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## **TWELFTH MEETING OF THE HEMISPHERIC COMMITTEE FOR ERADICATION OF FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE (COHEFA 12)**

*Santiago, Chile, 24 July 2012*

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### **PHEFA's Incorporation into the Global Foot-and-Mouth Disease Control Strategy and Implications for Technical Cooperation (TC): *Official Veterinary Service's View, Chile's representative***

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#### **Summary**

Chile eradicated foot-and-mouth disease thirty years ago, when clear understanding of the epidemiologic problem led to the employment of the tools of vaccination, surveillance, and zoning to progressively advance towards a country free of foot-and-mouth disease without vaccination. Despite two outbreaks, Chile has maintained unchanged a sanitary policy based on risk prevention along its borders and in relation to international trade. This has not only ensured its sanitary status but also facilitated the expansion of its livestock goods exports to 65 countries.

PHEFA subsumes a regional political agreement that provides strategies and technical guidelines for the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease from the continent. It incorporates the knowledge and the experience regarding the disease's history and its connection with the different production systems, animal movement, and trade. The 1988-2009 action plan, which has provided the framework for the designing of national and subregional programs, has led to significant progress in controlling the disease in South America, where 52 percent of herds, which account for 81.5 percent of bovine and bubaline populations, are foot-and-mouth disease free with vaccination, while 17 percent of herds that account for 3.5 percent of bovine populations are free without vaccination.

Notwithstanding the significant progress achieved in these twenty years, the disease has remained endemic in zones where the implementation of effective control programs has lagged, particularly in respect of cattle-raising systems not connected to the export market; in addition, there have been sporadic episodes of the infection in zones recognized as free with vaccination because of the circulation of endemic strains, which has been cause of regional concern. (PANFTOSA/PAHO 2012).

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The Global Foot-and-Mouth Disease Control Strategy, recently introduced in Thailand and formulated in conformity with the FAO/OIE global framework for the control of border infections, is the greatest, most ambitious initiative, after the global eradication of the Bovine Plague, to address foot-and-mouth disease at the origin; it makes the disease's eradication into a common interest and into a world public good. The strategy's overall objective is to help mitigate poverty and to improve subsistence conditions in developing countries, as well as expanding world and regional trade in animals and animal products. It aims not only at enhancing worldwide control of the disease but also at strengthening veterinary services and improving the prevention of other major cattle diseases. It provides a series of tools, such as PP-FMD, the OIE code, PVS, the Foot-and-Mouth Disease Reference Laboratories Network, and the surveillance and vaccine quality control systems, which may be adjusted and applied to different regional situations, illustrated by the circulation of seven pools of viral genotypes active worldwide.

The South American region has the lowest incidence of foot-and-mouth disease, showing a rupture of endemic clinical patterns. It has approved a new PHFA action plan for 2011-2020, aimed at bringing eradication to completion, thereby eliminating the pool of foot-and-mouth disease genotypes active on the continent.

It is in the context of a global control strategy and of PHEFA as a factor of regional coordination that future challenges will be addressed by the region; accordingly, the key objective should now be the detection of viral circulation, by means of sensitive active surveillance systems, and the elimination of such viral circulation in risk subpopulations, by means of early sanitary intervention mechanisms, and by reinforcement of the structures and capabilities of national veterinary services and regional coordination bodies. This will allow the completion on solid grounds of the elimination of foot-and-mouth disease genotypes on the continent. Technical cooperation and capacity-building programs should take these objectives into consideration.