

Agribusiness and Commercialization at IICA

Agriculture is increasingly viewed as an economic activity, a business, which, regardless of its scale and social complexity, **transcends primary production** and is, therefore, a comprehensive system that responds to the demands of the markets and the requirements of consumers with an agrifood chain vision and strategies.

Moreover, **local, national and international markets are a key element** for the success of agriculture. In recent years, many countries have placed great emphasis on two aspects of markets: efforts to open them up for freer trade, and the promotion of international markets over local ones.

However, the recent food and financial crises have highlighted the need to promote more efficient and transparent local markets, as mechanisms for development. This will also make it possible to integrate large swathes of agricultural producers (and small-scale farmers in particular) that have not benefited from trade liberalization.

Therefore, **the countries need to reactivate the mechanisms for multilateral dialogue**; fulfill the commitments assumed under the various trade agreements; and develop policies that will increase international trade in agricultural products and **ensure that all social groups benefit from it**.

To that end, IICA will assist the countries in **developing the policies**, institutional frameworks and capabilities required to create enabling environments **for agribusinesses**, as well as a new mindset and capabilities in producers, by strengthening their individual and collective capacity to supply markets and compete successfully.

The Institute will also help its Member States to develop public policies, strategies and institutions for the promotion and **development of more transparent and efficient local markets**, and to develop mechanisms and tools that will reduce risks and permit small-scale producers to establish more links with markets.

Moreover, it will help to develop strategies and strengthen the institutional framework for **promoting international agricultural trade** as a factor in development; and assist its member countries in developing capabilities that will enable them to better administer the trade agreements they sign and take greater advantage of them.

Technical cooperation programs

We carry out our technical cooperation actions through six programs:

- Innovation for productivity and competitiveness.
- Agricultural health and food safety.
- Agribusiness and commercialization.
- Agriculture, territories and rural well-being.
- Agriculture, natural resource management and climate change.
- Agriculture and food security.

Agribusiness and Commercialization	
Line of Action	Specific Objective
Line 1: Linking producers to markets, including small-scale producers	To tap the full potential of agricultural and rural producers and entrepreneurs in the IICA member countries, particularly those at the small and medium scale, enabling them to penetrate local, regional and international markets on a profitable, sustainable and competitive footing, and helping to improve incomes for rural families and food security for the member countries of IICA.
Line 2: Adding value to agricultural production and keeping value in production zones	To support the competitive and sustainable development of agriculture and rural territories by adding and retaining value for the products and services of agriculture, particularly in the case of family agriculture, with the intention of improving income, creating jobs and fueling investment.
Line 3: Modernization of markets and marketing systems	To support the development and modernization of agricultural markets and marketing systems that promise efficiency and transparency.
Line 4: Risk management and reduction	To support the member countries of IICA in developing and implementing institutional frameworks, public policies and public-private arrangements for managing and counteracting risks in agriculture and agribusiness.
Line 5: Prospection and management of innovation for agribusiness	To foster the development of new business models and help existing agribusinesses become more efficient, sustainable and profitable, by managing innovation and establishing sustainable practices.

Source: 2010-2014 Medium-Term Plan, IICA.