

IICA CANADA

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REPRESENTATIVE'S CORNER



Dr. Audia Barnett

Charles. There was no time to do more than exhale, having worked at a feverish pace to see projects funded by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada successfully executed in the first quarter. It is said that the penalty for a job well done ...is more work! So the team was not totally surprised with the good news that our project proposal submitted to the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) was short listed. This meant that the office was involved in the review and revision of not one but two project proposals during the period. Not bad at all considering this is a new realm for IICA Canada! Hosting the Annual Accountability Seminar against the backdrop of a fresh and beautiful Spring took the tedium out of the preparations. Bold changes were made, and while modifications to the format paid off, stakeholders made it quite clear that they wanted more time to engage with us. The international agenda was also quite full. We managed to keep abreast of hemispheric discussions such as the OAS General Assembly held in Cochabamba, Bolivia and the Rio +20 Meeting in Brazil as well as the Codex Food Labeling Committee meeting and The Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases (GRA) meeting held in Ottawa and Saskatoon respectively, challenging though it was. So that we didn't get "battle fatigue", the team took time out to pet farm animals at fundraising BBQ... This was nothing short of therapeutic!



"The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) is a specialized agency of the Inter-American System, and its purposes are to encourage and support the efforts of its Member States to achieve agricultural development and well-being for rural populations."

Usually by the time the second quarter in the year comes around, most of us are fully in the groove of getting stuff done, even if we have resigned ourselves to realizing our personal resolutions.....next year. For IICA Canada it was mix of emotional and mental energy. It was during this time that we bid Brandy a tearful Adieu and welcomed



ANNUAL ACCOUNTABILITY SEMINAR

A year after presenting the Technical Cooperation Strategy for Canada 2011 – 2014, the IICA Canada team invited partners, beneficiaries, friends- from the Diplomatic Corps, public and private sector, development agencies, academia and non-government organizations to hear how we progressed against our targets, and of our plans for the current year. Hosted at the Sheraton Hotel on May 2, guests participated in-person and via webinar. While the webinar is a great way to have the involvement of stakeholders who are not able to attend in person, glitches were experienced with the technology, resulting in intermittent transmission. Presentations and videos



were therefore dispatched *post haste* to all webinar participants. Notwithstanding the hiccups, the event was well received. The Director General was spot-on in his opening address, where he pointed to the synergies between Canada's Americas Strategy and IICA's mission. *Continued on page 2*

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2012 ANNUAL ACCOUNTABILITY SEMINAR CONTINUED



Mr. Elter Nehemias Santos Barbosa, Embassy of Brazil completing an evaluation form

Two short video productions provided pertinent and instructive information, underlining the magnitude and complexity of the Food Security problem. The Representative provided a report card on achievements of the office during the period, demonstrating the dynamic, responsive and results-based nature of the team. Of nota-

ble mention was the market scoping exercise which resulted in the one-of-a-kind publication presenting market and trade opportunities for agricultural commodities, inputs, paraphernalia, and services between selected countries in Latin America & the Caribbean and Canada. Favourable testimonials from Mr. Louis Pare of Développement International Desjardins and Dr. Danielle Donnelly of McGill University helped to illustrate two very different aspects of IICA Canada's activities while adding to the geniality of the affair. The "new kid on the block", Charles Kounkou, demonstrating pluck, presented the 2012 Work Plan without a hitch, a mere two weeks after joining the IICA family. Noting that his interest and forte are in the ambit of performance measurement, Charles' inclusion on the team midway IICA's programme period is strategic! The comfortable ambience and the excellent, albeit light fare,

had guests lingering to discuss aspects of our programmes and to network. The evaluation exercise conducted confirmed that IICA Canada is on the right track towards meeting the expectations of local stakeholders and furthermore that there is increasing confidence in the role of the institution in the hemisphere.



Ms. Cynthia Currie, Former IICA Rep in Jamaica & Mr. Daryl Nearing, AAFC

THE REGIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY

The Regional Fund for Agricultural Technology (FONTAGRO) is a consortium of Latin American and Caribbean countries specifically designed to finance research and innovation of regional interest. From 21 to 25 May, Dr. Hugo Li Pun, Executive Secretary of FONTAGRO visited Ottawa to meet with officials from Agriculture and Agri-food Canada (AAFC), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the International Research and Development Agency (IDRC) and IICA Canada. During these meetings Dr Li Pun not only made presentations on the Fund but also explored opportunities for cooperation between Canada and FONTAGRO.

The Fund aims at reducing poverty, promoting competitiveness of agri-

food chains and sustainably managing natural resources. During its first 12 years FONTAGRO funded 73 projects for a total of close to 67 M USD and leveraged more than five times its investments, while maintaining the value of its capital. FONTAGRO results and impacts are worldwide since many findings are replicated beyond the Americas. *Ex ante* evaluation of the projects supported in the first three calls for proposals showed an estimated Internal Rate of Return of 28.6% and cost benefit ratio of 1:3.3. There is no doubt FONTAGRO is one of IICA's partners of choice in the quest to make agriculture competitive and sustainable in the Americas. For more information on FONTAGRO, please visit: www.fontagro.org/en/que-es-fontagro



"This is a new way, like a new culture", said Mr. Danilo Herrera, Value Chain Specialist for the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) at the Value Chain Innovation Forum. This was hosted by the Value Chain Management Centre and Vineland Research and Innovation Centre, on April 3 and 4 in Mississauga, Ontario. The Forum exposed leaders from the agriculture and food industry to leading edge innovative approaches to business development, and allowed them to explore possibilities for implementing strategic alliances from farm through to

retail. Profitability, production efficiencies and market strategies were the main focus. In his presentation, Mr. Herrera expressed the view that one of the main aims of the new approach was to achieve more competitive agri-food value chains, which could be achieved through a "Competitiveness agreement" among stakeholders and representatives of the chain links, with the governments support. The IICA Specialist shared challenges experienced when trying to introduce value chains management approach in South America and the Caribbean. Reluctance on the part of small and medium producers to actively participate in the management of the value chain remained a concern. Some solutions being applied include improving methodologies for the analysis of value chain competitiveness and designing modern instruments to foster participation among the producers, as well as applying new proven instruments. For a copy of his presentation or more information on the Forum, please visit www.vcif2012.com.

DID YOU KNOW?

Latin America holds 42% of the world's agriculture expansion potential

-Dr. V. Villalobos
- Director General
for IICA/
MercoPress

40TH SESSION OF THE CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD LABELLING



From May 15 to 18, Dr Jaime Flores, IICA Specialist in Agricultural Health and Food Safety (AHFS) for the Andean Region, and Acting IICA Representative in Venezuela accompanied four (4) participants sponsored through the “Promotion of the Participation of the Americas in Codex Alimentarius Committees” project to the 40th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Labelling held in Ottawa. The project, which received AAFC’s financial

support as well as mentorship and technical guidance from IICA, sponsors officials from IICA member countries (excluding the US and Canada), who belong to the Codex Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean (CCLAC) to participate in various meetings of Codex standards sub-committees. Such Support provided to this initiative over the years has had proven impact in ensuring more effective participation of the hemisphere in Codex committee meetings. At the end of the 40th session on food labelling, the Committee was able to report advances on **matters for adoption by the 35th Session of the Commis-**

sion. These included topics such as “nutrient reference values”; the use of ethylene for ripening of fruit; or provisions for mandatory nutrition labeling. On a different note, the Organic Aquaculture was identified as a **matter of Interest to the Commission.** Finally, the Committee raised **matters to be referred to other Codex Committees** requesting advice on comparative claims for micronutrients; on the establishment of conditions for claims for “free” of Trans Fatty Acid (TFA); and on questions related to methods of measurement of saturated fatty acids in foods.

IICA AHFS SPECIALIST NETWORKING IN OTTAWA



Dr. Jaime Flores

Dr Flores’s visit in Ottawa was an opportunity for IICA Canada to arrange side meetings with various Canadian partners to discuss current status of Agricultural Health and Food Safety in the Andean Region and identify opportunities for technical cooperation with the member countries. These discussions were well received notably by CFIA and Health Canada. Follow up discussions are already underway with CFIA who has a shared interest to achieve scientific cooperation in Latin American Countries.

Technical Center for Agriculture & Rural Cooperation



On Thursday May 24, 2012 two representatives of the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) based in the Netherlands met with IICA Canada. CTA’s learning and evaluation unit (LEU) officers, Dr Ibrahim Khaddar, Manager, and Christine Webster, Program coordinator, had the opportunity to also meet with CIDA and IDRC during a one week business trip to Canada.

The CTA is a joint international institution of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States and the European Union (EU). Its mission is to advance food and nutritional security, increase prosperity and encourage sound natural resource management in ACP countries. The organisation provides access to information and knowledge, facilitates policy dialogue and strengthens the capacity of agricultural and rural development institutions and communities. CTA is 100% funded by EU and is specialized in information management. The Learning and Evaluation Unit’s (LEU) role is designing systems to monitor and evaluate strategies and Workplans for the Centre (CTA). During discussions with IICA Canada Technical Cooperation Specialist, activities in areas of mutual interest were shared. As a result, both parties agreed to further explore synergies in performance and impact measurement, Innovation, Value chain management and competitiveness.

For more information on CTA, please visit: www.cta.int/

TFO Canada Seminar for Trade Representatives



On Tuesday May 29, 2012, three IICA Canada team attended an informative seminar for trade representatives in developing countries. The seminar was organized by the Trade Facilitation Office Canada (TFO) in cooperation with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) and was held at DFAIT headquarters.

TFO Canada is a not-for-profit NGO supported by the Canadian International Development Agency, and which provides Canadian market information to exporters and trade support organizations from developing countries and emerging economies. The seminar featured a two panel of experts: **Canadian Government Panel** as well as a **Service Provider Panel.** Information gained was very instructive to IICA Canada staff since the office had made the commitment, as part as its 2011-2014 Country Strategy, to identify commodities where collaborations with IICA Member Countries in research, production, value added products and health benefits could foster win-win relationships.

KEEPING AAFC & DFAIT UPDATED

In an effort to maintain close relationships with our key stakeholders and keep them up to date regarding activities, past and present, IICA Canada hosted its first quarterly meeting of 2012 on Thursday April 19th with members from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) and Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada (DFAIT). The time was well spent as IICA Canada discussed progress on the work plan and highlights of the Market Scoping Study. Participants were also updated regarding special meetings at headquarters which would be taking

place throughout the remainder of the year as well as IICA Canada’s plans to commemorate the 70th Anniversary. The group also received a preview on aspects of the Annual Accountability Seminar. Members shared perspectives on the upcoming G20 meeting and the OAS and General Assembly and offered to keep IICA Canada apprised of developments. The continued support of AAFC and DFAIT is important to the success of the Technical Cooperation Strategy.

FOOD AID DAY 2012



From left to right: Mr. Charles Kounkou, Ms. Jillian Solsky, Dr. Audia Barnett & Ms. Ysabel Giroux at Food Aid Day

On Friday June 1st, 2012, the IICA Canada Team took a lunch break and attended for

its second year in a row the eighth Annual Food Aid Day BBQ at City Hall in Ottawa. Food Aid is a program at the Ottawa Food Bank (OFB) where money raised goes towards purchasing and processing beef from local farmers to feed families in need. The program was established in 2005 and has since raised close to \$1 million dollars. This year, all donations will be used to provide 1,700 pounds of beef per week, for the whole year to those in need. The IICA Canada Team was thrilled to have the opportunity to participate in this program again. Not only does it help add protein to the diets of families who need it but it also supports our local farming community. After a busy second quarter it was nice to enjoy some delicious burgers, live entertainment including a milking competition and play with some fuzzy and cute animals.

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PARTNERING WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT : LESSONS FOR CANADA FROM A DECADE OF EXPERIENCE & INNOVATION AT USAID

Students and Faculty members of Ottawa University, as well as guests formed the live audience for a frank conversation with Dr. Maura O'Neill, Chief Innovation Officer of the United States Agency for International Development (US AID). Hosted by Carlo Dade, Senior Fellow in the School of International Development and Global Studies of the University of

Ottawa, the talk covered topics ranging from Dr. O'Neill's personal journey as a professional to the unique programme that she is pioneering for the USAID. Interesting highlights of the conversation included the fact that Innovation was perceived by the USAID as a driver in transforming economies in developing countries and that partnership with private

sector was a logical move. Additionally, non-traditional partners such as diaspora groups are increasingly being eyed for joint projects. Dr. O'Neill noted that the programme had a budget of some US\$22b and was interested primarily in large projects that could produce visible impact.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS: UPCOMING EVENTS FOR QUARTER 3

JUL



10: 2012 Regular Meeting of the Special Advisory Committee on Management Issues (SACMI), San Jose, Costa Rica
17: Quarterly meeting with Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) & Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada (DFAIT), Ottawa, Canada
24-26: Symposium on Functional Genomics of Early Livestock Development, Banff, Alberta, Canada

AUG



SUMMER BREAK 

SEP



17-21: Vth World Congress of Agronomists and Agrologists, Quebec, Canada. Please note that IICA's Director General, **Dr. Victor Villalobos** will be travelling from Costa Rica to participate in this event.
21: IICA Canada commemorates the 70th Anniversary of IICA by hosting an exhibit at the Canada Agriculture Museum in Ottawa, ON. Please **SAVE THE DATE** as we look forward to seeing everyone there.



NOW AVAILABLE IICA Canada's 2011 Annual Report



If you would like a copy mailed to you please contact our office or visit our website at www.iicacan.org.