

The International Year of Plant Health celebrations will include 50 organizations.

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The National Service of Food Safety and Agriculture Quality (SENASICA) announced that in the coming weeks it will call 50 agricultural, academic and scientific organizations to commence preparations to celebrate the 2020 International Year of Plant Health and the 120th anniversary of plant health management in Mexico.

Francisco Ramírez y Ramírez, General Director of Plant Health of the Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development (SADER) pointed out that all organizations that interact in works to protect crops will be invited to join the festivities of the 2020 International Year of Plant Health as instituted by the United Nations (UN).

During his participation in the 45th Agricultural Parasitology National Symposium held in San Luis Potosi, the federal officer explained that the purpose of both celebrations is that society becomes more aware about the importance of plant health in subjects such as food security, reduction of poverty and environmental protection.

It is important that society becomes aware of the fact that plant health drives sustainable agricultural practices, facilitates economic and commercial development, generates responsible practices that reduce the spread of pests and promotes scientific innovation.

To summarize, Ramírez and Ramírez underlined that plant health is essential in the development of Mexican fields for its contribution to human wellbeing, generating wealth and social peace.

In this regard, he emphasized that San Luis Potosi's producers have understood the need to invest in sanitation practices, and as proof the state has become a referent in the production of sugar cane, citrus fruits, peppers and tomato, for national consumption and export.

On the other hand, Governor Juan Manuel Carreras López pointed out that in four years the state's agri-food production has grown 11.2 percent and has started to become competitive in products that did not stand out before, such as avocado and egg.

Moreover, he stated that there are no shortcuts in agri-food subjects and that sanitation is the main component that has helped producers to access better markets and sell their products with better competitive conditions, which has generated a very important value chain in the state.

He pointed out that another great achievement for the livestock sector was that, after 22 years, some San Luis Potosi regions have raised their status regarding bovine tuberculosis; therefore and subsequently, the producers have committed to keep investing in health to maintain and even improve such achieved status.

Abel Toledo Martínez, President of the IAP (Agronomist-Parasitologist Engineers) also argued for promoting plant health throughout all the country, so producers can protect their crops with the best methods and achieve sustainable and profitable crops.

He explained that pests and diseases can cause losses of 30 to 40% in food production, so the industry must be alert and rely on the SENASICA and local governments to resolve any health issues.

He considers that food safety plays a transcendent role, because consumers want to learn about the traceability in the production processes and demand healthy foods free of pollutants.

Members of the Plant Health State Committee and students from related majors of the UASLP (Autonomous University of San Luis Potosi) participated in the Agricultural Parasitology Symposium.