

AGRICULTURE AND HEALTH AUTHORITIES HIGHLIGHT THE IMPORTANCE OF COORDINATED INTERACTION BETWEEN AGRICULTURE, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT TO ENSURE FOOD AND NUTRITIONAL SECURITY

Santiago de Chile, July 27 - Ministers of Health and Agriculture of the Americas expressed a growing need to maintain and strengthen coordination between Public and Animal Health to prevent, detect and respond appropriately to animal diseases which may pose risks to public health, affecting either the production of food of animal origin or trade.

The ministers met during the 26th and 27th of July in Santiago de Chile, to discuss the challenges and opportunities to meet the growing demand for maintaining accessible and sustainable food supplies.

Participants also discussed how to address the risks related to human health, food production and food safety and ecosystem health. The meeting was organized by the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) through its Program of Veterinary Public Health / Foot and Mouth Disease Center (PANAFTOSA), supported and sponsored by the Government of Chile, through the Ministries of Health and Agriculture.

During the opening session on July 27th, the Minister of Health of Chile presented the "Order of the Southern Cross" award, on behalf of the Chilean government, to Dr. Mirta Roses, PAHO Director in recognition of her outstanding service to public health in the Americas.

In her presentation "Agriculture, Nutrition and Health", Dr. Roses highlighted the importance of food security and nutrition as a human right. She also stressed the need to ensure access to an adequate and continuous food supply as well as nutritional security.

RIMSA is the only forum in the Americas for the development of policies of common interest between health and agriculture sectors, guiding the definition of PAHO's technical cooperation program in veterinary public health in the Americas. It brings together the ministers of health and agriculture in the region, as well as representatives of producer and consumer groups, and international organizations. During this meeting, the ministers discussed opportunities and challenges to maintaining sufficient and sustainable food supplies. They recognized the importance and complexity of the interactions that occur at the interface between public health, animal health and the environment and how to respond to such emerging challenges.

PAHO was established in 1902 and works with all countries of the Americas to improve the health and quality of life of the peoples of the Americas. It also serves as the Regional Office for the Americas of the World Health Organization (WHO).

LINKS:
RIMSA16: <http://ww2.panaftosa.org.br/rimsa16/>
COHEFA 1: <http://ww2.panaftosa.org.br/cohefa12/>
COPAIA 6: <http://ww2.panaftosa.org.br/copaia6/>
INTERAGENCY FORUM: <http://bit.ly/NO6OY2>
PANAFTOSA: <http://new.paho.org/panaftosa/>
PAHO: <http://new.paho.org>

MEDIA CONTACTS:

En Santiago de Chile:

Cely Avila, cavila@panaftosa.ops-oms.org

Andrea Águila, aguilaa@chi.ops-oms.org, +56-2 437 4600, Móvil: +56 9 90233038

En Washington, DC:

Leticia Linn, linnl@paho.org, Tel. + 202 974 3440, Móvil +1 202 701 4005,

Donna Eberwine-Villagran, eberwind@paho.org, Tel. +1 202 974 3122, Móvil +1 202 316 5469,

Knowledge Management and Communications, PAHO/WHO—www.paho.org