



Agriculture in the News

16-25 June, 2012

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Hot peppers to boost agriculture sector in the Caribbean by New Agriculturalist, June 2012, <http://www.new-ag.info/en/news/newsitem.php?a=2704>

Full Article

The Caribbean Agriculture and Research Development Institute (CARDI) has identified hot peppers as one viable option to diversify and boost the Caribbean's agriculture sector. "Synonymous with most Caribbean countries, is the tradition of most village homes making their own hot pepper sauces from the indigenous landraces, of which more than three hundred have been recorded across the Caribbean," reveals CARDI's Consultant Plant Breeder, Herman Adams. See page 1 for more details.

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.



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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

Hot Pepper

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Full Article

The Caribbean Agriculture and Research Development Institute (CARDI) has identified hot peppers as one viable option to diversify and boost the Caribbean's agriculture sector. "Synonymous with most Caribbean countries, is the tradition of most village homes making their own hot pepper sauces from the indigenous landraces, of which more than three hundred have been recorded across the Caribbean," reveals CARDI's Consultant Plant Breeder, Herman Adams.

To enhance the viability of the hot pepper industry, CARDI has been working to develop and improve varieties of commercial importance across the region. This work has included purifying and stabilising indigenous hot pepper varieties, and producing high quality seeds for the growing industry. Suitable varieties identified include Yellow Scotch Bonnet, West Indies Red, Tiger Teeth, Moruga Red, Pimento, Seven Pod and the Trinidad Scorpion, the hottest in the world. In Trinidad and Tobago, seven commercial landraces, identified as having high market demand, are now beginning to be produced commercially.

CARDI is currently working with Caribbean Chemicals and Agencies Limited (CCAL), the largest agricultural input supplier in the Caribbean, to utilise its distribution networks in reverse and through them market local hot pepper seeds to Brazil, Taiwan, Guatemala, India and Costa Rica. The Institute is also encouraging farmers to boost production by providing them with a hot pepper production manual which covers choice of variety, field and soil preparation, disease management, and harvest and post harvest operations.

All of CARDI's activities are focused on the goal of making the Caribbean hot pepper industry viable and sustainable and as such increasing production and productivity in support of local farmers. "CARDI's efforts in the hot pepper industry employ a 'value chain' approach, whereby all aspects of the industry, from planning to the delivery of products to the consumers, are dealt with," Adams states. "We also train exporters in post-harvest handling."

Roots and Tubers

St. Vincent supporting all local and fresh foods by Newsday, 21 June 2012-06-25,
<http://www.newsday.co.tt/businessday/0,162112.html>

Full Article

ST VINCENT is known across the region for its fertile soil; and one Vincentian said to me, “If you come to St Vincent you will be eating healthy and you will be eating well... locally grown fresh food and fresh caught fish every day.” This sets the foundation on which the work of the Caribbean Agriculture and Research Development Institute (CARDI) in St Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) is posited.

The Common Fund for Commodities/European Union (CFC/EU) funded project for “Increased production of roots and tuber crops in the Caribbean through the introduction of improved production and marketing techniques” is being implemented in St Vincent and the Grenadines, with other benefitting countries being Barbados, Dominica, Haiti, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago (TT).

The tenets of this project are such that inherent within its execution are the links to tourism, public health, nutrition, import substitution and foreign exchange savings.

SVG has received a budgeted allocation of EC\$1.4 million to be executed over a two-year period, commencing in 2011. Activities have been focused on two (2) primary areas:

1. Establish and/or refurbish plant propagation infrastructure; provide weaning and hardening facilities and supply expendable propagating supplies
2. Demonstrate and validate Integrate Crop Management practices and training

Leading the team in St Vincent is Dr Gregory Robin, who also serves as Technical Coordinator for the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and Regional Councillor for the Caribbean, International Society for Tropical Root Crops (ISTRC).

Significant Project achievements include:

- Refurbished five (5) small farine processing plants and sensitised the processors to new sanitation techniques and Good Manufacturing Practices
- Constructed a tissue culture Laboratory at Orange Hill; increased the production, weaning and hardening capacity of the Ministry of Agriculture’s facilities both at Orange Hill and Perseverance by over 200 percent
- Introduced over one hundred (100) farmers, twenty (20) extension officers and fifteen (15) stakeholders to the new improved sweet potato cultivars and training in all aspects of sweet potato production and handling
- Established sweet potato demonstration plots in the three main producing areas, specifically Akers, Chateaubelair and Rabacca

The work in SVG benefits the wider Eastern Caribbean through the provision of certified, disease free planting material. One farine processor, Mr Malcolm Knights is noted to have said “it has increased my capacity to produce”.

While Mr Gordon Shallow, Extension Officer and supervisor for Region 2, also a beneficiary of the training conducted, stated, “It was enlightening for the farmers to see the different varieties other than what exist in St

Vincent.”

Farmer Hilford Bullock indicated that “he would use the CARDI Technology as it seemed to do better than his”. The work of the CARDI SVG Unit is actively supported by the Government of St Vincent and the Grenadines, in particular the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Transformation, Forestry and Fisheries. Other partnering institutions include the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA); Taiwanese Technical Mission (TTM); St Vincent and the Grenadines Bureau of Standards; and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

UGANDA: Cassava key to food security say scientists by AllAfrica Global Media, 20 June 2012

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201206210835.html>

Full Article

Kampala — An alliance of scientists has been formed to help promote cassava, which has emerged as a "survivor" crop able to thrive in the expected higher temperatures engendered by climate change, a scientific conference in the Ugandan capital, Kampala, heard.

Some 300 scientists attending the second International Scientific Conference of the Global Cassava Partnership for the 21st Century (GCP-21-II) announced the alliance, named the Global Cassava Modelling Consortium, which will offer a platform to world cassava researchers to share research information, better understand the physiology of the plant, and explore avenues for protecting it from attacks now that it has even greater importance for the food security of many regions in the world.

The new consortium will initially establish a loose network of scientists sharing and analysing current cassava research and historical research data. As it grows, the network will include the sharing of experiences with cassava farmers across the Tropics, with farms being treated as experimental stations in their own right.

Andy Jarvis, a climate change scientist at the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) and CGIAR's [<http://www.cgiar.org/who-we-are/>] Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS) Research Programme, told the conference that a study

[<http://www.springerlink.com/content/n36675226277455j>] published in February in the journal *Tropical Plant Biology* revealed that temperatures in East and West Africa - two major cassava growing regions - are expected to rise by around 1.8 degrees Celsius by 2030, but that the cassava plant will thrive.

"While this [rising temperature] poses problems for the suitability of food staples like bean, banana and sorghum, cassava suitability is likely to be the exception to the rule... Research shows that it will brush off the higher temperatures," he said. "Its potential is tremendously exciting. But now we have to act promptly on the research, as more pests and diseases are manifesting themselves because of climate change."

Cassava is the second most important source of carbohydrates in sub-Saharan Africa, after maize, and is eaten by around 500 million people every day, according to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization. Globally, 280 million tons are produced every year, with half the supply coming from Africa; Uganda produces 5.4 million tons of cassava every year. It is also grown by millions of smallholder farmers in Southeast Asia and Latin America.

Achilles heel

Despite its robust survival in the face of climate change, it has an Achilles heel; it is susceptible to diseases related to global warming like mealy bug, cassava brown-streak disease and cassava mosaic disease.

The cassava study described cassava as "the Rambo root" for its resilience, with authors reporting that the tuber becomes even more productive in hotter temperatures and outperformed potatoes, maize, beans, bananas, millet and sorghum - some of Africa's main food crops - in tests using a combination of 24 climate prediction and crop suitability models.

The study found that in East Africa cassava could see a 10 percent increase in production if temperatures rise as predicted. In West Africa cassava will hold its own, doing better than potatoes, beans and bananas. Cassava, along with banana and maize, will see a 5 percent increase in suitability in Southern Africa, with only Central Africa registering a 1 percent decrease in cassava suitability - significantly better than the substantial declines expected in potato and bean, according to Jarvis.

Vitamin-rich varieties

Scientists at the Kampala meeting are also focusing on aspects of cassava breeding - conventional, genetic engineering, the biology of the cassava crop, pests and disease, and nutrition enhancement by moving away from the usual white cassava which is Vitamin A-deficient, a problem in many developing countries. In Uganda for example, Vitamin A and iron deficiencies are major health problems with 32 percent of children under 60 months, and 31 percent of child-bearing mothers, deficient in the vitamin.

"We are planning to introduce nutritious yellow cassava varieties that are rich in Vitamin A and protein," Robert Kawuki, a cassava breeder at a government agro-laboratory facility told IRIN.

Uganda's Minister of State for Agriculture Zerubabel Mijumbi Nyiira told IRIN at the conference venue that the findings would prove useful to farmers in sub-Saharan Africa. "The crop can work as social and economic transformer," he said.

"Cassava used to be a poor person's crop, but now it has the potential of becoming the main food of millions of people while its commercial potential is unimaginable. It is not only for food but it can also be used for industrial starch and used in more than 300 industrial products.

"The world is moving away from using fossil fuel, and therefore fermented cassava starch can produce ethanol used in bio-fuel. But more importantly, its survival in circumstances of this nature makes it one of the most important crops that can make Africa food secure."

Crops - Germplasm

EU contributes €5 million to help farmers maintain crop diversity: Support under plant genetics treaty fund announced during Rio+20. FAO 21 June 2012 <http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/149683/icode/>

Full Article

21 June 2012, Rio de Janeiro - The European Union is contributing €5 million (6.5 million dollars) towards the Benefit-sharing Fund of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, FAO announced today, at a high-level ministerial meeting on the plant treaty at the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.

The Benefit-sharing Fund helps farmers in developing countries manage crop diversity for food security and climate change adaptation.

This is the single largest contribution made to the Benefit-sharing Fund since it was established in 2008. It will help to increase the capacity of smallholder farmers to manage traditional crops like potato, rice, cassava, wheat and sorghum.

"Plant genetic biodiversity is a key factor for sustainable agriculture. We share the commitment to ensuring that the world's ecosystems, and in FAO's specific case the world's agro-ecosystems, are healthy and sustainable," said José Graziano da Silva, FAO Director-General, at the 2nd High-Level Round Table on the International Treaty for Food and Agriculture at Rio+20.

The meeting focused on delivery of the Treaty's potential benefits for biodiversity, climate change mitigation, and sustainability. FAO hosts the Secretariat of the International Treaty which entered into force in 2001.

The European Union joined the Treaty in 2004 and this is the first time that a member of the Treaty which is not an individual country has contributed to the Fund. The funding package follows previous contributions from Australia, Germany, Italy, Norway, Spain and Switzerland.

The Benefit-sharing Fund is governed by 127 countries and addresses food security at a time when climate change and other threats are contributing to massive losses of crop genetic diversity. The Fund already supports projects in 21 countries by promoting innovative planning and practical solutions for the use of crop biodiversity in areas affected by climate change, rural poverty or food insecurity.

"We need full political and financial commitment in support of sustainable agriculture if we want to guarantee food security worldwide while ensuring the conservation of our natural resources, such as biodiversity," Dacia Ciolo, European Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, said.

"In this context, strengthening the implementation of the International Treaty will be essential to face major challenges for food security such as climate change," he added.

"Farmers, as managers of genetic diversity, have much to offer both to their own communities and to the world at large thanks to their efforts to conserve and improve their crops through breeding and selection, and by making them available for use by others," said Lars Peder Brekk, Minister of Agriculture and Food of Norway and Chair of the High-Level Task Force of the Treaty.

The treaty recognizes “farmers’ rights” and includes among them the right to participate equitably in benefit-sharing and in national decision-making about plant genetic resources.

“The participation of small-scale farmers and other stakeholders in this process, from civil society organizations to the private sector, is not only welcome but also necessary,” said Graziano da Silva.

The plant genetics Treaty is constitutionally linked with the Convention on Biological Diversity and spearheads the cooperation of FAO with the Convention in the field of genetic resources. During the high-level roundtable, a joint cooperation initiative was announced between the Treaty and the CBD to further consolidate the governance of all plant genetic resources for food and agriculture under the Treaty in FAO.

Scientific criteria

"One of the Benefit-sharing Fund's unique features is the transparent process that governs the allocation of funds. After a wide announcement of each call, all the project proposals received for funding are evaluated according to established scientific criteria by international experts in order to fund the best projects," said Shakeel Bhatti, Secretary of the International Treaty.

Another key feature of the Fund discussed during the Second High-level Round table is its specific focus on conservation and sustainable-use activities in developing countries and regions which are not adequately funded in any other way. The contribution from the EU will make possible a range of activities, including:

- On-farm evaluation, selection and management of local and introduced seed varieties;
- Conservation of local and threatened varieties in national or international genebanks or the development of local and community genebanks;
- Documentation and sharing of local and indigenous knowledge that brings value to local crops and varieties;
- The transfer of technologies for conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources to farmers and selected institutions in developing countries;
- Establishment of links between farmers and communities elsewhere to promote the sharing of genetic material and information about that material, which will help farmers to respond to climate change.

Small Ruminants

Time to expand Black Belly Sheep Industry by the Barbados Advocate, 24 June 2012,
<http://www.barbadosadvocate.com/newsitem.asp?more=local&NewsID=25495>

Full Story

President of the Barbados Agricultural Society (BAS), Carlyle Brathwaite, said it is time to look at expanding the island's Blackbelly sheep industry.

Speaking at yesterday's Sheep Farmers' Forum at the BAS headquarters, he pointed out that currently there were approximately 20 000 sheep in the island, noting that these numbers should be raised to at least 100 000 to have a thriving industry.

According to him, one of the major hindrances in achieving this was a lack of land, not only to rear the sheep, but to grow the grass required to feed such numbers.

"I believe that it is time that we start calling and asking for land so that we can grow the grasses that we need to make the hay available at a cheaper rate," he said.

He noted that with land coming out of sugar cane production, it meant that there was more available to be leased for such a purpose, so dairy and sheep farmers could access high quality feed at a lower price.

To this end, Brathwaite said he had already approached Government with the request for more land, but was awaiting word from the Ministry.

Addressing the event, which was hosted by the Barbados Sheep and Goat Farmers Incorporated, he also pointed out the viability of utilising by-products.

He said for example that the hides could be made to make leather belts and other accessories, but these were often discarded after the animal was slaughtered.

His comments followed those of President of the Barbados Sheep and Goat Farmers Incorporated, Wayne Smith, who stated that while farmers were saying that there was no money to be made from Blackbelly sheep, many Barbadians were lamenting the fact that there was hardly any on the market to be bought for consumption purposes.

"This shows that there is a market for this product and we need to position ourselves to benefit from it," he stated. (JMB)

Minister of Food Production visits Goat and Sheep by N. Lakhansingh, Ministry of Food Production, Land and Marine Affairs, 20 June 2012, <http://agriculture.gov.tt/fplma/index.php?q=media-room/press-releases/food-production-minister-visits-goat-sheep-farm-south-trinidad-28110613401>

Full Article

As part of our ongoing programme of traversing the length and breadth of the country to visit with stakeholders, Friday 8 June, 2012 saw the Minister and his technical team visiting the 13 year old small ruminants farm, Marilissa Farms, in South Trinidad. Nestled on twelve (12) acres of undulating land, this Farm boasts of a combined herd of five thousand, seven hundred (5, 700) heads of sheep and goats. Mr. Lincoln Thackorie, owner of the Farm led the team along the path of the pens, featuring the fine quality breeds, including Blackbelly, Dorper, Katahdin, Jacob and Polypay sheep; and Saanen, Nubian, French Alpine, Boer and Nigerian Dwarf goats.

The tour also included a stop at the high tech milking unit. The Farm currently produces five hundred (500) litres of milk daily and is awaiting approval of its labeling by the relevant authorities. At this juncture, the discussions focused on the development of the small ruminant industry with a view to promoting the benefits of goat's milk to the local population. The Farm is also a popular site for visits by neighboring schools for students to learn about our local animals, including macaws, rabbits, ducks and peacocks, among others.

Mr. Barton Clarke, local Representative of Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) donated portable milking equipment to the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. Minister Bharath accepted and then presented the items to Mr. John Borely, President of the Trinidad and Tobago Goat and Sheep Society, who sought to highlight the Society's strategic objectives and linkages to the Food Production Action Plan.

At the end of the tour, the Society was invited to submit a robust proposal to the Ministry outlining five (5) specific areas in which they can assist in the attainment of the targets set out in the National Food Production Action Plan as it pertains to the livestock sub-sector.

Members of the touring team included Mrs. Rosanna Rampersadsingh, Councillor for Quinam/Morne Diablo; Ms. Edwina Leacock, Permanent Secretary; Mr. Gregg Rawlins, Representative, Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA); Dr. Simone Titus, Director, Animal Production and Health; Mrs. Cheryl Roach-Benn, Deputy Director, Animal Production; and Mr. Lindsay Gay, Executive Member of the Trinidad and Tobago Goat and Sheep Society (TTGSS).

The TTGSS is a not-for-profit organization incorporated on February 18, 2011. Its objectives include stimulating aspects of development, production, processing, quality control, and marketing within the sector as well as establishing and monitoring quality standards for the consumers of these products. There are over three hundred (300) registered members.

Food and Nutrition Security

A Food Based Dietary Guidelines for Saint Lucia, Claudia.Monlouis, Press Release, 22 June 2012. Government Information Service, Saint Lucia

<http://www.stlucia.gov.lc/press-release/food-based-dietary-guidelines-saint-lucia>

Full Article

Friday, June 22, 2012 – With the marked increase in non-communicable diseases, Saint Lucians are constantly being encouraged to eat right, however the Ministry of Health, Wellness, Human Services and Gender Relations is currently preparing to take the awareness to another notch with the launch of the Food Based Dietary Guidelines for Saint Lucia scheduled for Friday, July 6th .

Chief Nutritionist within the Ministry of Health Lisa Hunt Mitchel says a recent workshop with key sections of the public including health workers proved to be very successful.

“A two day workshop was held at the Pastoral Centre on June 19th to 20th with different stakeholders including persons from the health team, such as medical doctors, nurses, community health aides, nutrition officers and students. The participants of the workshop also included stakeholders from the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Agriculture, the Victoria Hospital and St. Jude Hospital.”

Food-Based Dietary Guidelines from different countries contain similar broad messages based on principles of nutrition science. National dietary guidelines often contain unique features which were designed by national experts to address the priorities of each country. The chief nutritionist says the guidelines were tailored especially for Saint Lucia.

“The 8 dietary food based guidelines include the following: always try to eat ground provisions, peas and beans with your meals everyday, eat more vegetables and fruits every day. Buy less fatty and greasy foods and when you cook use less fat and oils, salted foods, packaged seasoning and salty snacks. Choose less beverages and foods preserved or prepared with added sugar. If you drink alcohol do so in moderation. Drink water several times a day. Make physical activity part of your daily life.”

The launch of the Food Based Dietary Guidelines for Saint Lucia will include a robust public education campaign.

Youth and Agriculture

Good news for youth in Agriculture by The Barbados Advocate, 21 June 2012-06-21
<http://www.barbadosadvocate.com/newsitem.asp?more=local&NewsID=25448>

Full Article

THE Youth in Agriculture Programme received a substantial boost of \$30 000 from the Maria Holder Memorial Trust yesterday.

The donation will be used to both expand the programme and provide much-needed equipment and material such as a hand plough which will be used during the cultivation aspect of the crop husbandry activities. The funds will also go towards improving the animal husbandry aspect of the learning experience for the young people.

“The young people who are part of the Youth in Agriculture, work at crop and animal production. Using this donation, we will be able to expand the rabbitry programme and eventually enter into commercial production,” said Government’s Advisor on Poverty Eradication and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Undene Whittaker at the press conference held at the Ministry of Agriculture site in the Pine, St. Michael.

Whittaker added that this programme is fulfilling both the Government’s mandate and the United Nation’s mandate in terms of the MDGs and using agriculture to eradicate poverty.

“Supporting young people with education and training is one of the primary objectives of The Maria Holder Memorial Trust. The Trust’s support of the Youth in Agriculture Programme is based on the fact that this initiative offers young people an opportunity to become productive members of the community,” said Chief Project Manager of The Maria Holder Memorial Trust, Jane Armstrong.

There are currently 35 young men and women in this year-long programme located at the two-acre 4-H Ministry of Agriculture site.

This programme, which began in 2008 by Whittaker, aims to provide unemployed youth with demonstrable agricultural and life skills. The young people work five days a week under the supervision of extension officers from the Ministry of Agriculture and are paid a stipend. They also receive counselling, mentoring, are taught life skills and benefited from a feeding programme from the Ministry of Social Care.

Speaking about his experience in the programme, 23-year-old Deriston Harewood said that he was interested in agriculture from primary school and wanted to continue in this field after secondary school.

Harewood stated that he was given the opportunity to come to the programme and has learnt more about agriculture which will help him in pursue a career in this path. With a love for both animal and crop husbandry, he said, “The programme is a great start for persons who are interested and I would encourage others to come on board.”

Latoya Murray is 26 years old. She believes that if women enjoy agriculture, they should get involved in it. She started last December and has found the programme very informative. **(AR)**

Students from the Caribbean and Pacific participate in UOG Agriculture Internship by Pacific News Center, 19 June 2012 http://www.pacificnewscenter.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=24693:students-from-the-caribbean-and-pacific-participate-in-uog-agriculture-internship&catid=45:guam-news&Itemid=156

Full Story

Guam – Thirteen college students from American Samoa, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Puerto Rico, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Republic of Palau, and US. Virgin Islands are on the University of Guam campus to participate in three and a half week summer internship under the CARI Pac consortium, which is a program through which all land-grant institutions in the Caribbean and the Pacific collaborate and share information about agriculture innovation, research and applications

CariPac is facilitated at the University by the College of Natural and Applied Sciences (CNAS).

“Students will participate in a variety of field observations and hands-on laboratories where they can learn about the agricultural activities on Guam,” said Dr. Prem Singh, UOG Professor of Agricultural Engineering and CariPac Internship Program Coordinator.

The students will visit a variety of farms including the Department of Agriculture organic farm, the Triton Farm aquaponics facility, the Watson vegetable/fruit farm which uses a drip irrigation and fertigation system on a farm scale and utilizes many innovations in its operation, the Ernie Wusstig Corn Farm which utilizes a no-till corn production method which has reduced soil erosion and increased soil depth, Quan's Coconut Farm which supplies fresh coconut drinks to the tourism industry, and the Hydroponic Living Lettuce production facility to learn about the business and production aspects of modern agribusinesses.

In the UOG labs students will learn about plant propagation and grafting and agricultural engineering technologies for Sustainable Tropical Agriculture, setting up a automated micro-irrigation system, and using biotechnology in agriculture. The students will also learn about alternative energy sources through visits to the Navy Solar Power facilities and wind power generation at the Yigo experiment station. The students will observe juvenile shrimp production facilities at UOG's aquaculture facility, visit the Animal Breeding Center, and learn how Guam is fighting the invasion of Rhino beetle that threatens the existence of coconut trees on Guam.

“This is an all inclusive internship where these students have the opportunity to absorb information that they can take back to their home islands and enhance their own agricultural economies,” said Lee Yudin, Dean of the College of Natural and Applied Sciences and Principal Investigator for the consortium grant.

The Caribbean and Pacific Consortium (CariPac) was established in 2005 and includes institutions of higher education in the Caribbean and Pacific islands. CariPac provides funding to strengthen academic instruction and distance learning programs.

Information and Communication

Minister Bharath attends launch of Agri-journalism Awards by N. Lakhansingh, Ministry of Agriculture Land and Marine Affairs, 20 June 2012 <http://agriculture.gov.tt/fplma/index.php?q=media-room/press-releases/minister-bharath-attends-launch-agri-journalism-awards-2821061340197744>

Full Article

The third annual media awards for Excellence in Agricultural Journalism was launched on Monday 11th June, 2012. The Agri-Journalism awards ceremony is hosted by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) in collaboration with the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) and the theme for this year's awards is "Sustainable Agriculture, Sustainable Society".

Senator the Honourable Vasant Bharath commended the organisers for continuing this initiative noting that the media plays a major role in conveying the Ministry's objectives, accomplishments and services to the general public. Also present were Mr. Gregg Rawlins, IICA Representative in Trinidad and Tobago; Dr. Arlington Chesney, Executive Director, CARDI and Ms. Suzanne Sheppard, President, Media Association of Trinidad and Tobago (MATT).

The categories prizes include Print, Radio, Television, Photography, New Media, Best Media House and the newest addition, the Citizen Journalist: Special award for Youth. The competition closes on September 14th, 2012, more details can be found at www.iica.int/trinidadandtobago