

Agriculture promotes Electronic Certification to guarantee more security to international food trade.

The Senasica already exchanges International Phytosanitary Certificates with countries member of the Pacific Alliance, and performs tests with Argentina and United States.



Mexico makes a progress in the exchange of International Phytosanitary Certificates (IPCs) by electronic means with different countries, with the purpose of promoting the safe and quick trade of agri-food products, informed the chief director of the National Service for Agro-Alimentary Public Health, Safety and Quality (SENASICA), Francisco Javier Trujillo Arriaga.

During a meeting with members of the Confederation of Custom Brokers of Mexico (Caaarem), he detailed that one of the main tasks of the Senasica is to inspect the points of entry to the country, with the aim of reducing the risk of pests and diseases' entry, which may affect the national agri-food heritage.

The official of the Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development (SADER) remembered that the zero risk does not exist, there are always threads. That is why, it is essential to be alert and to perform measures in order to reduce the admission chances of rare pests. One of these measures, he said, are the IPCs issued by health authorities of countries to attest the conditions of the plant products exported.

He explained that sending these documents electronically from country to country is safer for the food trade exchange, because the

presence of shipments with apocryphal documents at customs is avoided.

He pointed out that the IPCs comply with the standard stated by the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), which means another guarantee for the countries.

The official underlined the importance of the Single Window for Foreign Trade in Mexico (VUCEM) operated by the Tax Administration Services (SAT), through which Sader issues the electronic IPCs that are already exchanged with country members of the Pacific Alliance: Chile, Colombia and Peru.

He said that nowadays, they are carrying out tests with Argentina and United States for sending-receiving electronic certificates under the IPPC program. These tests gave satisfactory results, so we expect to start using this method in due course.

It is important to highlight that achieving agreements regarding electronic certification with the main business partners of Mexico will facilitate more than 350 thousand procedures for the import and export of agri-food products every year. Forty percent of these procedures are performed in 10 Health Inspection Offices (OISA) of the Senasica, located on the northern border.

On the other hand, the head of the Senasica met with the president of the Caaarem, Arturo Reyes. The two of them will sign a collaboration agreement between both agencies.

This agreement is aimed to establish strategic cooperation basis, especially in technical areas for the exchange of databases and temporary notices about pests and diseases, which may jeopardize the Mexican agri-food heritage.

In this respect, Trujillo Arriaga said that integrity is an indispensable requirement to work at ports, airports and borders because corruption acts may allow the entry of pests and diseases to the country.

Arturo Reyes declared that Caaarem understands that working on customs is an issue related to the national security, so the members work on creating an anticorruption Code into its regulations in order to make specific reference to integrity among the custom brokers of Mexico.