



Press Release - 16th Annual Caribbean Plant Health Directors Forum

The Caribbean Plant Health Directors (CPHD) Forum proposes to convene its 16th annual meeting in Antigua and Barbuda from 14th – 18th August, 2023. The meeting represents the first face to face meeting of members and partner organizations since the COVID 19 pandemic and will be held jointly with the International Plant Protection Commission (IPPC) Regional workshop, which will focus on the standardization of regional plant health agendas and operations with an emphasis on technical and emerging issues beneficial to the regional plant health systems. The workshop will also provide a platform for increased engagement in the International Standards for Phytosanitary measures (ISPMs) and will offer the Caribbean Community valuable insights into the IPPCs operations and objectives. The theme for the meeting is “**Plant Health for Environmental Protection**”. The first three days of the meeting will be devoted to developing and reviewing regional plant health technical and policy proposals consistent with the theme while the two remaining days will be dedicated to the endorsement of comments on draft ISPMs to be submitted to the IPPC.

The forum will also provide relevant updates on plant health matters and initiatives being undertaken in the Caribbean region that will impact/ or require the CPHD’s membership support and involvement in safeguarding the region from pests and invasive species. Discussions will revolve around the following:

- ✚ Caribbean plant health forum initiatives to include an update on communications, outreach and databases;
- ✚ Regional and international trade, agriculture health and food safety trends;
- ✚ Capacity building and regional initiatives;
- ✚ The Greater Caribbean Safeguarding Initiative project and plans;
- ✚ Emerging Pest Issues and ongoing Pest Exclusion, Management and Safeguarding Activities.

The meeting will also receive and discuss reports from the various Technical Working Groups (TWGs) on Safeguarding, Caribbean Pest Diagnostics, Emergency Response and Preparedness, Musa, and Fruit Flies - regarding their work during the past year as well as work plans for the next twelve months. A major highlight of the meeting is a special technical session on *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *ubense* tropical race 4, a severe fungal disease and a quarantine pest for the region. The session will discuss:

- ✚ Activities on TR4 in the IPPC community
- ✚ Consideration for the importation of resistant germplasm
- ✚ TR4 and the experience of Colombia
- ✚ TR4 preparedness and
- ✚ Considerations for conducting phytosanitary potential economic impact assessment.

For more information on TR4 please contact Mr. Nelson Laville, Chairperson of the Musa Technical Working Group (TWG) at 1 767 612 5353 (WhatsApp)

The CPHD Forum is the Technical Committee to the Caribbean RPPO – Caribbean Agriculture Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA) on agriculture and plant health issues and is comprised of 32 Member Countries and Partner Organizations. For more information on the CPHD and CAHFSA visit <http://www.cphdforum.org/> and <https://cahfsa.org/>. or contact via email at CPHD Secretariat secretariat@cphdforum.org or RPPO Secretariat rppo.secretariat@cahfsa.org