

COLEAD

SPS ACTIVITIES

On the first of January 2023 [COLEACP changed its name to COLEAD](#), the Committee Linking Entrepreneurship-Agriculture-Development. COLEAD is a network of companies, professional organisations and experts committed to inclusive and sustainable agriculture.

The mission of COLEAD is to facilitate and implement all actions allowing, directly and/or indirectly, to increase the contribution of the agricultural sector, and horticulture in particular, to the achievement of the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In practice, COLEAD designs, manages and implements development programmes, by providing online and on-the-ground technical assistance, vocational training and support services that cover regulatory monitoring, market intelligence, networks and alliances, research and innovation brokerage and access to finance.

COLEAD is a network and a toolbox for those who are committed to more sustainable agriculture, particularly in developing countries. These programmes and their activities are funded by donors including among other the European Union, the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), the French Development Agency (AFD), ENABEL and the World Trade Organisation (through the Standards and Trade Development Facility). Most COLEAD programmes include a focus on support for SPS capacity building.



CORE ACTIVITIES

Over the past two decades, COLEAD has significantly broadened its scope, and is now active not only in ACP countries but also across a wide range of low and middle-income nations worldwide. We have developed and trained a network of over 1000 local experts, mainly from ACP, and specializing primarily in SPS (Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures).

COLEAD is a trusted partner, regularly engaged by stakeholders from ACP, low and middle-income countries, as well as the EU, to tackle critical food safety and plant health issues. This is particularly important where SPS non-compliances threaten to disrupt trade; COLEAD can play an important role in addressing challenges, mitigating risks, and promoting smoother trade relations across a broader spectrum of countries. Our ISO 21001-certified vocational training system ensures that we provide services and support of a high standard.

In 2023, our primary focus at COLEAD has been on intensifying our outreach and enhancing support through our array of innovative tools and programmes. This year, we received close to 500 applications for support from private and public stakeholders under the FFM+ and NExT Kenya programmes. Each request undergoes an initial evaluation before proceeding through our technical committee's approval process, ensuring high standards of assistance and relevancy.

A highlight of the year 2023 was the official launch of the AGRINFO information programme. This programme provides up-to-date information about evolving

EU policies, regulations, and standards, and their potential implications for agri-food value chains in low-and middle-income countries supplying the EU market. An open-access database and regular newsletter keep stakeholders informed and engaged with the latest changes to policies and regulations, and recommended actions, in exporting countries.

In 2023, the COLEAD team focused on driving the two major new programmes FFM+ and AGRINFO, while also ensuring the continuation of (i) ongoing national programmes including, NExT Kenya, STDF, UNIDO and ENABEL programmes (ii) DeSIRA-LIFT which is a service facility supporting DeSIRA, an initiative funded by the European Commission that aims to contribute to climate-relevant, productive, and sustainable transformation of agri-food systems in the global South and (iii) Value chain analysis for development, VCA4D which correspond to ad-hoc services on value chains analyses in the fruit and vegetable value chain falling into the remits of COLEAD actions (market profiles) ; and finally closing the FFM and FFM SPS programmes, which have undergone a final technical evaluation started in 2023.

At the core of all COLEAD programmes lies sustainable intensification – increasing production while minimising negative impacts on climate, ecosystems and the productive environment. Activities also address the social and economic dimensions of sustainability, including livelihoods, economic viability, social justice and inclusiveness, for women and youth in particular.

SUPPORTING SPS COMPLIANCE

COLEAD monitors the evolution of SPS regulations and their implementation guidelines in order to identify decisions and trends that could have an impact on horticultural value chains in ACP countries and other partner-countries. In particular the changes brought about by the new EU Plant Health Law (EU 2016/2031), which came into force in December 2019, and the establishment of uniform conditions for its deployment under the Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/2072 of 28 November 2019.

Some new EU rules have required urgent action by competent authorities in order to maintain trade in the commodities concerned. It has also been important to address underlying structural reform to meet additional demands on authorities in terms of skills, policy and regulatory frameworks, as well as operational resources. COLEAD has provided information and raised awareness among public sector authorities, and has signed Memoranda of Understanding, with detailed action plans and budgets, tailored to the particular needs in each country. Specific activities include:

- Rapid assessment of the national system to comply with the EU requirements (using the COLEAD RSAT tool).
- Support to reinforce national stakeholder platforms for the development and implementation of national action plans, and submission of dossiers to the EU, in the context of EU high risk commodities, priority pests, and emergency measures
- Capacity building to support implementation of national action plans outlined in the dossiers, including training and coaching of support services, technical agents, and inspection services
- Capacity building of other target groups including extension services and laboratories

Based on regular contact with public and private sectors, COLEAD designs the tools, documents, technologies and training they need to enhance their capacity to manage and enforce SPS standards. Communication with NPPOs is strengthened by the organization of regular E-meetings on themes related to

plant health. Examples of tools developed are interactive dashboards compiling all SPS notifications from countries, Sector Good Practice Guides, an SPS rapid assessment tool, and new educational content on plant health.

In 2023, COLEAD has taken an active role in strengthening phytosanitary systems across West Africa. Initiatives include:

- **Enhancing Guinea's Phytosanitary System: Addressing PCE recommendations through a STDF Project Grant, implemented by COLEAD, to improve key aspects:**
 - Strengthening the legislative and regulatory framework for phytosanitary control.
 - Enhancing the capacity of the National Plant Protection Organization (NPPO) for the implementation of risk-based phytosanitary inspection and certification.
 - Building the capacity of operators in priority sectors to apply good practices.
 - Fostering improved intergovernmental and public-private cooperation.
- **Strengthening Phytosanitary Capacity in Senegal: Based on the results from the PCE exercise conducted in Senegal and identified areas for improvement, an application for a Project Grant has been submitted to STDF with the objective to build the capacities of the national SPS system. The project was approved by the STDF committee in November 2023.**
 - Requested by NPPO, with COLEAD designated as the implementing agency.
 - Focused on updating regulatory phytosanitary frameworks, reinforcing the operational capacity of the national phytosanitary system, and promoting stronger public-private communication and cooperation.

- **PCE Initiatives in Sierra Leone:**
 - With COLEAD support: Modules 3 (Environmental forces assessment), 4 (NPPO's mission and strategy), and 13 (Export Certification, re-export, and transit) were addressed.
 - National stakeholders are independently working (without COLEAD support) on Modules 5 (NPPO's structure and processes), 6 (NPPO Resources), and 10 (Import Regulation).

CURRENT COLEAD PROGRAMMES AND INTERVENTIONS

[Programmes financed by the EU at the request of the OACPS, with funding from the 11th European Development Fund](#)

Fit For Market SPS (FFM SPS)

Strengthening the sanitary and phytosanitary systems of the ACP horticultural sector (primarily public sector). Currently in year 5 (launched in January 2019). Final technical evaluation (alongside FFM) currently taking place. Technical operations have been closed. Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation activities foreseen until Q1 2024.

Fit For Market Plus (FFM+)

Mitigating the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic by strengthening the sustainability of the ACP horticultural sector. This new Programme will incorporate the lessons-learned from COLEAD's COVID-19 action plan (implemented from March 2020) and leverage the outputs and support provided through the FFM and FFM SPS programmes. In summary, the intervention provides the necessary support to the horticultural sector in member countries of the OACPS to mitigate the negative economic implications of the COVID-19 pandemic while at the same time to seize new market opportunities by embracing green, low-carbon and climate resilient

strategies through the development and adoption of relevant practices, skills, and technologies. 800 applications for support have been received since the operational launch in July 2022. 200 development projects have been designed, and the consolidation of methodologies and tools to be deployed through FFM Plus has been performed. Rate of implementation of activities is gradually increasing.

This FFM+ programme supports both the private sector, and ACP competent authorities, in particular National Plant Protection Organisations (NPPOs) and inspection services, to enhance their capacity to manage and enforce SPS standards. FFM+ targets, in particular, NPPOs, SPS official controls, and plant protection product regulatory authorities. Activities include support to NPPOs to adapt to the new EU plant health rules, covering training in Pest Risk Analysis, dossier preparation, and new requirements concerning export documentation and phytosanitary certificates.

[Programmes and interventions financed by the EU](#)

AGRINFO

Towards a fair, healthy and environmentally friendly food system: addressing compliance with EU regulatory and non-regulatory measures. The first year of AGRINFO was an inception phase to put in place the necessary expertise, information systems, procedures, partnerships, and methodologies. Delivery of concrete outputs against the programme indicators only began at scale in 2023.

The [AGRINFO information system](#) covers EU policies, regulatory and non-regulatory measures that have a potential impact on the competitiveness, market access and trade dynamics of agri-food and fisheries value chains linked to the EU market. Meeting EU regulations and standards is a major factor in achieving market access and encouraging domestic and foreign investment in trade. But evolving regulatory and market requirements can pose a challenge for developing and emerging economies exporting goods to Europe. This programme provides access to clear and timely information with the overall aim of helping to minimise any negative impacts, while optimising

opportunities that result from new measures and regulations that affect production, business, and trade. AGRINFO also aims to encourage greater participation by partner countries and stakeholders in consultation opportunities.

320+ records were published, and 16 bi-monthly newsletters issued. First impact studies and market analysis have been launched. Pro-active dissemination of targeted relevant information has been initiated. A specific effort to deploy and mobilise new contacts in the 143 countries covered by the programme is currently underway.

DeSIRA–LIFT (in consortium)

Leveraging the DeSIRA initiative for agri–food systems transformation. DeSIRA–LIFT is a service facility supporting DeSIRA, an initiative funded by the European Commission that aims to contribute to climate-relevant, productive, and sustainable transformation of agri-food systems in the global South. DeSIRA supports research and innovation projects in Africa, Asia, and Latin America and strengthens research capacities and governance involving key actors at the national, regional, and global levels. COLEAD has been identified as leader of the Work Package 2 – Actions in support of CAADP ex–pillar 4 organisations (FARA, AFAAS, ASARECA, CORAF, CCARDESA, GFAR). This work package identifies and implements support for the ex– pillar 4 organisations, in close consultation with these organisations.

NExT Kenya

Financed by EU Delegation in Kenya (2021–24) : NExT Kenya (New Export Trade) programme for enhancing horticultural exports. It aims to increase the sector’s contribution to the household incomes. In Period 4 (launched in May 2020): Implementation of activities is fully ongoing, with significant volumes of activities in 2022 and 2023. The programme was evaluated technically very positively (ROM evaluation).

VC4D

Value chain analysis for development, VCA4D, ad-hoc services on value chains analyses in the fruit and vegetable value chain falling into the remit of its action. COLEAD provides information on (i) market trends on national, regional, and international markets, combining analysis of publicly available data and own market insights, (ii) the main data sources and (iii) any useful complementary elements or sources. 4 market profiles were carried out in 2023.

Programmes financed by other donors

STDF Guinea

Strengthening the phytosanitary control and certification system in Guinea (focus on potato and mango value chains).

In year 4 (launched in October 2019). An extension has been accepted until April 2024.

ENABEL (DEFIA)

Support the transition to increased agro-ecological practices in the pineapple sector in Benin.

Officially launched beginning of 2022. All activities have been implemented and the programme was technically, administratively, and financially closed.

UNIDO Guinea Bissau

Improving the competitiveness of the Guinea Bissau mango sector: production, local processing, and export support. Extension has been granted until end of July 2023. Programme temporarily closed, pending decision from UNIDO to get another extension upon decision of their own donors.

Joint activities with the IPPC Secretariat

On 19th November 2021, an MoU was signed between COLEAD and the IPPC Secretariat during a virtual ceremony. The new partnership has strengthened collaborative actions in plant health in order to minimize the impacts of plant pests, and to facilitate safe trade, development, and economic growth.

COLEAD representatives participated in 3 working groups coordinated by the IPPC Secretariat. These include the IPPC Working Group to develop e-learning materials on Surveillance and Reporting Obligations, IPPC Working Group to develop e-learning materials on Inspection, and the Capacity Development Committee (IC) Team on *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *cubense* Tropical Race 4 (TR4). These groups addressed the development of training and guidance documents covering inspection, pest surveillance and Banana Fusarium Wilt (TR4) in collaboration with the FAO eLearning Academy.

During 2021, 2022 and 2023 COLEAD made considerable advances in the development and translation of e-learning courses on PRA (Pest Risk Analysis) and Export Certification. Those new e-Learning courses were developed in the frame of the “FAO support to COMESA trade facilitation programme” and support the implementation of the International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPM). In October 2023, they were presented to a large audience during the IC webinar on New IPPC guides and e-learning courses. COLEAD supported the translation into French of this event.

COLEAD also collaborated with the IPPC secretariat to develop an E-learning course on Phytosanitary Inspection, together with the associated working group constituted by the IPPC secretariat. The Phytosanitary Inspection training was initially developed in English, and is now undergoing translation to Spanish with the support of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA). The PRA Training previously translated into French is also being translated for the Spanish eLearning course. The main goal is to have all the IPPC-COLEAD training available in English, French and Spanish language so that it is accessible to wide audience. Those e-learning courses are already

available in English on the [IPPC website](#) and on the [COLEAD eLearning platform](#).

COLEAD has translated 11 IPPC guides into French to make them more globally accessible, particularly for the francophone countries in West Africa. French versions of the following guides are currently in press but can be made available in pdf format for training purposes. The topics covered are:

- Guide for developing contingency plans for outbreaks of quarantine pests - Guide pour la planification des interventions d'urgence en cas d'apparition d'organismes nuisibles de quarantaine
- Guide to Regulation of Wood Packaging Material - Guide sur la réglementation des matériaux d'emballage en bois
- Pest Status Guide – Guide sur la situation des organismes nuisibles
- Establishing a National Plant Protection Organization – Création d'une Organisation Nationale pour la Protection des Végétaux
- Operation of a National Plant Protection Organization – Fonctionnement d'une Organisation Nationale pour la Protection des Végétaux
- Import verification – Vérification des importations
- Export certification – Certification à l'exportation
- Pest risk communication – Communication sur le risque phytosanitaire
- Managing relationships with stakeholders – Gestion des relations avec les parties prenantes
- Delivering phytosanitary diagnostic services – Prestation de services de diagnostic phytosanitaire
- Plant pest surveillance – Surveillance des organismes nuisibles

Through its programmes, COLEAD supports in-person participation at the CPM 17 of NPPOs from certain Africa-Caribbean-Pacific countries. In 2023 this included Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, The Gambia, Togo, Madagascar, and Nigeria.

With regard more specifically to digital training, we would like to pay tribute to the ongoing efforts of our colleagues: David SODADE in leading and improving

online training courses, Morag WEBB and Marie Hélène KESTEMONT who received their certificate of appreciation from the IPPC, for their contribution in terms of guidance and online training on respectively the prevention, preparation and response to fusarium head blight of tropical race 4 (TR4) of banana, plant health inspection/Surveillance and reporting obligations.

Last but not least, COLEAD has promoted IPPC–COLEAD collaboration news via its newsletters and social media and beyond FAO initiatives like the tool kit highlighting the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-2031 and the critical role of strengthened national and international integrated One Health systems in achieving global food security and environmental protection, with a particular emphasis on the prevention, early warning, and management of plant pests and diseases.



GROWING PEOPLE

COLEAD

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