

Hemispheric Forum Discusses Trends, New Ways to Work, and Innovative Financing Mechanisms for Agricultural Development

Creating new ways to provide technical assistance to family farmers, promoting capacity building for national research institutes, and establishing partnerships with the private sector were some of the options presented to boost agricultural innovation and technology development.



(Washington, D.C., November 13, 2015), [FONTAGRO](#), the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), and EMBRAPA co-organized the **Fifteenth Meeting of FORAGRO's Extended Executive Committee**, held in Brasília this November 10 and 11.

The hemispheric forum brought together more than 70 experts from Latin America, Canada, and the English-speaking Caribbean, who, over two days, shared their experiences and discussed trends in agricultural innovation topics for the coming years. Issues discussed during the meeting included the importance of addressing the needs of a growing population, with more food, but above all, food with higher nutritional value; changes in diets and consumer preferences; and the use of technologies that already exist in other sectors and can be adopted by family farming.

Panels of experts also discussed innovative mechanisms for meeting new institutional requirements and approaches to agricultural research and development, in which strengthening the capacities of national research institutes and family farmers plays a fundamental part.

The meeting also included the introduction of new ways of providing technical assistance to family farmers by promoting integrated and participatory networking with intersectoral stakeholders to meet the needs of the most vulnerable populations.

Another topic discussed involved financial mechanisms that include public-sector participation and private-sector involvement, through the creation of partnerships that are essential to boosting innovation, complementing social program efforts, and strengthening investments.

Regarding the activity, **FONTAGRO's President**, José Luis Repetto, stated: "We strongly believe in enhancing cooperation among regional and international mechanisms. To that end, **FORAGRO** plays an important role in the hemispheric agenda consensus, on issues of agricultural research and development, underscoring the comparative advantages of all stakeholders."

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About FORAGRO

FORAGRO (Forum for the Americas on Agricultural Research and Technology Development) is a space for discussing the main issues related to agriculture in the Americas. FORAGRO is a member of The Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR) and it is composed of public and private national agricultural research institutes, higher-education institutes and universities, private sector organizations, producer unions, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), youth organizations, and public and private foundations that develop and/or promote technological innovation. The following cooperative research programs are members of FORAGRO: PROCISUR; PROCITROPICOS; Grupo Técnico de Innovación de Centroamérica; PROCINORTE and PROMECAFE; such innovation networks as Red INNOVAGRO and RELASER; and FONTAGRO. Other members include CATIE and CARDI, as well as CGIAR centers that work in the Americas and the Caribbean. FORAGRO's technical secretariat is provided by IICA. EMBRAPA currently holds FORAGRO's presidency.

About FONTAGRO

FONTAGRO is a unique regional cooperation mechanism that promotes family farming innovation, competitiveness, and food security. It was established in 1998 and it includes fifteen member countries that have contributed a capital of some \$100 million. FONTAGRO is sponsored by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA). Its Technical Administrative Secretariat is based at IDB headquarters in Washington, D.C. FONTAGRO has cofinanced 98 projects and initiatives in its member countries for an approximate amount of \$83.7 million, including contributions from other sources of funding and executing agencies. Its member countries are Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Spain, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

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