellowing of coconut, through training activities for specialists and officials of the ministries of agriculture of the aforementioned countries. The regional program for this strategic area facilitated the visit of Panamanian specialists to countries in South America, in order to familiarize them with modern techniques for the control and eradication of leprosis in citrus fruits. Finally, discussions were held with USDA-APHIS and AIEA officials to determine possible areas of collaboration for fruit fly eradication, technology exchange, and the modernization of agricultural health services.

GUATEMALA

During 2000, the CA/Guatemala responded efficiently and effectively to the needs of the agricultural sector and requests from government agencies. Some of the most important actions and achievements are described below.

Policies and Trade. Technical cooperation was provided to the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food (MAGA) for designing, formulating and determining the strategy to be used to implement the 2000-2004 Agricultural Policy. The policy was published and presented officially by the ministry at a ceremony attended by senior government officials and representatives of international technical and financial cooperation agencies, the academic sector and grassroots organizations of the agricultural private sector. The CA also cooperated with MAGA in drafting a policy proposal on sustainable rural development, which will be used by the ministry and the General Planning Secretariat (SEGEPLAN) as a basic instrument for consultation with the Cabinet and small-farmers' and business organizations of the agricultural sector.

Advisory assistance was provided to the Executive Commission of the Dairy Subsector, composed of private sector representatives of the productive and commercial milk chain and representatives of MAGA and the Ministry of Economic Affairs (MINECO), in identifying and designing policy instruments for reactivating and modernizing the country's dairy agroindustry. The following results were obtained: a) formulation of the Plan by Objectives of the Chamber of Milk Producers, for the period 2000-2005; b) elaboration of the terms of reference for the feasibility phase of the project to develop the agroindustrial dairy chain, which was submitted by MAGA to the IDB; and, c) signing of an agreement among representatives of the milk chain regarding regulation of the rehydration of powdered milk; the system of payment for quality and purchase contracts; the standards of the Guatemalan Standards Commission (COGUANOR) for dairy products, and the Pasteurization Act.

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. In 2000, the CA contributed to ensuring a steady flow of germ plasm of Mesoamerican black and red beans (preferred in Central America) under PROFRIJOL, an agricultural research network financed by COSUDE to help reduce poverty in rural and urban areas by raising bean yields through genetic improvement. The response of these materials to different biotic and abiotic stresses, such as golden mosaic disease, bacterioisis, anthracnose, web blight, angular leaf spot and rust, under conditions of high temperatures, drought and low fertility, was evaluated.

As part of the CA's ongoing support for the plan to develop the trinational border area (El Salvador-Guatemala-Honduras), technical cooperation was pro-

vided to the Office of the Vice-president of Guatemala for incorporating new border development initiatives on the integrated management of resources in shared watersheds into the priority regional projects to be presented at the Madrid-2001 Meeting on the Strategic Framework for the Transformation and Modernization of Central America in the 21st Century.

As part of the administrative cooperation actions carried out with MAGA for implementing the El Peten forest protection project (PROBOPETEN) and the plan of action for the modernization and development of irrigated agriculture (PLAMAR), operations were streamlined for generating and delivering administrative services, thereby improving the effectiveness of administrative and financial management of project resources.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. Advisory assistance was provided to the MAGA for designing a strategy for consultations and technical support in connection with a review of the implementing regulations of the Plant and Animal Health Act. This involved the professional associations of agronomists, veterinarians and animal husbandry specialists.

Rural Development. Activities implemented during 2000 to improve living conditions in specific rural areas included contributing to upgrading institutional capabilities so as to improve implementation of the project "Sustainable Rural Development in Ecologically Fragile Zones of the Trifinio Region," which forms part of the Trinational Border Development Plan (El Salvador-Guatemala-Honduras). Technical and administrative cooperation was provided to the project executing unit, in order to help it attain its objectives and streamline the management processes with the MAGA, the Ministry of Public Finance and the CABEI (which funds the project).

Under the Southern Peten Tropical Rain Forest Conservation Program (PROSELVA), involving the IICA-CATIE-CONAP/PROSELVA consortium and financed by the German Development Cooperation Agency KfW, agroforestry production systems were developed, kitchen gardens and animal breeding units were established, and men and women community leaders were trained in these sustainable rural development options.

HONDURAS

In 2000, the CA/Honduras worked very closely with the Secretariat of Agriculture and Livestock (SAG) and the private sector in developing agreements and responding to requests for technical support, thus enhancing IICA's position in the country. Some of the most important accomplishments for the year follow.

Policies and Trade. The CA provided support in formulating and implementing the Project Management Information System, which has become a fundamental decision-making tool for the minister and other SAG officials in matters related to agricultural and rural development projects. Assistance was also provided in developing and operating Information and Business Development Centers (CIDE) in smaller cities, and in setting up the Honduran Business Information System (SIEH)

The private sector received technical support for institutional strengthening of agribusinesses. This effort contributed to the creation of the Honduran Agribusiness Council (COAGROH), which worked actively in the development of the country's agricultural sector and in analyzing the rice and dairy agrifood chains, through meetings and forums held with technical personnel, producers, operators of agroindustries, and representatives of the marketing sector. In addition, IICA provided technical and administrative support to the SAG for institutional strengthening and modernization of the management mechanisms of the Planning, Evaluation and Management Unit (UPEG).

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. In this Area, IICA provided technical and administrative support to the SAG for formulating and executing the project Agricultural Technology Acquisition Fund, financed by the USDA. Its purpose is to support the development of new agricultural investment or business opportunities in different regions of the country through the acquisition of information technologies. The CA was also actively involved in reactivating the national system for the generation and transfer of agricultural and forest technology.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. In this area, the CA contributed to establishing the National Food Safety Commission. It also promoted modernization of the country's agricultural health services through a process to draft, negotiate and submit a project to control lethal yellowing of coconut to the USDA, securing approval of same and launching the initiative.

Rural Development. The CA supported the SAG in reactivating the agricultural sector by formulating and executing the Program to Rehabilitate Production Units Affected by Hurricane Mitch (PROREMI). With funding from USDA and technical and administrative support from IICA, the SAG successfully implemented the first stage of this program, reaching 1,841 farmers. Given the success of the first stage, the USDA provided additional resources for a second stage, which is now under way and will reach another 3,300 beneficiaries. The SAG also received technical and financial support to promote implementation of new policies and to create a new institutional framework for sustainable rural development in the country. Through cooperation provided in formulating and implementing the National Sustainable Rural Development Program (PRONADERS) and its management units (DINADERS and FONADERS), IICA contributed to creating an innovative and effective development model for the country.

Information and Communications. Efforts were made to reactivate the National Agricultural Information Network; the supply of agricultural information systems in the country was increased; and progress was made in implementing the SIDALC.

NICARAGUA

Overall, 2000 was a very productive year for the CA. Outstanding among its accomplishments were: a) training of 38 government officials on topics of strategic importance for the development of agriculture and the rural milieu in Nicaragua, within the context of integration and economic opening; b) conversion of the Esteli Catholic School of Agriculture into the Catholic University for Dry Tropical Agriculture (UCATS); c) strengthening of the National Agricultural Information and Documentation Network (RENIDA); d) support for the formulation of the agricultural policy for 2001-2002 and application of the chains approach to same; and e) strengthening the role of the private sector in the definition of public agricultural policy. All technical cooperation actions were directly linked to the actions of the stakeholders in agricultural development. These achievements contributed to enhancing the Institute's reputation as the inter-American system's leading provider of technical cooperation for agriculture.

Policies and Trade. With financial support from USAID, the CA launched a program to strengthen private sector participation in the formulation of agricultural policy. A group comprising more than 60 agribusiness leaders from all parts of the country was established. With technical support from IICA, it: a) formulated policy proposals: b) organized and held national workshops on financing, land tenure, technology, trade and forestry resources; and c) visited other countries to learn about their experiences in agricultural policy design and other topics, and to exchange information. During the last quarter of 2000, the entire group attended several national workshops, and some 20 producers from different parts of Nicaragua visited other countries. Through these actions, the private sector was able to gradually join in the discussion and design of the country's agricultural policies. The CA also collaborated with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAG-FOR), providing advisory and consulting services for defining policies for the 2001-1002 cycle, fostering dialogue between the public and private sectors, and analyzing measures for applying the chains approach to the principal commodities.

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. In the Northern Region (Jinotega), two projects were undertaken to rehabilitate the natural resources lost through poor management and Hurricane Mitch. These projects focused on four systems: agroforestry, reforestation, forestry-pasture and management of natural regeneration, and fostered the planting of forestry, energy-producing and timber-yielding trees, as well as trees for other uses (grafted fruit trees, living fences).

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. As follow-up to the technical assistance and training program implemented under the project to upgrade the services of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (FOSEMAG), a Master's degree program in Management of Public Agricultural Services was developed in conjunction with the Central American University (UCA) and Texas

A&M University. Under this program, 38 MAG-FOR officials received training in animal and plant surveillance, trade and food safety.

Rural Development. The CA/Nicaragua provided assistance in rural areas affected by Hurricane Mitch for rehabilitating natural resources. A pilot project funded by SIDA helped poor small farmers in the Central Region of Nicaragua recover from the damage caused by Hurricane Mitch, managing to regain their pre-hurricane levels of production. Also under this project, efforts were made to prevent an aggravation of poverty and to make beneficiaries less vulnerable to similar disasters in the future. A wide range of technical assistance was provided, including demonstration trials and other activities.

Training and Education. IICA's support of the agricultural universities in Chinandega, Rivas and Esteli yielded excellent results. For example, with support from IICA, the Esteli Catholic School of Agriculture, now the Catholic University for Dry Tropical Agriculture (UCATS), held several workshops for its management, teaching and administrative personnel; information, techniques and organizational skills were taught. Training was also provided on strategic planning for institutions of higher agricultural education, and on curricular transformation and tactical planning for academic development. Another important accomplishment was the development of a Master's degree program linking four areas: implementation, internal management, sectoral analysis and environment, and epidemiological surveillance. This program promoted topics of strategic importance for the development of agriculture and the rural milieu in Nicaragua, within the context of integration and economic opening. Lastly, a children's training project was implemented in Jinotega, aiming to interest and involve them from an early age in the protection of natural resources.

Information and Communications. Within the framework of the SIDALC, efforts continued to establish, develop and equip RENIDA with financial support from the Kellogg Foundation; it is composed of information centers in the different parts of the country. The CA also upgraded its own documentation center, which was extended to northern Nicaragua via the installation of a local office, providing individuals and institutions with access to needed information.

PANAMA

In 2000, the CA/Panama impacted on the Panamanian agricultural sector through actions including the following: a) participating in preparing the Rural Panama Plan 2001-2004, which includes strategic guidelines for agricultural and rural development; b) strengthening the capabilities of the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MIDA) and other public agricultural institutions of Panama; c) providing support to the three Ibero-American Summits held during the year in Panama, especially the Ibero-American Summit of Ministers of Youth (July) and the Fifth Ibero-American Summit of Ministers of Agriculture (August); and d) facilitating IICA's participation in the Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government (November).

The CA/Panama implemented a new administrative and financial management system for increasing efficiency and improving controls on the external resources it administers under an agreement with MIDA. As a result of this process, carried out in conjunction with project coordinators, the amount of resources for projects rose substantially from around US$8 million in 1999 to more than US$14 million in 2000 (a 78% increase).

New Rurality and Rural Planning. At the request of the Government of Panama, IICA supported MIDA by coordinating the process to formulate strategic guidelines for agricultural and rural development for the 2000-2010 decade and the Rural Panama Program 2001-2004. To this end, a group of national and international consultants was established and logistic and operational support provided. More than 800 persons participated in the process, from both the public and private sectors and civil society. The framework document "Rural Panama Plan 2001-2004" was produced, as were nine other documents on the following topics: strategic guidelines for agricultural and rural development; participatory preparation of agricultural and rural development policies; trade policy for the Panamanian agrifood sector; agrifood chains; combating poverty and developing family agriculture; land tenure and legal security; irrigated farming systems; strategic guidelines in support of youth, women and indigenous peoples; and the new institutional framework for agricultural and rural development.

The Minister of Agricultural Development presented the Plan to the full Cabinet, and it was approved by the President of the Republic in a meeting attended by the the ministers and vice ministers of agriculture of Central America and the Dominican Republic, ambassadors, representatives of international lending organizations and the Director General of IICA.

The CA/Panama also contributed to strengthening the planning and programming capabilities of MIDA and other public agricultural sector institutions. As part of this process, ongoing direct technical support was provided to the Office of the Minister, to other government institutions and to various private organizations. This new relationship was confirmed when IICA was invited in November to join the Strategic Council for Agriculture of Panama, which will follow up on, monitor and ensure application of the strategic guidelines. Also, the IICA/IDB alliance was strengthened through a workshop on strategic planning for the Agricultural Services Modernization Program (PROMOSA).

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. The Agricultural Research Institute of Panama (IDIAP) and REMERFI (IICA/GTZ) reached agreement on a project to promote the conservation and sustainable use of priority species of Annona in Mesoamerica. Under this project, training activities were carried out, equipment and materials were acquired, samples were collected and analyzed, farmers were interviewed, the results of surveys were analyzed and mapped, in situ characterizations of the area were carried out, and a workshop was held to present the results. The CA also contributed to establishing and organizing a working group made up of representatives of MIDA and several NGOs, private producers and indigenous leaders, to promote organic production in Central America and develop the markets for organic products.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. In this area, a short-term action was executed in support of the program to eradicate leprosis in citrus fruits, under which 8,904 infected trees on 296 farms were incinerated. Experiences were exchanged, in-service training was provided to national technicians for eradicating this disease, and an assessment on the situation and the measures being taken by the public and private sectors was presented.

Other Results in Rural Development. Under PRODAR, graduate theses and research projects on rural agroindustry were evaluated. In the context of the IICA/SIDA project "Gender in Sustainable Rural Development," technical support was provided to the Office of the First Lady. Training ws provided for women entrepreneurs from ten organizations; with MIDA support, the Summer Project of the Office of the First Lady was strengthened; and technical support was provided to the Ministry of Youth, Women, Children and Family.

Training and Education. IICA and the City of Knowledge Foundation, located on the former Clayton military base, signed an agreement in August to: a) improve and strengthen the strategic alliances between the CA and some 20 international and national institutions, including UNICEF, McGill University, Isthmus and others; and b) upgrade institutional capabilities and the opportunities to add value to the technical cooperation the CA offers to the government and institutions in Panama, the private sector, and the programs and projects of international agencies located in Panama. The CA also cooperated in drawing up the work plan of the Regional Network for Cooperation in Education and Research on Agriculture and Renewable Natural Resources (REDCA), a process involving more than ten public and private institutions.

Information and Communications. Within the framework of the Agricultural Information and Documentation System (SID), a work platform was established with national and regional agencies for creating a documentation and information system on agricultural and rural development. To this end, the existing centers were assessed and funds were sought for purchasing computer equipment. In addition, the groundwork was laid for creating a technical reference center that will provide information on rural development in LAC and form part of the Network of Libraries of Panama, within the framework of the SID.

NORTHERN REGIONAL CENTER

Events organized by the Northern Regional Center during the year 2000

	EVENTS		PARTICIPANTS		N° DAYS
	Number	%	Number	%	Total
Northern Regional Center	**26**	**100.0**	**1064**	**100.0**	**315**
Directorate	4	15.4	63	5.9	6
Canada	8	30.8	25	2.3	282
Mexico	9	34.6	918	86.3	22
United States of America	5	19.2	58	5.5	5

Source: DIPRE

REGIONAL DIRECTORATE

Over the past three years, the Northern Regional Center (NRC) has been developing a strategic and operating plan aiming to add value to existing relationships and activities currently under way among its member countries (Canada, Mexico and United States of America) and with other IICA units. During the Fourth NRC Meeting, held in Mexico City, NRC member countries reiterated their support for the NRC and its programs to strengthen regional integration, also approving the Strategic and Operating Plan for 2000-2001 with two new activities: development of a Regional Forum on Agricultural Health and Food Safety and development of a Regional Dialogue on Rural Development.

Working with the OAS Permanent Missions and the OAS General Secretariat, the NRC facilitated approval of the resolution recognizing the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) as the inter-American ministerial forum on agriculture within the OAS for analyzing and building consensus on policies and strategies for the improvement of agriculture and rural life in the hemisphere. The resolution was approved at the OAS General Assembly held in Windsor, Canada in June 2000.

The NRC also worked closely with a number of inter-agency committees in Washington involved in natural disaster reduction, water resources, coordination of actions for cooperation and development, and Bolivia Summit follow-up.

Policies and Trade. The NRC monitored new trade initiatives and policy statements of senior officials in

various government and international organizations. Over 30 memoranda explaining policies or positions were prepared and distributed throughout IICA Headquarters and Regional Centers. A new section on food trade with information on hemispheric, regional and country trade meetings and conferences was added to the NRC web site.

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. The NRC Cooperative Program in Research and Technology (PROCINORTE) continued to progress significantly during the year. The three task forces --the Umbrella (or Policy Group), the Agricultural Library and Information Services Initiative, and the Genetic Resources Task Force-- all held meetings and formulated new strategic action plans for implementation.

Two meetings of the PROCINORTE Umbrella Task Force were held during the year, resulting in an agreement on a restructured action plan with four major objectives. A declaration was signed by the member countries and IICA ratifying the priority of this initiative. The member countries also proposed the establishment of new task forces on tropical and subtropical fruits and on agricultural health/food safety, which are presently under review. Along with representatives from other PROCIs, PROCINORTE task force members attended the FORAGRO hemispheric conference on agricultural research, held in Mexico City. Finally, the Genetic Resources Task Force continued to move forward in implementing its action plan and, updating the plan for 2001, identifying five major objectives.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. In response to the priorities set by the Member States, the NRC continued to give high priority to food safety initiatives. A network of food safety specialists continued to monitor key activities in the region and disseminate information to IICA units and governments. A special area on food safety was established on the NRC web site. The Second Equivalency Seminar between the NAFTA and MERCOSUR countries was held in Washington, D.C., and the report is being finalized for distribution. In addition, the First NRC Regional Forum on Agricultural Health/Food Safety was held in Miami in December. A videotape of the proceedings is being prepared in English and Spanish for distribution with seminar materials to all Member States. Support was provided to various IICA offices for regional and hemispheric conferences on food safety.

Rural Development. Based on a proposal submitted by the Director, the NRC Council agreed to the establishment of a rural dialogue among the three countries. The NRC is establishing a steering committee to manage this dialogue; the first is expected to take place in 2001. At a more technical level, the NRC assisted the Directorate for Rural Development in negotiating the proposal for the Women's Credit Fund (FeRural), administering external funds for IICA's office in Panama, and preparing new project proposals to secure external funding for rural development projects.

With NRC support, a major achievement was realized in the cooperative efforts with other international organizations. During a forum convened during the IDB annual meeting, IICA's Director General signed an inter-agency agreement with five other international organizations (IDB/FAO/ECLAC/IFAD/GTZ) for joint efforts to reduce rural poverty. It is expected that the World Bank will become a signatory to the agreement early in 2001.

Information and Communications. The Specialized Task Force on Agricultural Libraries and Information Services Initiatives made significant progress toward completing its first two-year action plan. Actions were taken to help develop the Mexican Network of Agricultural Libraries and strengthen communications among the agriculture libraries of the three NRC member countries. Furthermore, the three countries joined the hemispheric initiative to strengthen the SIDALC. The NRC supported the first meeting of the consortium of libraries in the hemisphere to support SIDALC, and to include of IICA's distance learning center in the World Bank training facility. It is presently working with the OAS to develop a joint facility.

CANADA

IICA/Canada's Action Plan for 2000 continued to pursue the objectives of gaining new partners and adding political, cultural and economic values to Canada, particularly with regard to work in such strategic areas as food safety in international agricultural trade, the promotion of networks and strategic alliances, and the provision of support to Canada's initiatives in the area of agricul-

tural information and communication technology in LAC countries. IICA/Canada's active role reflects the new partnership approach envisioned by Canada and IICA and the desire of many Canadian groups to become more integrally linked to the Americas.

IICA/Canada's actions throughout Canada were expanded to more actively involve Canadian Provinces as partners in IICA/Canada programs. In the first phase of its outreach effort, IICA/Canada organized and co-sponsored a joint mission with AAFC to Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba Provinces, with the objective of introducing IICA's programs and actions, highlighting in particular IICA's activities in Canada.

All participants in IICA/Canada programs were financed by IICA, largely in response to Canada's request to add value to its contribution to the Institute. Given these successful experiences, a promising and ample opportunity for innovative partnerships is envisioned for the year 2001 and beyond.

Under the CA's Action Plan, five new active partnerships were developed with Canadian organizations. First, IICA/Canada and the Ministry of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) networked together for information dissemination and expert advice on current and future trade agreements. IICA also helped promote "The Great Globalization Game of Agri-Food Markets," an initiative of the AAFC and the Union de Producteurs Agricoles. It worked with AAFC to increase the benefits and the beneficiaries of the IICA/Canada Internships and Farmers' Exchange Programs. With the University of Guelph, Ontario Agricultural College, IICA collaborated with the "Ontario Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP)." It also provided support to the Ontario Institute of Agrologists (OIA) in organizing the OIA 2000 Conference "Taking Agriculture into the Next Millennium - the Americas." Finally, it worked with the organizers of Rural Expo 2001 to promote an inter-American seminar during that event.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. Technical cooperation for safe agricultural trade was expanded, involving in particular AAFC, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and the IICA network. IICA/Canada also supported efforts among Canadian and Latin American national agricultural health organizations through technical assistance for establishing and/or strengthening their ties with Canadian official services, research and educational organizations.

Training and Education. With regard to human resources development, 48 Canadian and LAC professionals received financial and logistic support from IICA/Canada's fellowship programs to develop their internships in the Americas. A total of 34 grants were awarded to Canadian professionals, experts, profes-

sors, post-graduate students, farmers and young entrepreneurs. In addition, IICA/Canada provided 14 grants to LAC professionals to develop their internships in Canada.

During the year, 32 Canadians and LAC professionals involved in the 1999 IICA/Canada fellowship programs returned to their countries. Their internships gave rise to 11 new opportunities for development, which are being discussed and/or negotiated between Canadian and potential LAC partner organizations and associations.

MEXICO

During 2000, IICA implemented the actions called for under agreements signed with the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food (SAGAR), its different units and other government agencies. The following is a description of some of the CA's most important actions and achievements during the year.

Policies and Trade. IICA supported the SAGAR in developing the Product-System and and the Species System. It worked with the Agricultural Statistics Center (CEA), under the agricultural information and statistics systems, in implementing three projects: remote sensing applied to Mexican agriculture; application and processing of baseline study surveys; and evaluation of indigenous coverage for the project to raise productivity in small-scale agriculture ("To the Countryside" project). IICA also collaborated with SAGAR's General Directorate of Agricultural Sector Studies in reviewing and preparing technical positions for the 26th FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean; in analyzing the positions relevant to the Caribbean countries as regards the situation of the WTO Banana Panel and the trade in sugar; and in formulating Mexico's position vis-à-vis special and differential treatment in WTO and FTAA negotiations. In addition, the CA helped prepare 15 documents, addressing such topics as fertilizers-through-irrigation, dairy development, support for rural development, implementation of integrated agricultural projects, analysis and results of the current situation of and outlook for the agricultural sector, data bases, and the annual evaluation of the environmental impact of the "To the Countryside" project.

The CA also provided assistance to FEPALE in preparing a strategy for implementing training activities, studies and regional seminars on trade negotiations and their impact on the dairy sector of countries in the hemisphere. It collaborated in presenting a paper on the strategic role of agriculture and the rural milieu at the Second Meeting of FORAGRO, held in Mexico; and supported Panama's Ministry of Agricultural Development (MIDA) in drawing up that country's agenda for the development of agriculture and the rural milieu during the 2001-2004 period, specifically the component on the development of competitiveness and agricultural trade.

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. With regard to technological innovation, IICA provided technical, financial and administrative support to the National Institute of Forestry, Agricultural and Livestock Research (INIFAP) in organizing the Second Meeting of FORAGRO and the Regional Forum on Agricultural Research and Technology Development–Mexico 2000 (attended by 250 participants from Latin America and the Caribbean, and other regions). It also collaborated in organizing the Third Meeting of the PROCINORTE Working Group, involving specialists from the United States, Canada and Mexico, and representatives from the CA/Mexico and Headquarters.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. The CA supported the Directorate of Phytosanitary Standards in reviewing regulations governing food safety to certify good agricultural practices in the production of fresh fruits and vegetables (NOM-EM-034-FITO-2000). It collaborated in designing courses for the staff of the verification units and the state delegations of SAGAR, the Secretariat of Health (SSA) and the Secretariat of the Environment, Natural Resources Fisheries (SEMARNAP). A total of 200 people received training, including 25 professors from the Antonio Narro Autonomous Agrarian University (UAAAN), through these efforts. In addition, some 130 professionals received training on the subject of biotechnology in agriculture.

With regard to animal health, IICA helped upgrade the technical and administrative aspects of the Sanitary Verification Program for Federally Inspected Slaughterhouses and Establishments, as well as the Program for Origin Verification of Animals and Animal Products. The CA disseminated information through the SANINET bulletin, distributing same directly to 500 specialists. It participated on two committees charged with drafting Mexican government regulations and on three project evaluation panels. It supported the National Technical Advisory Council on Animal Health (CONASA) in holding its monthly meetings and organizing National Agricultural Health Week. IICA helped arrange for specialized consulting services on agricultural health and, with PAHO, cooperated with the project on Venezuelan equine encephalitis.

Rural Development. In this strategic area, six technical attachments were formulated, setting out the technical commitments and resources to be allocated for the following areas: a) extension and technological development, b) technical cooperation and training, c) preparation of studies and projects, d) operational strengthening, e) sharing of rural development experiences, and f) administration of resources. Each of these attachments included efforts to improve the monitoring and evaluation systems of rural development programs; the production of informational materials; the dissemination of regulatory and technical-scientific information; the verification of expenditures of the regional programs and those targeting areas of poverty; and the holding of expositions, seminars, courses, workshops and technical conferences.

The Fourth International Exhibition of Non-traditional Agricultural Products was held, attracting 16,900 visitors. Some 400 speakers made presentations and 250 products were displayed, including those of nine agricultural machinery and tool manufacturing firms. The CA contributed to organizing other events including National Rural Development Week and the National Symposium on the High-performance Network of Extension and Rural Technical Assistance. These activities involved all the professionals of the following programs of the Under secretariat for Rural Development(SSDR): Training and Extension (PCE), Basic Technical Assistance (PEAT), Sustainable Development in Poverty Areas (PDSZM), Women in Rural Development, Coffee, Rubber and Cocoa.

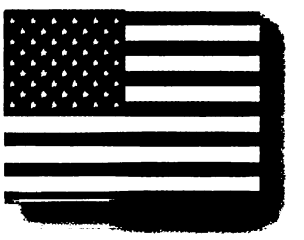
Technical and administrative support was provided for the evaluation, certification and distribution of resources (MN$85.5 million) to 354 projects, under a program component to strengthen the operations of the Program to Foster the Development of Agricultural Marketing Enterprises in the Social Sector (PROFECA 1999), which concluded in June. A total of 33 state-level workshops were held, attended by representatives of 309 organizations; and 1,965 courses were offered on technical and operational aspects of business and organizational development and marketing. Under PROFECA 2000, the CA supported the provision of ongoing advisory assistance to organizations in 27 states, for the preparation of project proposals. A total of 677 organizations were involved and 787 requests for financing were received, for a total of MN$107.0 million. Owing to the change of government, the CA worked with the SSDR/SAGAR Administrative Coordination Office to prepare and process the minutes and final reports, and to close the accounts of the technical attachments.

Training and Education. With the participation of the SIDALC and DECAP, IICA contributed to upgrading the Network of Mexican Agricultural Libraries and Documentation Centers, and the University of Chapingo's doctoral program in higher agricultural education.

Information and Communications. In addition to the above, a total of 40 documents and books on technical and scientific topics were edited and published.

In sum, the CA organized and coordinated 21 technical events, which were attended by 151 IICA specialists and over 3,900 national and international officials and specialists. It also coordinated meetings to address IICA's thematic areas of action.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



Over the past few years, the IICA/USA office has worked to develop a strategic and operating plan for creating programs and activities to increase awareness of the Institute at the national and state levels, as well as gain support for the regional initiatives of IICA's Northern Regional Center (NRC) and IICA's hemi-

spheric priorities. Significant progress was made in 2000 to increase outreach to a variety of public and private organizations and develop programs that respond to the specific interests of the U.S. government as well as other member countries.

A new agreement was signed by USDA and IICA. Several activities were implemented under the IICA/USA communications plan for Congress. A fact sheet on IICA's cooperative efforts with Texas A & M University was distributed to the Texas Congressional Delegation, to 180 members of the Texas State Legislature and to then Governor George W. Bush.

As part of the effort to respond to the specific interests of the U.S. government, a new proposal was presented to USDA's Foreign Agriculture Service suggesting increased collaboration between IICA's Cooperation Agencies (CAs) and U.S. Agricultural Attaché offices in the countries. Meetings and discussions were held with a variety of other government agencies including the State Department, Department of Commerce, Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and USDA's Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services, Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services, Agricultural Research Service, Food Safety and Inspection Service, and Office of International Cooperation and Development (OICD), to explore further avenues of collaboration.

Significant progress was made in informing members of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) regarding IICA's role in promoting hemispheric dialogue on agriculture. Attendance at the Tri-National Accord Meeting facilitated interaction with the Secretaries of Agriculture and other representatives from over 20 states.

This year, IICA/USA continued to co-sponsor the luncheon/speaker series with Caribbean/Latin American Action (C/LAA) and USDA. Four luncheons were held this year, with the IICA/USA office taking the lead in organizing and securing speakers for two events. Several meetings were held with the C/LAA Executive Director to discuss continued cooperation.

Policies and Trade. IICA/USA signed an agreement with the National Foundation for Women Legislators which led to the successful completion of the office's first trade mission, to Honduras. A group of state legislators, agriculture department representatives and agribusiness organizations from four states toured several agricultural enterprises, meeting with Honduran officials and legislators, including President Carlos Flores and Minister of Agriculture Guillermo Alvarado. Several business agreements were initiated during this mission.

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. The office coordinated development of a proposal on "Alternative Commercial Products from Narcotic-Producing Plants," which has been submitted to USAID in Colombia.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. IICA/USA secured an FDA grant of US$25,000 for the Ceres Hemispheric Forum on Food Safety through Dynamic Leadership. In addition, with C/LAA support, the office sponsored its first technical round table discussion on the topic of food safety. Over 35 public and private sector individuals, including legislative staff and embassy officials, attended the event. An agreement was negotiated and signed with Texas A&M University to begin implementation of a FONTAGRO project entitled: "To Improve Food Safety in Central America," which receives USDA funding.

Training and Education. The office's Human Capital Development effort expanded to three programs this year with the addition of an internship program to the existing Cochran Fellowship and Volunteer Programs. Under the internship program with the National Future Farmers of America (FFA) organization, IICA/USA sponsored two summer interns in the year 2000, one in Trinidad and Tobago and one in Washington, D.C.

During the second year of IICA's sponsorship of the Cochran Program, participation increased from five to eight fellows. The Cochran fellows rated their training programs as highly beneficial in overall quality and felt that the education they received contributed very positively to their job performance and to agricultural development in their home countries. At the conclusion of the two-year pilot project, the program reports and evaluations presented by the Foreign Agricultural Service's Office of International Cooperation and Development (OICD) and IICA/USA called for the development of a new agreement for the purpose of expanding training opportunities for IICA participants.

Under its agreement with ACDI/VOCA, IICA/USA sponsored one volunteer to work in St. Lucia. The IICA/USA office will work to expand the Volunteer Program next year, and has discussed possible agreements with Partners of America and Florida International Volunteer Corps.

Information and Communications. The newly established web site (www.iicawash.org) brought the IICA/USA office increased visibility along with the ability to highlight and promote its activities and those of the NRC. The web site provides access to NRC and IICA/USA reports and publications, as well as links to the IICA network, U.S. government agencies and a variety of public and private organizations in the international agriculture sector.

SOUTHERN REGIONAL CENTER

Events organized by the Southern Regional Center during the year 2000

	EVENTS		PARTICIPANTS		N° DAYS
	Number	%	Number	%	Total
Southern Regional Center	**61**	**100.0**	**3366**	**100.4**	**270**
Directorate	13	21.3	500	14.9	37
Argentina	1	1.6	52	1.5	1
Brazil	12	19.7	577	17.1	117
Chile	20	32.8	1447	43.0	66
Paraguay	14	23.0	747	22.2	48
Uruguay	1	1.6	43	1.3	1

Source: DIPRE

REGIONAL DIRECTORATE

During 2000, the countries of the Southern Region endeavored to stabilize and reenergize their economies, and stave off a recession at all costs. As in 1999, this situation had an impact on the amount of resources available for public- and private-sector investment projects. The CAs of the Regional Center redoubled their efforts to implement cooperation actions for their counterparts as efficiently as possible.

Policies and Trade. The Regional Directorate made a very important contribution to the discussion of different issues related to the sustainability and strengthening of the MERCOSUR, by publishing a yearbook on agriculture in the MERCOSUR, Chile and Bolivia. It was hailed as a very useful contribution to efforts to relaunch the greater MERCOSUR. Work in this area focused on the MERCOSUR negotiations and the agri-food sector, agricultural negotiations and trends in agriculture, using indicators from each of the countries of the greater MERCOSUR.

In collaboration with the University of Granada (Spain) and the Federal University of Pelotas, the Regional Directorate organized a seminar entitled "The European Economic Union and the MERCOSUR," which brought together politicians, academics and public- and private-sector officials from the region. The par-

ticipants discussed the institutional aspects involved in creating the European Economic Union and the MERCOSUR, and how they were related to the agreements between the two blocs and the regulations in effect for the upcoming agricultural negotiations. At the request of FEPALE, the Directorate also provided support to the organization of the international workshop "Multilateral and Regional Trade Negotiations and the Dairy Sector," targeting producers, public officials and other interested participants from the MERCOSUR countries.

In a joint effort, the Regional Directorate, the Area of Policies and Trade, ALADI and the CA/Uruguay held a seminar-workshop on international negotiations on agriculture, which focused on the trends in and outlook for agricultural trade in Latin America, non-tariff barriers to trade, and the experiences of the different ALADI member countries. With assistance from the CAs, the Directorate disseminated information on the agrifood sector via an electronic bulletin. Distributed among 602 public and private institutions, universities, embassies and NGOs in the five countries of the Southern Region, the recipients of the information regarded it as extremely useful.

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. In 2000, PROCISUR carried out 63 activities, including 11 meetings, 10 seminars, 15 exchanges, seven short-term advisory assistance efforts, two advisory assistance efforts involving specialists from international centers, five courses, five training events at specialized institutions and two studies and analyses. Implementation of these actions involved 690 officials and specialists from the region. PROCISUR modified the layout of its publications and continued to maintain its web site on the Internet, which, among other services, provides access to the materials it publishes.

One of the most important projects implemented by PROCISUR during the year had to do with the organization and management of agricultural and agroindustrial technology integration in the Southern Cone (Global Project). Under this project, studies were conducted on: a) the course of technological development and the technologies needed in the agroindustrial chains of the greater MERCOSUR; b) the trends in, and demand for, environmental technology in the principal ecological regions of the Southern Cone; c) the trends in, and the role of, technology in family agriculture in the Southern Cone; d) the supply of technologies available in the main agroindustrial chains of the greater MERCOSUR; e) trends in the organization and financing of agricultural research in developed countries; and, f) the national agricultural and agroindustrial innovation systems of the Southern Cone countries, how they have changed and their future needs. This project is scheduled to last six years and will be extended for a further four, unless one of the parties decides otherwise.

PROCITROPICOS held two international meetings on issues of strategic importance for the sustainable development of tropical ecosystems, in accordance with the needs identified by the countries. The first meeting concerned the production of oil palm as a socioeconomic and environmental alternative for economic development in Amazonia. The other addressed the development of aquaculture in the same region. The importance of the two events was underscored by their multidisciplinary approach and the participation of different actors involved in the agribusiness chain. The main conclusions and recommendations were forwarded to decision makers in the political, economic and financial sectors throughout the region.

The Regional Directorate also: a) organized four international seminars attended by over 500 specialists from the region; b) distributed bulletins and three other publications among 1200 specialists and researchers; c) secured approximately US$613,000 in external resources; d) presented over 90 papers at different events; e) organized 41 exchanges of professionals; f) prepared four new regional projects; and g) identified 20 new sustainable technologies of the Brazilian Institute of Agricultural Research (EMBRAPA) appropriate for use in the development of the South American tropics (five of which are being prepared for distribution to extension services).

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. As a result of the cooperation provided to COSAVE, major progress was made in harmonizing plant protection standards and procedures. Twenty-six new regional plant protection standards were generated in 2000, eleven of which were proposed as international standards by the Interim Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (ICPM). The regional standards developed were internalized by the MERCOSUR, for the purpose of defining phytosanitary requirements for regional trade.

IICA also contributed to creating the Regional Discussion Forum on Animal Health, made up of the

national animal health services of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay. This forum is intended to serve as a mechanism for building consensus on joint actions to solve animal health problems in the region, and to address the resulting sanitary restrictions, which affect the trade in animal-based products.

Rural Development. The actions implemented by the Regional Directorate in this strategic area were carried out through PROCODER. In 2000, this program made significant progress in articulating its efforts with organizations in the region that represent small farmers. This was achieved through the organization, with PROCODER, of the First Regional Forum on Cooperation for Rural Development. On the recommendation of the Advisory Council, the PROCODER Technical Secretariat established closer ties with international and producers' organizations, as well as with research centers and universities. Joint activities included a meeting held in Santiago, Chile to discuss the coordination of, and cooperation for, rural development in the Southern Cone, involving ECLAC, FAO and IICA, and the seminar "Trade, Standards and Commercialization for Small Farmers in the MERCOSUR," which received support from the trade specialists at the Regional Center and IICA's Area of Policies and Trade. The PROCODER Advisory Council recommended that the existing agreement be extended through December 31, 2001, when a new agreement will be presented to participating enterprises and IICA.

A seminar-workshop was held in Paraguay entitled "Basic Criteria for Formulating the National Program to Support Family Agriculture in Paraguay." A training activity was held in Natal, Brazil, on procedures for upgrading social capital for local sustainable development; and a virtual training activity was carried out with the Latin American and Caribbean Network of Institutions for Training in Economics and Agricultural Policy (REDCAPA), on public policies and family agriculture for rural development. In Uruguay, a seminar was held on strategies for integrating agrifood and agroindustrial technologies in the greater MERCOSUR, and a visit was organized for a group of specialists from Piaui and Rio Grande do Norte. With assistance from the National Granja Board (JUNAGRA), an analysis was made of the production activities of small farmers in Uruguay. Finally, the third issue of the informational bulletin was published (1000 copies each in Spanish and Portuguese).

Information and Communications. The Directorate made great efforts to set up the ERP IV/Baan management information system, which is a modern financial accounting system that will facilitate, streamline and ensure the reliability of the operations of the Regional Directorate and its associated CAs. Two of the CAs used the system successfully for their accounting closing in December 2000.

ARGENTINA

In 2000, the CA in Argentina implemented a variety of technical activities in support of the country's agrifood sector, focusing on three areas in particular: monitoring of the sector, economic research and agricultural health. Through these actions IICA improved its position within the Argentine agricultural sector.

Policies and Trade. In order to monitor developments in the sector, the CA continued to publish its widely-distributed "Status Report." This quarterly publication analyzes the latest developments in the sector, and those in the national and international macroeconomic environment that could affect agriculture. When the pertinent information is available, it also makes projections of the performance of the various subsectors. An econometric model for projecting agrifood exports was also developed and subsequently presented at the Annual Meeting of the Argentine Association of Agricultural Economics.

A quarterly survey of agrifood entrepreneurs was carried out to ascertain their views and expectations. Two important books were published: one on Argentina's agri-food sector in the 1997-1999 period, which completes the analysis of the 1990s (the period up until 1996 was covered in a previous book). The second, Argentina en Cifras, summarizes information on the sector, both by province and for the country as a whole. A directory of Argentine agrifood enterprises was also created. All this information was posted on the web site of the CA/Argentina and also distributed to radio and television stations and the written press. As

well as ensuring that it was widely disseminated, this enhanced the Institute's image in the eyes of the general public.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. The CA continued to implement the project to control contagious spongiform dseases, together with the National Agrifood Health and Quality Service (SENASA) and the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food (SAGPyA). Several seminars were held for officials from the SAGPyA, the SENASA and producers' organizations, on bovine spongiform encephalopathy, which is of enormous importance to the meat industry, given possible effects on exports. This was demonstrated in a document prepared by the CA and presented at the 21st World Buiatrics Conference in Punta del Este, Uruguay. The head of the project also played an active role in the activities of the Sanitary Health Monitoring Commission, following reported cases of animals seropositive for foot and mouth virus. This issue was important throughout the Southern Cone during the second half of the year. After the OIE declared Argentina "foot and mouth free without vaccination," the CA held a seminar on the topic during the well-known Palermo Livestock Show.

Rural Development. In this strategic area, and in collaboration with a local nonprofit association, the CA began to implement a pilot micro-credit project based on the Grameen Bank experience in Bangladesh. The initial results were extremely promising: the cost of providing the service to beneficiaries is low and loan repayment levels are high.

Information and Communications. The web site of the CA in Argentina has been upgraded consistently, both in terms of its design and the speed of access, which has resulted in more hits.

To complement the technical actions mentioned, the CA continued to provide administrative support to 19 national projects being implemented by different units of the SAGPyA, the SENASA, the National Agricultural Technology Institute (INTA), the National Institute of Statistics and Census (INDEC), the National Fisheries Research and Development Institute (INIDEP), and the National Wine-growing Institute (INV). Lastly, CA specialists gave talks and presentations at various seminars, at postgraduate courses at the University of Buenos Aires, and at meetings in other countries.

BRAZIL

During the year, the CA/Brazil endeavored to diversify the range of technical cooperation it provides to the local agricultural sector. Its main areas of action included efforts to: a) strengthen cooperative research and transfer programs and technology integration mechanisms; b) improve living conditions in rural communities and modernize the institutional framework of agriculture; and c) upgrade agricultural health and food safety.

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. Technical cooperation provided by IICA, the Ministry of Agriculture and Supply and other national institutions to the cooperative research and transfer programs and to technology integration mechanisms sought to equip them with more modern administrative procedures and enable them to provide better services to the public, with the aim of improving the responsiveness of Brazil's agricultural sector through the adoption of technology.

Rural Development. The technical cooperation provided by the CA/Brazil to improve living conditions in rural communities and modernize the institutional framework of agriculture was channeled through three priority actions.

Firstly, IICA cooperated with efforts to improve the integrated and sustainable management of water resources and provide institutional training in this field. Technical and management training activities for improving water resource management were held for national institutions, and efforts were undertaken to upgrade the country's water infrastructure in order to improve the efficiency of national agricultural production.

Secondly, the CA fostered institution building for sustainable natural resource management. In this area, it contributed to further development of agrarian reform programs, the institutional modernization process and efforts to expand and bolster family agriculture.

Thirdly, the CA provided support for developing mechanisms to strengthen agrifood systems in poor areas and foster job creation and income generation. IICA's most important actions in this field involved cooperating

with the Planning Secretariats of several northeastern states for developing rural poverty alleviation projects. The main objective was to identify new economic alternatives that would generate more jobs and income for rural poor.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. In this strategic area, the CA/Brazil promoted efforts to upgrade services for the technical/sanitary control of products, through sensitization programs and training in hazard analysis and critical control points. It also contributed to a project to reduce red tape and modernize the product registration system at the Ministry of Agriculture and Supply.

For the CA/Brazil, 2000 was a very successful year. Agreements for eleven new projects were signed, increasing the Institute's portfolio of projects in the country by US$9,758,975.

CHILE

The CA in Chile programmed its actions on the basis of the priorities established through consultations with government agencies, as a result of which it was decided that activities would focus on policies and trade, agricultural health and food safety, rural development, training and education, and information and communications.

Policies and Trade. The CA supported the efforts of the Ministry of Agriculture to develop its technical and institutional capabilities for fostering foreign trade and agricultural negotiations on agroforestry products, and for monitoring and analyzing international trade negotiations as well as hemispheric integration in agriculture. A manual on the WTO was produced for agriculture sector professionals, and a course entitled "Management and Strategy in the Vegetable and Fruit-growing Agroindustry" was held in coordination with the University of Chile. The course targeted academics and professionals from both the public and private sectors.

In addition, activities were carried out for creating an agricultural commodity exchange, with a view to increasing the competitiveness of agriculture, making markets more transparent and enhancing the stability, safety and commercialization of agricultural products. With the participation of professionals from the Ministry of Agriculture, the National Agriculture Society and producers' organizations, several workshops and technical visits to Colombia and Argentina were organized to expose participants to experiences related to the creation of commodity exchanges. In regard to institutional modernization and management, under the project "Livestock Resources, Animal Health and Decision Making," support was provided to the Agriculture and Livestock Service (SAG) in designing proposals for institutional structures that will make it possible to suitably address the issue of quality as the basis for agricultural development. Workshops were held and a book was published and distributed on agricultural policy and demand (Politica Agropecuaria: la Demanda). The book is a compilation of papers on the demand for food and its bearing on agricultural production.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. The CA helped the SAG to prepare documents and organize discussions on the proposal for implementing: a) an institutional system of quality certificates for livestock products, and b) a system for registering and identifying cattle.

Rural Development. The program to strengthen INDAP operations continued, with work focusing on the areas of commercialization and the organization of producers. A products development unit was created and consolidated, which will be responsible for operating the national coordinating offices for nine important products. Under the program to support rural microenterprises in Latin America and the Caribbean (PROMER), the following actions were taken: technical assistance was provided to micro-entrepreneurs in several countries; a business management program was carried out in conjunction with the IFAD Regional Rural Development Training Program (PROCASUR), for rural micro-entrepreneurs in Chile and Honduras; an inventory of the experiences of microenterprises was compiled; and an international workshop was held to discuss and analyze rural microenterprises covered by IFAD and IICA projects implemented in Central America, Mexico and Bolivia.

A coordinating office was set up for institutions that deal with land planning in areas populated by small farmers. Events were held and documents published on

watershed management and the legalization and clearing of titles on rural property. Research was also conducted on the aspirations and views of rural youth and youth organizations. This research was complemented by a joint IICA/ECLAC seminar to discuss the contrast between young people's aspirations and the activities of existing programs to increase their participation in society. Other important activities included efforts to upgrade the business skills of small farmers; in this connection, technical cooperation was provided for standardizing the services provided by INDAP's management centers. Finally, the National and Regional Rural Women's Forums were re-launched, with a view to increasing the coordination of public- and private-sector initiatives to help rural women. At year end, a forum entitled "Enterprising Rural Women" brought together 300 rural women micro-entrepreneurs from all parts of the country to discuss the strategy for strengthening associative enterprises run by women.

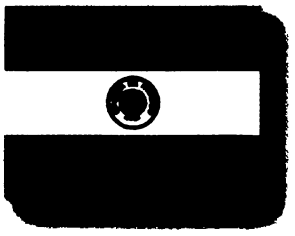
Training and Education. In regard to higher agricultural education, the activities undertaken positioned IICA in this area. The CA provided technical assistance for curriculum development and modernization and course accreditation under agreements signed with four universities. It included establishing profiles for graduates, descriptors of competitiveness and post-graduate programs; refresher courses; and the creation of strategic alliances with national and international organizations.

The CA contributed to the modernization of vocational agricultural and forestry education by providing advisory assistance to the Ministry of Agriculture, which is a member of the inter-ministerial team in charge of preparing the Permanent Education and Training Program. In the area of vocational training, educational materials and texts were also produced and distributed among students of agricultural high schools.

With IICA serving as the Technical Secretariat, an event was held entitled "National Forum on Agroforestry and Rural Education and Training." Participants represented most of the country's vocational and higher education institutions, agricultural education and private-sector training agencies, as well as agricultural production organizations. The event paved the way for better communication and stronger links between the different levels of the production and training sectors. A book was published on agricultural and forestry education and production in Chile, as was

a report on proposals for upgrading human resources in the agricultural sector, which was submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture.

Information and Communications. In connection with SIDALC, the National Network of Specialized Agricultural Information and Documentation was consolidated, involving nearly all of the country's public, university and private libraries. Electronic bulletins are produced every fortnight and include national news on agriculture and the MERCOSUR, such as agricultural forecasts, legislative news, and news from Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Paraguay.



PARAGUAY

In the year 2000, the actions of the CA/Paraguay in support of institutions serving the agricultural and rural sectors continued to have a major impact. Some of the most important actions and achievements in each strategic area of IICA's technical cooperation are described below.

Policies and Trade. The CA provided technical cooperation to the General Directorate of Planning (DGP) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) in connection with the establishment of the monitoring and evaluation unit. It also prepared and presented a proposed work plan to the DGP for the design and implementation of the monitoring and evaluation system of the program to modernize and diversify small-scale production. The CA collaborated with the National Agricultural Union (UAN) in formulating a project profile on technical cooperation for improving the marketing system of its members' products. It provided logistic support to facilitate the participation of an official from MAG's Marketing Directorate in the Latin American Course on Economic Analysis of Agrifood Circuits and Policy Analysis Matrixes, which was held in Caracas, Venezuela. Information was compiled on Paraguay's agrifood sector for the Southern Cone Agrifood Bulletin, 271 copies of which were sent out to Paraguayan institutions, international organizations and embassies.

Science, Technology and Natural Resources. IICA provided support to MAG's Agricultural Research Directorate (DIA) in conducting regional trials for cereal and oilseed research; evaluating corn and sunflower hybrids; and facilitating the participation of technical officials in PROCISUR activities. The CA also provided logistic support to the Federation of MERCOSUR Rural Associations (FARM) in organizing the Eleventh Regional Forum on Climatic Prospects for Southeastern South America.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. The CA provided technical cooperation and logistic support to MAG's Plant Protection Directorate (DDV) for organizing and carrying out several seminars: one on laboratory techniques for diagnosing diseases; another on the diagnosis of fungal plant diseases; and others for specialists attending activities organized by COSAVE and the Regional Agricultural Health Project (PRSA). IICA also collaborated with MAG's Livestock and Plant Protection Directorates in producing and publishing instructions on sample taking for the identification of plant pathogens and pests in the laboratory, as well as manuals on procedures for diagnosing animal diseases, the biological and physical-chemical control of veterinary products, the bromatological control of foodstuffs, the monitoring of agricultural pesticides, and phytosanitary inspections of imports and exports.

The CA also provided technical cooperation to the MAG's Plant Protection Directorate in drafting the parliamentary bill to create the National Plant Protection Service (SENAVE) and in formulating the Paraguay-Argentina Binational Project for the Eradication of the Cotton Weevil in Border Areas. It assisted the National Animal Health Service (SENACSA) in obtaining SPF eggs for use in a program to control and eradicate Newcastle disease in poultry, and in implementing a project entitled "Agricultural Health Education to Protect Human Health." Lastly, the CA worked with the Regional Directorate, the Rural Association of Paraguay and MAG to organize and conduct the International Livestock Development Forum.

Rural Development. Under the MAG-IICA letter of understanding to support implementation of the Rural Settlement Consolidation Project (PCCR), the CA provided technical and logistic cooperation to the National Directorate of Project Coordination and Administration (DINCAP). The aim was to help obtain

funding for fostering an economic and social reactivation of small-farmer committees and other types of farmer organizations, via the implementation of 184 production projects (installation of irrigation systems, establishment of small agroindustrial facilities, and efforts to foster milk, poultry and hog production). Some 2000 rural families benefited directly.

Under the MAG/DINCAP-IICA cooperation agreement (PRODESAL A1) for implementing a program to support development of small cotton farms, IICA provided technical and administrative cooperation for the pre-selection, selection and hiring, through a bidding process, of 12 technical units to manage 19 on-site cooperation units that provide direct technical assistance to some 8,000 farming families. In addition, equipment and furnishings were purchased and national and international consultants were selected and hired for the Program. The CA also provided technical and logistic support to the executing unit of the MAG-IFAD Credit Project for the Northeast Region, in support of 27 cooperatives and 12 producers' associations that directly benefit more than 2,000 producers. To this end, 67 consultants were hired and received support for providing advisory services to cooperatives and small farmers' associations.

The CA also provided technical support to the Secretariat for Women's Affairs (Office of the President) in preparing, publishing and disseminating guidelines for incorporating the gender approach into sustainable rural development projects. It provided technical and logistic support to the MAG's Agricultural Extension Directorate (DEAG) for organizing and conducting a modular course-workshop on the organization and management of rural microenterprises, targeting the institution's technical personnel and extension agents. In collaboration with the MAG and the National Agricultural Union (UAN), the CA organized and held the Fourth Congress on Family Agriculture and the MERCOSUR, as well as a seminar-workshop to establish the basic criteria for formulating Paraguay's National Family Agriculture Program.

The CA supported PROMER, IFAD and PROCODER II in organizing an international workshop on rural microenterprises as an alternative for development in rural areas. It provided logistic and administrative assistance to facilitate the participation of eight officials from the Small Farmer Development Fund and MAG's Agricultural Extension Directorate in activities organized by IICA and PROCODER. In collaboration with the MAG, the Rural Association of Paraguay and the Livestock Fund, the CA provided logistic and financial support for the Third Forum of Young Stock Raisers in the MERCOSUR.

Training and Education. The CA cooperated with the Paraguayan Council of Deans of Schools of Agricultural Sciences in organizing a visit by deans and professors to Santa Catarina, Brazil, where they learned about the extension and training methodology used with small farmers. It also supported the participation of four deans in the Forum of Deans of MERCOSUR Countries, which met in Uruguay in April and November 2000. In collaboration with the MAG's DEAG, it provided logistic and financial assistance for the organization and implementation of the First Congress of Graduates of Agricultural Schools, Agricultural Mechanics and the Mechanization Center.

URUGUAY

During the year 2000, the CA participated actively in technical support actions and in administering the resources of programs and projects. The main thrust of the CA's action was to collaborate with the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries (MGAP) in implementing technical cooperation actions; upgrading the expertise of municipalities for planning local development; improving business management skills of small-scale stock raisers in the northern region of the country; and supporting the activities of PROCISUR and PROCODER.

Policies and Trade. SThe CA assisted the MGAP's technical cooperation projects unit in preparing, discussing and analyzing the Livestock Development Project, the objective of which is to improve the competitiveness and sustainability of Uruguayan cattle and sheep raising. It also collaborated with the MGAP in monitoring the implementation of the National Agricultural Census, in analyzing the trade negotiations, and in improving the mechanisms for MGAP-private sector joint efforts to design trade strategies.

Some important actions were: a) collaboration in the preparation and implementation of an international

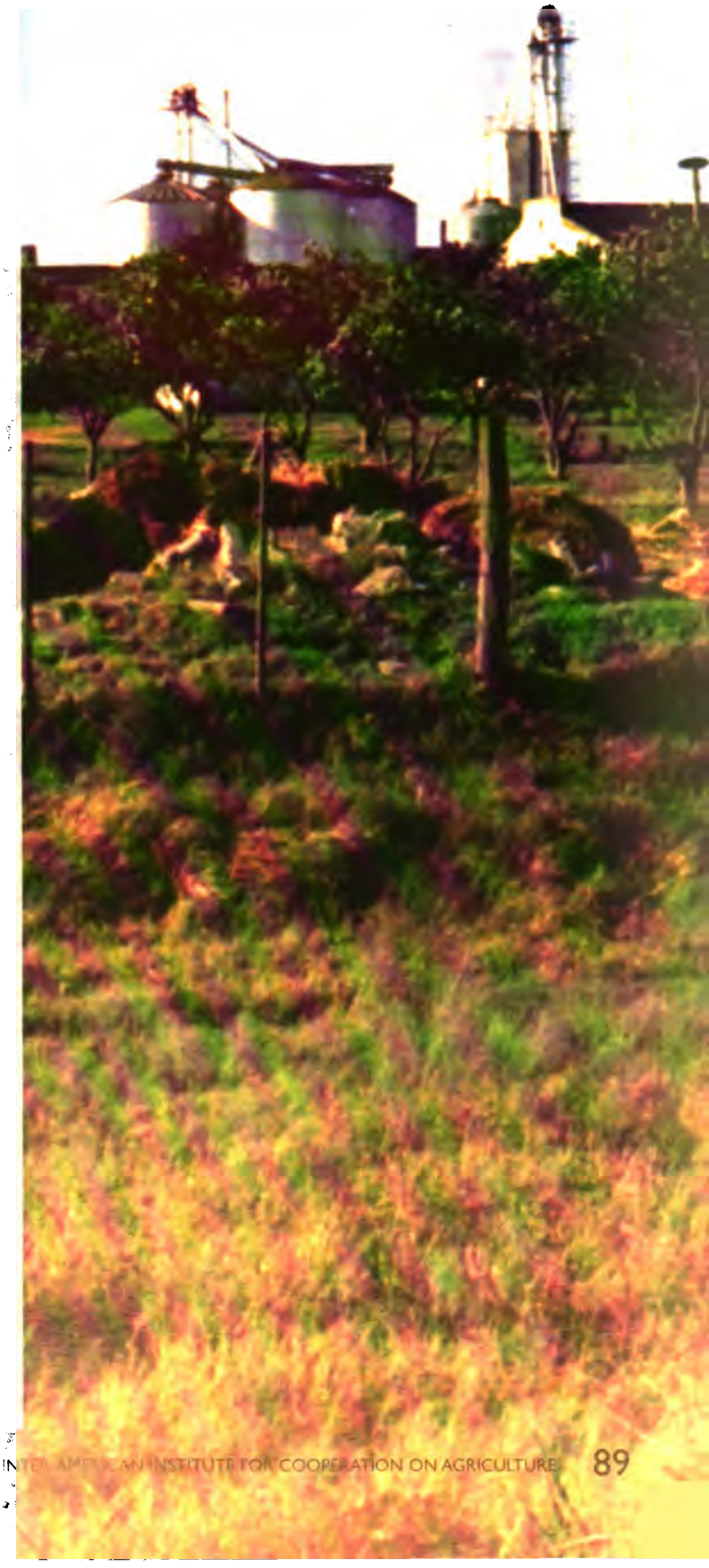
seminar on international agricultural negotiations, organized in conjunction with ALADI and the Institute for Latin American Integration (INTAL/IDB); b) the organization and implementation, with FEPALE, of an international workshop on multilateral and regional dairy negotiations; c) the organization and implementation of six meetings for the leaders of Uruguay's dairy producers' associations and dairy industry to discuss the international trade negotiations and the strategies of the country's dairy sector; and d) the design and launching of studies to evaluate the access of Uruguayan agricultural products to international markets and the conditions for agricultural imports into Uruguay.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety. The CA collaborated and participated in the World Buiatrics Congress, held in Punta del Este, in December.

Rural Development. The CA provided logistic and technical support for the organization and implementation of the ninth meeting of the PROCODER Advisory Council, which was attended by representatives of the Southern Regional Center, the International Center for Rural Development (CIDER) and national and regional institutions associated with the program. In addition, a seminar was held with the Network of Municipality Departments of Rural Development, in collaboration with the MGAP, the Agricultural Planning Institute (IPA) and the CA/Brazil, as part of activities to upgrade local development planning skills. Three other courses, on the identification and formulation of profiles for local development projects, were attended by 48 people.

The CA also collaborated with the National Granja Board (JUNAGRA) to facilitate participation of its staff in a course on the construction of social capital for sustainable local development, organized by PROCODER and held in Natal, Brazil. It also cooperated with the CIDER in conducting the Inter-American Consultation on Rural Youth, and the Youth and New Rurality Electronic Forum. A total of 301 people from 24 countries took part in the teleconference. Finally, with the Council of Agricultural Development Agencies (CEAD) and the IPA, two conferences were held on the impact of change on farmers and their families, each of which was attended by over 40 producers.

Training and Education. In the field of higher agricultural education, the CA worked with DECAP to continue providing support to the School of Agronomy of the University of the Republic for evaluating the intro-



ductory curriculum, and its activities as Secretariat Pro Tempore of the Standing Forum of Schools of Agronomy of MERCOSUR Countries. It helped organize the third and fourth regional conferences of schools of agronomy of the MERCOSUR countries, Chile and Bolivia, and initiated a study on the supply of and demand for tertiary education in the agricultural sector, which aims to quantify the human resources needed for MGAP's agricultural and rural development programs. The CA also assisted the Swiss Colony Dairy School in installing and configuring informatics equipment, and worked with the School of Agronomy to upgrade the methodology and instruments of the management system used by MGAP's national development program for small- and medium-scale livestock activities (PRONADEGA) to train and assist small-scale stock farmers in the Basalto area.

Information and Communications. The CA supported the efforts of the MGAP to link up with SIDALC; the MGAP's Agricultural Documentation and Reference Center (CEDRA) serves as the national coordinating center of the network of participating libraries. The chief librarian of the CEDRA library visited Costa Rica to take part in the first workshop of SIDALC Coordinating Centers. An important development with regard to administration and computer technology was the installation of the BaaN management system, the training of CA personnel in its use, and the initiation of data entry into the system. Documents were also published and technical information disseminated.

STRATEGIC ALLIANCES

STRATEGIC ALLIANCES

In describing IICA's accomplishments throughout this report, reference is made to strategic alliances promoted and established with a large number of public and private organizations. These alliances helped strengthen and expand the Institute's capabilities through new types of linkages, complementing interests and boosting actions at the national, regional, hemispheric and world levels.

As part of this effort, many specific agreements were signed or renewed to strengthen the Institute's external relations with organizations that have a bearing on agricultural development and rural areas in the Americas. In 2000, IICA signed 30 legal instruments, including letters of understanding, addenda to agreements and financial contracts.

The following are some of the institutions with which the Institute established or maintained important strategic alliances under general cooperation and negotiation agreements.

AgriFuture Foundation.. Despite its small budget, the results of this foundation's activities and projects in the year 2000 were encouraging. Under the project "Planting Seeds of Hope," some 9,983 pounds of vegetable seeds were distributed among people affected by natural disasters, through IICA's CAs, NGOs and public and private institutions. Some 240 computers were also distributed among five IICA CAs, the Dominican Agribusiness Board (JAD), the ministries of agriculture of St. Vincent, Dominica and St. Kitts and Nevis, and institutions in Honduras, Peru and Nicaragua. The AgriFuture Foundation continued to support the operation of SIDALC and the Pwotokol Project (Haiti), also fostering strategic alliances with the IDB, the OAS, the PAHO, Winrock International, OnSAt, Planet Aid and GIK, among others.

BMZ/GTZ. Negotiations were held under the General Technical Cooperation Agreement with the BMZ and the GTZ to renew inter-institutional relations and continue joint implementation of initiatives regarded as strategic by both.

CABEI. Terms and conditions were established for implementation of a technical cooperation program aiming to identify and prepare specific investment projects. These will be conducted by CABEI and IICA with a view to revitalizing the agricultural sector and spurring economic and social reactivation in Central America.

CARDI. The Caribbean Regional Center facilitated and provided ongoing support for the review of CARDI's operations, achieving important results and agreements regarding the orientation of CARDI's activities.

CATIE. In 2000, the Government of Costa Rica and IICA amended the CATIE Charter and renewed the corresponding contract for another 20 years.

FAO. Joint actions were taken to promote the Plant Genetic Resources Network and regional projects were carried out in support of FAO's World Action Plan.

IDB. On March 26, 2000, IICA signed an agreement with the IDB's Sustainable Development Department, for implementing the actions set forth in the charter agreement of the Interagency Group for Rural Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (comprising IICA, FAO, ECLAC, IFAD, GTZ and IDB), which was signed in New Orleans on March 24. IICA also took part in the meetings of the Consultative Group for the Reconstruction and Transformation of Central America, coordinated by the IDB.

INCAE. A technical cooperation agreement was signed that lays the groundwork for the joint implementation of actions in the following areas: a) education for the development of theoretical and methodological models, and b) training for trainers, with special emphasis on sustainable development, competitiveness of the agricultural sector, agricultural economics and agroindustry.

MAPA. IICA and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food of Spain signed a specific agreement for establishing IICA's new Permanent Office for Europe in the MAPA building in Madrid. This office will handle and promote relations between the Institute and the European countries, as well as different organizations headquartered in Europe.

SIDA. This agency continued to work through CIDER in supporting IICA's actions on gender equity and the development of rural women, under the project "Gender in Sustainable Rural Development." Core actions were designed for incorporating the gender perspective into all IICA activities. SIDA also collaborated with the program on gender equity and the development of rural women (PADEMUR), which has become one of IICA's most important hemispheric-level initiatives, due to the synergy created with the different social actors involved in issues related to gender, rural women and development.

Other alliances were established through IICA's participation in activities and meetings with the European Union, Iowa State University, the World Food Prize Foundation (WFPF), the World Food Prize Youth Institute, the USDA/FAS Marketing Conference and the Ontario Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP).

INSTITUTIONAL STATISTICS

EVENTS ORGANIZED BY IICA BY REGIONAL CENTER IN THE YEAR 2000

	Events		Participants		Total Duration
	Number	%	Number	%	(days)
Andean Regional Center	**118**	**27.9**	**3788**	**24.6**	**249**
Directorate	19	16.1	492	13.0	44
Bolivia	11	9.3	304	8.0	19
Colombia	37	31.4	1084	28.6	53
Ecuador	30	25.4	965	25.5	81
Peru	13	11.0	635	16.8	31
Venezuela	8	6.8	308	8.1	21
Caribbean Regional Center	**121**	**28.6**	**3584**	**23.3**	**299**
Directorate	8	6.6	357	10.0	16
Bahamas	1	0.8	48	1.3	2
Barbados	1	0.8	34	0.9	14
Dominican Republic	12	9.9	831	23.2	30
ECS	39	32.2	828	23.1	100
Guyana	18	14.9	377	10.5	44
Haiti	4	3.3	201	5.6	15
Jamaica	16	9.3	392	7.7	12
Suriname	10	8.3	75	2.1	24
Trinidad and Tobago	12	9.9	483	13.5	33
Central Regional Center	**97**	**22.9**	**3592**	**23.3**	**286**
Directorate	22	22.7	1108	30.8	75
Belize	7	7.2	167	4.6	8
Costa Rica	5	5.2	265	7.4	5
El Salvador	25	25.8	1140	31.7	81
Guatemala	4	4.1	73	2.0	15
Honduras	18	18.6	547	15.2	54
Nicaragua	11	11.3	187	5.2	41
Panama	5	5.2	105	2.9	7
Northern Regional Center	**26**	**6.1**	**1064**	**6.9**	**315**
Directorate	4	15.4	63	5.9	6
Canada	8	30.8	25	2.3	282
Mexico	9	34.6	918	86.3	22
United States of America	5	19.2	58	5.5	5
Southern Regional Center	**61**	**14.4**	**3366**	**21.9**	**270**
Directorate	13	21.3	500	14.9	37
Argentina	1	1.6	52	1.5	1
Brazil	12	19.7	577	17.1	117
Chile	20	32.8	1447	43.0	66
Paraguay	14	23.0	747	22.2	48
Uruguay	1	1.6	43	1.3	1
Total:	**423**	**100.0**	**15394**	**100.0**	**1419**

Source: DIPRE.

Note:

The percentages corresponding to the Regional Centers are calculated on the basis of the general total; the percentages for the CAs are based on the total of the corresponding Regional Center.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Figure 1 shows the trend in quota contributions and external resources in 1998, 1999 and 2000. Figure 2 illustrates the execution of regular resources by budget category in 2000: 88.98% of quota resources were used for direct technical cooperation services, 6.65% to cover management costs, and 4.37% for general costs and provisions. Figure 3 shows the execution of regular resources by Chapter in 2000, i.e., by direct technical cooperation services (broken down for each of IICA's Strategic Areas), management costs, and general costs and provisions.

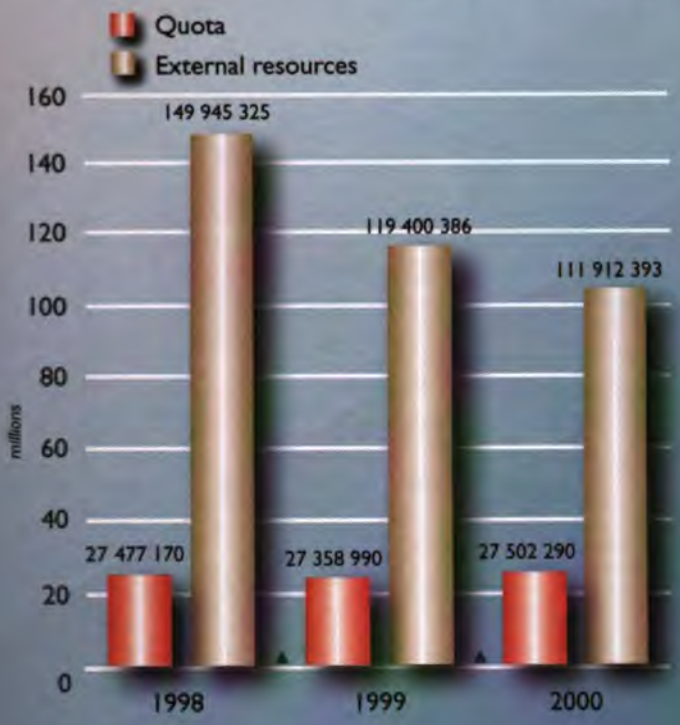


Figure 1. Execution of quota and external resources in 1998, 1999 and 2000 (in US$).

Source: Directorate of Finance
Note: Unaudited figures for 2000

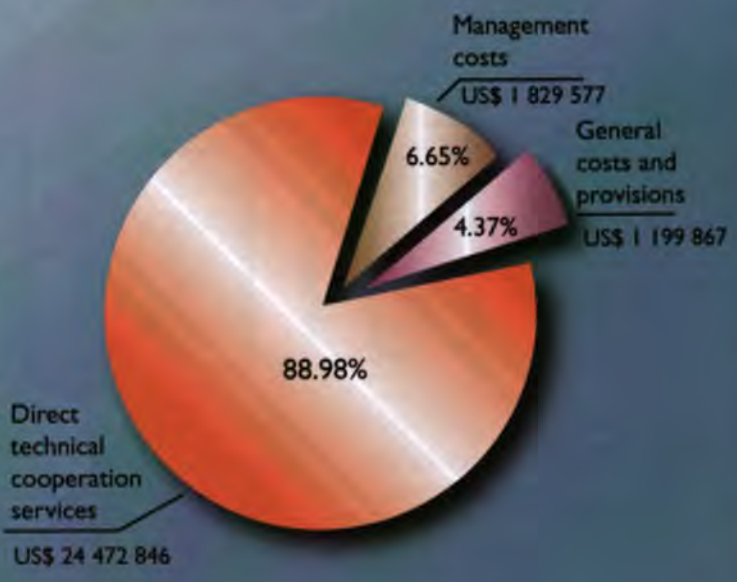


Figure 2. Execution of regular resources by budget category in 2000 (in US$)

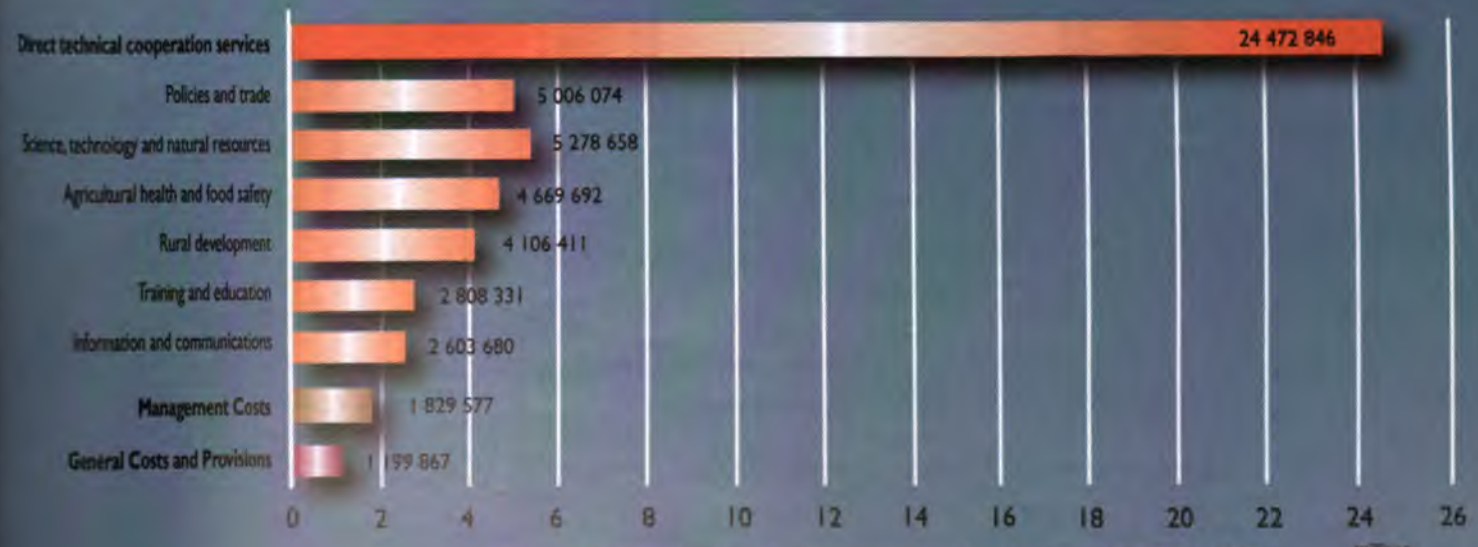


Figure 3. Distribution of quota resources by chapter in 2000 (in US$)

Total: US$ 27 502 290

HUMAN RESOURCES

Figure 1 shows the distribution of IICA's human resources by category in 1998, 1999 and 2000. Figures 2 and 3 present the distribution of personnel in 2000 by category and funding source, and by duty station and category, respectively.

Source: Directorate of Human Resources.

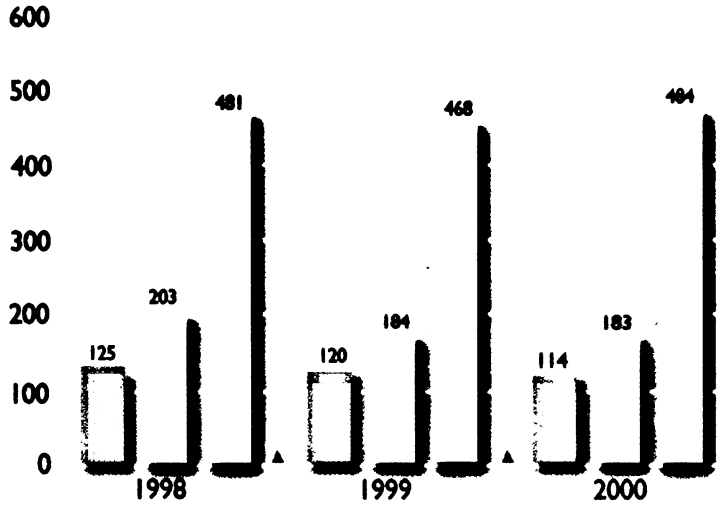


Figure 1.
Distribution of human resources by category in 1998, 1999 and 2000

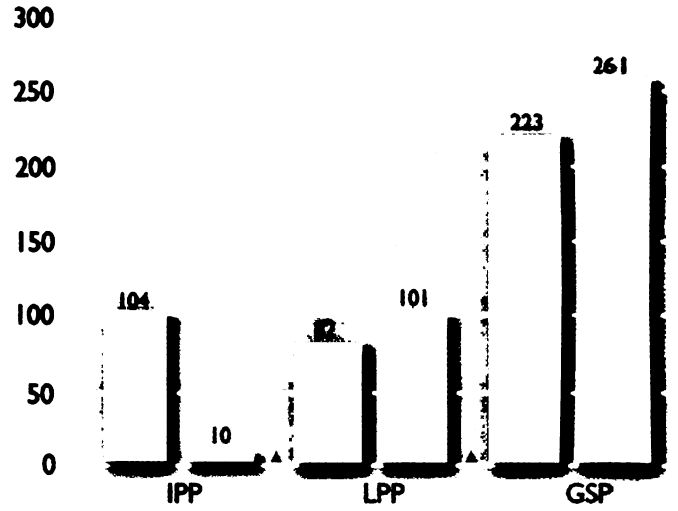


Figure 2.
Distribution of human resources by category and funding source in 2000

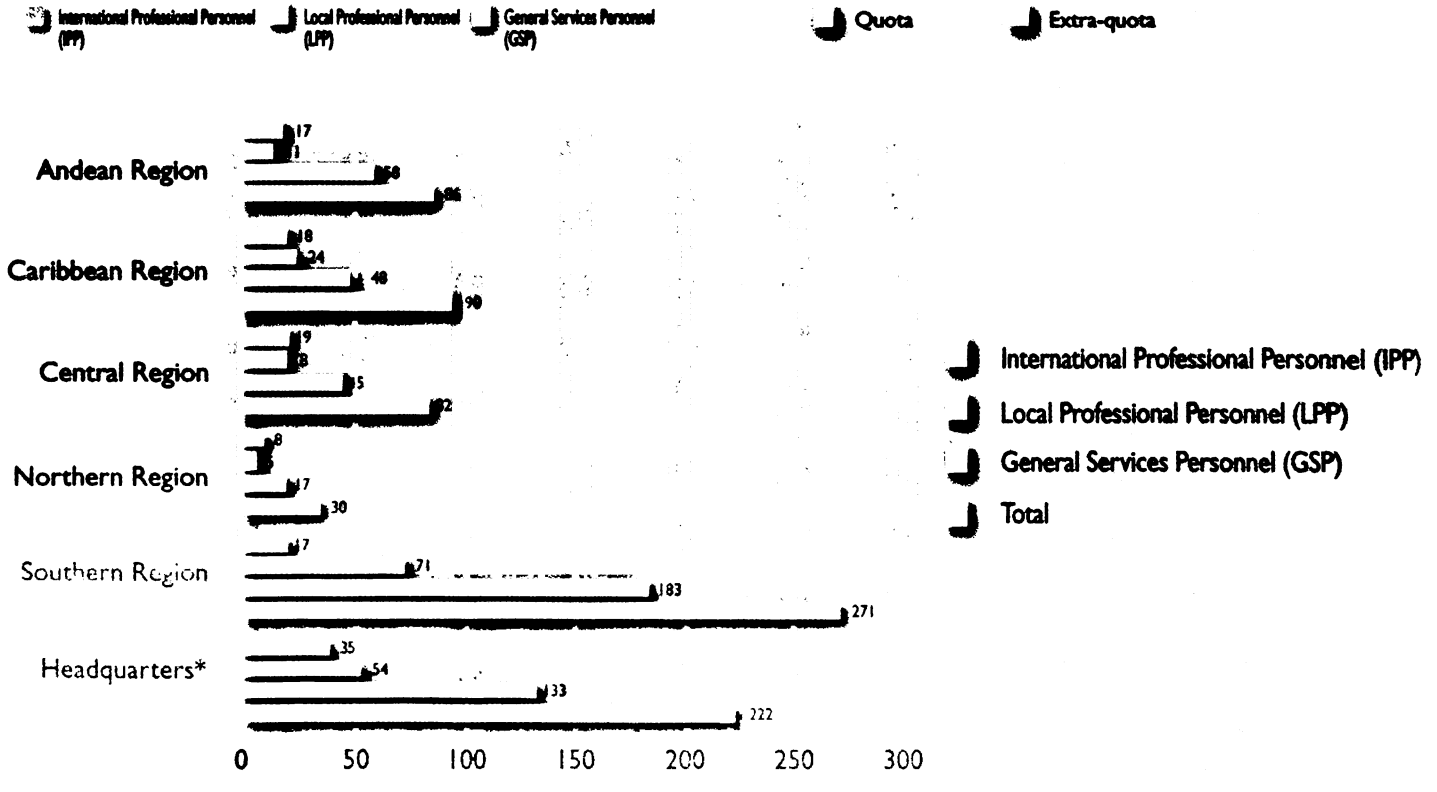


Figure 3.
Distribution of human resources by duty station and category in 2000

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ACRONYMS

ACDI/VOCA	Agriculture Cooperative Development International/Volunteers Overseas Cooperative Assistance
ALADI	Latin American Integration Association
APHIS	Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA)
BMZ	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (Germany)
C/LAA	Caribbean/Latin American Action
CA	Cooperation Agency (IICA)
CABEI	Central American Bank for Economic Integration
CAC	Central American Agricultural Council
CACHE	Caribbean Council for Higher Education in Agriculture
CAF	Andean Development Corporation
CARDI	Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CARIFRUIT	Caribbean Fruit Network
CATIE	Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Center
CIARA	Foundation for Training and Research Applied to Agrarian Reform (Venezuela)
CIAT	International Center for Tropical Agriculture
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIDAE	Center for Integration and Agribusiness Development (IICA)
CIDER	Inter-American Center for Rural Development (IICA)
CIRAD	Center for International Cooperation in Agricultural Research for Development (France)
CIRAD/EMVT	CIRAD/ Animal Production and Veterinary Medicine Department
CIRAD/FLHOR	CIRAD/ Flowers and Vegetables Department
CONPLAC	Consortium for Planning and Coordination (IICA)
CORECA	Regional Council for Agricultural Cooperation in Central America, Mexico, Panama and the Dominican Republic
COSAVE	Southern Area Plant Protection Committee
COSUDE	Swiss Cooperation Agency for Development
DECAP	Directorate of Education and Training (IICA)
DIPRE	Directorate of Programming and Evaluation (IICA)
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EU	European Union
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
FAVA/CA	Florida Association of Voluntary Agencies for Caribbean Action (United States)
FEPALE	Pan American Dairy Federation
FONTAGRO	Regional Agricultural Technology Fund
FORAGRO	Regional Forum on Agricultural Research and Technology Development
FTAA	Free Trade Area of the Americas
GO	Governmental organization
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
IABA	Inter-American Board of Agriculture
ICGPP	Inter-American Coordinating Group on Plant Protection
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IICA	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
INCAE	Central American Institute of Business Administration
INFOAGRO	Agricultural Information System (Costa Rica)
INFOTEC	Scientific and Technological Information System for the Agricultural Sector of the Americas
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
MAPA	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (Spain)
MERCOSUR	Southern Common Market
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement

NARI	National Agricultural Research Institute
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NRC	Northern Regional Center (IICA)
OAS	Organization of American States
OICD	Office of International Cooperation and Development (USDA)
OIE	World Organization for Animal Health
OIRSA	International Regional Organization for Agricultural Health
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PROCI	Cooperative agricultural research and technology transfer program
PROCIANDINO	Cooperative Agricultural Research and Technology Transfer Program for the Andean Subregion
PROCICARIBE	Caribbean Agricultural Science and Technology System
PROCINORTE	Cooperative Agricultural Research and Technology Transfer Program for the Northern Region
PROCISUR	Cooperative Program for the Development of Agricultural Technology in the Southern Cone
PROCITROPICOS	Cooperative Program on Research and Technology Transfer for the South American Tropics
PROCODER	Cooperative Program for Rural Development in the Southern Cone Countries
PRODAR	Hemispheric Rural Agroindustry Development Program
PROMECAFE	Regional Cooperative Program for the Technological Development and Modernization of Coffee Cultivation in Central America, Dominican Republic and Jamaica
REDARFIT	Andean Plant Genetic Resources Network
REDCAHOR	Collaborative Vegetable Research and Development Network for Central America, Panama and the Dominican Republic
REMERFI	Mesoamerican Network for Plant Genetic Resources
RUTA	Regional Technical Assistance Unit
SICTA	Central American System for Agricultural Technology
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SIDALC	Agricultural Information and Documentation System for the Americas
SIHCA	Hemispheric Training System for Agricultural Development
TROPIGEN	Amazonian Network for Plant Genetic Resources
UNDCP	United Nations International Drug Control Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USDA/FAS	United States Department of Agriculture/Foreign Agricultural Service
UWI	University of the West Indies
WFP	World Food Prize Youth Institute
WFPF	World Food Prize Foundation
WTO	World Trade Organization

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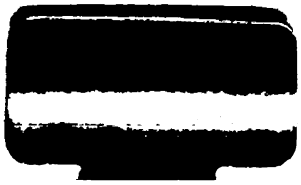

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