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PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION



**V MEETING OF THE HEMISPHERIC COMMITTEE
FOR THE ERADICATION OF FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE**

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

Washington, D.C., Monday, 24 April 1995

COHEFA5/FR (Eng.)
24 April 1995
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

FINAL REPORT



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FINAL REPORT

The V Meeting of the Hemispheric Committee for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (COHEFA V) was held at the Headquarters of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in Washington, D.C., United States of America, on April 24, 1995, as convened by the Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau.

OFFICERS

The officers of the Meeting were elected unanimously as follows:

President: Mr. Carlos Gasparri
Minister of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries
Uruguay

Vice President: Mr. Carlos Sousa-Lennox
Minister of Agricultural Development
Panama

Rapporteur: Dr. Luis Benjamín Bowles
President
Cattlemen's Federation
Bolivia

The Director of PAHO, Dr. George A.O. Alleyne, served as Secretary *ex officio* and Dr. Vicente M. Astudillo, Director of the Pan American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center, served as Technical Secretary.

PARTICIPANTS

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

For the Amazonas Subregion, Dr. Enio Antonio Marques Pereira, Secretary for the Defense of Agriculture of Brazil, and Mrs. Pedro Camargo Neto, President of the Foundation for Livestock Development of the State of São Paulo (FUNDEPEC); for the

Andean Subregion, Mr. José Raúl Alegrett, Minister of Agriculture of Venezuela, and Dr. Rodolfo Malarín, President, FONGALES Association, Peru; for the Caribbean Subregion, Hon. Johan Sisal, Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Suriname; for the Middle American Subregion, Mr. Carlos Sousa-Lennox, Minister of Agricultural Development of Panama, and Mr. José Alberto Amador, President of the Federación de Cámaras de Ganaderos of Costa Rica; for the North American Subregion, Dr. Héctor Campos López, Director General for Animal Health and Rural Development, Mexico, and Mr. Dan Childs, President of the Foreign Animal Disease Subcommittee of the National Cattlemen's Association, of the United States of America; and for the Southern Cone Subregion, Mr. Carlos Gasparri, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries of Uruguay, and Dr. Luciano Miguez, President of the Comisión Sanitaria de la Sociedad Rural (Rural Sanitary Commission).

OBSERVERS

Present as observers at the Meeting were Ministers and other representatives from the following Member Countries of PAHO: Argentina, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Canada, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, France, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Paraguay, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, the United Kingdom, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

Also present as observers were representatives of the following agencies: American Association of Food Hygiene Veterinarians, American Veterinary Medical Association, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Inter-American Development Bank, Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture, International Office of Epizootics, International Regional Organization for Health in Agriculture and Livestock (OIRSA), Latin American Confederation of Clinical Biochemistry, Lidivet, Microbiological Associates, Inc, Regional Council for Agricultural Cooperation in Central America, Mexico and the Dominican Republic, Tuskegee University, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, World Bank, and World Trade Organization.

AGENDA AND PROGRAM OF SESSIONS

The following agenda was adopted:

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Election of the President, Vice President and Rapporteur

3. Address by Sir George Alleyne, Director of the Pan American Health Organization.
4. Address by the Honorable Juan Carlos Wasmosy, President of Paraguay
5. Adoption of the agenda and schedule of sessions.
6. Report of the Secretariat of the Committee
7. Reports on the XXI and XXII Regular Meetings of the South American Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (COSALFA)
8. Report on the information and epidemiological surveillance system for vesicular diseases.
9. Report on risk analysis studies for imports of meat and embryos
10. Discussion of the Plan of Action of the Hemispheric Program for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease
 - Southern Cone
 - Andean Subregion
 - Amazonian Subregion
 - Disease-free areas
11. General discussion of the Plan of Action, with the participation of farmers, technical cooperation organizations and financing agencies.
12. Information from the international conference on prospects for the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease in the coming millennium and its impact on food security and trade.
13. Conclusions and recommendations
14. Other Matters
15. Closing of the Meeting

SESSIONS

Two plenary sessions and one closing session were held.

FIRST PLENARY SESSION

The President of COHEFA V, Mr. Carlos Gasparri, Minister of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries of Uruguay, opened the meeting and gave the floor to the Director of the Pan American Health Organization, Dr. George A. O. Alleyne.

Dr. Alleyne cordially welcomed all delegates and observers and, in particular, noted the importance that attaches to this forum from the presence of His Excellency the President of Paraguay. He then briefly reviewed the history of COHEFA and noted that the subregional approach to the war on foot-and-mouth disease, based on epidemiological concepts of the persistence of the disease, had made possible the development of a Hemispheric Eradication Program and was seen by the Ministers of Agriculture as a continental strategy. The result was the creation of the Hemispheric Committee for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (COHEFA) for the primary purpose of sustaining the political will of the governments in the Region to eradicate foot-and-mouth disease from the hemisphere.

He added that one of the principal strategies of the Program is integration and work in common to attain the goal of eradication of foot-and-mouth disease, and thereby to strengthen the animal health infrastructure in the Region, which effort the authorities and farmers, and other concerned social actors, have been pursuing, at all times with the technical support of PAHO through PANAFTOSA, which he cited as the center of technical and scientific excellence in the subject for the Region.

In closing, the Director noted that the future of animal health activities, especially the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease, targeted for the year 2008, will increasingly demand cooperative efforts between the public and private sectors, as well as among the international agencies responsible for technical cooperation in this field, and he stressed the important past, present and future role of the Pan American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center. He hoped that the Committee would be pleased would continue to be pleased with the results obtained and would strengthen its resolve to continue along the lines it has established.

The President of COHEFA V then gave the floor to His Excellency Dr. Juan Carlos Wasmosy, President of the Republic of Paraguay, who referred to the heinous act of terrorism committed in Oklahoma City and expressed his sorrow to the people of the United States of America. He thanked the Director of PAHO for the invitation to partici-

pate in this Meeting and cited the importance of this forum for the coordination of joint efforts toward the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease from the hemisphere. Though not technically conversant with the matter, as a cattleman he was greatly interested in the subject through the components of livestock production and productivity, in addition to the social importance of the war on the disease for the small cattleman as well. In addition to the problems it creates in the cattle industry, the disease has socioeconomic, political, and now also ecological impacts as well.

He went on to cite the Pan American Center in its mission of technical and scientific support to the countries involved in the Hemispheric Program for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (PHEFA). He then referred to the progress made by the Southern Cone countries, and by his country in particular, and to the progress seen and difficulties still being faced in the war on foot-and-mouth disease in the other PHEFA regions. He noted the importance of perfect coordination between the private and public sectors in the direction of control and eradication activities and the importance of this process in his country, with integration of the forces of society for the installation of health care structures as a whole at the local level.

In closing, noting that in addition to posing a challenge, eradication of foot-and-mouth disease is also a factor for integration and encouragement to the coordination of activities in a scenario of broadening trade relations among the countries. He urged them to continue their efforts toward eradication of foot-and-mouth disease and, citing an initiative of the countries in the Region, to wage a crusade against terror, the drug traffic, and corruption.

The Secretary then identified the representatives of the public and private sectors in the different subregions, and read out the provisional agenda and schedule of sessions, which on a motion by the Representative of Uruguay, Dr. Dante Geymonat, was approved by the Committee.

In this first plenary session the Committee considered the report of the Secretariat, presented by the Technical Secretary, Dr. Vicente M. Astudillo, Director of the Pan American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center, on compliance with the recommendations of COHEFA IV, including an account of the gains made in the two years since, with emphasis on the regional differences found in the indicators, as a result of greater integration between the public and private sectors.

When the report had been read, the discussion began. The representatives and some observers from the subregions entered motions of commendation to the Secretariat for the work done with the countries to achieve the gains observed and for the laudable work done by PANAFTOSA, and invited the countries to meet their financial commitments to the Center. Some of them asked for more attention to disease-free countries

and regions, which need to strengthen their prevention systems, and to countries that had fallen behind in the eradication process. Reference was made to the importance in this context of the epidemiological surveillance, including differential diagnosis in the laboratory, of diseases that could be mistaken for foot-and-mouth disease. Reference was also made to the importance of encouraging the establishment of local units and of performing risk analyses on prevention and on regionalization of production areas in order to enhance the effectiveness of measures and guarantees in trade negotiations.

In its reply the Secretariat cited the need to give momentum to integration between public and private sectors at all levels, for the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease has ceased to be a technical problem and has become a problem that requires the participation of other social actors no less than political action. It reaffirmed PANAFTOSA's cooperation goals of regionalization risk assessment, and stressed prevention activities, which would take the place of those for eradication.

There followed presentation of the reports of the XXI and XXII Regular Meetings of the South American Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (COSALFA) by, respectively, Mr. Rodolfo Matsuda, Vice Minister of Agriculture of Peru, and Dr. Carlos Bruckner, Under Secretary for Animal Production of Bolivia. These reports prompted no comments.

The morning session closed with presentation by Mr. Antonio Mendes da Silva of SIVESA, a computerized information system developed by PANAFTOSA in cooperation with the government of São Paulo, Brazil, the Foundation for Livestock Development (FUNDEPEC), and the Ministry of Agriculture, Supply and Agrarian Reform (MAARA), which features a geographical basis and a flexibility that affords integrated management of all data bases for the execution of epidemiological surveillance at the local level and management of the program at the higher, strategic levels. In the discussions the representative of FUNDEPEC cited an additional important by-product of the system, which was personnel training, which had aroused the interest of the staff members involved. Dr. Galo Izurieta, of Ecuador, expressed a wish that the system could be set up hemispherewide, and that the countries would make an effort to automate their own systems.

SECOND PLENARY SESSION

The second plenary session opened with a presentation by Dr. Paul Suttmöller, PAHO Consultant, on analyses of the risk of introduction of foot-and-mouth disease by the trade in products of animal origin and in genetic material with the disease-free countries, performed with the support of PANAFTOSA. Dr. Suttmöller described the methods employed in the studies of meat products from Argentina and Uruguay going

to the disease-free countries of CARICOM, the latter in cooperation with Tuskegee University. He then referred to the document on the risk associated with the international trade in semen and embryos, in which the assumed risk was very small. He stressed the need for disclosure of the risk to facilitate negotiations between producers and government regulatory agencies in the countries. In closing he said that risk analysis was no academic exercise, but a tool based on epidemiological information and indispensable for the facilitation of international trade.

In the discussions the representative of Uruguay noted that a commendable document had been presented and that in a similar study done to comply with an agreement on exports to the U.S.A. the calculated risk could be reduced even further by the figures used for the average weight of slaughtered animals, and also by the nonexistence of viral foci in the region. In both cases the calculated risk would be reduced.

Then the reports on the subregional projects were presented: Dr. Dante Geymonat presented the report on the Southern Cone, and remarked on the gains made, the impact on foreign trade, the strategies used, and the importance of the Agreement to the Region. The representative of Paraguay reiterated the importance of the Agreement for the development of the Program in his country, and thanked PANAFTOSA for its support. The representative of Uruguay answered questions on the negotiation of export quotas, which involved several steps with the participation of the United States Department of Agriculture.

The representative of Honduras noted the emphasis placed on eradication and asked for more support to prevention based on epidemiological surveillance systems.

The subproject of the Andean Area was presented by Dr. Hugo Tamayo, who in addition to providing information on the inception of the subproject and its future plans, described in detail the results of the recent second EU mission, which decided that the project should be financed in two primary areas: the structuring of a coordination unit in JUNAC with the technical support of PANAFTOSA, and the complete funding of the constituent subprojects of the PHEFA for the region.

The speakers on the Amazon subregion were Drs. Enio Marques and Pedro Camargo, who cited the breadth of the area covered by this subproject, its socioeconomic importance, the progress made in some regions with cooperation from the private sector, and the importance of the work for small cattlemen as well. They proposed the performance of a study for a resizing of the subproject area on the basis of epidemiological characteristics, to permit more effective control and eradication measures.

The speakers for the disease-free area were Minister Sousa-Lennox and Mr. Ronald M. Gordon. The Minister viewed with concern the restriction imposed by

Canada on the entry of animal products from Panama, and was of the view that setting up a flow of information among the countries should improve communication and an understanding of the sanitary situations of the countries. He gave several examples of intersectoral and interagency cooperation in the conduct of processes for reduction of the prevalence of several diseases, and added the need to improve information and diagnoses.

The representative of Mexico and the Minister of Panama reiterated the need to implement the COPALIFA. The Secretariat advised that when this Commission of Disease-Free Countries was created, it had been agreed that its meetings would coincide with those of OIRSA, which, unfortunately, has not been possible.

In respect of the Caribbean subregion Mr. Gordon presented a summary of the activities of that subcommission since its formation in June 1990. Highlights of these activities were three meetings of the technical group of the subcommission, two workshops on quantitative risk analysis on trade in meat products between Argentina and the Caribbean, conducted in collaboration with the Veterinary Department of the University of Tuskegee. He stressed the importance of updating the emergency preparedness plans of the countries, in the immediate future.

The representative of Canada, Dr. Barry W. Stenshorn, took note of the concerns of Minister Sousa-Lennox for bilateral discussions, and commended PANAFTOSA/PAHO for the progress made in risk analysis and expressed his country's interest in the joint pursuit of those studies with a view to favoring trade with the infected area.

Dr. Yves Cheneau, representative of FAO, presented the idea of the International Conference on Prospects for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease in the Next Millennium and Its Impact on Food Security and Trade, coordinated in conjunction with PAHO, to be held in Brazil on a date to be determined. The meeting will be attended by the ministers of agriculture of the Region and several countries.

The session closed with an analysis of the conclusions and recommendations. The proposed resolutions were read out, one of which relates specifically to the disease-free areas, and were approved with changes that were subsequently introduced by the Secretariat.

RESOLUTION I

THE V MEETING OF THE HEMISPHERIC COMMITTEE FOR THE ERADICATION OF FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE,

Considering:

That recent international agreements involving animal products recommend that their commercial and sanitary aspects be governed by the principle of transparency in the application of standards;

That the last two years have been characterized by continuation of the remarkable progress made in combating the disease in the Southern Cone of our hemisphere;

That in other areas there are disquietingly persistent stagnation and deterioration of the execution of national programs for the control and eradication of foot-and-mouth disease;

That increasing participation by farmers, especially in local structures, is being seen in most of the regional subprojects of the Hemispheric Plan for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease;

That there has been highly satisfactory articulation between the public and private sectors in the war on the disease, in which the specific responsibilities of each of them have been respected;

That there is increasing acceptance of the criteria of regionalization and risk assessment in evaluating the trade in animal products between regions of different sanitary status;

That at the COSALFA XXI and XXII Regular Meetings resolutions were approved that are of great importance for the progress of the Hemispheric Program for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease; and

That the disease-free areas of the Americas are facing ever greater challenges to meet the new interests of marketing without compromising their present disease-free status,

RESOLVES:

1. To commend the Secretariat for its contribution to attainment of the objectives of the Hemispheric Program for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease.
2. To endorse the resolutions of the COSALFA XXI and XXII Regular Meetings and to recommend their approval at RIMSA IX.
3. To recommend to the countries the need to persist in carrying out the Hemispheric Eradication Program ratified at COHEFA V.
4. To support, through the Pan American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center of PAHO, international recognition for countries that have made noteworthy progress in fighting the disease.
5. To reiterate the importance of institutionalization in the countries of the participation of farmers and other sectors of the community in the administration of plans for the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease.
6. To ask JUNAC and PANAFTOSA to coordinate the immediate holding of a sub-regional meeting of representatives of the public and private sectors to energize implementation of the Andean subregional project.
7. To congratulate the countries participating in the Plate Basin project for the important results achieved, and to ask their governments not to interrupt their economic support to the agreement under which the activities of this project are being coordinated, as the success of the project is largely dependent on continuity of the positive results obtained.
8. To step up the support of the Pan American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center to the countries in applying the risk assessment method to the international trade in animal products and by-products, based on the principles of transparency, equivalency and harmonization.
9. To intensify the participation of the countries in the disease-free area by making the regional and national committees for the prevention and eradication of foot-and-mouth disease and the COPALIFAs fully operational.
10. To energize the systems for the prevention and surveillance of foot-and-mouth disease in the region by encouraging community participation and making the national committees and the Commission of Foot-and-Mouth Disease-Free Countries (COPALIFA) fully operational.

RESOLUTION II

THE V MEETING OF THE HEMISPHERIC COMMITTEE FOR THE ERADICATION OF FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE,

Considering:

That the progress made in other areas toward the control and eradication of foot-and-mouth disease must be complemented by prevention of the disease in the disease-free countries;

That the disease-free countries are exposed to reintroduction of the disease unless appropriate joint measures are adopted by the public and private sectors;

That information and epidemiological surveillance systems must rise above the national and regional spheres to the hemispheric level,

RESOLVES:

1. To strengthen, through the regional animal health agencies and with the collaboration of PAHO, the basic and refresher training of technical and professional personnel of promotion and public information measures in foot-and-mouth disease prevention programs.
2. To design, implement and make mutually compatible computer programs for reinforcement of the information and epidemiological surveillance system.
3. To strengthen prevention and the quarantine system, especially at ports and international trade centers, and to draw on experience, internationally applicable law, research and information to reduce the risk of the introduction of foot-and-mouth disease and for the preparation of emergency plans.
4. To provide international financial and technical support to the execution of preventive measures in disease-free countries.
5. To involve farmers as participants in the framing and execution of prevention plans and programs.
6. To agree to make epidemiological information transparent in all the nations of the hemisphere, as an act of international ethics in the prevention, control and eradication of foot-and-mouth disease.

CLOSING SESSION

In the closing session Mr. Luis Benjamin Bowles, President of the Cattlemen's Federation of Santa Cruz de la Sierra (FEGASACRUZ), Bolivia, presented a decoration to the Assistant Director of PAHO, Dr. Mirta Roses, for her support to his country's animal health and veterinary public health projects during his tenure as Representative.

In his closing words the Director recalled for the participants his remarks of the morning on the final results expected of this meeting, which beyond its resolutions and the reiterations of commitments amounted to an example of intersectoral coordination, community participation and genuine sense of Pan Americanism. In the name of PAHO he expressed thanks for the decoration presented to Dr. Roses.

In his closing remarks the President of COHEFA mentioned that the results presented, the difficulties encountered and the activities programming discussed pointed to a tangible, attainable goal, which was not only a quest for economic advancement of the countries, but true integration of all of them.

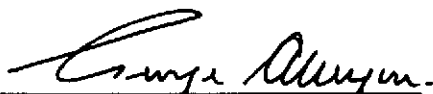
The President thanked the participants for their contributions to the success of the Meeting, and declared it closed.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned sign the present Final Report in English and Spanish.

DONE in Washington, D.C., United States of America, this twenty-fourth day of April, nineteen hundred and ninety-five.



Carlos Gasparri
President of COHEFA V
Minister of Livestock,
Agriculture and Fisheries
Uruguay



George A.O. Alleyne
Secretary *ex officio*
Director,
Pan American Health Organization