

PAHO AND IICA ASSEMBLES MINISTERS OF DISCUSS THE COORDINATION IN HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE

Rio de Janeiro, PANAFTOSA-PAHO/WHO – During June 11 and 12, Brazil will host the RIMSA 15 (15th Inter-American Meeting, at the Ministerial Level, on Health and Agriculture), the COHEFA 11 (11th Meeting of the Hemispheric Committee for Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease), and the COPAIA 5 (5th Meeting of the Pan American Commission for Innocuousness of Food). These are meetings convoked by the Director of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), Dr. Mirta Roses Periago, which are traditionally held in Washington, DC.

WHAT IS HAPPENING

RIMSA 15 is the political forum of the highest continental level which assembles ministers of health and agriculture of the countries of the Americas and proposes collaboration between these sectors, to discuss political guidelines on animal health and zoonoses, and interchange of knowledge and experience achieved in the continent by prevention and health control programs, foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) eradication projects, protection of food and other emerging diseases.

This year, the inauguration of the event will have the participation of the governor of the State of Rio de Janeiro – Sergio Cabral – and attendance has been confirmed of more than 20 Ministers of Health and Agriculture of the Americas.

The Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Supply of Brasil, Reinhold Stephanes, will open the Agri-Health Forum on June 11 with the talk on “Animal Production. Health and Development in South America: strength, challenges and opportunities”. Other topics to be presented by the panels will be food safety, climatic changes, innocuousness of food, nutrition, eco and agri-tourism, zoonoses and social inclusion in the rural environment. According to Dr. Albino Belotto, director of Veterinary Public Health of PAHO, “these days of activity are essential to the main subject of RIMSA, which will be to strengthen the integration between the health and agriculture sectors of the Member States, with special attention to rural zones, as well as to consolidate current links between the public and the private sector”. He still added: “(...) the objective of this strategy is to contribute with the social and economic development of rural populations, with the increase in production, interchange, distribution and consumption of animal-origin food of good quality. To offer new possibilities to improve life conditions of rural populations which represent 23% of the population of the region”.



Previously to the RIMSA 15, on June 9, 2008 the 11th Meeting of COHEFA (Hemispheric Committee for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease) will be held and its objective is to evaluate the progress of the Hemispheric Plan for Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (PHEFA).

COHEFA 11 holds special importance due to the need to approve the new strategic guidelines for PHEFA in view of the progress observed in the disease eradication, as well as a consequence of recently recorded episodes, which demand a reorientation of prevention and health emergency actions.

The carrying out of the objectives proposed by the Hemispheric Plan depends on the political effort and the close collaboration between the official and the private sectors in the development of eradication activities. For this reason, COHEFA 11 will have the participation of representatives of these sectors in the six sub-regions which integrate the Committee: the Southern Cone, Amazonia, Andean Area, Central America, the Caribbean and North America.

On June 10, the 5th Meeting of the Pan American Commission for Innocuousness of Food (COPAIA 5) will be held. This meeting will contribute to the strengthening of food safety in the countries and to maintain the political will of the sectors involved in the food chain to organize food safety programs as a special function of public health.

WHO IS INVOLVED

The RIMSA meeting in Rio is being organized by the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) jointly with the Inter-American Institute of Cooperation for Agriculture (IICA) and with the support of the government of Brazil through the Ministries of Health; Agriculture, Livestock and Supply, and Foreign Affairs.

The meeting will be attended by the Ministers of Health and Agriculture of all the countries of the continent, representatives of associations of cattlemen and international organs for technical and financial cooperation, such as BIRD, World Bank, World Health Organization, OIE, IICA, FAO, OIRSA, among others.

When

June 9, 2008 – COHEFA 11

June 10, 2008 – COPAIA 5

June 11 and 12, 2008 – RIMSA 15



WHERE

Conventions Center

Hotel Intercontinental Rio

Av. Prefeito Mendes de Morães, 222 – São Conrado

Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil

AGENDA

The objectives of RIMSAs 15 are to discuss subjects of mutual interest to health and agriculture. Panels of specialists will debate the following topics: The objectives of the Millennium related to poverty and hunger, strategies of primary attention in health and local development, international cooperation in emerging problems in the agricultural, livestock and health environment, such as avian influenza, for example.

PAHO was established in 1902 and it is the oldest public health organization in the world. It functions as a Regional Office for the Americas of the World Health Organization and carries out and promotes work with the countries to improve health and the quality of life of their populations.

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