

# Plant health is a national asset: Secretariat of Agriculture

During the “Food Security and Plant Health” forum organized by the UMFFAAC (Mexican Syndicate of Manufacturers and Developers of Agrochemicals), the National Agro-Alimentary Health, Safety and Quality Service (SENASICA) stated that “For over 120 years, the Secretariat of Agriculture, in coordination with farmers, has implemented plant health actions in the 32 states”.



The sanitary status achieved has enabled Mexico to rank eleventh among producers of agricultural crops in the world.

Plant health in Mexico is national asset that stopped being only a government matter and evolved into a task that nowadays involves all the links of the agro-alimentary chain, from small scale producers to large food processing industries, and food traders.

During his intervention in the “Food Security and Plant Health” forum organized by the UMFFAAC (Mexican Syndicate of Manufacturers and Developers of Agrochemicals”, Francisco Javier Trujillo Arriaga, general director of the National Agro-Alimentary Health, Safety and Quality Service (SENASICA), mentioned that our country has matured and become an example worldwide, thanks to 120 years of experience in plant health matters.

He further explained that the celebration designated by the United Nations promotes the importance of caring for plants to produce foods free of pests and diseases, and consequently advance towards the goal of attaining food security.

In the context of the International Plant Health Day celebrations, the official from the Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development recalled that the SENASICA, pursuant to the Federal Plant Health Law, promotes and enforces many legal provisions to prevent the introduction and spread of plant pests that represent a risk for food production.

Concurrently, the agency implements strategies to establish plant health measures intended to protect crops.

The agency is authorized to establish and direct actions to prevent, delimit, contain, and eradicate threats, through epidemiological surveillance activities and plant health protections, and to enact requirements and provisions to timely address pest and disease outbreaks.

He further stated that Mexico has made remarkable progress in the appropriate use of agrochemicals and that the country has a mature industry, which considers environmental protection a top priority.

The synergy between the environmental component, public health, and the agro-alimentary sector, makes possible for strategies to achieve favorable results.

The coordinated work between the federal and state governments, assisted by the Plant Health auxiliary bodies, has been masterfully developed, and is part of the reasons that today Mexico is a world reference and has a privileged position as agro-alimentary producer.

Juan Cortina Gallardo, president of the CNA (National Agriculture and Livestock Council) stated that the Mexican plant health status is a passport for all agro-alimentary products cultivated in the country.

He emphasized that the plant health measures applied by millions of producers make possible for Mexico to be free of over one

thousand regulated pests, and control, in a timely and efficient manner, any incursions detected through epidemiological surveillance.

Senator Beatriz Paredes Rangel, member of the Agriculture, Livestock, Fishery and Rural Development of the Mexican Senate, made a call to strengthen the support provided to small scale producers through strategic programs to lift the countryside.

### **Mexico is the eleventh producer of agricultural crops in the world**

Mexico ranks eleventh in agricultural crops producer in the world, with 24.6 million seeded hectares.

The importance of plant health makes possible to reach commercial treaties and agreements to trade Persian limes, oranges, tangerines, peppers, avocados, guavas, figs, sapodilla fruits, table grapes, corn, and berries, with countries such as the United States, Japan, South Korea, and China.

The Forum was also attended by Senator Nancy Sánchez Arredondo, president of the Agriculture, Livestock, Fishery, and Rural Development Commission of the Senate; Juan José Flores, director of Anaberries (National Association of Berry Exporters); Kazuo Watanabe, professor from the Genetic Research Center of the Tsukuba University of Japan; Manuel Gerardo Flores, coordinator of the Regulatory Policy Program of the Organization

for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and Luis Fueyo McDonald, environmental advisor, among others.