



**THE IICA IN THE WTO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE WORK PLAN VIII:
JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2018**

SUBMISSION BY THE IICA

The following submission, dated 8 February 2018, is being circulated at the request of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).

1 BACKGROUND

1.1. In March 2010, the Committee on Agriculture of the World Trade Organization (WTO) granted the IICA ad hoc observer status in its regular meetings. Since June 2012, the IICA has been operating a WTO Reference Centre, which provides technical advisory services in connection with various areas of agricultural trade to individuals from government, business and academic circles that are interested in improving their technical capacity in these areas.

A number of joint technical cooperation activities have been conducted within the framework of the existing alliance between the IICA and the WTO on agricultural subjects of particular interest to the two institutions and their member countries, including, in 2017, two technical fora: one on rules of origin in trade in agricultural goods, and the other on the WTO dispute settlement system and its relationship with trade in agricultural goods. A regional workshop on sanitary and phytosanitary measures was subsequently held for 19 Latin American countries.

1.2. In this context, the IICA submitted seven joint work plans between 2010 and 2017 (documents G/AG/GEN/92, G/AG/GEN/95, G/AG/GEN/105, G/AG/GEN/115, G/AG/GEN/125, G/AG/GEN/132 and G/AG/GEN/139).

1.3. In order to ensure the continuity of the IICA's commitment, an eighth joint work plan has been drafted and will be presented to WTO Members at the next regular meeting of the Committee on Agriculture.

2 ACTIVITIES TO BE DEVELOPED IN RELATION TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

2.1. The following activities are under consideration:

- a. *Participation in and attendance at meetings of the Committee on Agriculture:* The IICA, as an observer member of this Committee, undertakes to participate in the regular meetings held at the WTO addressing matters within its competence. Following these meetings, the IICA will prepare technical bulletins to inform government agriculture officials and IICA officials, and the business and academic sectors of IICA member States, about the most important issues addressed at each meeting.
- b. *Preparation of a paper on the IICA's contribution to the Marrakesh Decision and Food Security:* The IICA undertakes to inform WTO Members about the contributions made by the Institute during the year in the area of food security. It published submissions on this subject in 2010 (G/AG/GEN/93), 2011 (G/AG/GEN/97), 2012 (G/AG/GEN/104),

2013 (G/AG/GEN/111), 2014 (G/AG/GEN/125), 2015 (G/AG/GEN/128), 2016 (G/AG/GEN/136), and 2017 (G/AG/GEN/142).

- c. *Support for technical cooperation activities:* The IICA will support the WTO in its technical cooperation activities geared towards ministries of agriculture at both hemispheric level, through the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (JIA), and subregional level, through the Southern Agricultural Council, the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC), the Caribbean Alliance and other ministerial bodies. This support is designed to enhance the involvement of the IICA and its WTO Reference Centre in the development of such activities.
- d. *Monitoring areas of common interest:* The IICA will monitor the progress of the agricultural trade negotiations at the WTO and will prepare technically to respond to the requests of its member States in the area of agricultural trade policy and to develop possible training programmes in areas of common interest with other technical partners. The Institute will, in turn, make its technical staff available to the WTO should it require support in respect of requests for technical advice and training (in particular in Latin America and the Caribbean) relating to the [agricultural matters that form part of the Institute's work](#).
- e. *Compliance by countries with agricultural notification requirements:* Before each meeting, the Committee on Agriculture identifies the member countries that have fallen behind in submitting agricultural notifications (series G/AG/GEN/86).¹ In this light, the IICA will continue to support the WTO's initiatives to conduct regional workshops and other training activities for Latin American and Caribbean countries to help them improve, and ensure they are up to date with, their transparency commitments. Similarly, it will support and channel national and regional initiatives that require WTO technical cooperation.
- f. *Preparation of technical documents:* Given the IICA's extensive and proven experience in this area, it will assist the WTO Secretariat with such activities at the Committee's request.

3 THE AGRICULTURAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS WITHIN THE INSTITUTE

3.1. The IICA's activities in the WTO will be conducted within the framework of the IICA's Technical Cooperation Directorate, which will be responsible for implementing this work plan. The implementation of the plan will help to strengthen IICA member States' capacity to build relationships and participate in international forums and other mechanisms for the exchange of knowledge and mobilization of relevant resources, in accordance with the [IICA's 2014-2018 Medium-Term Plan](#) and the new 2019-2023 plan, which is currently being drafted and which will follow up on issues of interest relating to international agricultural trade and trade policy.

The IICA has an experienced network of experts in agriculture, international trade, and agricultural trade negotiations working both at its central headquarters and at its offices located in 34 member countries on the American continent, which will enable it to implement the technical cooperation activities set out in the work plan.

3.2. For further information, please contact:

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¹ Notifications are submitted in accordance with the requirements and formats adopted in 1995 by WTO Members (G/AG/2).