



An Institution of the Caribbean Community.

REPORT ON THE OPERATIONS OF CAHFSA OCTOBER 2015-DECEMBER 2016

**“FACILITATING TRADE THROUGH REGIONAL
HARMONIZATION OF SANITARY
AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES”**



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ABBREVIATIONS

AHFS	Agricultural Health and Food Safety
CAC	Codex Alimentarius Commission
CAHFSA	Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency
CARDI	Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CARPHA	Caribbean Public Health Agency
CCLAC	FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean
CCS	Caribbean Community Secretariat
CISP	Caribbean Integration Support Programme
COTED	Council for Trade and Economic Development (CARICOM)
CPHD	Caribbean Plant Health Directors
CPM	Commission on Phytosanitary Measures
CRFM	Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism
CROSQ	CARICOM Regional Organization for Standards & Quality
EDF	European Development Fund
EPPO	European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
HR	Human Resource
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IICA	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
IPPC	International Plant Protection Convention
ISPM	International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NPPO	National Plant Protection Organization
OECS	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
OIE	World Organization for Animal Health
PRA	Pest Risk Analysis
RPPO	Regional Plant Protection Organization
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary
STDF	Standards and Trade Development Facility
TPDP	Technical Panel on Diagnostic Protocols
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

CORPORATE INFORMATION

MANDATE: The Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA) was established by the Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) to perform a coordinating and organizing role in the establishment of an effective and efficient regional sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) regime and to execute on behalf of Member States such SPS actions and activities that can be more effectively and efficiently executed through a regional mechanism.

LEGAL INSTRUMENTS: The following agreements give force to CAHFSA:

- Revised Agreement Establishing the Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA): February 25, 2011;
- Original Agreement Establishing the Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency: March 12, 2010
- Revised Treaty of Chagaramas: July 5, 2001 (Articles 27 and 74).

Our Vision: “to be a leading regional institution of international repute in the application of Agricultural Health and Food Safety Systems.”

Our Mission: “to enhance regional development in agricultural health and food safety through the application of SPS Measures that meet the expectations of all stakeholders and contribute to the welfare of our citizens.”

Core Values:

The organization is committed to:

- Accountability
- Transparency
- Integrity
- Confidentiality
- Good Governance
- Inclusiveness

Address: Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency
Letitia Vreisdalaan #10
Paramaribo
Suriname

E-mail: info@cahfsa.org

Website: www.cahfsa.org

Telephone: +597 422 546 (Office)
+597 743 9090 (Mobile)

AREAS OF WORK

- Plant Health
- Animal Health
- Food Safety

Chief Executive Officer: Mr. L. Simeon Collins

Number of Staff: 07

Principal Bankers: DSB Bank Suriname N. V.

Board of Directors – 2015/2016

- Dr. Beverley Wood: Barbados- Chairperson
- Dr. Bowen Louison: Grenada - Vice Chairperson
- Dr. Simone Titus: Trinidad & Tobago
- Dr. Helena Browne-Jeffery/Dr. Tubal Edwards: Antigua & Barbuda
- Mr. Gregory Rahming- Bahamas
- Mr. Emiz Cruz- Belize
- Mr. Ryan Anselm- Dominica
- Dr. Dindyal Permaul/ Dr. Mark Pierre- Guyana
- Dr. Max Millien/Mr. Charles Pierre- Haiti
- Mr. Ian Chapman/Dr. Tracey Challenger- St. Kitts & Nevis
- Dr. Auria King-St. Lucia
- Dr. Kathian Hackshaw- St. Vincent & the Grenadines
- Mr. Radjendre Debie/Ms. Soenita Parbhoe- Suriname
- Mr. Claude Brown- Montserrat
- Ms. Sanniel Wilson /Mr. Fitzroy White- Jamaica
- Ms. Desiree Field Ridley/Ms. Nisa Surujbally/Dr. Ronnie Brathwaite- CARICOM
- Secretariat (Observer)
- L. Simeon Collins: CEO (*Ex officio* Member)



Figure 1: Second Face-to-Face Meeting of the Board of Directors-Paramaribo, Suriname, October 2015



Figure 2: Opening Ceremony of Board Meeting of CAHFSA, October 2015, Paramaribo, Suriname: Left to Right: Dr. Abimbola Abiola, IICA Representative, Suriname; Dr. Beverley Wood, Chairperson Board of Directors; Hon. Soeresh Algae, Minister of Agriculture, Husbandry and Fisheries, Suriname; Ms. Desiree Field-Ridley, CARICOM Representative; Mr. Djoemadie Kasanmoesdiran, Permanent Secretary Ministry of Agriculture, Husbandry and Fisheries, Suriname; Dr. Bowen Louison, Vice-chair, Board of Directors.

Professional Staff

- Mr. L. Simeon Collins, B. Sc., M.Sc. – CEO
- Mrs. Herma Griffith Ifill, FCCA, MBA – Finance/Administrative Officer
- Mrs. Juliet Goldsmith, B. Sc., M.Sc.- Plant Health Specialist
- Dr. Gavin Peters, DVM., M. Sc. – Animal Health Specialist

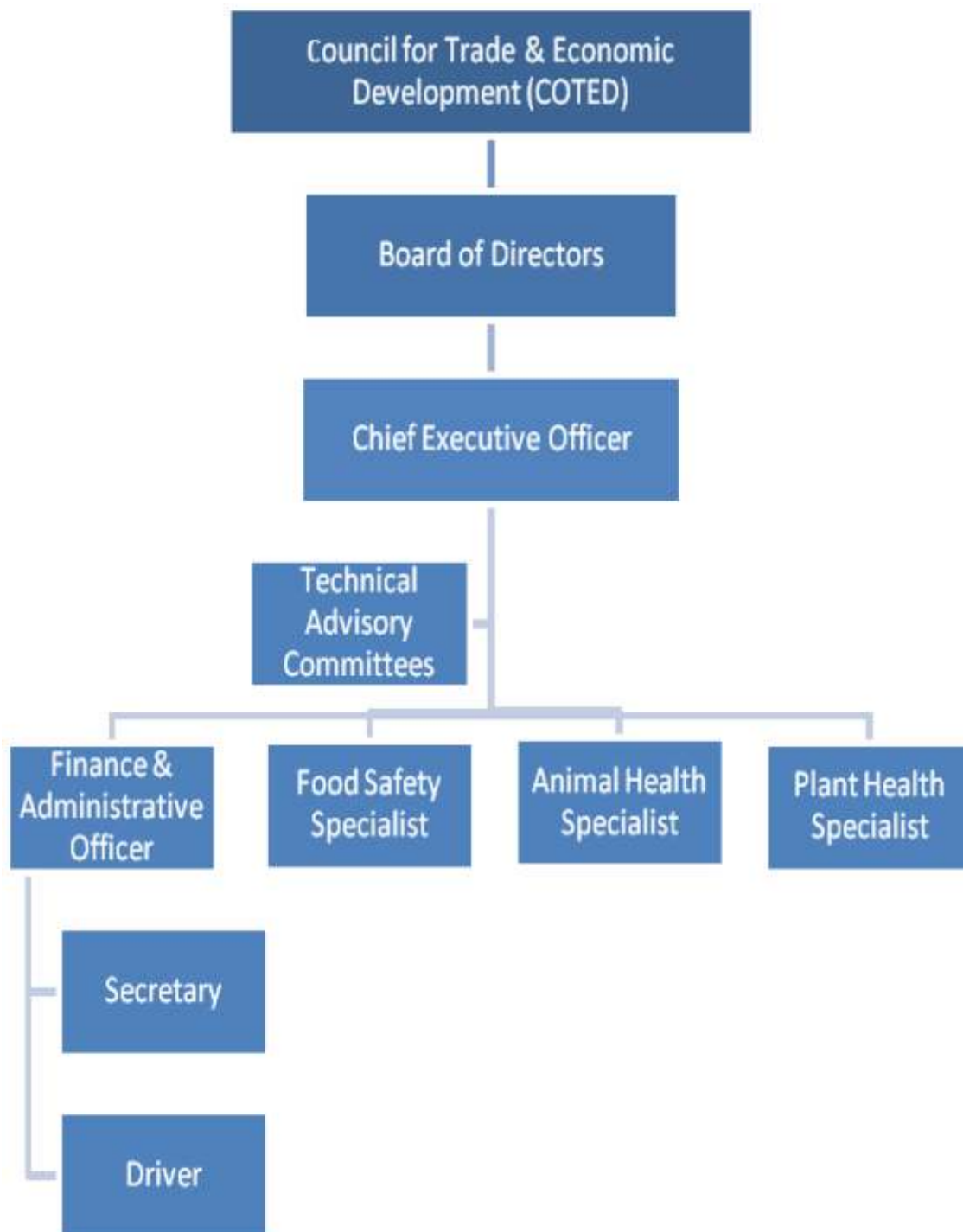
Support Staff

- Trisnatie (Truus) Djoed, Secretary;
- Hemantkoemar (Shaam) Kalika, Driver;
- Amushca Satjapradja: Cleaner



Figure 3. CAHFSA Staff Members-Opening of Headquarters. Paramaribo, Suriname. December 20, 2015

Organizational Structure: 2015/2016



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines the major activities undertaken by the Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA) during the period October 1, 2015 to December 31, 2016. During this period, efforts were placed heavily on the operationalization of CAHFSA, development and implementation of medium term and short term operational plans and building CAHFSA's visual identity. In addition, emphasis was placed on strengthening the agricultural health and food safety systems and infrastructure related to agricultural trade in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) while ensuring CAHFSA does not duplicate activities of other relevant regional and international institutions but rather work in close collaboration, possibly through MOUs or other mechanisms.

Several steps towards enhancing the efficiency of CAHFSA's operations have been introduced. One such step is the development of a medium term operational plan to guide and aid Management to conduct sound strategic and operational work. Eleven (11) strategic objectives were identified in the CAHFSA's Medium Term Operational Plan for 2015-2017. They include:

- ensuring organizational efficiency and effectiveness;
- establishing an ICT platform to enable the efficient and effective functioning of CAHFSA in achieving its mandate;
- providing a mechanism for the coordination and integration of technical support to stakeholders by relevant regional and international organizations;
- providing a framework to continuously monitor and evaluate national agricultural health and food safety programmes and provide technical support;
- facilitating the development and use of regional SPS standards that are based on international SPS standards;
- provision of support for the strengthening of laboratory services;
- strengthening the legal framework for SPS Measures and SPS related issues;
- harmonization of technical procedures in relation to matters such as quarantine systems and their protocols as well as safe management and use of agrochemicals and other relevant processes and procedures;
- building regional consensus on SPS issues that can be represented in international fora such as the World Trade Organization Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (WTO/SPS Committee), Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC), World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and any other trade agreements involving CARICOM Member States;
- providing an effective mechanism to respond rapidly to emergencies and emerging issues;
- establishing a mechanism to facilitate the provision of technical assistance to stakeholders in the private sector by regional and international organizations to improve productivity and competitiveness in the market place;

To this end, despite tremendous challenges, satisfactory progress was made during the period under review.

- Mission and Vision Statements and Core Values for the Organization were completed;
- A three-year operational plan has been finalized and CAHFSA's work programme has been aligned with the strategic plan and work programme of the Caribbean Community for the period 2015-2019;
- A multi-agency steering committee was established at the regional level to oversee the implementation of the work in Agricultural Health and Food Safety throughout the Region;

- A Business Logo Competition for CAHFSA was staged;
- A website for the organization was developed and activated;
- Promotional materials such as stand up banners, brochures, folders etc. were developed;
- A Memorandum of Understanding aimed at establishing relationship between CAHFSA, Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) and CARICOM Regional Organization for Standards & Quality (CROSQ) has been finalized;
- The Organization has received Observer status to the meetings of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) and the WTO/SPS Committee;
- Talks have commenced with the CPHD towards the successful formation of a Regional Plant Protection Organization for the Caribbean (RPPO);
- Six (6) protocols on the safe movement of plant germplasm within the CARICOM region were sent for Member States consultation;
- The quality of cassava flour to be trade regionally was evaluated as a first step towards some level of standardization of the product and a draft standard for cassava flour has been developed;
- A guideline for conducting pest risk analysis was developed to provide a standardized model for interpreting and applying IPPC standards for Pest Risk Analysis (PRA);
- Three regional animal health protocols are at various stages of development;
- Animal Health Risk Analysis have been conducted in (6) Member States towards facilitating the trade in meat products within the region;
- A training programme has been developed for use in training a cadre of pest risk analysts in the region and has been used to conduct training workshops in five (5) member States;
- Several data bases related to agricultural health and food safety have been developed to improve the delivery and sharing of information across the region;
- A draft procedure for resolving SPS disputes within CARICOM has been developed.

CAHFSA would like to acknowledge with gratitude, the work and support of the CARICOM Secretariat, all CAHFSA Board members, the Staff of CAHFSA, the 10th EDF Project, all supporting agencies and collaborating institutions and the Governments of contributing Member States.

1. REPORT ON OPERATIONS

This report provides an overview of the operations of CAHFSA during the period October 2015 to December 2016. It is divided into two (2) sections.

Section 1 is premised on the eight (8) major areas of work of CAFHSA which are aligned to its mandates of performing a coordinating and organizing role in the establishment of an effective and efficient regional sanitary and phytosanitary regime and strengthening the agricultural health and food safety systems and infrastructure related to agricultural trade in CARICOM, namely: -

- Developing linkages with other regional and international SPS organizations;
- Drafting of SPS standards, guidelines and protocols to facilitate inter- and intra-regional trade of CARICOM agricultural products;
- Establishing standards for products derived from regional priority commodities;
- Development of Regional SPS procedures and protocols;
- Data collection and exchange;
- Risk Analysis;
- Addressing intra-regional SPS trade issues;
- Coordinating rapid response and safeguarding mechanisms.

Section II covers the following areas:

- Operationalization of CAHFSA;
- Building CAHFSA's visual identity;
- Human Resource Development

1. SECTION 1

1.1 Development of Linkages with Regional and International Organizations

1.1.1 Linkages with International Organizations

(a) IPPC

The IPPC is recognized under the WTO-SPS Agreement as the standard setting body for plant health. The standards adopted by the governing body of the IPPC (the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures) and the various guidelines promulgated by the IPPC are recommended for adoption by Contracting Parties as a means of harmonizing international phytosanitary measures and plant protection procedures.

CAHFSA, as the regional organization tasked with coordinating and harmonizing SPS measures among CARICOM Member States can benefit tremendously from participating in the work of the IPPC. The mandate of CAHFSA includes the protection of the Region's plant resources and environment from the incursion of damaging plant pest and as such is consistent with the objectives of the IPPC

In 2016, CAHFSA sought and was accorded "Observer" status at the meetings of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM), which serves as the IPPC's governing body.

At the 11th Session of the CPM held at the Headquarters of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Rome Italy, from April 4-8, 2016, CAHFSA was represented by the Plant Health Specialist.

It is important to note that CAHFSA's has already proposed a number of activities that are included in the CPM recommendation on the importance of pest diagnosis. These include:

- Supporting the development of guidance on laboratory requirements for pest detection and on the overall management and technical aspects for a diagnostic laboratory,
- Undertaking trainings on diagnostic methods and laboratory capability,
- Working to enhance expertise and capacity within the region, such as the identification of regional experts.
- Identifying and encouraging the development of centres of expertise that NPPOs within the region can access.

The Plant Health Specialist, as a member of the Technical Panel on Diagnostic Protocols (TPDP) of the IPPC attended the 2016 face-to-face meeting in Jamaica, July 11-15 2016. The meeting was attended by seven TPDP members (Australia, Canada, France, Jamaica, New Zealand, Netherlands and USA), as well as the TPDP Steward, one invited expert (EPPO), two representatives from the host organization, and two representatives from the IPPC Secretariat. The panel intensely discussed four draft diagnostic protocols: *Candidatus Liberibacter* spp. on *Citrus* spp. *Puccinia psidii*, Begomoviruses transmitted by *Bemisia tabaci* and *Xylella fastidiosa*.



Figure 4: TPDP 2016. Opening ceremony, Montego Bay Jamaica. July 11, 2016

Between August 8-19, 2017, the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) Secretariat organized and held the second training for the Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE) Facilitators in Chang Mai, Thailand under the Standards Trade and Development Facility (STDF) project 401: *Training of Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE) Facilitators*. The Plant Health Specialist attended this training. CAHFSA, as the regional body tasked with assisting CARICOM Member States to improve their SPS systems now have improved skill-set necessary to facilitate effective evaluation of these systems and make informed recommendations.



Figure 5: PCE Facilitators' Training. Chaing Mai, Thailand. August 8, 2016

In November 2016, CAHFSA was invited by the IPPC to observe the 28th Technical Consultation among RPPOs which was held in Morocco. The Institution, which was represented by the Plant Health Specialist was asked to provide an update on the status of the Caribbean RPPO as well as to deliver a short presentation on CAHFSA and plant health activities in the region.



Figure 6: Plant Health Specialist attending 28th TC-RPPO, Rabat, Morocco. November 2016

(b) OIE

The Animal Health Specialist attended the 84th OIE General Sessions in Paris May 22 – 28, 2016. This was facilitated through the Observer status of the CARICOM Secretariat. On November 14-18, 2016, the Animal Health Specialist also attended the 23rd Conference of the Regional Commission of the OIE for the Americas in Santa Cruz, Bolivia



Figure 7: 23rd Conference of Regional Commission of the OIE

(c) Codex Alimentarius Commission

In June 2016, “Observer” status was accorded to CAHFSA by the Codex Alimentarius Commission. This will permit CAHFSA to participate in the work of the Commission and any or all the Commission's subsidiary bodies on a regular basis.

In November 2016, the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean (CCLAC) held its Twentieth Session in Viña del Mar, Chile which was attended by the Animal Health Specialist.



Figure 8: Animal Health Specialist at CCLAC-22, November 2016

(d) WTO SPS Committee

In addition to obtaining Observer status at the meetings of the three Standard Setting bodies formally recognised in the WTO-SPS Agreement (Codex Alimentarius Commission, IPPC, OIE), the Organization also received Observer status to the meetings of the WTO-SPS Committee.

;

(e) International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

During 2-5 November 2016, CAHFSA was invited to participate in an Interregional Meeting on Aligning the Technical Cooperation Programme with the Development Goals of Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) in Vienna, Austria.

The purpose of the meeting was to establish a harmonised approach for the technical cooperation programme formulation, implementation and monitoring for SIDS. This should facilitate the identification of programmatic synergies between countries and organisations to ensure greater efficiency and sustainability of programme delivery for all.

CAHFSA, which was represented by the Plant Health Specialist, participated in its capacity as an institution of the Caribbean Community with interest in areas relevant to the technical cooperation (TC) programme and with the understanding that the IAEA TC programme will be executed through regional institutions.



Figure 9: Plant Health Specialist attending IAEA Inter-Regional Meeting. Vienna, Austria. Nov. 2016

1.1.2 Linkages with Regional Organizations

(a) Establishment of Multi-agency AHFS Steering Committee

A multi-agency steering committee was established at the regional level by the CARICOM Secretariat to oversee the implementation of the work in Agricultural Health and Food Safety throughout the Region. This Agricultural Health and Food Safety Systems Thematic Group (AHFSSTG) comprises CAHFSA, the CARICOM Secretariat (CCS), the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), CRFM, CARICOM Chief Veterinary Officers (CCVOs), CPHD, and the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA). This Group is presently led by CAHFSA but initially, it was led by the CCS. Since its inception, the Group has met seven (7) times.



Figure 10: Meeting of AHFS Thematic Group, Paramaribo, Suriname

(b) CPHD

CAHFSA has been collaborating with the CPHD in undertaking its programme of work to assist Member States in preparing their national priority pest lists. Training workshops on the use of the Analytical Hierarchal Process for pest prioritization, as adopted and validated by CPHD have been conducted in Antigua and Barbuda June 20-21, 2016 and in St. Lucia, August 29-30, 2016

CAHFSA has also been collaborating with the CPHD and the OECS to assist in establishing PRA Units in select OECS Member States. Financial support is provided by the USDA-APHS-IS and the OECS Commission while CAHFSA provides the trainer.



Figure 11: CEO of CAHFSA attending CARICOM Plant Health Directors Meeting

(c) CRFM and CROSQ

A draft MoU on strengthening cooperation between CROSQ, CAHFSA and the CRFM is being finalized. This cooperation includes activities of mutual interest that contribute to the fulfilment of the mandates of the three parties. The activities under the MoU include, but are not limited to: food and food safety, aquatic and terrestrial animal and plant health and hygiene, technical barriers to trade, sanitary and phytosanitary systems, and the use of standards and conformity assessment to enhance international competitiveness and trade capacity as well as measures to promote sustainable production and healthy ecosystems

(d) FAO

At the commencement of 2016, funds were received from FAO for the provision of services to address Plant Health and Animal Health issues in the CARICOM region. The funds were used by CAHFSA to guide and support the work in Agricultural Health and Food Safety throughout the Region.

A partnership has been developed with the FAO for the implementation of a project which aims at removing obsolete pesticides from the Caribbean as well as building capacity for better management of pesticides and pests via identification of alternatives to highly hazardous pesticides.

(e) IICA

CAHFSA is represented on the Technical Advisory and the Technical Oversight Committees of the 10th EDF SPS Project "Support to CARIFORUM States in the implementation of the commitments undertaken under the EPA: Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures".

This project which is managed by IICA and funded by the European Union has provided significant support to the operationalization of CAHFSA.

Support was provided in the following areas: (i) development of the Agency's corporate identity, (ii) hosting of the Annual Board meetings of the Agency, (iii) attendance of staff at regional and international meetings, (iv) capacity building of staff members in key technical areas and (v) development of a regional AHFS database.

(f) CARDI

During the period under review, CAHFSA collaborated with CARDI in soliciting comments on draft protocols for moving *Ipomoea batatas* (sweet potato), *Dioscorea spp* (yam), *Capsicum chinense* (hot peppers), *Cajanus cajan* (pigeon peas), *Zea mays* (corn) and *Phaseolus vulgaris* (beans) planting materials within the CARIForum region.

1.1.3 Development of Regional SPS Standards, Guidelines and Protocols

a) Plant Health

Six protocols on the safe movement of plant germplasm within the CARIForum region, were drafted by CARDI and proposed for development into regional standards. These include protocols for moving *Ipomoea batatas* (sweet potato), *Dioscorea spp* (yam), *Capsicum chinense* (hot peppers), *Cajanus cajan* (pigeon peas), *Zea mays* (corn) and *Phaseolus vulgaris* (beans) planting material.

The CPHD has proposed the standardization of a Guideline for preparing a market access proposals. This document which has already been approved by the Council on Trade and Economic Development (COTED) has been redrafted to conform with the standards layout for phytosanitary standards by CAHFSA.

A guideline for conducting pest risk analysis was developed to provide a standardised model for interpreting and applying the IPPC standards for Pest Risk Analysis (PRA). This document is intended to help ensure consistency and harmonisation in conducting PRA's in the region.

b) Animal Health

Three (3) animal health protocols have been drafted by consultants and are at varying stages of development These include:

- Harmonized Protocols for the Movement of Dogs and Cats in the Caribbean;
- Harmonized Protocols for Movement of Ovine and Caprine germplasm within CARICOM.
- Protocol Governing CARICOM Control, Inspection and Approval Procedures for Trade in Animals and Animal Products.

c) Food Safety

Standards for products derived from regional priority commodities

In order to support the Region's initiatives to produce value added products, including cassava flour, CAHFSA, in collaboration with the FAO and IICA and with funding from the 10th EDF Project, sought to evaluate the quality of cassava flour produced in the region as a first step towards some level of standardization of the product.

Towards the attainment of this goal, a literature review of existing international standards for cassava flour has been completed and based on the review a draft standard is currently being prepared.

Further actions conducted during the period under review included: (i) collection of cassava flour samples from processors in major producing countries (Trinidad & Tobago, St Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, Grenada, Barbados and Jamaica) and (ii) commencement of an analysis of the samples collected against the pre-determined quality parameters outlined in the draft standard. The main output of the study will be recommendations for improving the quality of cassava flour currently being produced. This action is being led by CAHFSA.

d) Procedural Documents

- **Procedure for addressing SPS related trade disputes in CARICOM**

The prevalence of SPS related disputes among Member States and the protracted time-frames for their resolution was largely behind the initiative by the Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA) to focus on the development of draft procedures for resolving SPS disputes as a means of facilitating intra-regional trade. The informal mechanism proposed by CAHFSA constitutes an appropriate response, given the contentious and fractious potential which SPS related disputes implied for trade relationship among CARICOM Member States. Since CAHFSA's legal framework subjects its mandates to the approval by Member States, the "Draft Procedures for Resolving SPS Disputes among Member States" remains at proposal stage and is yet to be formally considered by Member States.



Figure 12: Discussion with Dr. Patrick Antoine on Draft Procedure for Resolving SPS Disputes

- **Procedure for Preparation of Regional SPS Standards and Technical Regulations**

This procedural document was developed to describe the method to be followed in the preparation of Regional SPS standards and technical regulations. The procedure applies to all SPS standards and technical regulations to be developed by the Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency and should be observed by all Technical Advisory Committees that are involved in the development of standards.

- **Draft Standard Layout for Regional Phytosanitary Standards, Guidelines and Recommendations**

This document is being prepared to provide guidance and consistency in the drafting of regional phytosanitary standards and guidelines.

1.1.4 Data Collection and Exchange

One of the strategic objectives of CAHFSA is to provide a framework to continuously monitor and evaluate national and regional agricultural health and food safety programmes and provide technical support to Member States. This objective is to be achieved, in part, by the establishment of databases of reports, studies, assessments etc. and developing a mechanism for Member States to have access. These databases are intended to be used by senior agricultural health and food safety personnel in member states as well as regional SPS organizations

for decision making. In this context, Regional AHFS databases have been developed for improved monitoring, coordination and decision making.

These databases have been designed within the framework of CAHFSA's current website where the development of the following five databases has been initiated:

- Risk Analysis conducted Regionally and Internationally;
- SPS Import and Export Requirements of the Member States;
- Regionally Regulated Plant Pest;
- Food Safety, Animal, and Plant Health Professionals;
- Regional Trade Issues

The databases are to be populated with data supplied by member states to the CAHFSA Technical Team.

1.1.5 Risk Analysis

a) Animal Health

In order to facilitate the movement of agricultural products, with a focus on meat products, within the CARICOM Region, a Regional Animal Health Assessment Team has been established by CAHFSA. In addition, harmonized Regional Procedures have been developed to conduct animal health risk assessment. So far, these risk assessments have been conducted in Belize, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago and Suriname at the request of COTED. Based on the report of these risk assessment, the Ministers at the Meeting of the COTED will make a pronouncement as to whether trade in these products can take place regionally.

b) Plant Health

Guidelines for Pest Risk Analysis of imported plant and plant products have been developed by CAHFSA for use regionally. This is a standardized procedure for interpreting and applying the IPPC Guidelines and will facilitate harmonization in conducting PRAs in the region, thereby facilitating consistency in the application of sanitary measures as they relate to inter and intra-regional trade.

A training programme, including PowerPoint presentations and a workbook has been developed for use in training a cadre of pest risk analysts in the region. The programme has been used to conduct training workshops in five Member States, most of which are currently engaged in establishing PRA Units/Committees

1.1.6 Addressing Intra-regional SPS trade issues

Among trade issues being addressed are the following:

- Trinidad & Tobago's request for methyl bromide fumigation on vegetables from Guyana: Based on a decision taken at the Regional Agricultural Planners Forum held in Grenada in January 2016, CAHFSA wrote to Trinidad and Tobago requesting justification for requesting methyl bromide fumigation for vegetable imports from Guyana. In response, Trinidad and Tobago requested from CAHFSA, information and guidelines on the use of Methyl Bromide for Quarantine purposes. The necessary information was provided by CAHFSA's Plant Health Specialist.
- Market Access for Honey into Trinidad and Tobago: Trinidad & Tobago is currently receiving assistance from IICA to work on the necessary legislation to facilitate the trade of honey.

- Trinidad & Tobago's restrictions on duck meat from Suriname: A Verification Assessment was done by CAHFSA on the invitation of all parties concerned at DOCKSENCLUB Farm, Suriname to ascertain compliance with corrections of non-conformances as pointed out by the Authorities of Trinidad and Tobago. Following this, Trinidad & Tobago agreed to facilitate the trade after a number of administrative arrangements which includes formally adding Suriname to the list of countries approved for export of poultry products to Trinidad & Tobago.

2. SECTION 11

2.1 OPERATIONALIZATION OF CAHFSA

(a) Staffing

A cadre of professionals have now been employed to efficiently manage the office. They include the following:

- CEO, Mr. Lindley Simeon Collins, a national of Grenada, who assumed duties on 1 October 2014;
- Administration and Finance Officer, Mrs. Herma Griffith-Ifill, a national of Barbados, who assumed office on September 1st 2015;
- Plant Health Specialist, Mrs. Juliet Goldsmith, a national of Jamaica, who assumed office on 1 October 2015;
- Animal Health Specialist, Dr. Gavin Peters, a national of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, who assumed office on 1 October 2015;

The Government of Suriname has provided the following support staff:

- Mr. Hermantkoemar (Shaam) Kalika, Driver (commenced in May 2015: on assignment from the Ministry of Agriculture);
- Mrs. Trisnatie (Truus) Djioed, Secretary (commenced on September 7, 2015; on assignment from the Ministry of Agriculture);
- Mrs. Amushca Satjapradja: Cleaner (commenced on September 7, 2015; on assignment from the Ministry of Agriculture);

(b) Housing

The period under review saw the completion of the construction of a new building for CAHFSA's office by the Government of Suriname with the staff of CAHFSA occupying the Headquarters in December 2016. Transfer of equipment and supplies provided by the EU under the 9th EDF CISP, valued at 112,987 Euros has taken place as well as the installation of electricity, water, telephone service and internet connectivity.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Suriname, has donated 5 desks to CAHFSA while two were received under the project. They have also donated six visitors' chairs and five office chairs and have provided other furniture and office equipment on loan to CAHFSA.



Figure 13: Headquarters of CAHFSA, Paramaribo, Suriname

(c) Development of medium term and short term plans

During the month of February 2015, a three-year operational plan was finalized for the period 2015- 2017. This Plan sought to harmonize laws, standards, procedures and other administrative practices in agricultural health and food safety used by Member States with internationally accepted guidelines, standards and legislative practices and to put in place a support mechanism that will enable countries to implement these laws and standards thus meeting their obligations under the WTO- SPS Agreement and the Revised Treaty of Chagaramas.

In January 2016, a work programme for 2016 was developed based on the CARICOM Strategic Plan for the Period 2015-2019 and its Operational Plan for 2016. CAHFSA's work programme was included under Strategy ECN 4 of the CARICOM Strategic Plan which is "to enable sustainable growth of the economies of Member States. The possible outcomes are:

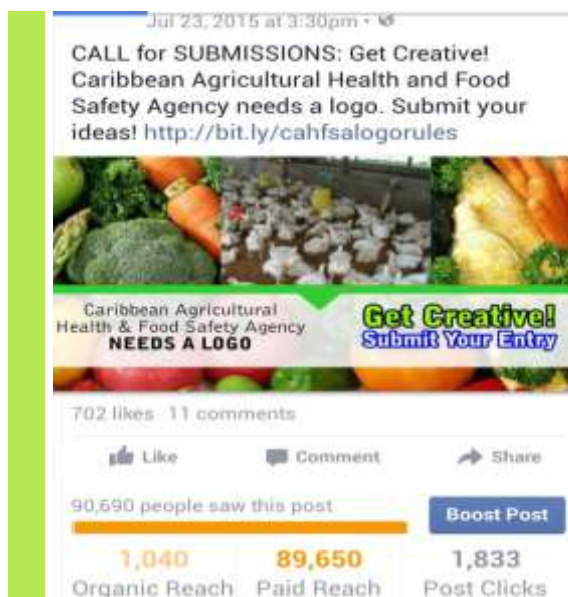
- Increased competitive production and trade of Goods and Services;
- Increased opportunities for CARICOM Nationals to engage in cross border economic exchange and transactions;
- Substantial compliance by Member States with their CSME commitments.
- Adoption of Rules of Procedure for CAHFSA
- Rules of Procedure aimed at providing guidelines as to how the Board of Directors conduct its meetings were approved by the Board at its virtual meeting in April 2015 and signed by members at the face to face meeting in November of that year.

2.2 BUILDING CAHFSA's VISUAL IDENTITY

(a) Regional Logo Competition

In an effort to develop CAHFSA's Visual Identity, a regional logo competition was staged in order to identify a business logo which will appear on CAHFSA's letterheads, business cards, website, etc. and will serve as a brand identity for the institution. The logo competition was officially launched on July 17, 2015 and ended on August 17, 2015.

The competition information pack, included a promotional flier, the rules and submission guidelines, the official entry form and the launch press release was distributed to 40 media houses in eligible countries across the region. The digital pack was also distributed to approximately 25 institutions in the region.



In addition, to communicate the message quickly and efficiently a social media strategy with emphasis on Facebook marketing was developed and implemented.

The strategy was to create awareness and request submissions from eligible persons in the region, especially those with an interest in Art, Design, Desktop publishing and or Agriculture, as well as students, teachers, hobbyists and other professionals. The age group focus: 13- 50, males and females.

The Facebook Marketing activities included the creation of a Facebook Event Page, which was used as an online hub for the: "Rules and submission guidelines" with links to the digital entry form, which allowed participants to seamlessly submit entries online. The page was

also used to invite individuals to participate and share the competition information.

The power of Facebook advertising is the ability to reach identified target markets and very competitive rates. The image seen above shows the ad that was used to promote the competition. The Ad-reach was over 90 000 persons, with 1,800 clicks.

The results of the efforts were 12 designs submitted for consideration. Three design professional from across the region made up the initial judging panel. They were required to shortlist the three top logos. Board members and logo Committee members then made the final selection. The winning entry which appears below was submitted by Mr. Sean Ifill of Barbados.



(b) Development of a Website for CAHFSA

During the period under review, a website was developed for CAHFSA which is expected to serve as an effective organizational management tool as well as an efficient communication tool to disseminate information, extend knowledge and facilitate the exchange of ideas among its

varied stakeholders. Funding for the development of the web site was obtained from the 10th EDF Project.

A total of seventeen (17) submissions were received from regional and international vendors to develop the website following a Call for Expressions of Interest (EOI), which invited candidates to submit technical and financial proposals. An Evaluation Checklist was used to shortlist candidates. The top three candidates were then interviewed by an Evaluation Committee. Based on this, the contract was awarded to Spang Makandra of Suriname. They began work in August 2015. The web site was activated at the end of October 2015.

(c) CAHFSA'S Outreach Programme

One brochure on the background, role and function of CAHFSA was produced. Four stand-up banners were also produced together with folders, promotional mugs and pens. Assistance was provided by the 10th EDF Project in the development of these promotional materials.

A CAHFSA's Facebook account, which was started in May 2015, now has 600 contacts with at least two (2) additions per day.

Personnel from the public and private sector in Suriname visited the office of CAHFSA to obtain information on its role and function. These included the CARICOM Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the local Manufacturers Association as well as some farmers group. The CEO has also participated in a number of regional meetings, making presentations and updating participants, so that the voice of CAHFSA is heard. In addition, the CEO spoke at a Farmers' Forum organized by the Caribbean Food Crop Society.



Figure 14: CEO delivering presentation at 51st CFCS Meeting, Suriname 2015

2.3 HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

The Finance and Administration Officer spent one week attached to the Finance Department of the CARICOM Secretariat where she received training in the strategic and operational prospective in areas of accounting, finance and related administrative activities.

The Animal Health Specialist participated in a Food Safety Risk Analysis Training Course at the Joint Institute for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (JIFSAN) in College Park, Maryland, USA (May 30 – June 30, 2106). Specific areas of training included: Risk Analysis, Risk Management, Risk Communication, Qualitative Risk Assessment, Quantitative Risk Assessment for Food Safety and Epidemiology of Risk Analysis.

The Plant Health Specialist attended the IPPC Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE) facilitators Training in Thailand (August 8-19, 2016).

3. CONCLUSION

Significant strides were made in the establishment of an effective and efficient regime to address the coordination of SPS issues regionally over the reporting period. Of note was the development of linkages with regional and international SPS-related organizations. Also of importance was the initiation of the work to develop a procedure for resolving SPS related trade disputes among member states as a means of facilitating intraregional trade. The development of draft animal health protocols and draft protocols for the safe movement of plant germplasms regionally was a significant milestone that will have medium to long term benefits in relation to the Region's capacity to comply with the SPS regime.

Efforts were made to develop CAHFSA's visual identity through the staging of a regional logo competition and the development of a website for CAHFSA. Data bases have been developed to improve the delivery and the sharing of information across the region. These databases are accessible from CAHFSA's website. There were some implementation challenges faced during the reporting period; however, through risk mitigation measures, these challenges were minimized.

4. OUTLOOK FOR 2017

On-going actions and activities constitute the major part of CAHFSA's work programme for 2017. These actions include the completion of the procedure for the settlement of SPS related trade disputes, the drafting of SPS standards, guidelines, and protocols, conducting risk assessments as required and data base development and population.

Additionally, efforts will be made to facilitate the formation of a Regional Plant Protection Organization for the Caribbean that provides representation to the wider Caribbean region.

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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L. Simeon Collins
Chief Executive Officer