

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: Costa Rica Unveils Domestic Ag Policy Focused on
Technology

Country: Costa Rica

Post: San Jose

Report Category: National Plan, Policy and Program Announcements, Agricultural Situation

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Report Highlights:

The Chaves Government introduced a 10-year national agricultural strategy targeting improved export competitiveness through more efficient institutions and the adoption or development of innovative technologies. The new plan aims to expand value-added processing opportunities and agricultural productivity while promoting sustainable, climate resilient agricultural practices.

On January 26, 2023, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) released its “Public Policy for the Agricultural Sector” through 2032. Serving as a priority-setting document for the sector, the document captures the vision of Minister Victor Julio Carvajal and the administration of President Rodrigo Chaves’ Social Democratic Progress Party to improve competitiveness and productivity while enhancing farmers’ well-being and economic development. Proposed reforms that would streamline MAG operations are central to the plan, though these measures would require legislation in the national Assembly.

The national agricultural policy lists a number of challenges facing the sector, including climate adaptation, adoption of agricultural technologies, and underdevelopment of value-added processing. In response, MAG has identified four strategic priorities: 1) modernizing agricultural sector institutions, 2) promoting competitiveness, 3) enhancing productivity and sustainability, and 4) commercializing value-added innovations. The Executive Office for Sectoral Planning (SEPSA) will be responsible for implementing the policy, defining specific interventions and allocating budget resources across the strategic priorities.

According to Minister Carvajal, the plan will help create a more competitive, productive, interconnected, technologically advanced, inclusive, and sustainable agricultural sector capable of playing a dynamic role in the economy, while providing social, economic, and environmental benefits for the country.

The national agricultural policy and the presentation delivered at its launch (both in Spanish) are available [here](#). FAS/San José has provided an informal translation of the major points within each strategic focus area in the Appendix below.

Appendix – Translation of Strategic Priority Objectives

1. Modernizing Agricultural institutions

Proposed actions:

- Reform the sector's legal framework
- Update the institutional functions and structure of the sector
- Improve interagency coordination and public resources utilization
- Update regulations impacting competitive improvements in the sector
- Apply modern technological tools to simplify procedures

2. Promoting Competitiveness

Proposed actions:

- Standardize protocols for data collection
- Provide producers relevant economic and environmental data as well as national and international markets data
- Enhance producers' capacity to integrate data into operations and planning
- Strengthen cold storage supply chain
- Support producers in modernizing and optimizing productive processes
- Update phytosanitary and food safety standards based on risk models
- Protect the country's phytosanitary and sanitary assets from pests and diseases that threaten food safety and local economic activities

3. Productivity and Sustainability

Proposed actions:

- Maximize the benefits of different production systems through natural resource technical assistance
- Promote good agricultural practices that protect human health, soil health, the environment, water, and forest resources
- Promote production and processing technologies that optimize natural resource use
- Strengthen irrigation and drainage infrastructure to conserve water resources
- Promote research, development, production, and sustainable use of seeds and genetic material appropriate to specific production systems
- Increase productivity through imported or improved domestic seed quality
- Scale Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMA) model to new sectors to improve competitiveness and profitability, while reducing climate vulnerabilities
- Recognize and promote sustainable agricultural practices
- Streamline authorization and registration of new molecules
- Expand use of advanced agricultural technology (e.g., drones, apps, satellite data, etc.)
- Improve producers' capacity to apply technological advancements to operations

4. Value added and Commercialization

Proposed actions:

- Promote value added production for local and export markets
- Identify market niches for value-added production

- Develop sustainable agro-industrial parks integrated into global supply chains
- Improve agricultural sector access to the Institutional Supply Program (a National Production Council program that purchases agricultural products for public schools, hospitals, and correctional facilities)
- Develop virtual marketing platforms for agricultural and fishery products
- Improve efficiency of price discovery by modernizing wholesale markets
- Increase availability of and access to safe, high-quality food products
- Develop new markets for waste and residues along the agricultural and fishery supply chains

Attachments:

No Attachments.