



CARIBBEAN PLANT HEALTH DIRECTORS

PROTECTING CARIBBEAN AGRICULTURE

Press Release - 13th Annual Caribbean Plant Health Directors Forum

The Caribbean Plant Health Directors (CPHD) Forum comprising 32 member countries and territories along with several partner organizations including various international, regional, national organizations and universities - will convene the 1st virtual session of the 13th Annual CPHD meeting on 11th and 12th August 2020. Due to the COVID 19 global pandemic the CPHD adjusted its regional work plan by moving away from its usual annual face to face meeting to a series of online meetings structured according to various plant health themes. This meeting was preceded by two webinar meetings one each in May and July 2020 with a focus on the “*Caribbean response to the COVID 19 Pandemic and the implications for the Plant Health Community*” and the “*EU Plant Health Regulations and the Caribbean’s Compliance Challenges*” respectively.

The 13th CPHD meeting will provide relevant and timely 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. During the meeting, the plant health officials will have intense discussions aimed at bolstering the ability of member countries to identify, exclude, and respond to pests and diseases that threaten regional agriculture and natural resources and to resolve issues that might impede the trade of Caribbean agricultural products regionally and internationally.

The discussions will revolve around the following:

- Regional plant health decisions and recommendations from the 81st Special Meeting of the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) - Agriculture
- Results of the 2019 regional plant health and safeguarding initiatives
- 2020 regional plant health and safeguarding initiatives under the Greater Caribbean Safeguarding Initiative (GCSI)
- The 11th EU/EDF Sanitary and Phytosanitary project 2020
- Leveraging and improving the region’s plant health partnerships and technical resources

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 the Fruit Flies - regarding their work during the past year as well as work plans for the next twelve months. Partner organizations; CAHFSA, USDA/APHIS, IICA and UWI will also present summaries of projects and their programmes, and reports on how COVID 19 impacted the implementation of these projects.

A second virtual CPHD session will be held in October 2020 and will receive reports from other partner organisations comprising the Forum.

The CPHD Forum is the Technical Committee to CAHFSA on Agriculture on plant health issues and continues to strive to harmonize plant health safeguarding strategies in the region through the exchange of technical information, the transfer of technologies and methods, the maximization of technical and financial resource use and allocation and the harmonization of plant protection and agricultural trade management approaches. The efforts of this forum continue to strengthen plant protection and have a direct impact on the region’s food security and economic prosperity for the Greater Caribbean Region.

For more information email the CPHD Secretariat at secretariat@cphdforum.org or visit the CPHD website <http://www.cphdforum.org/>.

