



# CARIBBEAN PLANT HEALTH DIRECTORS

PROTECTING CARIBBEAN AGRICULTURE

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## NEWSLETTER

BI-ANNUAL PUBLICATION



*CPHD Forum Chairman, Mr. Brian Crichlow*

### Chairman's Message

On behalf of myself and the members of the CPHD Executive, I extend heartfelt greetings and best wishes for a happy, productive, and rewarding 2023 to my fellow Plant Health Directors, Representatives of our Partner Organizations, Plant Health professionals across the region, and all friends and supporters of the CPHD Forum.

A year ago at the outset of 2022, we knew that the world was still dealing with the impacts of COVID-19 and that it would be another challenging year. Yet despite this, we, the plant health professionals across the region and globally have continued to be professional, committed to doing our jobs and our best to safeguard our agriculture and environments from the threats of invasive pests, climate-driven change, and facilitate the safe and efficient trade of agricultural commodities upon which we all depend. Your commitment to regional plant health initiatives and to the CPHD in 2022 has been equally unwavering. Despite all of the external challenges and inability to meet and exchange information and ideas as we once did, we have still managed to accomplish many of our goals and deliver results for the benefit of our national agricultural systems across the region.

This past year our Regional Priority Pest List (RPPL) working group was able to meet and produce the third iteration of our Regional Priority Pest List. The RPPL working group continues to enhance and improve the methodologies used in the preparation of the list, which is of critical importance to the region as it helps to focus resources and shape and define

the priorities and work plans for the CPHD as well as all organizations, national and regional, working in plant health in the Caribbean.

In addition to the updated Regional Priority Pest List, thanks to the ongoing financial support of USDA-APHIS-GCSI and the coordination of USDA-APHIS-IS Trinidad (the CPHD's Secretariat), the CPHD was able to complete the development and testing of two new digital tools, CBIS and Pest Surveillance Database. Both of these tools will greatly enhance the work of NPPOs across the Caribbean as they are rolled -out and implemented regionally. The CPHD extends its sincere thanks to the staff of the NPPOs in Jamaica, the Cayman Islands, and St Kitts for piloting and testing the respective systems and for providing the feedback critical to improving the final product.

In the latter half of 2022, the CPHD, with the guidance of a very experienced Consultant, Mr. Miguel Camacho, developed a five-year Strategic Plan for the Forum. Thanks to the Consultant and the commitment of the members of the planning group, which comprised the Executive, TWG Chairs, representatives of the CPHD membership, and key partner organizations, over many lengthy virtual meetings, we now have a Plan to strategically guide our work over the next 5 years. As we begin 2023, our task is to translate this plan into actions and initiatives which will continue to move us forward to the achievement of our goals.

One of the Executive's goals this year is to ensure the return to our annual face-to-face meeting - to rekindle and strengthen those bonds of kindred and mutual purpose that have been the foundation of the success of the CPHD over the past 15 years. It is this spirit of togetherness and common purpose, guided by a shared vision and agreed strategic goals that will ensure our success and the continued strengthening of plant health across the Caribbean. I look forward to working with you all in the coming year and to seeing you at CPHD 16.



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## Coordinating Trade Relevant and Pest Specific Webinars for the Greater Caribbean Region

To better streamline APHIS Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) - internal and external stakeholder accessibility to regulatory requirements for imported agricultural products, PPQ developed the Agricultural Commodity Import Requirements (ACIR) database. From October 1st, 2022, ACIR will be the official location for determining import requirements for fresh fruits and vegetables (with FAVIR being retired) and house regulations from four APHIS PPQ manuals including the Miscellaneous and Processed Products Manual, the Cut Flowers and Greenery Manual, the Plants for Planting Manual, and the Seeds not for Planting Manual.

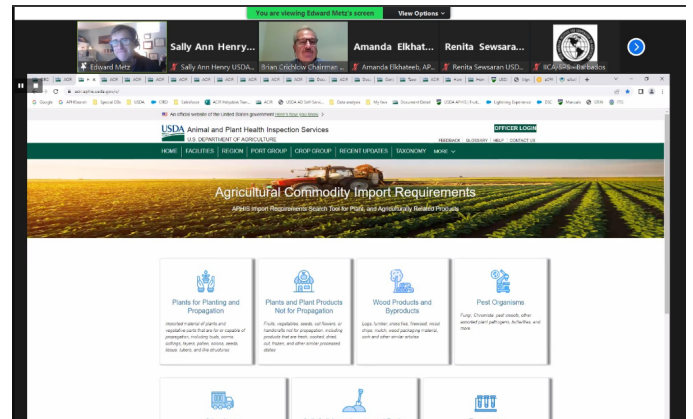
As such, on Thursday 20th October 2022, the CPHD Forum, in collaboration with APHIS IS Trinidad and the USDA APHIS PPQ (Phytosanitary Issues Management) Information Services and Manuals Unit (IRM-PEIP), coordinated a timely webinar titled “USDA’S One Place for Agricultural Import Information” for the NPPOs of the Caribbean Region. The webinar provided a detailed demonstration of navigating ACIR as well as highlighted the versatility and specificity of the database.

The webinar was well attended, with over 70 stakeholders joining from the Greater Caribbean Region.

Accordingly, with the rise of the Giant African Land Snail (GALS) population throughout the Caribbean Region, a second webinar, hosted by the CPHD forum in collaboration with APHIS IS Trinidad and the USDA Mollusks Cross Functional Working Group was held on October 27th, 2022. The webinar was aimed at providing experiential learning content on Giant African Land Snail (GALS) detection, management, and eradication programs.

Presentations were delivered by the staff of the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services – Plant Protection and Quarantine (USDA APHIS PPQ), Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), and CPHD Member States Barbados and Antigua and Barbuda who gave the Caribbean’s perspective on GALS Impact and Long Term Management. The webinar, which was attended by over 200 participants from NPPOs,

research, and academic institutions, concluded with a moderated technical question and answer session by CARDI.



*Mr. Ed Metz, USDA IRM-PEIP, demonstrating the ACIR System*



*Mr. Jason Stanley, DPI FDACS, presenting on Miami and Tampa Eradication programs*

The recordings and presentations from both webinars are available on the CPHD's website:

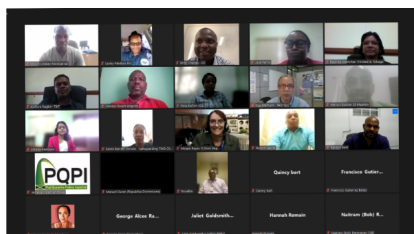
<https://members.cphdforum.org/index.php/2022/10/28/giant-african-snail-webinar/> (Login Required)

<https://members.cphdforum.org/index.php/2022/10/21/usda-s-one-place-for-agricultural-import-information-webinar-resources/> (Login Required)

## CPHD hosts its 15th Annual Meeting Virtually

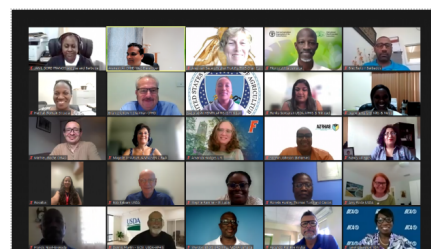
For the 3rd year, the CPHD Executive and USDA APHIS, in collaboration with the Caribbean RPPO – the Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA), the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), and the 32-member state forum of the CPHD convened its 15th Annual meeting in a virtual format from September 14th - 16th, 2022.

The Annual Meeting closely followed the 3-day Regional IPPC meeting to capitalize on the momentum built on plant health discussions, updates, recommendations, and decisions. The meeting was attended by 60-plus regional participants/ partners for the 3 days.



At the CPHD Annual Meeting, the Regional Priority Pest List (RPPL) Working Group presented the results of its 4th Pest Prioritization Exercise and the model employed to examine parameters such as invasiveness, economic, social, and environmental impact, to arrive at the ten (10) quarantine pests that would have the highest probability of impact, that are either not present or if present is in limited distribution and being officially controlled. The process resulted in the identification of the Red Ring Nematode which affects mainly coconut palms and is present in a few countries as the number one priority crop pest for the region. This was followed by *Fusarium oxysporum fsp cubens* TR4, which affects all bananas, plantains, and all Musa species; *Ceratitis capitata/rosa*, the Mediterranean Fruit Fly (Medfly), which can affect all varieties of fruits and vegetables; *Steneotarsonemus spinki* (Rice panicle mite); *Helicoverpa armigera* (Old World Bollworm), *Ralstonia solanacearum* Race 3 Biovar 2 (Brown rot of potato), Banana bunchy top virus, Maize lethal necrosis disease, *Rhynchophorus ferrugineus* (Red Palm Weevil), and *Peronosclerospora philippinensis* (Downy Mildew).

In support of the management of those pests and to build a safeguarding continuum, the CPHD through USDA APHIS funding - launched and piloted the Caribbean Biosecurity



Interceptions System (CBIS) and the Pest Caribbean Surveillance Tool. These tools will allow for the analysis of noncompliance issues encountered in trade over time, and act as an entry point for data collected in relation to pest threat surveillance in the Caribbean region.

To achieve an intervention strategy for surveillance at ports for the prevention of the entry of pests and invasive species in the region, Emergency Response Plans (ERPs) for four (4) priority pests of mutual concern for the Caribbean and the United States, as well as Guidelines for the conduct of Tabletop Simulation Exercises were developed. The tabletop simulations for the pests *Tuta absoluta* (Tomato Leafminer), *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2 (Brown Rot of Potato), *Xanthomonas citri* (Citrus Canker), and Citrus Leprosis virus were conducted in five countries.

The exercise served to prepare the National Plant Protection Offices (NPPOs) for pest incursions that potentially threaten food and nutrition security, trade, and the socio-economic development of the Region. In addition, it has provided best practices that can be used to optimize the outcomes of the simulations when scaled up to other countries in the Greater Caribbean.

Another highlight of the annual meeting was the announcement by The University of the West Indies, Faculty of Food and Agriculture, Trinidad and Tobago to now offer a fully online and accredited Plant Quarantine Basics Course from January 2023. This course seeks to develop the technical skills of plant quarantine workers across the region to enable them to safeguard their country's borders from the entry of unwanted Invasive Alien Species (IAS).

Finally, it was announced at the meeting that the Caribbean Pest Diagnostics Network (CPDN), an initiative of the University of Florida, IS Trinidad, and CPHD, to rapidly identify digital photos of pests, will continue for another 2 years FREE OF CHARGE to the entire Caribbean Region.

# Top 10 Priority Pest for the Caribbean identified at the 4th Meeting of the CPHD Regional Priority Pest List Working Group

During the week of August 29th – September 2nd, 2022, the 4th Meeting of the Caribbean Plant Health Directors (CPHD) Regional Priority Pest List (RPPL) Working Group was held in Kingston, Jamaica. The overall objective of the TWG is to identify and prioritized quarantine pests for the Caribbean scientifically and objectively.

The TWG comprises experts within the region in the fields of Entomology; Crop Pathology (Bacteriology, Mycology, Virology) Nematology, Malacology, Acarology, Weed Sciences, Plant Quarantine, and Economics (AHP Model). Through the intervention of the USDA APHIS, to improve the quality and accuracy of its outputs this year, the RPPL WG adopted the use of the USDA Objective Prioritization of Exotic Pest (OPEP) model. This model reliably predicts the probability that a pest, based on its behavior in other areas with similar climates, will have a high negative impact on crop production as well as local plants.

A blended approach was used for this WG and as such prior to the face-to-face meeting in Jamaica, experts.

- Examined the prioritized list of quarantine pests from a minimum of (9) nine CARICOM Members states
- Conducted Horizon Scanning to identify the potential pests that could enter into the region based on trade flows, potential spread, etc. and
- The Priority regulated pests in the OIRSA region

Pests identified from the process above were analyzed using the OPEP Model and only the pests with the highest impact potential percentage ( $\geq 70\%$ ), were short-listed for further ranking/prioritization using the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) which examines parameters such as invasiveness; economic, social and environmental impact. As a result, the list below reflects the Top 10 Priority Pests for the Caribbean (ranked in the order of priority) with the Top 5 Pest of Mutual Concern to the USA and the Caribbean

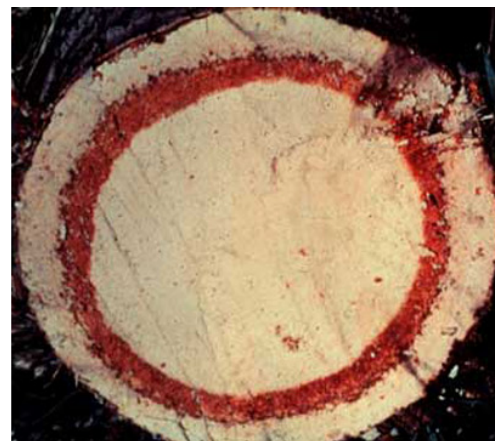
(highlighted) was also identified when cross-referenced against the USDA OPEP 2022 results (<https://pestlens.info/>).

Pest #1: Red ring nematode
Pest #2: <i>Fusarium oxysporum fsp cubens</i> TR4
Pest #3: <i>Ceratitis capitata</i> - Medfly
Pest #4 : Rice panicle mite
Pest #5: <i>Helicoverpa armigera</i> - Old World Bollworm
Pest #6: <i>Ralstonia solanacearum</i> Race 3 Biovar 2 - Brown rot of potato
Pest #7: Banana bunchy top virus
Pest #8: Maize lethal necrosis disease
Pest #9: <i>Rhynchophorus ferrugineus</i> - Red Palm Weevil
Pest #10: <i>Peronosclerospora philippinensis</i> (Downy Mildew)



*Figure 1 Staff of APHIS IS Trinidad (CPHD Secretariat) and the Experts on the CPHD Regional Priority Pest Listing Working Group, Kingston, Jamaica*

It is important to mention that the output of this Working Group instructs/ informs the attention, resources, and activities of the CPHD and its regional partners with respect to the design and implementation of regional pest exclusion and monitoring activities such as surveillance programs, capacity building, regional emergency action plans, simulation exercises, regional pest risk analysis – all within the context of finite resources.



*Figure 2 - Red ring disease caused by red ring nematode*

Image credit - Entomology and Nematology Department - University of Florida

# The 2022 International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) Caribbean Regional Workshop



© FAO/Saul Palma

The International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) Secretariat and Regional Plant Protection Organizations of the Caribbean held their annual regional workshop virtually on 16-18 August. The conference theme this year is Innovative Plant Health for Food Security.

The IPPC opening message was given by IPPC Secretary Osama El-Lissy who emphasized the essential role that innovative plant health methods have in guaranteeing the right to food for everyone. He reminded participants that preventative international phytosanitary standards are key to avoiding costly eradication and control responses to emergency pest outbreaks in all regions of the globe.

“The IPPC has an important role in protecting plants and in combatting hunger on a global scale. The IPPC Secretariat remains committed to working together with FAO and national and regional plant protection organizations in fulfilling our collective mission. That is, to safeguard agricultural and natural resources against invasive pests and diseases. We also work to facilitate the safe trade not only of plants, plant products, and regulated articles but also of agricultural crops that will help feed an increasingly hungry global population,” El-Lissy says.

Live welcoming remarks were presented by FAO Caribbean Sub-Regional office representative Guy Mathurin, Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency Chief Executive Officer Gavin Peters, and Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture representative Janet Lawrence.

The IPPC Caribbean Regional Workshop was chaired by Thaddeus Peters of Grenada’s National Plant Protection Organization (NPPO) who led nearly 50 registered participants from 15 Caribbean countries in the discussions. Participants learned about IPPC activities and shared views, information, and updates on activities and initiatives in the region. The IPPC Secretariat and NPPO representatives gave topic reviews and received comments on draft standards including:

- Revision of ISPM 4 Requirements for the establishment of pest-free areas
- Revision of ISPM 18 Guidelines for the use of irradiation as a phytosanitary measure
- 2021 Amendments to ISPM 5 Glossary of phytosanitary terms
- Criteria for evaluation of available information for determining host status of fruit to fruit flies (2018-011) to ISPM 37 (Determination of host status of fruit flies (Tephritidae))
- Draft 2022 Amendments to ISPM 5: Glossary on phytosanitary terms
- Use of specific import authorizations (Annex to ISPM 20: Guidelines for a phytosanitary import regulatory system)

Various members of the Caribbean countries shared reports and case studies on the latest IPPC and Caribbean regional plant health activities and initiatives. Among those who presented included a member of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measure (CPM) Bureau Javier Trujillo, Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency Plant Health Specialist Juliet Goldsmith, IPPC Standards Committee member Hernando Morera González, Implementation and Capacity Development Committee member Francisco Gutierrez, Inter-America Institute of Cooperation for Agriculture (IICA) representative Janet Lawrence, FAO Sub-Regional Office for the Caribbean representative Guy Mathurin, United States Department of Agriculture, Plant Protection and Quarantine Directors Christian Dellis and Dennis Martin, and IPPC Secretariat representative Fitzroy White.

Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, and Saint Lucia highlighted the major activities undertaken by NPPOs on activities related to the inaugural of the International Day of Plant Health on 12 May 2022. Other topics included the IPPC Strategic Framework 2020-2030 Development Agenda Items on Pest Outbreak and Response System, e-commerce, and perspectives on IPPC commodity standards and Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation.

The IPPC Secretariat leads thanked the Caribbean regional workshop organizing committee members for their success in fulfilling a fruitful and robust workshop chaired by Mr. Peters.

For more information:

<https://www.ippc.int/en/news/ippc-regional-workshop-in-the-caribbean-successfully-concluded/>

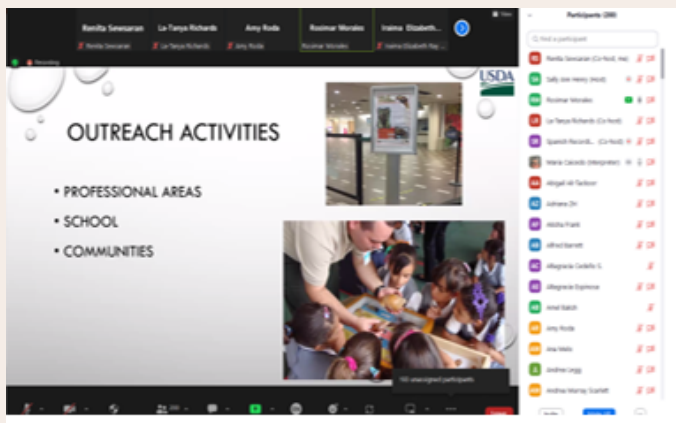


# Giant African Snail Identification Training for Jamaica



Further to the GALS webinar held in October 2022, Jamaica's Plant Quarantine/Produce Inspection Branch was desirous of training their technical officers in the NPPO i.e. Plant Quarantine Inspectors, Entomologists/Identifiers, Diagnosticians, Researchers, and Agricultural Extension Officers, in the identification of the Giant African Land Snail and other gastropods of importance to the Caribbean region.

The Giant African Snail is a pest of quarantine significance to Jamaica, is present on the country's Regulated Pest list, and is one of the top ten priority pests.



Through the coordinated efforts of the CPHD Forum, the Mollusks Cross Functional Working Group, APHIS IS Trinidad, and the Jamaican Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, the training was held in November 2022 and facilitated by Dr. David Robinson and Dr. Amy Roda. It was attended by over 30 technicians.

The CPHD wishes to give special recognition to Dr. David Robinson, National Malacologist for the USDA APHIS. He has provided significant support to the Caribbean Region as the Subject Matter Expert on all issues regarding mollusks for the USDA.

He has also provided malacology capacity-building training to national agricultural authorities throughout the West Indies, Latin America, and island nations across the Pacific. After twenty-seven years with the USDA Dr. Robinson is moving on to other endeavours and the CPHD will like to wish him all the best.

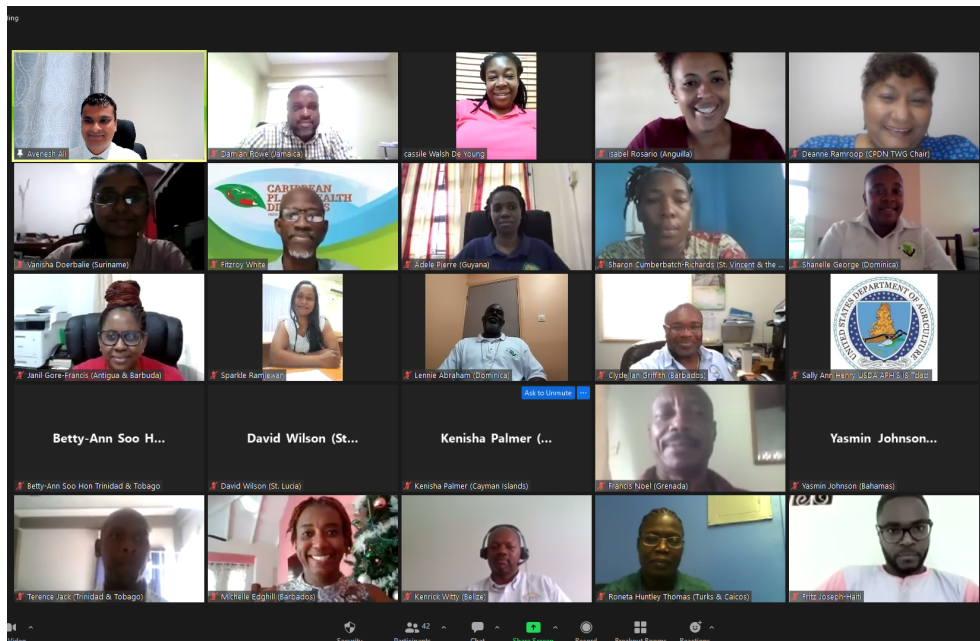
# CPHD launches digital safeguarding tools regionally

## The Regional Launch of the Caribbean Biosecurity Interceptions System (CBIS)

CBIS was originally conceptualized and built by CAB International to improve the communication and recording of instances of IAS interceptions by port authorities in the Eastern Caribbean. However, in 2021 CBIS was handed over to the CPHD for sustainability and expansion.

Over the past year, understanding the potential that CBIS can have for plant health and quarantine, the CPHD Executive in collaboration with USDA APHIS and with funding from GCSI, enhanced that component of the CBIS to better be in line with IPPC ISPM # 13 Non-Compliance Reporting. It will be the region's first and only web-based standardized port interception data collection and reporting tool.

The improved CBIS was piloted in August 2022 in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands and on November 11th, 2022 was successfully launched to the 16 additional other CPHD Member states with national usage set to begin in February 2023. To ensure the full and effective use and uptake of CBIS in the Region, a multi-part training plan was devised to include recapping plant health concepts and tools including IPPC NROs, Port Inspections, and Sampling and The Caribbean Pest Diagnostics Network (CPDN).



**Bilateral NROs ⇌ Inspection Process**

**Bilateral Obligations**

- 01 Organizational arrangements of plant protection
- 02 Rationale for phytosanitary requirements, restrictions and prohibitions
- 03 Reporting significant instances of non-compliance with phytosanitary certification
- 04 Reporting the results of investigations of significant instances of non-compliance with phytosanitary certification
- 05 Information on pest status
- 06 Technical and biological information necessary for pest risk analysis.

**CBIS-CPDN Training Part 1 Outline**

CPDN Introduction

Guideline on Digital Photography for Diagnostics

CPHD Caribbean Plant Health Directors

How do I submit a sample from the Port of Entry to a "Hub/Focal Point" in your country for submission to UFL?

**Digital Distance Diagnostics**

Process flow: Feedback To client → Complete Diagnostic Form/Digital Photo → Email to Lab/Focal Point → Entomologist/Plant Pathologist → Forwarded to UFL via CPDN → Diagnosis received from UFL



**Pilot of the Pest Surveillance System (Pest - Caribbean)**

Since 2019 to present, the CPHD has focused its safeguarding activities and projects on six organisms considered to pose significant threats to the region, including the Mediterranean Fruit Fly, the Tomato Leaf Miner, Bacteria Wilt of Potatoes, Citrus Canker, Citrus Leprosis virus and Fusarium Wilt Tropical Race 4. Safeguarding activities comprise a series of key components including; conducting pest risk analyses, providing training in pest diagnostics and surveillance for nineteen (19) countries, conducting surveillance activities for two (2) priority pests in fourteen (14) countries, preparing four (4) emergency response plans and conducting tabletop simulation exercises.

To further expand and build on the foundation laid through these coordinated and ongoing safeguarding initiatives, in 2021, the CPHD Forum developed, with the assistance of a Web Developer, a tool on the CPHD member's website designed similar to that of the USDA Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey (CAPS) program, where the prioritization activity is conducted and priority pests are identified for focused attention, the ERPs for each pest is posted, surveillance protocols for each priority pest is developed and posted, identification tools/ resources are listed, and finally, a surveillance data page/table designed to provide “at a glance” surveillance information per country based on

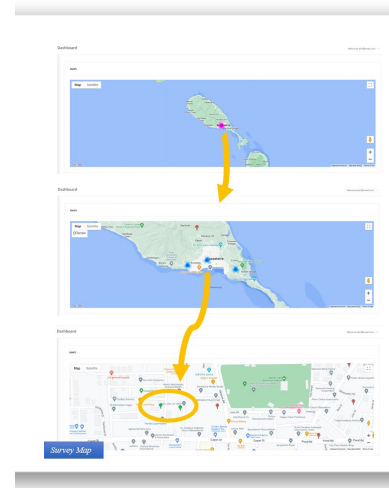


Fig. 2 Pest Surveillance System Map

several parameters including but not limited to – pest identification capacity (trained / not trained), surveillance activity/ phase e.g.- detection, delimiting, etc., number of areas under surveillance, number of traps in the field, areas under surveillance (ports, fields, etc.), and point of contact.

The Pest Surveillance Database is hosted on the current domain "http://www.cphdforum.org" www.cphdforum.org and will act as an entry point for data collected in relation to pest threat surveillance in the Caribbean region. The information will be populated monthly and will most importantly, give the region a quick overview of aggregate and relevant key surveillance information for priority pests. It currently caters to the capture of data for Citrus Canker, Ralstonia solanacearum, and Tuta Absoluta with the capability of capturing data for other pests when necessary. Each country will have its own private account to log on and the data presented will be private to only registered users of the system.

A critical component of the database design and development was a demonstration of the system to a pilot country. This was done with St. Kitts and Nevis who tested the system for further enhancement and final demonstration of the database to the wider CPHD membership. Furthermore, training was also successfully performed, in October 2022, for Antigua and Barbuda based on their request to use the system for the capture of surveillance data relating to Red Palm Weevil.

In 2023, the CPHD will strive to train its other member states in the use of PeST Caribbean.

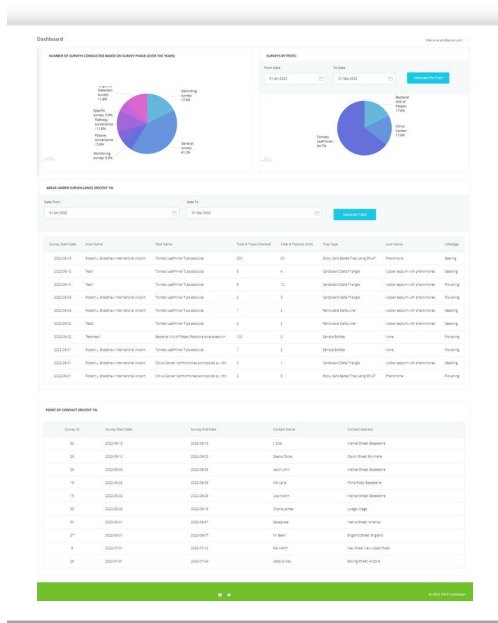


Fig. 1 Pest Surveillance System Dashboard

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**Awards distributed to Pilot Countries of the Caribbean Biosecurity Interceptions System (CBIS/Pest Surveillance System (Pest Caribbean))**

Thanks to the efforts, transparency, and technical input of the NPPOs of the Cayman Islands, Jamaica, and St. Kitts and Nevis during the pilot phase, CBIS and PeST Caribbean were formally launched and adopted for regional implementation and onboarding at the 15th Meeting of the Caribbean Plant Health Directors (CPHD) Forum. To recognize and honour these 3 NPPOs for their invaluable contribution towards the enhancement of CBIS and PeST Caribbean they each were presented with an award of recognition.

The excellent collaboration and teamwork for the enhancement of these safeguarding tools, will result in the better identification and analyzation of risk pathways, targeted surveillance and safeguarding efforts, and better compliance with IPPC standards as they relate to trade, phytosanitary measures, and reporting.



*Jamaica Team - CBIS Pilot Project: (L-R) Mrs. Karen Barrett-Christie, Entomologist-Identifier, Mr. Damian Rowe, Senior Plant Quarantine/SPS Enquiry Point Officer (now Acting Chief Plant Quarantine Produce Inspector) and Ms. Shaneil Malcolm, Entomologist-Identifier*



*St. Kitts and Nevis Team - Pest Caribbean Pilot Project: (L-R) Khivauna Isaac, Jeanelle Kelly, Millicent McSheen, Kadian Banton*



*St. Kitts and Nevis Award for PeST Caribbean Pilot*

## CPHD develops 5 - year Strategic Plan

Under the GCSI IICA Cooperative Agreement for 2021, the Caribbean Plant Health Directors (CPHD) Forum was awarded funding for the project titled, **“Development of a Strategic Plant Health Agenda for the Caribbean Region”**.

With the formation of the Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA) in 2010 and its subsequent recognition by the IPPC as the Caribbean Regional Plant Protection Organization (RPPO) in 2018, the CPHD moved to formalize its linkages with CAHFSA and in 2019 was recognized as the Technical Committee on Plant Health Matters to the CAHFSA (RPPO). Based on this achievement, the Caribbean Plant Health Directors (CPHD) Forum in conjunction with the Caribbean Regional Plant Protection Organization (RPPO) - The Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA) recognized the need to have a clearly developed and focused strategic plan to guide the work of the CPHD Forum in the Region.

The development of the plan was coordinated by the CPHD Secretariat but facilitated by a Consultant with the participation of a CPHD team – main partner organizations, particularly those who have been there from inception such as IICA, FAO, GCSI, CABI, CARICOM, OIRSA, OECS, representation from 2 of the larger Islands (Jamaica & Trinidad), OECS members (Dominica and Antigua), Overseas Territories (Cayman Islands), mainland member state Belize and the RPPO - CAHFSA.

Given that the planning process was never fully finished since it requires adaptation and adjustments as circumstances change and progress is achieved, what was accomplished during the consultative sessions, in particular the level of detail obtained in the key actions, shows the process was successful in achieving its two key objectives:

1. Building the capacities of the team to conduct a strategic planning process;
2. Building a strategic plan for CPHD for the next five years

The final strategic plan will outline a Multi-Year strategy that guides the work of the CPHD. It will inform and shape the specific work plans of the CPHD’s various Technical Working Groups (TWGs) and support the work and objectives of the RPPO and CPHD regional partners and stakeholders.

For more information check out our website:

<http://www.cphdforum.org/index.php/2023/01/03/cphd-forums-5-year-strategic-plan/> (Login Required)



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## Saint Lucia utilizes the phytosanitary capacity evaluation (PCE) tool - virtually

Saint Lucia recently became one of the first countries in the world to launch a structured investigation into its capacity to detect and respond to plant-based pests following the outbreak of COVID-19. The country virtually used the phytosanitary capacity evaluation (PCE) tool, managed by the Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). Under the guidance of an autonomous facilitator, with the Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA) as the implementing agency and financial support from the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) sub-regional office for the Caribbean.

Saint Lucia set its sights on promising new markets for a thriving agricultural sector after casting a critical eye on the strengths and weaknesses of its laboratories, quarantines centers, and data storage systems.

Hannah Romain, Senior Research Officer in the Research and Development Division of Saint Lucia's Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Physical Planning, Natural Resources and Co-operatives, said "that updating the quarantine system to bring it in line with current trading environment and international standards was vital in securing new markets for Saint Lucia's banana crop."



The PCE process helped Saint Lucia's national plant protection organization (NPPO) analyze field data and identify the need for a comprehensive system to improve its ability not only to store but to actively use it. It focused on four out of thirteen possible modules: pest diagnostic capacity, pest surveillance and reporting capacity, the NPPO's mission and strategy, and the phytosanitary import regulatory system.

This upgrade would enable the NPPO to correspond and communicate with stakeholders and generate the information needed to guide phytosanitary decision-making processes, going beyond the limits of a basic collection and storage system. It is an invaluable tool for enhancing dialogue with the nation's stakeholders which has presented the NPPO with clear steps toward ensuring a future for farmers and exporters in Saint Lucia.



This is one of a series of success stories from four countries across the world that have carried out phytosanitary capacity evaluations – even in the face of the global COVID-19 pandemic. In Saint Lucia, the evaluation identified ways to strengthen the Caribbean nation's data collection and storage capacities. In Nepal, this structured process shone a light on opportunities for further investment in the human resources needed to operate the country's diagnostic laboratories. In Nicaragua, it paved the way for essential new plant health legislation. And in Sri Lanka, the PCE identified a clear path forward for overcoming challenges within the country's pest diagnostic capacity.

For more information:  
<https://www.ippc.int/en/stories/how-saint-lucias-pce-put-data-collection-at-the-heart-of-plant-health/>



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL OBSERVANCES

- » March 21st - International Day of Forests  
For more information visit: <https://www.fao.org/international-day-of-forests/en/>
- » April 22nd - Earth Day  
For more information visit: <https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-2023/>
- » May 12th - International Day of Plant Health
- » May 22nd - International Day of Biological Diversity
- » June 5th - World Environment Day
- » June 6th - World Pest Day
- » June 7th - World Safety Food Day  
For more information visit: <https://www.un.org/en/observances/food-safety-day>
- » September 26th - World Environment Day
- » October 16th - World Food Day
- » October 24th - International Day of Climate Action
- » December 5th - World Soil Day

**Don't forget you can highlight your events via the CPHD Forum's website or the newsletter.  
Email details to the CPHD Secretariat: [secretariat@cphdforum.org](mailto:secretariat@cphdforum.org)**



# ONGOING PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES FROM CPHD REGIONAL PARTNERS

## CPHD

### » Support for the Facilitation, Maintenance, and Expansion of the CABI/ CPHD Caribbean Biosecurity Interception System (CBIS)

To support the maintenance and expansion of the CBIS platform through (i) training and onboarding of 18 additional countries in the Caribbean region and (ii) conceptualizing and facilitating risk-based calculations.

### » Continued support towards a coordinated Regional Safeguarding Initiative for Priority Pests of Mutual Concern to the United States and the Greater Caribbean Region

To support the ongoing safeguarding and capacity-building efforts for pests of mutual priority

### » Supporting Pest Exclusion: Foc TR 4 Exclusion Activities in the Caribbean Region

To collaborate with global and regional technical and academia specialists, to advance the safeguarding, exclusion, and preparedness activities for *Fusarium oxysporum f. sp. cubense* Tropical race 4 (Foc TR4), in the Greater Caribbean Region, by (i) establishing and validating promissory resistant germplasm, (ii) piloting a tool to evaluate the potential impact of a phytosanitary incident that will instruct future policy and financial decisions and (iii) support the development of national action plans for selected countries.

For more information: <https://members.cphdforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Agenda-Item-5.6-Update-on-upcoming-CPHD-2022-2023-Projects.pdf>

## FAO

### » IPPC Implementation and Capacity Development

FAO provides the Secretariat for the IPPC – the IPPC is an intergovernmental treaty signed by over 180 countries aiming to protect the world's plant resources from the spread and introduction of pests and promote safe trade. The Convention introduced International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs) as its main tool to achieve its goals, making it the sole global standard-setting organization for plant health.

One core activity of the IPPC is, Implementation and Capacity Development where contracting parties agree to promote the provision of technical assistance to other contracting parties, in particular support to developing countries.

For more information: <https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/capacity-development/>

## CABI

### » The Declare, Deposit, or Pay Campaign

The Declare, Deposit or Pay Campaign aims to encourage passengers to leave at home items that pose a pest and disease threat and to declare such products being carried into countries. Failure to do so can have disastrous consequences for agriculture, the environment, and human health, so everyone pays. The campaign supports national and regional efforts to safeguard national and Caribbean biodiversity and protect people and their livelihoods from invasive alien species (IAS).

The most common pathways by which IAS are introduced and spread are via trade, travel, transportation, and tourism, and the most cost-effective way to manage these 'pathways' is through prevention.

For more information: <https://caribbeaninvasives.org/index.php/2022/09/02/declare-deposit-or-pay-what-you-need-to-know/>

## CARDI

### » Carib Green Project

The goal of CaribGREEN is to promote diversified, healthy, and sustainable agriculture in the Caribbean, to increase food self-sufficiency, and overcome the challenges resulting from global change. It's funded by the French Development Agency (AFD) (May 2022-April 2024). It is the first collaborative project promoting collaboration between animal, plant, and veterinary public health and agroecology in the Caribbean.

CaribGREEN will bring together multiple disciplines and sectors using the "One Health" approach to create a regional platform for cooperation in agro-environment and health, involving a variety of stakeholders.

This platform will promote agroecological practices and integrated health management within farms and production systems, to increase the resilience of Caribbean agriculture facing global changes. CaribGREEN will also strengthen regional cooperation and collaborations for the co-construction and adoption of risk management strategies at the Caribbean level.

View the presentation: <https://members.cphdforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Agenda-Item-3-CaribGREEN-presentation-CPHD-meeting-2022.pdf> (Login Required)

## UWI

### » Plant Quarantine Basics Course

In 2021, through the efforts of USDA APHIS and IICA, the Faculty of Food and Agriculture (FFA), UWI has developed a structured, UWI-certified, and accredited online course. This course seeks to develop the technical skills of plant quarantine workers across the region to enable them to safeguard their country's borders from the entry of unwanted Invasive Alien Species (IAS). In 2021/2022 the PPQ course was piloted as a fully accredited blended professional development certificate course in collaboration with the UWI Open Campus.



**PLANT QUARANTINE  
BASICS**  
Cohort 2

January 23<sup>rd</sup> 2023-July 31<sup>st</sup> 2023.  
Fully Online  
One payment of \$1400.00 USD

## About the CPHD

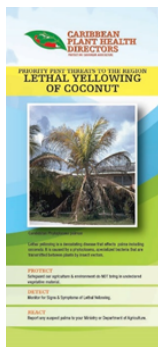
The Caribbean Plant Health Directors Forum is a collaboration of National Plant Health Services Regional and International Organizations, Government entities, Universities and Reference Laboratories with the common purpose of

- safeguarding the plant resources of the greater Caribbean Region (GCR) from the threat of quarantine pest
- improving plant health through the control and management of existing pests, and
- expanding production and trade of agricultural commodities;

in order to increase food security, protect the unique environment and enhance the quality of life and economic wellbeing of the people of the countries and territories of the Greater Caribbean Region.

## Notable Ongoing CPHD Initiatives

- » Training and Ongoing Surveillance of priority pests of mutual concern to the US and Caribbean Region
- » Enhancement and Creation of online border management tools FFMS, CBIS, and PeST Surveillance
- » Updated CPHD Website with interactive online tools
- » Development of a 5-year Strategic Plan
- » Regional Pest Prioritization Exercise – Updated Regional Priority Pest List



**CARIBBEAN  
PLANT HEALTH  
DIRECTORS**  
PROTECTING CARIBBEAN AGRICULTURE

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