



Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture

**Directorate of Regional Operations and Integration
Division of Horizontal Technical Cooperation**

**Promoting Cooperation Between Countries Of The
Hemisphere**

Annual Report 2006

San Jose, Costa Rica

INTRODUCTION

We are pleased to present the report on “Promoting Cooperation between Countries of the Hemisphere.” This report covers the horizontal technical cooperation activities carried out by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture in conjunction with initiatives undertaken by its Member States during 2006.

Bearing in mind the key role it has played in these efforts, IICA created the Division of Horizontal Technical Cooperation within the Directorate of Regional Operations and Integration to promote and support its efforts to mobilize and strengthen the application of knowledge and experience in countries where this could be useful in solving specific problems.

Through its offices in the individual countries, IICA has built a bridge across the Americas, helping Member States solve problems encountered in agriculture and rural life. It has facilitated the implementation of 44 horizontal technical cooperation actions, in keeping with the strategic priorities set forth in the Medium-Term Plan 2006-2010, which is aimed at helping to create opportunities for facilitating dialogue and transferring experiences.

The actions carried out during 2006 encouraged closer cooperation between public and private sector entities in the countries. They promoted support by national agencies for international cooperation, helped identify areas in which knowledge was needed, transferred successful experiences to supplement national efforts.

In that context, this report includes a description of the initiatives carried out in 2006 and the results obtained. All these cases are examples of how human and financial resources can be mobilized to promote the exchange of knowledge and experience among the countries concerned.

We are grateful to Member States for being willing to share their achievements and what their responsible approach and contribution to the strengthening of horizontal technical cooperation in the agro-food and rural sector, as well for placing their trust in IICA.

Chelston W. D. Brathwaite
Director General

THE STRATEGIC VALUE OF HORIZONTAL TECHNICAL COOPERATION

In response to global changes, IICA has met the challenge of launching a stronger cooperation policy that focuses on the potential of individual countries to contribute to and strengthen national, regional and hemispheric capacities. To that end, it has started to improve the mechanisms used to deliver technical cooperation, stressing knowledge management as a tool for action.

In this scenario, horizontal technical cooperation is a key instrument for enhancing the technical expertise and technological capabilities of given a country or region. The 2006-2010 Medium-Term Plan (MTP) - the guiding framework for institutional action during this period – assigns strategic value to horizontal technical cooperation.

In practice, horizontal cooperation is carried out through exchanges of experiences and specialized technical resources, the idea being to find appropriate solutions that can be successfully transmitted among Member States or their institutions. The effort is aimed at identify and promoting good practices in agriculture and the rural environment and placing them at the service of countries and agencies where they are needed. This knowledge might be generated as the result of a specific project or an innovative methodology that is amenable to replication.

In order to ensure that horizontal cooperation efforts are carried out in a coordinated and complementary manner, IICA works jointly with international agencies that have similar mechanisms (OAS-FAO-PAHO) and with National Agencies for International Cooperation in countries that are committed to strengthening international relations.

Requests for cooperation and the supply of successful experiences and specialized human resources are handled through National Agencies and IICA offices in member countries with the aim of strengthening a well-coordinated process of technical cooperation in priority areas within the framework of IICA's guidance.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF IICA IN HORIZONTAL TECHNICAL COOPERATION

Forging a new institutional framework to ensure that agriculture is placed higher on the agenda of the hemisphere's priorities, and promoting the sustainable development of agriculture and the prosperity of rural communities, are tasks that exceed the Institute's capabilities. IICA, therefore, has made a carefully coordinated effort to harness the capabilities of other development agencies and the public and private actors of the countries themselves, both at the national and international levels.

To that end, IICA is redoubling its efforts to assist the countries in developing a new leadership and institutional framework, based on the promotion of the national, regional and inter-American dialogue on agriculture and rural life and the development of cooperation links with international and national strategic partners. The effort to create a hemispheric platform entails various lines of action, one of which is the promotion of horizontal cooperation, i.e., the promotion of joint cooperation activities between countries. This initiative is intended to help the countries not only to share their experiences in an effective way, but also to train their peers to implement the most successful practices.

With this objective in mind, IICA is promoting the creation of mechanisms to facilitate dialogue and permit the direct transfer of experiences among those responsible for them. The Institute is also encouraging the countries that have the greatest experience to make their knowledge available so that it can be adapted and implemented in other parts of the region with similar needs. The preparation of reports on strategic actions, the updating of databases with electronic access, the identification and systematization of useful experiences, and the facilitation of direct contacts in IICA's Offices are some of the Institute's actions in this area.

One example of such efforts is the creation of "Nodes of Excellence" in the agriculture sector, the value of which is evidenced by the work done in Mexico, Brazil and Chile.

In Chile, a "Node of Excellence" was created based on the experience gained as a result of coordination between the public and private sectors. Policy mechanisms, international trade negotiations and competitive development tools were used to strengthen the partnership between sectors.

In Mexico, a "Node of Policies and Trade" was established to take advantage of all the experience gained in the agriculture sector over the ten years of implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The node covers mechanisms for carrying out institutional reform, policy tools that have been generated and applied, and incentives for domestic trade in agricultural products. Technicians and policy directors of several countries have visited Mexico to learn from this experience.

In Brazil, the focus was on agribusiness. The most important initiatives in this field were systematized, including alternative uses of agro-energy, development of chambers of agricultural entrepreneurs, and advances in reduction of rural poverty.

In addition to actions carried out jointly with international agencies such as FAO and PAHO, the inventory of achievements and mechanisms for cooperation includes agreements with the National Cooperation Agencies of the foreign ministries in support of international complementarity efforts in the field of agriculture. Some examples are the work carried out with the Directorate for International Cooperation of Argentina for implementation of activities with other countries (Haiti), the Agreement with the Chilean International Cooperation Agency (AGCI), and the efforts of AGCI and IICA in promoting the creation of a Node and organization of a Regional Seminar on Development of Nodes of Excellence for Capacity Building, in particular for South-South cooperation.

THE SUPPLY OF HORIZONTAL TECHNICAL COOPERATION, BY REGION, IN 2006

Andean Region

Horizontal technical cooperation actions carried out as a contribution of the Andean countries included areas such as agricultural policies, sustainable rural development and successful experiments with oil palm and guava.

Caribbean Region

The Caribbean countries focused on offering horizontal technical cooperation in areas such as development of hydroponics, swine pest control, creation of a front to prevent the entry of bird influenza, and promotion and development of certified organic agriculture.

Central Region

The Central American countries attached priority to horizontal technical cooperation relating to the production and uses of sugar cane, sustainable rural development in ecologically vulnerable areas, exploitation of native trees, development of tropical fruit crops, and identification of the costs of agricultural inputs.

Northern Region

The United States, Canada and Mexico offered requesting countries horizontal technical cooperation relating to the experience gained in the framework of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The focus was on agricultural policy and rural development. The Canadian program with countries in the Southern Cone and the United States program on animal health for countries of the hemisphere were especially helpful.

Southern Region

The horizontal technical cooperation activities carried out by the South American countries focused on development of family gardens, design of State agricultural policy, sustainable rural development with a territorial approach, coordination of the meat chain, tomato production, environmental indicators, plant and animal health, agro-exports, and nodes of excellence designed to improve the agri-food sector and rural life (Chile). Human and financial resources and collaboration between countries were instrumental in strengthening the mechanisms of the Agriculture Council of the South (CAS).

HORIZONTAL TECHNICAL COOPERATION ACTIONS, BY REGION AND BY STRATEGIC AREA. 2006

REGIONS	STRATEGIC AREA	ACTIONS	ACTIONS BETWEEN COUNTRIES
ANDEAN	Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness Promotion of Rural Communities	4	Peru, Colombia, Venezuela y Ecuador
CARIBBEAN	Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness Promotion of Rural Communities Promotion of Agricultural Health and Food Safety	9	Trinidad and Tobago, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Guyana and Bahamas
CENTRAL	Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness Promotion of Rural Communities Promotion of Agricultural Health and Food Safety Education and Training	6	Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Belize and Panama
NORTHERN	Promotion of Agricultural Health and Food Safety	3	Mexico and Canada
SOUTHERN	Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness Promotion of Rural Communities Promotion of Agricultural Health and Food Safety Promotion of the Incorporation of Technology and Innovation	18	Chile, Brazil, Uruguay, Paraguay and Argentina

REGIONS	STRATEGIC AREA	ACTIONS	ACTIONS BETWEEN REGIONS
NORTHERN AND ANDEAN	Promotion of Sustainable Rural Development	1	Mexico and Colombia
NORTHERN AND CENTRAL	Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness	1	Mexico and El Salvador
NORTHERN, CENTRAL AND CARIBBEAN	Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness	1	United States, Canada, Guatemala, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Panama and Dominican Republic
NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN	Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness	1	Mexico and Brazil

ANDEAN REGION

COLOMBIA SHARES WITH PERU ITS EXPERIENCE WITH THE OIL PALM MODEL

Peruvian oil palm entrepreneurs observed the operation of Colombia's successful oil palm model in the context of initiatives involving the implementation of seed germination, fruit harvesting and industrial processing programs. This cooperation was promoted and carried out by the IICA offices in Peru and Colombia.

Activity: Technical mission by a delegation of Peruvian oil palm entrepreneurs.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness Competitiveness

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Peru and Colombia, representatives of the National Confederation of Palm Growers, entrepreneurs and professionals from public and private entities working on development of oil palm in Peru.

Results: The Peruvian delegation observed the main activities being carried out in Colombia in connection with seed germination, fruit harvesting and industrial processing, with a view to adapting the processes in Peru. A network was set up to facilitate communications between officials in the two countries.

COLOMBIA EXCHANGES WITH PERU ITS ACHIEVEMENTS IN MANAGEMENT OF AGRARIAN POLICIES

Columbia shared with agricultural actors in Peru its achievements with agrarian policies; watershed management; agricultural production chains; palm, cereal, cacao, meat, and dairy producers organizations; and parafiscal funds. The IICA offices in the two countries served as facilitators for this horizontal cooperation.

Activity: Specialized course in territorial development and management.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of the Development of Rural Communities.

Participating agencies: IICA Office in Peru, Ministry of Agriculture of Peru, IICA Office in Columbia, Colombian Agricultural Research Corporation (CORPOICA), Center of Excellence for Plant Health (CEF), Ministries of Agriculture and Rural Development, Environmental Affairs, Housing and Territorial Development of Columbia, FENALCE, FEDEPALMA, ASOHOFRUCOL, National Cocoa Growers Council, National Dairy Council (CNL) and National Beef Chain Council.

Results: Participants from the Peruvian mission were trained in agrarian policies, watershed management, agricultural production chains, experience with trade organizations in palm, cereals, cacao, beef, dairy and parafiscal funds. With the support of IICA, Peru will assess the design and implementation of tools in these areas.

COLOMBIA COOPERATES WITH PERU ON THE USE OF AGRI-FOOD CHAINS

Colombia shared with Peru its experiences with the Observatory for agri-food chains and territories. This entity has provided the public and private sectors with the information tools and mechanisms needed to improve the competitiveness of the rural territories.

Activity: Technical visit by Peruvian delegates to learn about Colombia's agricultural policy with regard to the Free Trade Agreement with the United States, especially in the meat subsector.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness Competitiveness.

Participating agencies: The IICA Office in Peru and the Ministry of Agriculture, the Colombian Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, and the IICA Office in Colombia.

Results: With the support of IICA, Peru will design and put underway an observatory of agricultural production chains and territories. The Colombian model will be used to exchange experiences and propose new actions on the subject. The IICA Office in Colombia will coordinate the knowledge transfer process.

COLOMBIA SUPPORTS ECUADOR IN GUAVA PROCESSING

Ecuador will build its first guava processing plant in the province of Imbabura. This objective was implemented after an Ecuadorian mission visited Colombia to observe their production and processing operations.

Activity: Technical visit to observe production and industrial processing of guava.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness Competitiveness.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Ecuador and Colombia, Provincial Development Agency of Imbabura (ADEPI), Catholic University Ibarra Campus, Guava Producers Association, CORPOICA and CIMPA in Colombia.

Results: Participants in the Ecuadorian mission received training and learned about Colombia's experience. A project profile was developed with a view to building the first guava processing plant in the province of Imbabura. IICA will help Ecuador seek financing.

CARIBBEAN REGION

THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC SUPPORTS HAITI IN COMBATING CLASSIC SWINE PEST

The Dominican Republic will provide support to Haiti in its efforts to combat classic swine pest. At Haiti's request, the two countries created a united front to eradicate the disease by 2010. The initiative, which has the support of IICA, envisages joint activities in the border region.

Activity: Technical advisory services for control and eradication of classic swine pest.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Agricultural Health and Food Safety.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Haiti and the Dominican Republic, Secretariat of State for Agriculture (SEA) of the Dominican Republic, APHIS/USDA, and Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Rural Development (MARNDR) of Haiti.

Results: Haiti and the Dominican Republic will harmonize their policies and strategies for the control and eradication of classic swine pest and facilitate health monitoring measures. Haitian personnel received training based on the experience of the Dominican Republic.

THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC FACILITATES HAITI ITS GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES MODEL

Haiti will adopt a model of good agricultural practices similar to that of the Dominican Republic in order to develop agri-food production that meets national and international standards. The Dominican Republic will support this process, with the backing of IICA.

Activity: Training in good agricultural practices (GAPs) and good livestock practices (GLPs).

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Agricultural Health and Food Safety.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Haiti and the Dominican Republic, Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Rural Development (MARNDR) of Haiti, Secretariat of State for Agriculture (SEA) of the Dominican Republic, APHIS/USDA, Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), HBI, INESPRES, PATCA Project (SEA/IDB) and Stock Growers Association of Nisibon.

Results: Training was carried out in Haiti through workshop-courses for technicians, producers and agro-entrepreneurs. In addition, a network was set up to facilitate cooperation between the Dominican Republic and Haiti.

THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC AND HAITI COMBAT BIRD FLU

In order to prevent the introduction of bird flu, Haiti and the Dominican Republic will work side by side on three fronts: harmonization of surveillance criteria, animal health campaigns, and emergency response.

Activity: Joint technical cooperation meetings to prevent the introduction of bird flu into their territories.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Agricultural Health and Food Safety.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Haiti and the Dominican Republic, Secretariat of State for Agriculture (SEA) of the Dominican Republic, APHIS/USDA, Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Rural Development (MARNDR) of Haiti, producer associations and agro-entrepreneurs from both countries, PAHO, FAO and OIRSA.

Results: Haiti and the Dominican Republic will harmonize surveillance criteria, animal health campaigns and emergency response efforts so as to prevent the introduction of bird flu. IICA will support these initiatives. The two countries will draw up a binational technical cooperation agreement and a program that will serve as a framework for joint action.

THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC PROMOTES ORGANIC FARMING IN SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES AND SAINT LUCIA

The Dominican Republic provided training in the development of organic farming for a group of potential agro-entrepreneurs from Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

Activity: Training workshop on basic principles of organic farming for future agricultural entrepreneurs.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of the Development of Rural Communities.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and the Dominican Republic, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Caribbean Council for Higher Education in Agriculture (CACHE).

Results: A group of farmers who had the potential to become organic producers was identified. The activities were carried out in the context of regional efforts to promote organic farming. Officials in the sector received training based on the experience of the Dominican Republic. IICA will continue to support this initiative.

THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC COOPERATES WITH HAITI IN BIOLOGICAL AGRICULTURE

With the support of the Dominican Republic, Haiti increased its pool of human resources qualified in biological agriculture by training 135 people, including technicians, entrepreneurs and producers.

Activity: Fifth Annual Workshop on Biological Agriculture in Haiti.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of the Development of Rural Communities.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Haiti and the Dominican Republic, Fondation Groupe '73, Haitian Chamber of Biological Agriculture (CHAAB), World Lutheran Federation (WLF).

Results: Training was provided to 135 people, including technicians, entrepreneurs and farmers who were interested in biological agriculture. This activity, which promises to be an important economic alternative for the country, will be carried out in collaboration with IICA and the Dominican Republic.

THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC SHARES WITH ECUADOR ITS EXPERIENCE WITH ORGANIC BANANAS

The Dominican Republic, which leads the world in exports of organic bananas, shared its experience with Ecuadorian banana growers. Ecuador is the largest exporter of bananas in the world, and the Dominican specialty opens up important prospects for the future.

Activity: Third International Seminar 2006 on New Challenges for the Banana Market.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness Competitiveness.

Participating agencies: IICA Offices in Ecuador and the Dominican Republic, Ecuadorian Banana Exporters Association (AEBE), and Ministry of Agriculture of Ecuador.

Results: Ecuadorian technicians and entrepreneurs learned about the Dominican experience at the conference on world prospects for organic bananas, the panel on marketing, and in exchanges with Dominican exhibitors and producers. Ties between producers of the two countries were strengthened and IICA increased its support in this area.

THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC SUPPORTS DOMINICA IN CERTIFIED ORGANIC PRODUCTION

With the support of the Dominican Republic, Dominica will develop certified organic agriculture as a specialized area within the agriculture sector. The Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment made a formal request for technical assistance to its counterparts in the Dominican Republic.

Activity: Advisory services in setting up a farmer-to-farmer exchange program, study of management systems for certified organic production in the Dominican Republic.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of the Development of Rural Communities.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Dominica, Saint Lucia, and the Dominican Republic, Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment of Dominica, STABEX Agricultural Diversification Programme of the European Union.

Results: The Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment of Dominica asked the Secretariat of State for Agriculture (SEA) of the Dominican Republic for technical assistance in the area of organic agriculture, and IICA provided support for the meetings. The purpose of the initiative is to train farmers in certified production and establish ties between producers of the two countries. IICA also strengthened its work in the Dominican Republic and in Dominica.

THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC PROMOTES ORGANIC AGRICULTURE IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

In the context of a cooperation program between the Dominican Republic and Trinidad and Tobago, activities were carried out to promote organic farming. The project, which will make it possible to start organic farms, has the support of the IICA Office in the Dominican Republic. Trinidad and Tobago has great potential, and the idea is to promote and encourage agricultural entrepreneurs.

Activity: Technical assistance for starting model organic farms.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of the Development of Rural Communities.

Participating agencies: IICA Offices in Trinidad and Tobago and the Dominican Republic, Ministry of Agriculture of Trinidad and Tobago, Caribbean Research and Development Institute.

Results: With technical collaboration provided by the Dominican Republic, an organic farming program was designed, and five model farms were set up to promote the development of this activity in Trinidad and Tobago. The purpose of the project is to promote and encourage agricultural entrepreneurs. The initiative will have the support of the IICA Office in the Dominican Republic. Once the five model farms are set up, in 2007, efforts will be made to promote this specialty in Trinidad and Tobago.

SAINT LUCIA AND GUYANA SUPPORT THE BAHAMAS IN THE AREA OF HYDROPONICS

Saint Lucia and Guyana provided training in hydroponics for leaders of Bahamian cooperatives. The initiative will enable these organizations to undertake new operations, including development of hydroponics, thus opening up new opportunities for farmers.

Activity: Technical mission to offer training on cooperative organizations and introduce hydroponics.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness Competitiveness.

Participating agencies: IICA OFFICES Saint Lucia, Guyana and the Bahamas, Department of Cooperatives of the Ministry of Local Government and Consumer Affairs, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources, Bahamas Agricultural Services and Investments, Bahamas Agricultural Producers Association (ABAPA) and Department of Cooperatives and Cooperative League.

Results: Leaders of cooperative organizations in the Bahamas received training in hydroponics, and a network of cooperative organizations was set up.

CENTRAL REGION

COSTA RICA SUPPORTS THE BELIZE IN SUGAR INDUSTRY

Belize plans to modernize its sugar industry based on a study of the sugar-cane chain that was carried out with the support of Costa Rica. The first step in this direction was taken after the IICA offices in both countries coordinated a visit by a Costa Rican mission that made recommendations, particularly regarding the industrial component.

Activity: Direct technical advisory services in studying the sugar-cane chain in Belize.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness Competitiveness.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Belize and Costa Rica, Liga Agrícola e Industrial de la Caña de Azúcar (LAICA) and Hacienda Taboga de Costa Rica, Belize Sugar Industry (BSI), Belize Sugar Control Board, Sugar Farmers Organization, Ministry of Agriculture of Belize.

Results: A project on the sugar-cane chain was developed for Belize, which undertook to implement the recommendations made in the study, especially those relating to the industrial component, which will require the participation of chemical engineers. IICA will support the exchange and follow up on the conclusions and recommendations.

COSTA RICA SUPPORTS EL SALVADOR IN AGRICULTURAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Technicians, librarians and documentation specialists in El Salvador improved their capacities in the management of agricultural information, a key process in knowledge management.

Activity: Training workshop on agricultural information systems.

Strategic area of IICA: Information and Communications.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in El Salvador and Costa Rica, Agricultural and Agroindustrial Chamber of El Salvador (CAMAGRO) and Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of El Salvador.

Results: Training in management of agricultural information was provided for technicians, librarians and documentation specialists. This is an especially important process, which is supported by IICA in the context of knowledge management. The beneficiaries now manage the SIDAL, AGRIS, CABI, WAICENT and AGORA information systems.

CENTRAL AMERICA PROMOTES EXPERIENCES IN FRUIT GROWING

The Third International Forum on Tropical Fruit Agribusiness was held on September 14 and 15, 2006, at the Central Headquarters of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).

The activity brought together persons who were interested in fruit growing, especially producers, agro-industrialists, exporters, entrepreneurs in general, representatives of growers associations and organizations, universities, the financial sector, public and private agencies, organizations involved in promoting exports, international cooperating agencies, certification agencies and persons responsible for imports and exports, among others.

Activity: International Technical Forum on Tropical Fruit Agribusiness.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness Competitiveness.

Participating agencies: Ministry of Agriculture of Costa Rica, IICA, public and private agencies of the Central American fruit sector and experiences in countries of the hemisphere.

Results: Participants learned about different national experiences in fruit production, health and food safety relating to fruit production in the business and production chains. The forum provided networking opportunities for the participating countries, as well as exchanges of information on technological, organizational and commercial innovations. The projects underway in Central America were showcased, and unresolved weaknesses were discussed.

EL SALVADOR SUPPORTS GUATEMALA AND HONDURAS IN FORESTRY DEVELOPMENT

With the support of CATIE and IICA, El Salvador trained 31 technicians from Guatemala and Honduras in the identification of native tree species with high commercial value, with a view to exploiting them in the PRODERT trinational area. In addition to their use in wood production, these varieties can also be used for industrial and medicinal purposes.

Activity: Seminar on experiences with the cultivation and use of native Central American trees for technical staff of PRODERT projects.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, CATIE, PRODERT project in the three countries, CARITAS Nacional and Grupo Acción Territorial Zona Alta de Chalatenango.

Results: The PRODERT cooperation network was strengthened through training for technicians from the three countries in the identification of native tree species that have a high commercial value. Participants were also trained in the design of teaching materials.

EL SALVADOR COOPERATES WITH BELIZE ON PROJECT FINANCING

El Salvador trained 29 high-level professionals from the public and private sectors in Belize on the design and drafting of projects that will attract potential donors.

Activity: Training course on “How to write a convincing proposal: Consolidation of project development, donor relations and mobilization of resources for agricultural innovation”.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of the Incorporation of Innovation and Technology.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Belize and El Salvador, SICTA Network, Belize Agricultural Health Authority, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute, Belize Botanic Gardens, Ministry of National Development, Banana Growers Association, Ministry of Rural Development, University of Belize.

Results: Twenty-nine high-level professionals in the public and private sectors of Belize were trained in the design and drafting of projects that will attract donors. They were also trained on how to negotiate with donor agencies and strengthen institutional units. In addition, ties were established with specialists in El Salvador.

CENTRAL AMERICA SHARES WITH NICARAGUA IN REGARD TO STUDIES ON COST OF INPUTS FOR THE CENTRAL AMERICAN AGRICULTURAL COUNCIL (CAC)

Central American technicians conducted a number of studies on the cost of agricultural inputs in the region. The activity brought together representatives of Panama, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala.

Activity: Technical advisory services in connection with the analysis of costs of agricultural inputs in Central America.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness Competitiveness.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in the six Central American countries, Agency for International Development (AID) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAGFOR) of Nicaragua.

Results: In the context of the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC), a regional and comparative study on the cost of agricultural inputs in Central America was conducted in each country. These studies will be used to develop a harmonized policy on the matter. IICA strengthened its cooperation on the matter, which is a high priority for Nicaragua and the other CAC countries.

NORTHERN REGION

CANADA COOPERATES WITH THE SOUTHERN REGION ON VETERINARY DIAGNOSIS

Southern Region technicians were trained by Canadian technicians in the use of the polymerase chain reaction in real time (PCR-RT) for detection of foot-and-mouth disease, classic swine pest and bird flu. The initiative will help improve the diagnostic capacities of regional laboratories.

Activity: Technical training for veterinary services in the Southern Region, so as to improve the diagnostic capacities of laboratories.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Agricultural Health and Food Safety.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Canada, Brazil, Uruguay, Paraguay, Argentina and Chile, veterinary diagnostic reference laboratory in Winnipeg, Canada.

Results: Technicians were trained in the use of the PCR-RT technique, which is essential for detecting foot-and-mouth disease, classic swine pest and bird flu. In Canada, a medium-term training program on the subject was developed for technicians in Southern Area countries. IICA supports the region through the horizontal cooperation program.

THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA HELP NICARAGUA SET UP EXPORT PLATFORMS

Nicaraguan companies and entrepreneurs who are interested in exporting to the North American market now have the tools they need in the form of “export platforms” with the United States and Canada. This conceptual framework allows them to receive training in areas such as international business and to show their products to potential buyers, among others.

Activity: Technical advisory services in setting up export platforms for selling Nicaragua’s agricultural products to the United States and Canada.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness Competitiveness.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Nicaragua, the United States and Canada, Agency for International Development (AID), Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAGFOR) of Nicaragua, and Ministry of Industrial Development and Commerce (MIFIC) of Nicaragua.

Results: Two export platforms were established, with the United States and Canada, to train companies and entrepreneurs interested in the North American market. Support was provided by the IICA offices in the two countries, and national technicians received training in international business.

MEXICO SUPPORTS COLOMBIA BY SHARING ITS EXPERIENCE WITH THE AGRICULTURAL FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

Colombia benefited from Mexico's experience with agricultural restructuring in the context of the Free Trade Agreement with the United States. Colombia is moving forward with its own process in preparation for its FTA with the United States. The IICA Office is supporting this initiative and provided an opportunity for representatives and officials in the agriculture sector to contact their Mexican counterparts.

Activity: Visit by an official mission to learn about rural development policies relating to the FTA.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness Competitiveness.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Colombia and Mexico, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MADR) of Colombia, Colombian Rural Development Institute (INCODER), Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food (SAGARPA) of Mexico, Mexican Association of Secretaries of Rural Development (AMSDA), Support and Services for Agricultural Marketing (ASERCA), National Agricultural Council, INCA Rural and World Bank.

Results: Colombian officials on the technical mission received training, and a networking mechanism was set up to enable agencies in Mexico and Colombia to exchange information.

SOUTHERN REGION

ARGENTINA PROMOTES IN HAITI DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRO-HUERTA PROGRAM

Argentina shared with Haiti its successful Pro-Huerta program; during the first stage, training was provided for 123 promoters in five locations. At present, 630 families representing a total of 4,200 members have started planting vegetable gardens. The initiative was also implemented in 13 schools and benefited 3,800 students, as well as an orphanage with 69 children. In addition, a teaching manual entitled *Un Pequeño Jardín Orgánico en su Casa* is being planned.

Activity: Technical advisory services for promotion and adaptation in Haiti of Argentina's Pro-Huerta program.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness Competitiveness.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Haiti and Argentina, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Argentina, Ministry of Agriculture of Haiti, Embassy of Argentina in Haiti, Technical Agriculture Institute of Gonaives, and the Children's Educational and Nutritional Center (orphanage).

Results: One hundred twenty-three Haitians living in five towns were trained in the development of vegetable gardens. Thanks to the program, 630 families involving 4,200 people now have their own gardens. The program was also started in 13 schools, where it benefits 3,800 students, and in an orphanage with 69 children. With support from IICA, links were established between the Governments of Argentina and Haiti and the General Directorate for Cooperation of Argentina.

BRAZIL OFFERS TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO COLOMBIA IN THE AREA OF AGRICULTURAL INSURANCE

Brazil supported the agricultural restructuring process in Colombia in preparation for the FTA with the United States. A Colombian mission visited Brazil to observe first-hand the Agro Ingreso Seguro program (AIS). With support from IICA, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Colombia will design and implement an initiative similar to the one in Brazil.

Activity: Visit by a Colombian technical mission to learn about Brazilian agrarian policy tools relating to the design of the Agro Ingreso Seguro (AIS) program.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness Competitiveness.

Participating agencies: IICA Office in Colombia, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MADR) of Colombia, Brazilian goods and futures stock exchange, Ministries of Agriculture, Agrarian Development and Social Development and the Fight against Hunger of Brazil, National Supply Company of Brazil, Bank of Brazil and National Agrarian Confederation.

Results: The Colombian entrepreneurs received training on the Brazilian farm insurance program. The cooperation initiative promoted the design of an Agro Ingreso Seguro (AIS) program and the creation of the National Council of Secretaries of Agriculture (CONSA). With the support of IICA, an opportunity was provided for analysis of the issue of insurance in Colombia.

BRAZIL COOPERATES WITH COLOMBIA IN THE AREA OF FINANCING AND MARKETING

Colombia plans to include in its agricultural policy certain financing and marketing tools like the ones currently in place in Brazil, including the farm product bond (*cédula de producto rural*), the agricultural certificate of deposit and guarantee, the certificate of agribusiness credit rights, the agribusiness letter of credit and the agribusiness receipt certificate.

Activity: Technical mission to learn about financing and marketing tools used in agricultural activities in Brazil.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness Competitiveness.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Colombia and Brazil, Bolsa Agropecuaria de Bogotá, Ministry of Agriculture of Colombia, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Supply of Brazil.

Results: The members of the mission shared experiences and exchanged information on the operation in Brazil of tools such as the farm product bond (*cédula de producto rural*), the agricultural certificate of agribusiness credit rights, the agribusiness letter of credit and the agribusiness receipt certificate. Information was also provided on the use of three marketing tools, and links were established between institutions in the two countries.

BRAZIL SUPPORTS PARAGUAY IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT WITH THE TERRITORIAL APPROACH

Paraguay successfully completed the preparatory process leading to implementation of rural development strategies and policies with the territorial approach. With support from Brazil, terms were defined for developing the tools, which will complement the actions carried out by the Sustainable Rural Development Investment Fund (FIDES).

Activity: Follow-up to previous missions so as to assist with the formulation of rural development strategies and policies with a territorial approach and management of FIDES.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of the Development of Rural Communities.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Paraguay and Brazil, INDERT Paraguay and Technical Office of the Vice Presidency of Paraguay.

Results: Approval was given to terms of reference for the formulation of differentiated rural development strategies and policies and for guidelines for the regulations of the Sustainable Rural Development Investment Fund (FIDES). A decision was made to organize a seminar on the subject, and the terms for a cooperation agreement between IICA and the Technical Office were defined, as were the terms of reference for updating Paraguayan agrarian legislation.

BRAZIL SUPPORTS SURINAME IN TOMATO PRODUCTION

Brazil offered support to Suriname in connection with tomato production, with emphasis on disease and pest control.

Activity: Technical mission to support tomato production in Suriname.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Agricultural Health and Food Safety.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Suriname and Brazil, Ministry of Agriculture of Suriname and vegetable growers associations in Suriname.

Results: A plan for supporting tomato production was drawn up and presented to the Ministry of Agriculture of Suriname. Among other things, the initiative provides for actions to control diseases and pests that affect tomato crops. IICA coordinated the technical cooperation actions and helped draw up the framework for cooperation, which was then presented to the Ministry of Agriculture of Suriname.

BRAZIL EXCHANGES EXPERIENCES WITH 40 PRODUCERS AND AGRICULTURE OFFICIALS OF PERU IN TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT

A total of 40 producers and agriculture officials from the Ministry of Agriculture of Peru traveled to Brazil to learn more about the formulation of agricultural development proposals with a territorial approach.

Activity: Specialized course on agrarian development and territorial management.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of the Development of Rural Communities.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Peru and Brazil, Ministry of Agriculture and Centro de Altos Estudios Nacionales del Perú, Agroindustrial Cooperative, COROL, Empresa DEDINI and Agronomic Institute of Paraná (APIAR) of Brazil.

Results: A total of 40 producers and agriculture officials of the Peruvian Ministry of Agriculture received training on the formulation of agricultural development proposals with a territorial approach, based on the exchange with Brazilian organizations. Relations between institutions working in this area in both countries were enriched by the encounter.

BRAZIL SHARES WITH URUGUAY ACHIEVEMENTS IN REGARD TO ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS

Brazil shared with Uruguay its experience in developing a system of environmental indicators that will be adapted to the responsible production project of the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries of Uruguay.

Activity: Workshops on implementation of a system of environmental indicators for the Responsible Production project.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of the Incorporation of Innovation and Technology.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Uruguay and Brazil, Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries of Uruguay, and Brazilian Agricultural Research Enterprise (EMBRAPA).

Results: Three workshops were carried out as an exchange between EMBRAPA technical staff and a technical team from the Responsible Production project. Technicians also received training on data collection and processing. In addition, a network was set up with the support of PROCISUR to facilitate exchanges on the subject between Uruguay and Brazil.

CHILE PROMOTES ITS COOPERATION NODE IN 20 LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES

Chile promoted and disseminated in 20 Latin American countries its cooperation node, which is based on successful experiences in public-private relations, thus helping to strengthen the agri-food sector and improve rural life in the region.

Activity: Regional seminar on Development of nodes of excellence for capacity-building to foster South-South cooperation.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness Competitiveness.

Participating agencies: The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Chile and the Chilean International Cooperation Agency (AGCI), the IICA Office in Chile, the foreign ministries, ministries of planning, national technical and international cooperation agencies and the ministries of agriculture of the Latin American countries, SAG, ODEPA, INDAP, CNR and FIA, among others.

Results: Chile shared with participants from 20 Latin American countries its experience with strengthening relations between the public and private sectors in the area of agriculture and rural life. It provided information on the concept of cooperation nodes for agriculture, and on the tools Chile has created to improve relations between the public and private sectors, as well as on progress made in the design of State policies, international negotiations and competitive funds. Relations between participating countries and Chilean governmental agencies were promoted, and suggestions were made regarding the possibility of facilitating exchanges of experiences by identifying needs for cooperation in the area of agriculture and rural life. Ties between IICA and AGCI were strengthened with the signing of a cooperation agreement. Finally, Chile offered to share its experiences so as to promote cooperation nodes in priority areas in the participating countries.

CHILE SUPPORTS PANAMA IN AGRICULTURAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

Chile trained technical staff of the Directorate of Animal and Plant Health of Panama on the application of quality control systems to enable them to improve their services. In line with this conceptual framework, it also strengthened the capacity of the Directorate to evaluate of the work of laboratories in accordance with ISO 17025 standards.

Activity: Technical advisory services and participation in the workshop on Quality control systems: tools for strengthening animal and plant health services in Panama.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Agricultural Health and Food Safety.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Panama and Chile, Agriculture and Livestock Service (SAG) of Chile, Ministries of Agricultural Development (MIDA) and Health (MINSA) of Panama, Rural Agroindustry Network, Panama-Spain Mixed Fund, and Spanish Cooperation Agency.

Results: Training was provided for participants in the application of systems for improving the quality of official agricultural health services, based on the experience of SAG in Chile. In addition, a preliminary proposal for strengthening laboratory management was designed. IICA will monitor progress in these areas in the region.

CHILE SHARES WITH COSTA RICA THE KEYS TO ITS SUCCESS WITH AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS

Chilean speakers lectured on the factors responsible for Chile's success as an exporter of agricultural products and told how that country managed to achieve 99% growth in exports of foodstuffs between 1996 and 2004. The presentation on Chile's successful experiences with the export of agricultural products was made in Costa Rica.

Activity: Technical advisory services on the promotion of mechanisms for the export of fruits from Chile.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness Competitiveness.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Chile and Costa Rica, Directorate for Export Promotion PROChile of the Chilean Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Results: Costa Rican entrepreneurs, exporters and government officials learned about experiences with the application of the Chilean agro-export model, including details on health and the safety of vegetables and fruits, which are essential aspects when exporting to the United States and Europe. This process strengthened the agricultural trade agreement between the two countries.

CHILE CONTRIBUTES TO MODERNIZE THE SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE IN EL SALVADOR

The National School of Agriculture of El Salvador (ENA) undertook a process of institutional modernization and curriculum management. A comprehensive advisory program on administration and design of the training curriculum will be carried out with support from Chilean training institutions, with IICA participating as facilitator.

Activity: Technical assistance to the National School of Agriculture of El Salvador (ENA), in order to expand institutional modernization and curriculum management.

Strategic area of IICA: Education and Training.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in El Salvador and Chile, National School of Agriculture of El Salvador, Ministries of Agriculture of Chile and El Salvador, Chilean International Cooperation Agency, and FAO.

Results: An agricultural cooperation program was set up with the collaboration of the Chilean National Cooperation Agency. In addition, a comprehensive advisory program on administration and design of a training curriculum was drawn up.

CHILE AND PERU SCORE TWO VICTORIES IN EFFORTS TO CONTROL THE FRUIT FLY

Chile and Peru won two new victories against the fruit fly, as the pest was eliminated from the departments of Tacna and Moquehua in Peru. As coordinator of the initiative, IICA will systematize the experience so that it can be used as a model in other situations.

Activity: Thirty-third Binational Technical Meeting between Chile and Peru on the Fruit Fly Agreement, SENASA-SAG/IICA.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Agricultural Health and Food Safety.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Chile and Peru, Agriculture and Livestock Service (SAG) of Chile and National Agrarian Health Service of Peru.

Results: IICA will systematize the experience gained over 15 years of project implementation so that it can be used as a model in other situations. Among other activities, an international workshop on management of pest-free areas and organization of emergency plans will be carried out for technical staff working in the context of the agreement.

CHILE PROVIDES ECUADOR TOOLS FOR A MODEL AGRARIAN OFFICE

Ecuador is working to set up an office of agrarian studies and policies similar to ODEPA in Chile. With the support of IICA, Chile shared its own experience through technical visits, direct advisory and consultant services, and training activities.

Activity: Technical advisory services provided by ODEPA-Chile to the Ministry of Agriculture of Ecuador in the process of formulating the State policy for the agriculture sector.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness Competitiveness.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Ecuador and Chile, Ministry of Agriculture of Ecuador, and Agrarian Studies and Policies Office (ODEPA) of Chile.

Results: A program to provide training and technical visits from ODEPA staff was organized so as to enable Ecuador to have a similar experience in formulating State agricultural policy. IICA support was strengthened in the context of the National Technical Cooperation Agenda.

CHILE SHARES WITH PERU ITS SUCCESSES IN AGRICULTURE

The successes of Chilean agriculture, especially in regard to policy on agri-food exports and support for small and medium-scale family farms, were discussed in detail by a high-level Peruvian delegation headed by the Minister of Agriculture.

Activity: Visit by the Minister of Agriculture of Peru and technical missions by agrarian leaders to learn about the achievements of Chilean agriculture.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness Competitiveness.

Participating agencies: Ministry of Agriculture of Peru, Centro de Altos Estudios Nacionales, IICA offices in Peru and Chile, Planning Office of the Agrarian Sector (ODEPA), Office of Regional Agricultural Development (INDAP), Agriculture and Livestock Service (SAG), Agricultural Export Promotion Fund Program (PROCHILE), National Commission on Irrigation, Development and Irrigation Investment, and user organizations.

Results: The experiences gained during the visit were systematized in documents and courses adapted to the situation of Peru. The IICA offices in Peru and Chile promoted closer ties and transfer of knowledge. A network for exchanging information between officials of similar organizations was set up, and the two offices created tools for strengthening missions on the subject.

URUGUAY SUPPORTS HONDURAS IN THE DESIGN OF A LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Uruguay advised Honduras on the formulation of a livestock development strategy. In this context, it provided short-term consultants for a meeting in Uruguay on the competitiveness of beef and credit policies for the agriculture sector. Support was provided to the Secretariat of Agriculture and Livestock of Honduras through the National Agri-food Development Program.

Activity: Technical consultancy to analyze the situation of stock-raising in Honduras and propose financing strategies.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness Competitiveness.

Participating agencies: Secretariat of Agriculture and Livestock of Honduras (SAG), IICA offices in Uruguay and Honduras.

Results: Technical advisory services were provided for the formulation of a medium- and long-term livestock development strategy, and to define guidelines for the creation of the trust fund for the meat chain in Honduras. Financing mechanisms were identified, including in areas such as selection of individual animals, and innovations relating to legal, accounting and tax matters.

URUGUAY SUPPORTS CHILE IN CONNECTION WITH THE MEAT CHAIN MODEL

Uruguay's meat chain model will serve as a guide for new undertakings in Chile. Producers and institutions in both countries established technical and commercial contacts when a technical mission of Chilean professionals and small-scale producers visited Uruguay. IICA offices in the two countries facilitated the contacts.

Activity: Technical mission to develop livestock exports for small-scale producers.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness Competitiveness.

Participating agencies: IICA Offices in Chile and Uruguay, Agricultural Development Institute (INDAP) of Chile, Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries (MGAP) of Uruguay, National Meat Institute (INAC), National Agricultural Research Institute (INIA), Limited Agrarian Cooperative of Aiguá (CALAI), Uruguayan Federation of Regional Agricultural Experiment Centers (FUCREA), Grupo Crea 54, Vaquería del Este Producers Group, Frigorífico Tacuarembó, Pantalla de PLAZARURAL and Zambrano & Cía.

Results: Chilean producers and professionals established technical and commercial contacts with Uruguayan professionals and institutions involved in beef production and trade. Members of the mission learned about the beef chain and were given an opportunity to do complementary work in that area, with the support of IICA.

URUGUAY SHARES WITH PARAGUAY INFORMATION ON COURSE ACCREDITATION FOR MERCOSUR

With support from Uruguay, the schools of agrarian sciences and veterinary sciences of the National University of Asunción will conduct a self-evaluation of their courses and draft a curriculum for accreditation by Mercosur. The IICA offices in Paraguay and Uruguay provided a model for conducting the process and enhancing the schools' capacities.

Activity: Training and advisory services to the School of Veterinary Sciences of the University of Asunción in connection with accreditation of courses by Mercosur.

Strategic area of IICA: Education and Training.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Paraguay and Uruguay, National University of Asunción.

Results: With the support of IICA, the schools of agrarian sciences and veterinary sciences of the National University of Asunción will conduct a self-evaluation of their courses and draft a plan for accreditation by the educational branch of Mercosur.

NORTHERN AND ANDEAN REGIONS

MEXICO AND COLOMBIA SUPPORT TO CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRIES IN CONNECTION WITH PRODERT

Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador created a Directors' Forum for the sustainable rural development project in ecologically vulnerable areas in the Trifinio region (PRODERT) and developed an agenda which includes three spheres of action: knowledge management, transboundary cooperation and agro-environmental integration, and capacity building. This initiative has the support of Mexico and Colombia.

Activity: Technical advisory services to support the creation of the Directors' Forum for the PRODERT project.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness Competitiveness.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Mexico and Colombia, PRODERT project in the three PRODERT countries, and Ministry of Agriculture of Colombia.

Results: Support was provided for creation of the PRODERT Directors' Forum , and a four-month agenda was developed which covers three spheres of action: knowledge management, transboundary cooperation and agro-environmental integration, and capacity building. IICA is expected to help coordinate the initiative as a trinational program that will promote actions in the region.

NORTHERN AND CENTRAL REGIONS

MEXICO AND EL SALVADOR PROVIDES TO PERU THEIR EXPERIENCE WITH THE AGRICULTURAL FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

A Peruvian mission of government officials and representatives of agrarian producers associations visited Mexico and El Salvador to learn about those countries' experiences with their FTA with the United States. IICA served as a bridge between the three countries.

Activity: Technical mission to learn about the experiences of El Salvador and Mexico with the Free Trade Agreements between those countries and the United States.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness Competitiveness.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Peru, Mexico and El Salvador, Ministries of Agriculture of Peru and El Salvador, and Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food (SAGARPA) of Mexico.

Results: Members of the mission exchanged and shared information with their counterparts in Mexico and El Salvador. In addition, a document entitled *Lecciones aprendidas de la pasantía agrícola sobre Acuerdos de Libre Comercio: El Salvador y México* was published as a tool for discussion and learning.

NORTHERN, CENTRAL AND CARIBBEAN REGIONS

SEVEN COUNTRIES HELP NICARAGUA TO IDENTIFY A BASKET OF EXPORT PRODUCTS

With the help of seven countries, Nicaragua identified a basket of 201 agricultural products that have a potential market in the United States, Canada, Guatemala, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Panama and the Dominican Republic.

Activity: Technical advisory services in connection with market studies to identify demand for Nicaraguan agricultural products.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness Competitiveness.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in the eight countries, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Nicaragua (MAGFOR), producer associations, import agents and marketing firms.

Results: Market studies were conducted on a basket of 201 products, and training was provided to Nicaraguan technicians. A network of markets for Nicaraguan products in the eight countries was developed, and the findings were publicized among Nicaraguan companies and producer associations.

NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN REGIONS

MEXICO AND BRAZIL WILL EXCHANGE EXPERIENCES IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT WITH COLOMBIA

Mexico and Brazil will share their rural development experiences with Colombia, under a project developed by representatives of the three countries. The initiative is aimed at analyzing and systematizing experiences relating to policies and institutions.

Activity: Colombian technical missions to Brazil and Mexico to consider collaboration strategies, with a view to developing and implementing a project on analysis of rural development experiences.

Strategic area of IICA: Promotion of the Development of Rural Communities.

Participating agencies: IICA offices in Mexico, Colombia and Brazil, Secretariat of Rural Development of Mexico, Institute for Rural Capacity Building (INCA Rural), Secretariat of Territorial Development of Brazil and Colombian Rural Development Institute (INCODER).

Results: A proposed project on management and exchange of know-how in rural development between Mexico, Brazil and Colombia. In addition, participation of different entities and exchange of information among them was revitalized.

PRINCIPAL STEPS IN IMPLEMENTING THE INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGY

Substantial progress was made in horizontal technical cooperation in 2006, for the advancement of agriculture and rural wellbeing in the Americas. The first step in this direction was the organization and launching of a division within the Institute that will be responsible for work in this area, thus placing it as a priority item on the national and regional agendas of Member States.

The improvement of IICA's horizontal technical cooperation policies brought into focus the need to share and exchange the major successes of individual countries so that other countries can also benefit from that contribution.

This approach led to improvements in knowledge management between countries and maybe even more satisfying was the fact that such actions made it possible to close gaps on certain specific issues. This annual report covers 44 experiences in horizontal cooperation, which attest to the range of action of the initiative.

Another key result was the establishment of linkages between the countries' agriculture sectors and the policies of their foreign ministries. In particular, that was the case in Chile and Argentina, where the effort was carried out jointly with the relevant National Cooperation Agencies.

Progress was also made in generating a methodology for creating and developing "Nodes of Experiences" and designing tools to be used in promoting them.

The Chilean Node, which has specialized in public-private relations, includes experiences relating to State policies, soil recovery, irrigation, good agricultural practices and export promotion. These experiences are being shared with countries that need them.

The Brazilian Node, which focuses on agribusiness, includes experiences in the area of family farms, agro-energy, producers associations in specific sectors, and public spending on agriculture.

The Mexican Node, which is centered on policies and trade in the context of ten years' experience with NAFTA, covers experiences with institutional reform, policy instruments, and domestic trade mechanisms.

Finally, ties were established with International Cooperation Agencies with a view to working in coordinated and complementary fashion on those issues that are most important in the different national contexts.

FUTURE IICA ACTIONS TO STRENGTHEN HORIZONTAL TECHNICAL COOPERATION

A. At the institutional level:

- To have a policy for managing IICA's horizontal technical cooperation and supplement that institution's knowledge management.
- To identify the demands for cooperation and the supply of successful experiences and specialized human resources.
- To subscribe instruments and agreements to promote horizontal cooperation with the foreign Ministries and the National Cooperation Agencies.
- To design methodologies and guidelines for strengthening horizontal cooperation processes within the institution.
- To promote the demand for agricultural cooperation with the National Agencies for International Cooperation, enhancing contacts between the agriculture sector and the foreign ministries and embassies of participating countries.
- To promote experiences in strategic topics such as: bioenergy, biotechnology, rural development, trading and health, agribusiness, and agricultural insurance.

B. With regard to supply, demand and the work of nodes:

- To identify resources associated with demand for knowledge in the agriculture sector and generate a fund for strengthening horizontal cooperation.
- To promote and facilitate from the IICA offices the successful experiences and exchanges between Member States in strategic areas.
- To administer and support the implementation of cooperation activities between IICA and the agriculture sector with a view to carrying out "reverse engineering" with successful experiences and good practices.

C. With regard to strategic partners:

- To expand and strengthen agreements with strategic partners and national and regional agencies to cooperate on joint efforts in the hemisphere.
- To expand the network of strategic linkages with international agencies, promoting joint efforts for horizontal cooperation with PAHO, OAS, FAO and with regional agencies and integration forums, the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC), the Agricultural Council of the South (CAS) and ALLIANCE in the Caribbean.

D. With regard to systematization and dissemination of successful experiences:

- To identify demand for agricultural cooperation in the countries of the hemisphere and promote such initiatives.
- To implement information system for recording and disseminating experiences and learning processes that can be useful in horizontal cooperation efforts.
- To systematize useful experiences and lessons learned in regard to horizontal cooperation and to disseminate that information.