



Optimizing the Impact of PROCINORTE in the Hemisphere through IICA

Context

The Cooperative Program in Agricultural Research and Technology for the Northern Region – PROCINORTE was established in 1998 by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada’s Research Branch (AAFC-RB, now Science & Technology Branch), United States Department of Agriculture’s Agricultural Research Service (USDA-ARS), the Instituto Nacional de Investigaciones Forestales, Agrícolas y Pecuarias (INIFAP) and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), with the latter providing in-kind support as well as some financial resources. Executives of the 4 organizations comprise the Board of Directors, while senior research scientists working in the member organizations constitute Task Forces which address issues of trilateral interest to the agricultural sector. With the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in place, PROCINORTE presents an important mechanism for supporting agricultural trade through science, research and technology. Over the years since its inception, PROCINORTE’s Task Forces have provided tremendous in-kind support through the generation and sharing of knowledge, tools, methodologies and information on trends, all to support the continued dynamic agricultural trade agenda of the northern region.

The Strategic Plan 2015 – 2020 notes that the Mission of PROCINORTE is “*To mutually strengthen agriculture related governmental and stakeholder collaboration in research and in support of the development of science-based policies to: 1) enhance sector productivity and competitiveness; 2) improve food safety and plant and animal health, and 3) contribute to capacity building through cooperation in science and technology*”. The priority themes in the current SP are Genetic Resources, Plant Health, Animal Health, Tree Fruits and Outreach. It further reminded that PROCINORTE provided a mechanism for outreach to other regions in the Americas through other PROCIs (PROCISUR, PROCITROPICOS etc.) where there is alignment of technical cooperation agendas.


Acknowledging that while the Task Forces have been functioning reasonably well generating outputs of hemispheric value, and that the “outreach” activities have largely been sporadic and *ad hoc*, the Board of Directors requested information to be presented at the XIX BoD meeting on modalities for more effective and sustainable approaches to enable PROCINORTE to benefit Latin America and the Caribbean region. Such information is intended to generate and facilitate meaningful deliberations and decisions regarding selected interventions for immediate implementation.

The attached summary “Increasing impact of PROCINORTE through IICA and it’s instruments” presents an overview of some main results of PROCINORTE over the years, and proposes a variety of means for effecting N-S transfer through IICA and other PROCIs. Considering the dynamic nature of Agricultural Science, Technology and Innovation, a mix of information sharing webinars, shared protocols, exchanges, and joint projects *inter alia* are included. Similarly areas of interest will not be static, however at this time could involve the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources, animal disease diagnostics and management, invasive pests & diseases, biological control, and fruit post-harvest management and standards. Specific examples will be shared for illustration purposes.

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TYPICAL OUTREACH ACTIVITIES NORGEN


Opportunity	Recipient	Activity
Access to senior scientists & curators of genebanks	Caribbean Agricultural Research & Development Institute (CARDI)	Assistance in establishing Gene bank for Potato.
Capacity building in Animal & Plant GRIN.	PROCI – targeted interested countries	Capacity Building/Internship in Plant GRIN.



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TYPICAL OUTREACH ACTIVITIES Tree Fruits


Opportunity	Recipient	Activity
Access to scientists and facilities in the 3 countries working on non-destructive testing of fruit.	PROCI – particularly countries producing similar fruits. GT-ITTI (<i>Grupo Técnico de Investigación, Tecnología, Transferencia e Innovación</i>)	Internship/Exchange.
Joint projects involving fruits of interest.	PROCI – selected countries.	Joint response to Calls for Proposals.



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TYPICAL OUTREACH ACTIVITIES Animal Health

Opportunity	Recipient	Activity
Training & Harmonization of protocols : Avian & Swine Influenza, Bovine TB, & BSE) and standards.	IICA – Agricultural Health & Food Safety (AHFS) Program for selected countries.	Invitation to workshops. Webinar. Internship/ Sensitization visit of facilities.
Network of senior animal health scientists for advice and joint initiatives	CaribVET	Joint response to Calls for proposals. Invitation to workshops.



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TYPICAL OUTREACH ACTIVITIES Plant Health

Opportunity	Recipient	Activity
Molecular and Diagnostic tools in detection of new and emerging pests for fruit & vegetables in LAC – e.g. tomato, avocado, pepper, potato	IICA – Agricultural Health & Food Safety (AHFS) Program.	Invitation to workshops. Webinars.
Impact of invasive species in agriculture, due to Climate Change.	IICA- Resilience Flagship Project	Joint response to Calls for proposals. Invitation to workshops.

