



Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet

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New Pesticides Law Promotes Trade in Central America and the Caribbean

On December 13, the Central American Customs Union (CACU) signed a new law on biological pesticides that standardizes minimum and maximum levels for the presence of microorganisms and specifies requirements for food safety. Bio-pesticides help manage pests by using other microorganisms (rather than synthetic pesticides) to protect plants.

This law, set to go into effect in June 2013, is critical to improving the viability of businesses in Central America and the Caribbean that are part of the horticulture value chain. Export-oriented horticulture is a major focus of Feed the Future in this region, where many smallholder producers rely on horticulture for their livelihoods.

To support the development of this new policy, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) coordinated over the past two years to provide the CACU with technical assistance to promote food security and trade integration. The biological pesticides law mandates for the first time a process for registering agricultural pesticides and is more transparent and consistent with the World Trade Organization's Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agreements as well as obligations under the U.S.-Central America-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement. Compliance with these international standards is an important step in promoting economic growth in the region.

The CACU is comprised of Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and El Salvador.