



Agriculture in the News

11-15 June, 2012

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Hayles welcomes CARDI projects by Alecia Smith-Edwards, 14 June 2012,
<http://www.jis.gov.jm/news/list/30925>

Full Article

State Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries, Hon. Ian Hayles, has welcomed the implementation of two projects by the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI), which seek to enhance the production of roots, tubers, vegetables and herbs in the region.

“These projects are a step in the right direction as they are aligned with the Ministry’s strategic growth areas; onions, yams, tumeric, ginger to name a few, as they have clearly defined markets,” he said.

For more information see page 4, Agricultural Development section

Agriculture in the News is a newsletter which provides a compilation of selected news articles on issues affecting agriculture in the Caribbean region. Articles from Newspapers, Online News Service Agencies, Newsletters and Press Releases are featured.

For copies of documents cited, visit the web address or source of the information provided.



Improving Lives Through Agricultural Research

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About CARDI

Our Vision

To be the centre of excellence in the Caribbean for the provision and application of research and development in agriculture and rural enhancement.

Our Mission

To contribute to the sustainable economic well being of Caribbean people by the generation and transfer of appropriate technology through research and development within the agricultural value chain.

www.cardi.org

Livestock

Devising successful feed interventions in Ehtiopia – ILRI project identifies promising tools by Peter Ballantyne, 7 June 2012, <http://livestockfish.cgiar.org/2012/06/07/devising-successful-feed-interventions-in-ethiopia-ilri-project-identifies-promising-tools/>

Full Article

Last week, the International Livestock Research Institute convened a synthesis workshop of the ‘fodder and feed in livestock value chains in Ethiopia’ project. Funded by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), this short project aimed to develop and refine tools for the rapid assessment of feed resources – that will allow effective feed intervention strategies to support intensification of livestock production in value chains benefiting smallholder producers.

Implemented with teams from the Ethiopian Institute for Agricultural Research (EIAR), the Amhara Regional Agricultural Research Institute (ARARI) and the International Center for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas (ICARDA), the project worked on three main tools: value chain analysis (VCA); the feed assessment tool (FEAST); and Techfit for feed technology prioritization.

On 28 and 29 May, the three teams came together with partners and resource people to assess the results of this work. The results from the participatory assessments with communities and dairy, sheep, and beef value chain actors in 6 sites were critically assessed and the strengths and weaknesses of the tools were discussed.

Overall, the tools were found to generate useful data and insights, deepen interactions among scientists and farmers, offer systematic frameworks to assess options and technical options, all in a relatively short time.

On the afternoon of the second day, the results of the project were shared with a wider group of people likely to be interested in the results. This provided an opportunity for critical feedback.

In his presentation to this wider group, project leader Alan Duncan emphasized that these tools should be seen as “discussion tools” – to be used to guide and inform research and suggest promising options to discuss further with communities. We should not expect them to generate recipes or blueprints for all situations.

Climate Change

Barbados to represent SIDS on Green Climate Change Fund Board by Julia Rawlins-Betham, Barbados
Government Information Service, 13 June 2012,
http://www.gisbarbados.gov.bb/index.php?categoryid=13&p2_articleid=8422

Full Article

Barbados will represent the interest of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Green Climate Fund (GCF) Board.

The effort will be headed by the island's Chief Economist (Ag.) in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, Derek Gibbs, who was selected and approved by Cabinet to serve as the SIDS representative on the Board of the GCF.

Mr. Gibbs was nominated and served on the Transitional Committee (TC), supported by Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Barbados to the United Nations in New York and Chief Negotiator of Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) Climate Finance, Selwin Hart.

During his tenure, Mr. Gibbs served as a co-facilitator of Workstream I of the TC which focused on the overarching scope, guiding principles and cross-cutting issues relevant to the design of the GCF.

Barbados was the main negotiator for the AOSIS on finance, and played a pivotal role in the finalisation of the relevant content of the decision.

As a result, many aspects of the final agreement, including those related to the establishment of the new fund and key aspects of the design process were based on proposals advanced by AOSIS.

The GCF would be the key instrument through which climate financing is expected to be disbursed to recipient countries and is projected to be subscribed to by developed countries at a rate of US\$ \$100 billion per year by 2020.

The fund will also be governed by a 24-member board comprising an equal number from developing and developed countries.

The GCF was established following the UNFCCC 16th Conference (COP 16) in Cancun, Mexico, in December 2010.

It is designed to provide financial support for projects, programmes, policies and other activities geared towards combating the adverse effects of climate change in developing countries.

Latin America and the Caribbean face massive economic damages from global warming, report warns. Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), 5 June 2012
<http://www.iadb.org/en/news/webstories/2012-06-05/latin-america-and-the-caribbean-global-warming,10011.html>

Region needs to dramatically increase its investment in climate change adaptation and mitigation in the coming decades

Full article

Latin America and the Caribbean face annual damages in the order of \$100 billion by 2050 from diminishing agricultural yields, disappearing glaciers, flooding, droughts and other events triggered by a warming planet, according to the findings of a new report to be released at the Rio+20 summit.

On the positive side, the cost of investments in adaptation to address these impacts is much smaller, in the order of one tenth the physical damages, according to the study jointly produced by the Inter-American Development Bank ([IDB](#)), the Economic Commission of Latin America and the Caribbean ([ECLAC](#)) and the World Wildlife Fund ([WWF](#)).

However, the study also notes that forceful reductions in global emissions of greenhouse gases are needed to avert some of the potentially catastrophic longer term consequences of [climate change](#). The report estimates that countries would need to invest an additional \$110 billion per year over the next four decades to decrease per capita carbon emissions to levels consistent with global climate stabilization goals.

“Many climate-related changes are irreversible and will continue to impact the region over the long term,” said Walter Vergara, the IDB’s Division Chief of Climate Change and Sustainability and the lead researcher of the study, whose preliminary findings were presented today in Washington at an event jointly hosted by the IDB and the Center for American Progress (CAP). “To prevent further damages, adaptation is necessary but not enough. Bolder actions are needed to bend the emissions curve in the coming decades.”

Region especially vulnerable

Latin America and the Caribbean contribute only 11 percent of the emissions that cause global warming. However, countries are especially vulnerable to its effects, given the region’s dependence on natural resources, an infrastructure network that is susceptible to climate events, and the presence of bio- climate hotspots such as the Amazon basin, the Caribbean coral biome, coastal wetlands and fragile mountain ecosystems.

Estimated yearly damages in Latin America and the Caribbean caused by the physical impacts associated with a rise of 2C degrees over pre-industrial levels are of the order of \$100 billion by 2050, or about 2 percent of GDP at current values, according to the report titled “[The Climate and Development Challenge for Latin America and the Caribbean: Options for Climate Resilient Low Carbon Development](#).”

The study cites climate impacts in areas such as agriculture, exposure to tropical diseases and changing rainfall patterns, among others. For instance, the report cites recent work estimating the loss of net agricultural exports in the region valued at between \$30 billion and \$52 billion in 2050.

Mexico and Brazil have the largest land distribution just above sea level, making those countries vulnerable to rising sea levels. A rise of one meter in the sea level could affect 6.700 kilometers of roads and cause

extensive flooding and coastal damage. A 50 percent loss of the coral cover in the Caribbean from coral bleaching would cost at least \$7 billion to the economies in the region.

The study notes that the adaptation costs are a small fraction of the costs of physical impacts, conservatively estimated at 0.2 percent of GDP for the region, at current values. In addition, adaptation efforts would have significant development benefits, from enhanced water and food security to improved air quality and less vehicle congestion, further reducing their net costs.

“Investments in adaptation are cost effective and have substantial co-benefits” said Luis Miguel Galindo, Chief of the Climate Change Unit of ECLAC, a key contributor to the study. “Also, some of these adaptation measures are very easy to implement and have significant positive impacts.”

Though adaptation is important, substantial investments are also required in order to drastically cut the region’s projected carbon emissions to levels consistent with global climate stabilization goals.

Under a business-as-usual scenario, Latin America and the Caribbean would contribute 9.3 tons per capita of greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, up from the current 4.7 tons per capita. The report identifies pathways to bend the emission curve to two tons per capita, by promoting zero net emissions from deforestation and other land-use practices by 2030, combined with efforts to eliminate the carbon footprint in the power matrix and transport infrastructure by 2050, at an annual cost of \$110 billion.

“Yes, spending \$110 billion a year for a region that faces major development challenges is not an easy proposition,” said Pablo Gutman, the Director of Environmental Economics at the WWF. “However, this would also bring about major benefits such as improved food and energy security; people would have healthier lives in cleaner environments.”

“In the long term,” added Vergara, “this is the surest way to ensure Latin America and the Caribbean continues to prosper along a sustainable path.”

Agricultural Development

Hayles welcomes CARDI projects by Alecia Smith-Edwards, Jamaica Information Service, 14 June 2012, <http://www.jis.gov.jm/news/list/30925>

Full Article

State Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries, Hon. Ian Hayles, has welcomed the implementation of two projects by the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI), which seek to enhance the production of roots, tubers, vegetables and herbs in the region.

“These projects are a step in the right direction as they are aligned with the Ministry’s strategic growth areas; onions, yams, tumeric, ginger to name a few, as they have clearly defined markets,” he said.

Mr. Hayles was addressing a Caribbean Stakeholders' Symposium for the projects held on June 13 at the Terra Nova All Suite Hotel in St. Andrew.

The projects, which were launched in 2010 with grant funding from the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC) and the European Union (EU) are entitled: ‘Increased Production of Roots and Tuber Crops in the

Caribbean through the Introduction of Improved Marketing and Production Technologies’; and ‘Increased Production of Vegetables and Herbs through the use of Protected Agriculture in the Caribbean’.

The State Minister further noted that these projects also present great opportunities for the country’s non-traditional sub-sectors “which have tremendous potential in terms of export development and import substitution”, pointing to yam, for example, which in 2011, had export earnings of approximately US\$28 million, “but has the capacity to generate even more revenue/income”.

“Similarly, our herbs and spices have potential for the development of our nutraceutical industry and the United States/regional markets. If we could exploit just even a small percentage of these markets, we would be on our way,” he said.

Mr. Hayles lamented that, while the country has made some strides in improving some of its primary crops, there is still a lot of work to be done in terms of value-added and processing.

“Too often, our farmers have suffered as a result of excess production in some crops; whereas if we had vibrant agro-processing industries, we could capitalise on the excess production. It is to that end that we are encouraging increased public/private sector partnership... to establish storage and post harvest facilities,” he said.

He went on to thank the EU/CFC for the grant assistance towards capacity building for the country’s farmers, who have benefited from the transfer of knowledge and the development of skills along the value chain, through training and demonstration in production and group dynamics, post harvest, processing and marketing techniques.

“Knowledge is indeed power, and with the ‘know how’, our farmers will be in a better position to engage in agronomic practices that will eventually lead to greater yields,” he said.

The symposium was held to bring key players within the roots and tubers and protected agriculture industries together to discuss technical issues, share information on the roles and current initiatives of the various stakeholders and chart a way forward for both sub-sectors.

Africa: Group calls for ACP, EU Relations Revamp by Victoria Rudvidzo, 12 June 2012,
<http://allafrica.com/stories/201206130950.html>

Full Article

Port Vila, Vanuatu — The 95th session of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group Council of Ministers meeting began here yesterday, with emphasis on the need to revamp the group's relations with the European Union in tandem with the changing global landscape.

Ambassador to Belgium Ms Mary Margaret Muchada is heading the Zimbabwean delegation which comprises officials from the ministries of Finance, Industry and International Trade, and Agriculture, Mechanisation and Irrigation Development.

Industry and International Trade Minister Professor Welshman Ncube was expected to arrive last night to lead the team.

In his opening remarks, ACP secretary general Dr Mohamed Ibn Chambas said it was time to reconsider relations between the ACP and EU in view of changes taking place and the emergence of such powers as China, Russia, India and South Africa.

"In the coming years, we must make crucial policy choices regarding the reinvention of the ACP as a collective grouping," he said. "This is not only on account of the realities of the New Europe, it is equally due to new competitive pressures in the global marketplace and the new geo-political configurations that define the character of our post-Cold War international order. What is essential is to build on our existing strengths while exploring new opportunities opened up by the emerging reconfiguration of economic, technological and geo-political developments."

Global realignments and major shifts in EU policy orientations on the one hand, and the new opportunities created by emerging economies on the other, demanded a re-look at the future of the ACP-EU relations.

The president of the Council of Ministers Mr Alva Baptiste underscored the need to revisit the ACP-EU engagement as the developing countries seek to strengthen their integration into the global economy.

"Europe itself is changing both in terms of geo-political priorities and institutional architecture," he said.

"This makes it all the more pressing that we explore all possibilities of reinventing the ACP group and ensuring a more solid basis of our relationship with the EU. Equally imperative is the need to diversify our international economic relations by exploring South-South linkages with the BRICS and other emerging economic powers."

Stakeholders continue to discuss on Agriculture by Andre Skeete, Barbados Government Information Service, 13 June 2012 http://www.gisbarbados.gov.bb/index.php?categoryid=13&p2_articleid=8428

Full Article

Agriculturalists, farmers, agronomists, members of the public and government have been 'putting their heads together' in an effort to find ways to move the local agricultural sector forward.

They were taking part in the Ministry of Agriculture's second town hall meeting at the Valley Resource Centre, The Valley, St. George.

Entitled *A National Dialogue on Food and Agriculture*, the three-hour session saw Ministry representatives soliciting the views of stakeholders and members of the public on critical issues impacting the sector. The ideas and solutions will form the basis of a proposed White Paper on Agriculture.

Among the areas discussed were the impact of praedial larceny on the farming community; the introduction of technology such as a market information system; the dire need to cut food imports, particularly for those items which can be grown or produced here; the importance of buying 'Bajan'; and poor communication between members of the agricultural chain, that is, from the farmers to the consumers.

Charles Herbert of Redland Plantation stressed that it was pointless to ask framers to produce more when imports continued to flood the market in increasing numbers.

"It took me three months to sell a field of carrots. Why? Because container loads of carrots continue to come into Barbados every week and we cannot sell our production. I have cut back my lettuce production by one third because I cannot sell it. The supermarkets are flooded with Iceberg and Romaine lettuce," he pointed out.

Mr. Hebert added that unless Barbadians understood the importance of buying local and farmers were offered some level of support and protection, then the sector will remain stagnant.

"We have a whole generation of Barbadians who know only how to eat plums, grapes and apples. Most of them have never tasted a mango and never will because it is far easier for sellers to import than to buy local and if you don't protect us, agriculture will never grow," he maintained.

Steven Elcock of the Valley Plantation added his voice to the issue of local production and imports, suggesting a strategic partnership with government could help provide a steady market for local goods.

"If government is saying they really want to help production, they should 'baby' certain crops, in other words, if a farmer is growing carrots all year round, then government, which controls the importation licences of products, should take these items from us and supply the community and nation with them. The government should then import what they know will be lacking at certain times of the year," he said.

With regard to land use, Michael Rudder proposed what he termed "a Certificate of Stewardship" where landowners would lease their lots to persons who would have responsibility for improving the quality of the land.

"You could lease the land for a certain amount of time but your job is to maintain it and improve the quality of it...The certificate would not only be about what you grow, but paying attention to developing and improving the soil on which you grow," he said.

Livestock Farmer, Sylvan Payne, expressed concern about the length of time it took to process incentives for farmers.

"The machinery of the government is hindering poor farmers like me from getting the help we need...It takes too long to process and when you want money in farming to develop, you have to get it [urgently]. If you don't have money to buy the feed, you can't live and feed is expensive. I would like to see something [done] about that," he remarked.

The consensus among the audience was that the agricultural sector could not continue to operate in its present state and an urgent rethink was needed to bring it in line with modern day demands.

The final town hall meeting will be held next Monday, June 18, at the Alexandra School, Speighstown, St. Peter, starting at 7:00 p.m.

Full Article

A leading agriculturalist is concerned that Barbados as a sovereign nation is too dependent on other countries for its food.

This observation has come from Chairman of the National Agricultural Commission and Director Emeritus of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), Dr. Cheltson Brathwaite, who acknowledged that, while it was impractical for Barbados to grow all of the food its citizens required, it was in the country's interest to produce as much as it could.

"It is well known that we are only producing a limited amount of our food requirements. When your food is being produced by someone else, you are clearly subject to the whims, fancies, prices and quality of that someone else and there could be a time when you get no food," he said.

Speaking last night at the second town hall meeting on agriculture at the Valley Resource Centre, The Valley, St. George, he noted that there were some crops that Barbados did not grow such as rice and wheat, and he suggested that Barbadians may soon have to make a critical choice about their dietary patterns.

"A significant amount of what we eat is based on five commodities - wheat, rice, corn, soya beans and potatoes...We don't produce them, yet they are the basis of our daily diet...but there is nothing that says a people cannot change," Dr. Brathwaite maintained.

He added that any effort to boost local food production should be borne out of a sense of national commitment, duty and pride.

"There is no place in the world where the agricultural sector has done well without national commitment and without the commitment of the people. I'm not only talking about the farmers; I'm talking about the nation. If agriculture is going to do well, a nation must commit to the agricultural sector, a nation must be serious about its agriculture," the agricultural expert said.

Dr. Brathwaite pointed out that the high food prices presently impacting the sector would not be a temporary phenomenon, and as such Barbados had to look inwards for the solution to feed its population while developing food security.

Food Security

Food and Nutrition Security Critical. Barbados Advocate, 13 June 2012,
<http://www.barbadosadvocate.com/newsitem.asp?more=local&NewsID=25287>

Full Article

The countries of the region have to be innovative if they are to find the resources needed to ensure that they can meet the food and nutrition needs of the people of the Caribbean.

That is the view of Dr. Vincent Little, Regional Policy Advisor with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). Speaking at a recent consultation on the repositioning of the agricultural sector here in Barbados, Little maintained that food and nutrition security is not only the remit of the Ministry of Agriculture, but has to be a multi-sectoral, multidisciplinary approach, involving the private sector, civil society, development partners, as well as the Ministries of Health and Education.

He noted that while every effort must be made to ensure that all people at all times have access to safe, affordable and nutritious food, there are some critical factors that are having a negative impact on those efforts. Among those factors, he said, is limited co-ordination and integration of policies and initiatives within the region.

“If we are to ensure that all people at all times have access to nutritious, affordable, safe food then we have to make the investment in the relevant actions we need to implement. The question is where is this resource going to come from? ...We need to be innovative. It is not going to come from FDI, in fact, if you look over the last 10 years it is very erratic with a downward tendency and in the region, it is going to tourism and energy, it is not going to the agricultural sector,” he said.

The FAO Regional Policy Advisor also expressed some concern about the impact of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) on the Caribbean population, suggesting that to a large extent, the incidence of such diseases is related to the food the region imports. He noted that billions of dollars are spent on food imports annually and in many cases the wrong type of foods are being imported and he is contending that this practice needs to change. Little maintained that this is necessary as NCDs are putting tremendous pressure on health services and people’s health in general.

“I think we need to provide disincentives, whether it is going to be a tax on the importation of foods that are contributing to NCDs in this region. I think this is something we need to look at seriously in this region,” he added. (JRT)

Food production has increased, but inequalities threaten food security in the Americas. IICA (Website), IICA Connection, June 2012, <http://www.iica.int/Eng/prensa/IICAConexion/IICAConexion2/2012/N11/secundaria2.aspx>

Full Article

To promote greater investment in agriculture, to provide incentives for research and technology transfer and to strengthen family agriculture are three of the recommendations contained in a document IICA sent to the OAS on how to increase agriculture's contribution to food security in the Americas.

Over the last two decades, food production has increased in the Americas overall, but the level of growth has not been equal in all countries and regions, depending on whether they are net food importers or exporters.

Between 1990 and 2010, the Andean, Southern and Central regions reported high growth rates in production, while rates slowed in the Caribbean due to declines in vegetable production and no growth in grain production.

These data are presented in the report "[Food Security in the Americas](#)", prepared by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) at the request of the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (OAS).

The document served as input for the discussions on food security held on the 42nd OAS General Assembly, which took place this week in Cochabamba, Bolivia.

Concurrent with the increase in food production, food imports and dependence on international markets have also increased, even outpacing production.

According to IICA specialists, the risks posed by this situation vary; while the Northern and Southern regions can almost guarantee the availability of food for their population, the other regions, but especially the Caribbean, depend heavily on imports.

The report recommends investing more in agriculture, providing incentives for research, extension and technology transfer, strengthening family and small- and medium-scale agriculture and improving access to markets for small- and medium-scale producers.

"We believe that it is imperative to support family and small- and medium-scale agriculture, given its contributions to overall food production and because it generates jobs, increases rural incomes and contributes to alleviating poverty," said IICA Director General Victor M. Villalobos.

Calm despite risks

Between 1990 and 2010, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) showed steady improvement of the Global Hunger Index (GHI), calculated by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).

In general, most of the countries fall into the category of low or moderate food insecurity, but the situation is critical in Haiti, where 58% of the population suffers from undernutrition, while in Bolivia, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, Ecuador and Panama, at least one in six inhabitants is affected.

Thanks to their International Monetary Reserves (IMR), net food importing regions in LAC are able to finance their imports. In general, the IMR cover between 43 and 98 months of food imports and it is recommended that the period covered be no less than 12 months. However, countries such as Haiti, St. Lucia, Dominican

Republic and Nicaragua would have limited liquidity, in an emergency, with which to acquire food on international markets.

In the Caribbean, net food imports account for 2% to 10% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), making this the most vulnerable region of the hemisphere in terms of international access to food.

In addition to these elements, individual access (food consumption per person) is also affected by factors such as poverty, inequity in the distribution of income and inflationary processes in LAC.

Unhealthy diets, growing levels of obesity and concerns regarding access to potable water, sanitation systems, medical care and agricultural health and food safety services are added to the issues the countries of LAC must address if food security is to become a reality.

The attainment of this goal also depends on the strategies applied by the countries of the hemisphere to adapt agricultural production and agroindustries to climate change, which, in the medium and long terms, threatens the availability of food.

Comprehensive strategies

Given the challenges identified in the IICA report to the OAS, and the fact that one of the Institute's strategic objectives is to improve the contribution of agriculture to food security, IICA promotes the adoption of comprehensive strategies intended:

1. To increase investment in agriculture in order to develop needed scientific, research, innovation and extension capabilities
2. To develop efficient and transparent agricultural markets
3. To adopt policies and institutional arrangements that promote the integration of small- and medium-scale agriculture into markets
4. To promote free international trade in food
5. To implement programs that provide access to food for vulnerable segments of the population
6. To adapt agriculture to climate change and climate variability, and minimize the risks posed by those phenomena and the volatility of prices for agricultural products
7. To reduce and mitigate the impact of agriculture on the environment, and promote food and nutritional security education programs.

Full Article

Government is working to tackle this country's high food import bill head on, whilst throwing its full support behind the local agricultural sector.

And, this will be done by ensuring that any produce which can be grown locally will not be imported into the island.

This assurance has come from Minister of Agriculture, Food, Fisheries and Water Resource Management, Dr. David Estwick, who said his Ministry was presently undertaking a study to determine which specific fruits and vegetables could be produced locally on a sustained basis.

He was speaking during yesterday's town hall meeting on the agricultural sector at the Princess Margaret Secondary School, Six Roads, St. Philip.

"When we get to that stage when that information is determined and proven, rest assured and as long as I am Minister of Agriculture, I am going to Cabinet and those crops will not be imported into Barbados as long as we can produce them," Dr. Estwick said to rapturous applause.

He was speaking against the backdrop of an escalating food import bill for the island which, according to the Agricultural Planning Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture, stood at US \$326.89 million in 2011.

Dr. Estwick continued: "Where there is a production cycle and we have evidence that we can produce the majority, we will utilise the CARICOM model under the revised Treaty of Chaguaramas, I think it is Article 21, which makes it quite clear that... no produce can be imported into the CARICOM region unless you have first applied to COTED and there is a demonstration that another country cannot produce the amount that you would want."

He added that such a model would be employed locally within the Barbados Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation (BADMC) where "certain items that can be produced on a rotational basis in Barbados will not be brought in when we get the information [from that study]," Dr. Estwick pointed out.

Marketing

IICA St. Vincent and the Grenadines assist Agro-Processors. IICA (Website), June 2012, <http://www.iica.int/Eng/prensa/IICAConexion/IICAConexion2/2012/N11/secundaria3.aspx>

Full Article

The goal is to ensure efficiency and competitiveness in the market place.

IICA's Country Strategy for St Vincent and the Grenadines focuses on the development of agribusiness and industries. Central to the development of such businesses is ensuring that the procedures and practices inherent in their operation are at the highest levels to ensure efficiency and competitiveness in the market place.

Fulfilling its mandate to facilitate the development of such competitive industries, IICA initiated and organized a workshop on Good Manufacturing Practices for small scale agro-processors.

This activity was held at the agro-processing laboratories of the Ministry of Agriculture at Orange Hill. Twenty (20) persons participated in the event including members of the SVGNRWP who are already engaged or interested in processing and members of the national network of agro-processors, VINCYKLUS.

The facilitator at the event was the Ministry's Food Technologist, Wendy Michael, who delivered presentations addressing the areas of: cleaning and sanitation; hygiene consideration in processing; process control; raw material selection and control; finish product handling and preservation. The presentations were well received as expressed in the evaluations conducted at the end of the session.

Denoting the importance of the session, the Minister of Agriculture, Rural Transformation, Forestry and Fisheries, Hon. Montgomery Daniel, was on hand to deliver a keynote address and declare the session open prior to the presentations. Other addresses were delivered by the Technical Specialist of IICA and President of the SVGNRWP, Norgie Tucker.

Going forward the parties have agreed to continue the collaboration, to expose the processors to new knowledge that would enhance the efficiency within their small businesses.

Water

NGO to embark on Million Dollar Rainwater Harvesting Project in Trinidad. Global Water Partnership Caribbean, <http://www.gwp.org/en/GWP-Caribbean/GWP-C-IN-ACTION/News-and-Activities/-NGO-to-Embark-on-Million-Dollar-Rainwater-Harvesting-Project-in-Trinidad/>

Full Article

The Toco Foundation, a non-governmental organisation (NGO) based in the north-east coast of Trinidad has been granted TT\$17 million from the Green Fund of Trinidad and Tobago for an extensive rainwater harvesting (RWH) project.

The Toco Foundation, which is a partner of GWP-C, works to influence communities in Toco and surrounding areas through a range of personal development services, sector focused economic development and environmental preservation programming.

Approximately five years ago, the Foundation endeavoured to develop a programme to ensure water security in the communities it serves. After a long-awaited approval of its application submitted for funding from the Green Fund, the Toco Foundation plans to install rainwater harvesting systems in fifty households in the rural villages from Matura to Matelot all on the north-east coast of Trinidad.

The Green Fund which falls under the Ministry of Housing and the Environment is the National Environmental Fund of the country of Trinidad and Tobago. The grant facility is available to community groups and organisations engaged in activities focusing on remediation, reforestation or conservation of the environment.

On May 14th, 2012, the Toco Foundation signed the Memorandum of Agreement with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to receive the TT\$17 million from the Green Fund, which will be disbursed over a four-year period to support the rainwater harvesting project.

Representatives from Global Water Partnership-Caribbean (GWP-C), its partner the National Institute of Higher Education Research, Science and Technology (NIHERST), government agencies and other organisations attended the signing ceremony.

Providing the welcome address at the ceremony was Mr. Richard Laydoo, Programme Coordinator of the Green Fund Executing Unit who described the very stringent application approval process. He explained that approval of applications would continue to be as thorough as it is because the Green Fund is capitalised by a tax on the gross sales of companies in Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Inshan Meahjohn, Chairman of the Green Fund Advisory Committee (GFAC) who also provided remarks at the ceremony, pointed out that since the establishment of the GFAC in 2008, there have been over 800,000 projects that have been recommended.

Mr. Michael Als, Project Director of the Toco Foundation, provided an overview of the RWH project at the ceremony. He pointed out how important the concept of RWH will be to Trinidad and Tobago and acknowledged the work of other organisations that are engaging in RWH projects. He stressed that organisations particularly NGOs should be provided with support to enable them to access the Green Fund as these organisations would need direct technical assistance.

Senator the Honourable Verna St. Rose-Greaves, Minister of Gender, Youth and Child Development provided remarks at the signing ceremony. The Minister highlighted the vital importance of literacy in

community development and expressed how pleased she was that the Toco Foundation's RWH project would serve communities.

She also spoke of a National Youth Volunteer programme launched by the Ministry of Gender, Youth and Child Development and indicated that it would be good to see the link between the Youth Volunteer programme and the RWH project.

Mr. Reynold Cooper, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Housing and the Environment gave the feature address at the event. Mr. Cooper stressed that water is at the heart of sustainable development. He also pointed out his Ministry's efforts to develop a coastal management plan for Trinidad and Tobago. Moreover, he commended the Toco Foundation for their work and their new project.

The Toco Foundation will receive an initial disbursement of funds in the amount of TT\$4 million to start the RWH project.

CDB launches regional water sector review. Global Water Partnership Caribbean, <http://www.gwp.org/en/GWP-Caribbean/GWP-C-IN-ACTION/News-and-Activities/CDB-Launches-Regional-Water-Sector-Review/>

Full Article

Global Water Partnership-Caribbean (GWP-C) was among various water agencies and stakeholders invited to the Project Launch Workshop of a Regional Water Sector Review being spearheaded by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB).

The workshop which was held on May 18th, 2012 in Barbados, sought to launch a consultancy initiated by the CDB to conduct an assessment of the state of the Water Sector (WS) in its Borrowing Member Countries with the exception of Haiti. The countries to be assessed therefore include: Jamaica; Trinidad and Tobago; Belize; Guyana; The Bahamas; St. Vincent and the Grenadines; St. Kitts and Nevis; Anguilla; Montserrat; Barbados; Antigua and Barbuda; Dominica; St. Lucia; Cayman Islands; British Virgin Islands; Grenada; and the Turks and Caicos Islands.

The proposed consultancy is aimed at evaluating and rationalising the major development challenges facing the WS in the Caribbean and for the CDB to determine its future role within this context. The major expected outcome of the Water Review project is that it would present up-to-date information, analyses and recommendations to aid in the CDB's strategic planning for its interventions in the WS.

The workshop provided a good platform for local and regional water stakeholders to be fully sensitised about the project and their future involvement in the consultancy process. This is because the consultants hired to conduct the WS review would be expected to gather various types of information from participating countries, through a mix of country visits, interviews and information surveys. Moreover, participants were able to meet the members of the consultancy group hired to undertake the project.

The consultancy is expected to span a year and entails a robust and detailed scope of work. The first stage of the research will involve the preparation of Water Sector Profiles for the various countries that will form part of the study. In building these profiles, evaluations will be conducted on areas such as:

- Policies, legislations and institutions governing the WS.

- Existing or proposed strategies related to managing climate change impacts on the WS.
- Effectiveness of Water Resource Management Systems in each country.
- Geology and Hydrology assessments.
- Adequacy of water supply service provision.
- Water for agriculture in the relevant country.

Other areas of the project will comprise of assessments of the role of: regional organisations; funding agencies; and an evaluation of the potential role of the CDB.

Water Resource Minister calls for improved water conservation efforts across the country. GIS Dominica, 14 June 2012, <http://news.gov.dm/index.php/news/4-headline-news/195-water-resource-minister-calls-for-improved-water-conservation-efforts-across-the-country>

Full Article

Minister for Water Resource Management, Hon. Reginald Austrie wants nationals to become more conscious about water conservation.

Water conservation refers to reducing the usage of water.

Hon. Austrie made the appeal as he addressed residents of Grand Fond this week, as they witnessed the contract signing for commencement of work on a new water supply project.

“Water is life but it’s also a scarce resource. Water is said to be more important than oil in the Middle East because you can live without oil but I’m not sure how long you can live without water. We must not waste it and we must not take it for granted... Let us close the taps and not allow water to run unnecessarily because the water you waste, a million people could do with just one drop of it.”

He also noted to residents of Grand Fond that they know all too well about the inadequacies of the current water system in that community, so they too have to be conscious of the water consumption once the project has been completed.

Agribusiness

Agro-Business groups receive equipment by Latonya Linton, Jamaica Information Service, 15 June 2012, <http://www.jis.gov.jm/news/leads-103/30932>

Full Article

Three farming groups, which benefited under the Organization of American States (OAS)-funded Rural Youth Capacity Building and Business Development Project (YOU CAB), were on June 14, 2012 presented with equipment as a contribution to the development of their business ventures.

The presentation, made at the closing ceremony for the project at the Scientific Research Council's (SRC) Hope Gardens offices, comprised stainless steel table, commercial blender, impulse sealer, scale, pH meters, refractometers, thermometers and chlorine test kits. They also received production formulation and product manuals.

Beneficiary groups are: Barada Farms, St. Thomas; Golden Grove Youth Society, Trelawny; and the South Manchester Group, Manchester.

The SRC was the executing agency for the project, that got underway in 2010, and which sought to build the capacity of rural youth involved in agro-processing enterprises.

Director General of the Organisation of American States' Jamaica Office, Dr. Joan Neil (2nd left), shakes the hand of Diana Blake (right) of Barada Farms in St. Thomas, after presenting her with a digital weighing scale on June 14, 2012 closing ceremony for the Rural Youth Capacity Building and Business Development Project held at the Scientific Research Council, Hope Gardens, St. Andrew. Sharing the moment are: Executive Director at the Scientific Research Council (SRC), Dr. Chadwick Anderson; and Manager, Project and Quality Management Systems, SRC, Marcia Henry.

SRC Executive Director, Dr. Chadwick Anderson, said YOU CAB has provided valuable technical information and assistance to the project beneficiaries, which they could not have otherwise afforded.

"It has also afforded the SRC and other stakeholders many valuable experiences in taking technologies to the rural communities and individuals in Jamaica that need them for sustainable livelihood options," Dr. Anderson said.

Director General of the OAS' Jamaica Office, Dr. Joan Neil, said the project provided an opportunity to share with young people, the knowhow and the expertise of business and how these can be applied "in a combination that will provide a winnable product".

"What is going to be the biggest challenge at the end of the day, is how you are going to apply the knowledge you have gained, with all of the heartbreaks and trials, and rising above that to ensure that you can take a highly successful product to market and that you can do so in a continuous production mode," Dr. Neil said.

Under the programme, a total of 50-70 beneficiaries were trained in the elements of good manufacturing practices; business development; food processing; product development; packaging, labelling, marketing and sales.

Agro-tourism

Tourism and Agriculture main areas of focus for Sr. James Parish Council by Garfield L. Angus, Jamaica Information Service, 14 June 2012, <http://www.jis.gov.jm/news/leads/30926>

Full article

Members of the St. James Parish Council have placed tourism and agriculture at the top of their agenda in meetings, and at Committee deliberations.

This was stated by Mayor of Montego Bay, Councillor Glendon Harris, at a JIS 'Think Tank', held at the Montego Bay office of the agency, on June 13.

The Mayor explained that those two areas provide the largest employment in the parish, and the Council must ensure that they receive the necessary attention and policy direction.

"These two sectors are the main employment areas for the citizens, and we want to make our contribution to enhancing the lives of the residents of this parish. We will support the farmers by way of creating the environment that enables them to live and work," he said.

"We will be looking at the policy that will enhance and enable the farmers. They will have a direct window in the Council's activities," Mr. Harris added.

On another matter, the Mayor told JIS News that a new female ward will be built at the St. James Infirmary. He said the institution must be a place that can accommodate and give the best care to persons in their twilight years.

He also noted that there is a plan to retrofit a vehicle that can deal with fires in the Cambridge and Maroon Town areas of St. James, as a first response from a sub-station, as the unit in Montego Bay takes approximately 50 to 60 minutes to reach the areas.

On the matter of roads and other infrastructure in the parish, the Mayor said he is in dialogue with the National Works Agency (NWA), the National Water Commission (NWC) and the respective Ministers to ensure that, where possible, projects can be fast tracked.

In the meantime, Mr. Harris said the Council will continue to upgrade infrastructure from its own budget.

Event

IICA/CARDI Media Awards for Excellence in Agricultural Journalism 2012 Launched

Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) on 11 June 2012 launched in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, the 3rd Annual **IICA/CARDI Media Awards for Excellence in Agricultural Journalism 2012**.

"Sustainable Agriculture, Sustainable Society" is the theme of this year's competition.

Entries are invited for the following categories:

- Print
- Radio
- Television
- Photography
- New Media
- Best Media House
- Citizen Journalist: IICA / CARDI Special Award for Youth

The competition closes on 14 September 2012.

Further details on the competition are available from IICA Trinidad and Tobago office:

Telephone: 645-4555; 645-5020; 645-8886

Website www.iica.int/trinidadandtobago