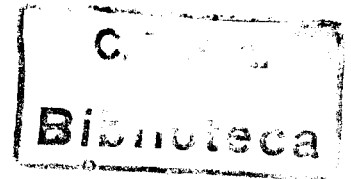




PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION



HEMISPHERIC COMMITTEE FOR THE ERADICATION OF FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

Washington, D.C., 29 April 1991

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F I N A L R E P O R T

FINAL REPORT

The III Meeting of the Hemispheric Committee for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (COHEFA) was held at the Headquarters of the Pan American Health Organization in Washington, D.C., United States of America, on 29 April 1991 as convened by the Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau.

OFFICERS

The following officers of the Meeting were elected unanimously:

- President: Mr. Juan Agustín Figueroa
Minister of Agriculture of Chile
(Representing the Governments of the
Southern Cone Subregion)
- Vice President: Mr. Gilvan Viana Rodrigues
Confederação Nacional da Agricultura do Brasil
(Representing the producers of the
Amazonian Subregion of Brazil)
- Rapporteur: Dr. Gustavo Reta Patterson
Under Secretary for Livestock in the
Secretariat of Agriculture and Water
Resources of Mexico
(Representing the Governments of the North
American Subregion)

Dr. Raúl Casas Olascoaga, Director of the Pan American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center, served as Secretary ex officio.

PARTICIPANTS

A. Titular Members

For the Southern Cone Subregion: Mr. Juan Agustín Figueroa, Minister of Agriculture of Chile, and Dr. Luciano Miguens, of the Sociedad Rural (Rural Society) of Argentina; for the Andean Subregion: Dr. Mauro Bertero Gutiérrez, Minister of Agriculture of Bolivia, and Dr. Camilo Quintana, of the Asociación Nacional de Productores de Leche (National Dairymen's Association) of Colombia; for the Amazonian Subregion and Brazil: Dr. Antonio Cabrera Mano Filho, Minister of Agriculture of Brazil, and Dr. Gilvan Viana Rodrigues, of the Confederação Nacional de Agricultura (National Agricultural Confederation) of Brazil; for the

Caribbean Subregion, Dr. Seymour Mullings, Minister of Agriculture of Jamaica; for the Mesoamerican Subregion: Dr. Carlos Abadía, Vice Minister of Health of Panama, and Mr. Justo Díaz del Castillo, President of the Confederación Interamericana de Ganaderos (Inter-American Cattlemen's Confederation); for the North American Subregion: Dr. Gustavo Reta Petterson, Under-Secretary for Livestock in the Secretariat of Agriculture and Water Resources of Mexico, and Mr. Jim Graham, President of the Canadian Cattlemen's Association.

B. Observers

Present as observers were Ministers and other representatives of the Governments of Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Grenada, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, United States of America, Uruguay, and Venezuela; and representatives of cattlemen's associations: Confederação Nacional da Agricultura, Associação Brasileira de Industrias Exportadoras de Carne, the Federação Rural do Estado do Rio Grande do Sul, and the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of Belo Horizonte, all of Brazil; the Fundación Argentina de Erradicación de la Fiebre Aftosa (FADEFA); the Federación Andina de Ganaderos; the Federación de Ganaderos and the Asociación de Industriales de la Carne, both of Venezuela; the Federación Rural of Uruguay, and the following agencies: the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the World Bank (IBRD), the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the Agency for International Development (AID), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the European Economic Community (EEC), the Board of the Cartagena Agreement (JUNAC), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Regional Organization for Health in Agriculture and Livestock (OIRSA), the International Office of Epizootics (OIE), and the Organization of American States (OAS).

The provisional agenda was approved in the first session

SESSIONS

The Meeting held an inaugural session, two plenary sessions, and a closing session.

The inaugural session was addressed by Dr. Carlyle Guerra de Macedo, who regretted the absence of the Chairman of COHEFA II, held last year, for which reason he took the initiative of presiding. He then welcomed the representatives of the countries and other participants.

He underscored the importance of COHEFA for institutionalization of the shared (state/community) conduct of activities for the control of foot-and-mouth disease, with the active involvement of the cattlemen in the process.

Dr. Macedo then gave an account of the principal gains posted. In the Plate Basin there had been increasing and active participation by producers in local committees and mobilization of private resources

through them as the strategy for surmounting the administrative and financial developments in the Andean subregion were the negotiations between JUNAC and the EEC for the funding of subregional eradication projects.

In the Amazon region no systematic development of activities had yet been observed under the program owing to the natural difficulties of the region.

He noted the general concern over the quest for administrative and financial alternatives in the development of the Hemispheric eradication plans.

He added that foot-and-mouth disease was considered an eradicable disease by the Governing Bodies of PAHO, and was an integral component of the document on the Organization's Strategic Guidelines and Program Priorities.

The Director then invited the delegates of the countries to elect their officers, which was done with the results shown above.

Mr. Juan Agustín Figueroa, Minister of Agriculture of Chile, thanked the participants on the Committee for electing him Chairman, and appealed for all to join in the effort to eradicate foot-and-mouth disease. He stressed that, while the governments had expressed their political will, this will rested on the resolve of the community and was expressed in a multiplication of experiences of joint administration between government and private sectors as partners in subregional programs.

Dr. Raúl Casas Olascoaga, Secretary ex officio of COHEFA, then read out the Report of the Secretariat, which was considered by the participants and received their unanimous approval, followed by a round of applause for the excellence of the work done.

Mr. Gilvan Viana Rodrigues, Representative of Brazil, cited the support given by the meat and dairy industry to foot-and-mouth disease eradication programs in the same spirit that had inspired the operations of COHEFA.

Several participants then took the floor to speak on points raised in the Report of the Secretariat. Dr. Patrick McKenzie, Minister of Agriculture of Guyana, asked that the document show clearly demarcated the disease-free areas in South America. Dr. Y. Ozawa, of the OIE, highlighted the importance of improving biosafety in laboratories that handle infectious viruses to prevent them from escaping. This comment was prompted by the fact that the latest outbreaks in Europe were caused by such accidents. Dr. Javier Alcázar emphasized that the suspension of vaccination in Europe would not necessarily lead to more restrictive standards, but rather to a search for ways to maintain trade with affected areas.

The subject of the deterioration of veterinary services in the eighties was discussed by the Delegate for Mexico, Dr. Héctor Campos López; the Delegate for Brazil, Dr. Tania Lira; and Dr. Luciano Miguens,

speaking for the cattlemen of the Southern Cone. In general, the speakers focused on the search for arrangements for shared management with the community.

The Representative of Venezuela noted the prohibition on the use of attenuated live virus vaccines in Venezuela and the preparation of a national project for the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease, which was under examination.

After a brief recess, the proceedings were resumed with presentation of the plans of action of the Plate Basin and the Andean Area.

The representative of the cattlemen of the Plate Basin, Dr. Luciano Miguens, spoke for that region. The cattlemen of Argentina were participating actively in that country's control and eradication program. The Argentine Government was integrating all sectors in the process by setting up national, provincial and local committees, and the cattlemen had responded favorably to this new strategy, mainly through the local committees. Vaccination with oil-adjuvanted vaccine is concentrated in breeding areas and will soon be extended to the finishing areas as the availability of this biological permits.

This position was corroborated by Dr. Cané, General Administrator of SENASA, who said that acceptance of the philosophy framed in COHEFA II had been a success, the cattlemen having been persuaded to participate in a significant way. Dr. Cané took the opportunity to recommend that both the CPFA and CEPANZO be involved as advisors at international trade gatherings such as those of GATT because of the world-wide recognition of their technical excellence.

Dr. Centragolo, member of the Delegation of Uruguay, added that the new arrangement of comanagement of the project was in full operation, and the priority was the improvement of epidemiological surveillance, since there had been no confirmation of the disease in that country in 12 months.

Dr. Guidice of Brazil said that the agricultural sector was prepared to collaborate with the Government in the implementation of these policies.

The Delegate of Paraguay reported briefly on the progress made toward integrating his country into the Plate Basin, especially the revision of the animal health legislation and the increase in funding for the Program. He also reported that the coverage of vaccination with oil-adjuvanted vaccine continues to spread.

Dr. Mauro Bertero Gutiérrez, Minister of Campesino Affairs and Agriculture of Bolivia, cited the importance of this meeting in the context of the efforts of the countries toward HFA2000, mainly by making it possible to meet the basic needs of the population. He added that in the "lost decade of the eighties" none of the indicators of animal production and productivity were improved, and that it was essential to

speak of eradication of foot-and-mouth disease to strengthen the market in the subregion and win markets outside it, for in his view animal production was the practical road to development in the middle run in the countries of the Americas.

He emphasized that in the process of development of our democracies "we must never forget to democratize development." He also said that it was becoming daily more important for our economic systems to find formulas for making the cold index numbers of macroeconomic performance compatible with better indexes of health, education and social welfare. He also noted that it is necessary to give our governments more social managerial capacity to make democracy strictly tangible to our peoples in the dimensions of real social and economic democracy.

He then said that the plans of action that still await financing must offer chiefly a program that is economically sustainable, and he asked the EEC to rule favorably on the request presented.

Dr. María del Rosario Sintes, Minister of Agriculture of Colombia, commented that the entire region was undergoing a modernization that was oriented to external markets, for it had been realized that the home markets of the countries were limited, and meat and milk were of unquestionable importance in foreign markets. She therefore asked the buyer countries to take an objective position, without excessive jealousy, toward the supplier countries.

She also referred to the past importance of external help in the drive against foot-and-mouth disease, but said that the time had come to find new ways to pursue the drive with a better cost-benefit ratio. The solution appeared to be the adoption of models that had been proposed in 1985 and had spread to other regions of the country.

Dr. Camilo Quintana, representing the cattlemen of the Andean area, said that both the work being done in Colombia and the Argentine experience proved the virtues of the system, and they persisted because they were "economically viable enterprises," though he recognized some paternalistic qualities in the system.

In the last intervention of the morning, the representative of CONFAGNA said that his institution had given every support to the efforts of the region. It was also supporting the co-management initiatives in progress.

Dr. Alfredo Salto, representative of Ecuador, reported that his country was embarked on the establishment of committees that included the private sector, for the purpose of making the campaign self-financing.

Dr. Tania Lira spoke for the Amazonian subregion and Brazil. She said that projects for the control and prevention of diseases in the region should give special attention to the environment. In the words of Dr. Rodríguez, this region accounted for only 1% of the country's cattle population.

Another important point for Brazil was World Bank financing for the restructuring of animal health services.

Dr. Casas, Director of PANAFTOSA, noted the need to eradicate foot-and-mouth disease in the Region in order not to lose its competitive position, because the large producing areas of the world were free of this disease.

Dr. Samuel Goldzveig, the Representative of Chile, presented a paper on the importance that Chile be and keep itself free of foot-and-mouth disease. He cited the significance of that condition for the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease in the Southern Cone countries and its implications for economic and commercial integration, especially with Argentina.

In the discussion of disease-free areas, Dr. Goldzveig, referred to participation by the private sector in the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease, already used successfully in Chile.

The presence of countries that are disease-free or have disease-free areas (Chile and Argentina) in endemic areas, was discussed in a general way in the subcommittee on disease-free areas. It was suggested that they make a proposal for participation. However, differences between a disease-free country in an endemic area and one in a disease-free area were to be taken into account.

The Representative of the OIE referred to the study conducted by his organization to characterize, in GATT, the concept of relative risk in connection with the importation of meats, to be presented at the next regular meeting of the OIE.

Dr. Gustavo Ferrés, Under Secretary for Crops, Livestock and Fisheries of Uruguay, recommended that COHEFA should convey to the OIE the priority interest of completing as soon as possible the studies commissioned by GATT on standards for evaluation of the risk of foot-and-mouth disease in international trade.

Dr. Seymour Mullings, Minister of Agriculture of Jamaica, said that the subcommittee of the Caribbean (CARICOM), on the example of that of Central America, would discuss its rules of procedure at the meeting next June.

The Minister of Agriculture of Colombia noted the need to strengthen border agreements between countries in the region in order to ensure that the efforts made by a country do not stop at its borders.

In the closing session the following resolution was approved:

RESOLUTION I

THE III REGULAR MEETING OF THE HEMISPHERIC COMMITTEE FOR THE ERADICATION OF FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE (COHEFA),

HAVING OBSERVED THAT:

The intense joint efforts of the governments and the community to achieve the goals of the Plan of Action of the Hemispheric Program for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease demonstrate the unflagging will and commitment of the countries of the Region to eradication of the disease from the Americas in the shortest possible time, and that the rural producers and other sectors of the community associated with the animal industry are increasingly resolved to assume a preponderant role in achieving that objective;

The benefits of eradication will be essential to increase productivity, intraregional and international trade, and the capacity to compete with quality products in a world in which the most competitive regions are free of foot-and-mouth disease or are in the process of becoming so;

Evident progress has been made in the organization and operation of the Technical Cooperation Agreement of the River Plate Basin Sub-regional Project between Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, and PAHO, accompanied by more regular flows of financial contributions and growing community participation (cattlemen, private veterinarians, the biologicals industry, dairy and meat industries, scientific and technical institutions, and universities);

The progress of this project has awakened interest in other regions and in neighboring countries, and there is a request from Paraguay to become a party to the Agreement;

In the Andean area, JUNAC and its member countries have defined the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease as one of the priority problems for their subregional development and their economic and commercial integration, for which reason the Andean Technical Committee and National Committees for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease have been set up and an agreement for technical cooperation between JUNAC and PAHO is in preparation;

Owing to the success of the operating systems applied in the ICA-USDA cooperative project in northwestern Colombia, it has been agreed to extend the project to the northeastern subregion on the Atlantic coast of that country;

Decisive steps have been taken to establish two subcommittees of foot-and-mouth disease-free countries, one for Central America, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Mexico, and the other for the Caribbean,

for the prevention of foot-and-mouth disease as a multilateral mechanism for the coordination of prevention and emergency activities in the framework of the subregional economic and trade agreements (CARICOM and the Central American Common Market);

COHEFA has undertaken initiatives to obtain resources from governments, international agencies, and technical and financial co-operation agencies;

AND CONSIDERING THAT:

Despite the progress observed, and with certain exceptions, the stagnation and in some cases actual deterioration of programs to combat foot-and-mouth disease and of animal health services continue as a consequence of the financial crisis of the 1980s, which affects all the countries of the Region;

This situation includes the disease-free area in Central America, where structural problems and problems of definitions have emerged in the subregional foot-and-mouth disease diagnostic laboratory (LADIVES) in Panama, in addition to the growing and unavoidable establishment of cattle farms in the Darién buffer area, which is weakening the subregional surveillance system;

The restrictions imposed by foot-and-mouth disease on the intraregional and international trade in animals and animal products continue, and could increase significantly with full integration of the countries of the European Economic Community at the end of 1992;

As a mechanism of adjustment to the crisis and to the inescapable need to promote economic growth and social development, an accelerated and dynamic process of economic and commercial integration between the countries of the Region is being developed which imposes epidemiological-sanitary equivalence requirements in animal production, foot-and-mouth disease being one of the principal obstacles to that integration;

The active involvement of vast segments of the animal production sector (production, industrial processing and services) in the planning, organization, execution and evaluation of subregional, national and local plans for the control and eradication of foot-and-mouth disease has been significant and promising; this community effort has been partial, however, and its development and institutionalization have not yet gone far enough to solve the problem of support for and administrative continuity of the programs;

A great effort of integration, awareness building, and development of appropriate methodology is required for community participation to be efficient and extensive;

For consolidation of the political decision to be translated into concrete results, substantial supplementary financial resources are required for harmonious and systematic implementation of the Plan of Action, particularly that of the Andean subregional project;

South America today has the human, scientific and technological resources to achieve advanced control, and later the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease;

The more rapidly that areas are made disease-free in the regions of high production and exporting capacity, the faster eradication will be accomplished and the greater the benefits and the return on the investment;

At its recent XVIII Regular Meeting, the South American Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (COSALFA) adopted specific resolutions on activities for the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease in the River Plate Basin, in the Chilean-Argentinian mountain range, in the Andean area, and in the Amazon area, and at the same time for the strengthening of local veterinary care units and active involvement of the community in all health actions carried out there, particularly those for epidemiological surveillance; and

GATT has presented to the International Office of Epizootics (OIE) a request for the formulation and updating of guidelines on evaluation of the acceptable health risk,

THE III MEETING OF COHEFA RESOLVES:

1. To commend the Secretariat for the report on activities carried out during the period 1989-1991.
2. To approve the Projection of Activities for the Quadrennium 1992-1995 presented by the Secretariat ex officio to the III Regular Meeting of COHEFA, in which it is proposed that by the end of this period the following will have been achieved:
 - a) In general, an increase in the area of the Americas free of foot-and-mouth disease and advanced control in other areas of the affected countries;
 - b) The promotion and conclusion of bilateral and multilateral agreements setting up intercountry programs for the prevention, control, and eradication of foot-and-mouth disease;
 - c) In the South Cone of South America, absence of the clinical disease in the present area of the River Plate Basin project, extension of the area of the project, and the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease from the Argentine provinces of San Juan, Mendoza, Neuquén and Río Negro, adjacent to Chile.

- d) In the Andean area, the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease in the departments of Tacna, Moquegua and Arequipa in Peru, expansion of the area of eradication on the Atlantic Coast of Colombia, eradication of clinical foot-and-mouth disease on the coast of Ecuador and in eastern Venezuela, and advanced control on the borders between Colombia and Ecuador and between Peru and Bolivia.
- e) In Brazil and in the Amazon territories, eradication of clinical foot-and-mouth disease in the state of Roraima, advanced control in the west-central and southeastern regions, structuring of a control plan for the northeast, and integration of the foot-and-mouth disease programs in the Amazon areas into environmental protection projects.

3. To urge the countries of the affected area to give priority to the decentralization and strengthening of local structures as an administrative strategy and broad participation by the community involved in the animal production sector (production, processing, and services) as an operational strategy in order to attain the objectives established by the member countries for the Hemispheric Program for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease in South America.

4. To urge the Subregional Committee of the River Plate Basin, its member countries, and its Secretariat to:

- a) Strengthen and consolidate actions to eliminate the disease before the end of the quadrennium 1992-1995;
- b) To bring Paraguay, areas of northern Argentina, and the neighboring states in Brazil into the subregional project as soon as possible;
- c) To seek complementary sources of financing for the Subregional Technical Cooperation Agreement so that the project may be expanded and the plan of action for the quadrennium efficiently carried out;
- d) To apply environmental protection and biosafety measures in order to prevent virus leaks into the environment from the laboratories that handle the foot-and-mouth disease virus;
- e) To mobilize the community so that the sanitary measures may be conducted effectively and without interruption.

5. To support the decision taken by the Governments of Argentina and Chile to develop and implement a subregional project aimed at creating sanitary conditions that will reduce the risk of the introduction of foot-and mouth disease into Chile and facilitate trade between both countries.

6. To thank the European Economic Community for its donation of US\$450,454 to carry out a reasearch study on the correlation of direct and indirect tests used to monitor the effectiveness of FMD vaccines.
7. To support the activities of JUNAC, its member countries, and PANAFTOSA in implementation of the Andean Subregional Project for the Control and Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease. To that end, COHEFA undertakes to participate with the ex officio Secretariat, JUNAC, and each of the member countries in joint institutional efforts to obtain additional resources from the EEC and other agencies and organizations of technical and financial cooperation, and to reiterate the request to the EEC for financing for the project for the control and eradication of foot-and-mouth disease in the Andean Pact countries, presented through JUNAC to the II EEC-Andean Group Mixed Committee.
8. To urge the countries of the Andean Group to restructure and strengthen their programs in accordance with the regional strategies and the new approach of the Hemispheric Plan of Action for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease.
9. To urge the health authorities of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the other countries that make up the Amazon subregion to implement, with technical cooperation from PANAFTOSA, actions that are integrated with the subregion's environmental protection projects aimed at the advanced control of foot-and-mouth disease in peri-Amazonian areas and at its prevention in the currently disease-free areas, including eradication of the disease in the state of Roraima in Brazil.
10. To support and offer all necessary assistance to the countries of the disease-free area of the hemisphere in their effort to create and implement subcommittees in Central America, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Mexico, and in the Caribbean, with the participation of Canada and the United States of America.
11. To recommend to the two subcommittees of disease-free countries that they draw up plans of action for the strengthening of the epidemiological surveillance, animal quarantine, prevention and emergency systems, and for the training of human resources.
12. To request that the two subcommittees of disease-free countries, with the support of the ex officio Secretariat, arrange for funds to finance the aforementioned plans of action.
13. To ask the International Office of Epizootics to take the necessary steps so that the Group of Experts may complete the document on the evaluation of the risk of foot-and-mouth disease as soon as possible.
14. To urge the Members of PAHO to issue in the shortest possible time the appropriate rulings in response to requests for the recognition of countries or areas as free of foot-and-mouth disease.

15. To create in the framework of COSALFA a subcommittee of countries free or with areas free of foot-and-mouth disease, to take advantage of the institutional status achieved by this Committee at the level of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs.

16. To request PAHO to formally authorize the participation of PANAFTOSA and CEPANZO as technical advisors of the countries in the Region in the Uruguay Round of GATT.

17. To request that the governments and rural producers present a joint evaluation of the progress of the control, eradication and prevention programs and of the fulfillment of the resolutions of COHEFA III at the next meeting of the Committee.