Jagdeo Initiative high on COTED agenda. CARICOM Secretariat Press Release, 11 October 2013

(CARICOM Secretariat, Turkeyen, Greater Georgetown, Guyana) The Jagdeo Initiative is one of the key subjects that will be considered when Ministers of Agriculture gather on Friday for a Special Meeting of the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) on Agriculture. The Special COTED Meeting is a staple of the Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA) which is being held in Georgetown this year and which draws to a close on Friday after eight days of activity including technical meetings, workshops, field visits and an exhibition and trade show.
For more information see page 7

AGRICULTURE IN THE NEWS is a monthly 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.

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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
Coconut

CWA 2013 explores... Moving the regional coconut industry forward. CARICOM Secretariat press release, 8 October 2013

Full Article

(CARICOM Secretariat, Turkeyen, Greater Georgetown, Guyana) The vast potential of coconut industry in the Caribbean came under the microscope as the activities of the 12th edition of the Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA) continued at the Guyana International Conference Centre (GICC) in Georgetown.

The CWA is being held under the theme ‘Linking the Caribbean for Regional Food and Nutrition Security and Rural Development’.

A workshop on the coconut industry was held on Monday and Tuesday. It was organized by the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation, the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) and the University of the West Indies (UWI).

Stakeholders explored the growth of the coconut industry following a slump; the varied uses of coconut; opportunities that are available to push the industry; and challenges to the industry including the lack of market research on the use of the products, and pests and diseases.

The versatility of the product generated healthy discussion with participants expounding on the use of the shell/ husk as compost, and for generating electricity; the flesh to make coconut oil and milk; the water from the nuts; and the use of the ‘jelly, once a challenge for entrepreneurs.

“We need to organize the industry; we need to have people working closer together ...We are not looking at coconut only for coconut oil as we did 10 to 15 years ago. There are new products: coconut water, which used to be a ‘by-the-way’ drink, is now a full-fledged industrial drink...We see more of the by-products being utilized ...We’ve also seen the movement of the products – which is a good thing – from Guyana to Trinidad, from the production area to the bigger market,” Dr. Arlington Chesney, Executive Director of CARDI told representatives of the media Tuesday morning.

Some of the participants, themselves engaged in the industry as farmers and/or producers of various coconut-based products on a small to medium scale, were of the opinion that there was much work to be done to move the industry forward. Farmers, they pointed out, were critical to the success of the industry and needed to be recognized for their hard work.

The workshop was one of several that are being hosted concurrently at the Conference Centre. They are being held ahead of the formal opening ceremony of the CWA on Wednesday 9 October. This year, for the first time, the CWA has attracted participation from Haiti, as well as Canada, and Pacific Islands, Tonga and Samoa.
Climate Change

Climate smart agriculture must be adopted – delegates at opening of CWA Joint Technical session told Guyana Government Information Service, 7 October, 2013

Full Article

As part of the on-going activities for the 12th Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA), an opening ceremony was held to officially usher in the 43 workshops which are already underway, and continue into the week.

During the formal ceremony held at the Guyana International Conference Centre, the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) and Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) launched its joint publication entitled ‘Making Caribbean Agriculture Climate Smart.’

Guyana’s Minister of Agriculture, Dr. Leslie Ramsammy was presented with a copy of the document by CARDI’s Executive Director, Dr. H. Arlington Chesney.

Dr. Chesney emphasised that the book outlines the work that has been done in the last three years by CARDI and CTA on improving the policy framework, sensitisation of the public on climate change and the way forward in developing climate change resilient systems in the Caribbean.

“The publication presents a detailed synopsis of the new climate smart agriculture with information provided on how the global climate change system works, what factors are changing the global climate, indications and impacts of the changing climate…it also shares information on how climate change is threatening the agricultural and food production systems in the Caribbean, and around the world, what are the various solutions and response options to deal with climate change, and agriculture and how CARDI and CTA are working with national, regional and international partners to build a new climate smart agriculture,” he said.

In his feature presentation, Minister Ramsammy stated that the CWA provides great opportunities to examine where the Caribbean is thus far in agriculture, its economic importance, and how it can better lives.

The Minister highlighted that former President of Guyana, Bharrat Jagdeo has, and continues to play a pivotal role globally in advocating for better ways to be found to address climate change.

He explained that Guyana has just experienced one of the wettest August and September months since maintaining rainfall records and one of the wettest start of October. The Minister described the recent weather changes as weird.

“Whatever we call it, we in the Caribbean do not find it funny that some want to continue the debate as to whether there is global warming and climate change. We know and we are experiencing climate change and our experiences have been that climate change threatens our economic and social development…I believe those who have doubted climate change and those who have continued to drag their feet are reckless in their behaviour and leave too many people at risk,” he stated. Minister Ramsammy stressed that agriculture can, and must be a pillar on which a sustainable and resilient economy is built so as to bring equity, prosperity and social justice for all peoples. Further,
agriculture, or more appropriate today, the climate smart agriculture must be the vehicle for sustained economic and social prosperity and for ensuring that CARICOM countries reach the goal of high middle income countries in their lifetime.

In this regard, the participants were called upon to talk passionately about climate smart agriculture and be diligent and aggressive in placing it at the very heart of any people-centered development agenda.

“For Guyana, and countries in CARICOM, this is an imperative… in our countries and in a world where the pursuit of equity for our citizens remain a major challenge, it is our imperative to robustly promote a knowledge-based, climate smart, multifunctional transformative agricultural sector as one of the prudent approaches to achieve equity and better lives for our people,” the Minister highlighted. In this regard, the Jagdeo Initiative was a sound approach and remains relevant today. “I am saddened that having developed and embraced a prudent approach to transform agriculture and ensure it plays an expanded role in our development trajectory, we have been lukewarm in our implementation of the Jagdeo Initiative,” Minister Ramsammy expressed.

It is the Minister’s hope that CWA 2013 sees a new commitment and reaffirmation to the Jagdeo Initiative.

He acknowledged that agriculture plays a significant role in the emission of greenhouse gases. “Our agriculture development trajectory must proceed in ways that reduce agriculture’s environmental footprint, reduce vulnerability to climate change, help agriculture to create food security and add to the energy stock through bio-fuel production,” the Minister posited.

Importantly, Guyana’s Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) is an ambitious and lofty approach to development that shows that global warming and climate change can be reversed, and that even countries that played no role in its emergence can contribute to the solution without deferring development.

“The challenge we face today is enormous…we must be willing to respond with ambitions that are equally enormous in its scope,” Minister Ramsammy indicated.

Climate smart agriculture can help the Caribbean to increase food production, reduce losses due to weather patterns, become more resilient to climate change, reduce greenhouse gases and play a role in mitigation of climate change. If climate smart agriculture or conservation agriculture is practiced, the region can also reduce water needs for crops by 30 percent, lower energy needs by 70 percent and increase carbon sequestration, he posited.

“I believe there is a call to action…today, we declare that agriculture will not be part of the problem of global warming and climate change and a threat to food and nutrition security, but represents a robust solution, leading to adaptation and mitigation of the weather insecurity challenge,” Minister Ramsammy declared.

During the opening ceremony greetings were delivered by the President of the Association of Caribbean Media Workers, Wesley Gibbings; Regional Coordinator, Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), Gregg Rawlins; Director, technical Centre for Agriculture, CTA, Michael Haili; Executive Director CARDI and Officer-in-Charge, Trade and Economic Integration CARICOM, Desiree Field-Ridley.
**Biotechnology**

**Biofuel development should not compromise food security, says CFS.** FAO News, 11 October 2013

**Full Article**

*Committee on World Food Security also stresses policy and investment support for smallholder farmers and producers*

**11 October 2013, Rome** - Following a week of intense discussions, the Committee on World Food Security stressed the link between biofuels and food security, saying that the “progressive realization of the right to adequate food for all” should be a priority concern in biofuel development. The world's most important intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder platform for food security and nutrition said biofuel development "should not compromise food security, and should especially consider women and smallholders."

The 7-11 October meeting drew nearly 750 people, including over 130 government delegations, 100 civil society and 50 private sector organizations. Following the talks, the CFS also agreed on the importance of integrating smallholder agriculture into national policies, strategies, and research aimed at boosting investment and sustainable development.

Family farmers, fishers and others whose livelihoods depend on smallholder agriculture in developing countries account for most of the 840 million chronically hungry people in the world, according to the recent UN hunger report, the *State of Food Insecurity in the World.*

**Opportunities and risks**

On the subject of biofuels and food security, informed by a report from the High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) on Food Security and Nutrition, the CFS noted that biofuel development encompassed "both opportunities and risks in economic, social and environmental aspects," depending on the context and practices. "In some cases, current biofuel production creates competition between biofuel crops and food crops," it added.

The CFS encouraged FAO and other stakeholders to look at ways to help countries strengthen their capacities to assess their situation with regards to biofuels, taking into account food security concerns at global, regional and national levels, and legitimate land tenure rights.

"Governments and other appropriate stakeholders are encouraged to review biofuels policies - where applicable and if necessary - according to balanced science-based assessments of the opportunities and risks they may present for food security,” the Committee said.

It called on biofuel research and development partners to improve the efficiency of biofuels regarding both resources and processes, and to devise solutions adapted to the needs of all stakeholders, including those in least-developed countries, as well as women and smallholders who are most in need of access to modern energy services.

The CFS' recommendation called on research and development partners to adapt biofuel production and processing to modulate the supply chain between food, feed and energy, depending on conditions.
The CFS specified that guidance on the issue is included in existing international agreements and instruments including: the CFS Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition (GSF); the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in The Context of National Food Security (VGGT); the Voluntary Guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security; the Global Bioenergy Partnership (GBEP) Sustainability Indicators for Bioenergy and FAO Bioenergy and Food Security (BEFS) Approach.

**Investment in smallholders**

On the issue of investment in smallholder agriculture, also informed by an HLPE report, the CFS adopted a policy recommendation calling on governments, together with smallholder organizations, civil society, the private sector, research institutions and international development partners, to work together to "build a country-owned vision" designed to boost investments in smallholder agriculture. The CFS recommended countries consider how agricultural, urban and rural sector policies, strategies and budgets could best enable smallholder access to productive assets, local, national and regional markets, appropriate training, research, technology and farm support services - especially for women. The importance of smallholder agriculture will be highlighted in 2014 during the International Year of Family Farming.

The CFS also tackled a wide range of other issues designed to support efforts to eradicate chronic hunger and extreme poverty, including responsible agricultural investments and food security in protracted crisis situations. These discussions were slated to continue during regional consultations in the months to come.

At the end of the week, Gerda Verburg of the Netherlands was elected as the CFS Chair for a two-year term. Verburg succeeds Yaya Olaniran of Nigeria.

**Soil and Water Management**

**Greater implementation of policies for the water sector needed** by Aisha Reid, 10 October, 2013


**Full Article**

There is a call for the greater implementation and development of policies for water sector management in the Caribbean.

This is the view of Minister of Agriculture, Food, Fisheries and Water Resource Management, Dr. David Estwick, who was addressing the 9th High Level Ministerial Forum on Water for Ministers of the CARICOM Region, today at the Hilton Barbados hotel.

Dr. Estwick said that many small developing islands are faced with challenges that relate to basic amenities and the maintenance of a high standard of living.

“A surprising number of householders in small and rural communities in the region lack adequate facilities for the proper collection, treatment, and disposal of wastewater – all essential to protecting the environment and the health of the public,” he lamented.
The Water Resource Management Minister said that it was essential for a proper wastewater treatment to be in place to safeguard against diseases.

He noted that this could be done through proper garbage collection, potable water treatment facilities and immunisation programmes, among others. He stated that untreated water could create a number of challenges for individuals as it could spread diseases and infect drinking water sources at various levels.

“… Most people give little thought to what happens to their wastewater, and the availability of safe, clean drinking water is often taken for granted. Cholera and other wastewater-related diseases are generally viewed as threats only for other less developed countries. Hence, we need to be cautious of similar outbreaks reaching our shores which could negatively impact our populations and devastate our fragile economies,” he added.

Dr. Estwick expressed the hope that by the end of the High Level Session, plans would be in place that would help to further address the issues relating and affecting water and wastewater management throughout the region.

The 9th High Level Ministerial Forum continues tomorrow.

Agricultural Development

Agriculture finally getting recognition it deserves – President Ramotar. CARICOM Secretariat Press Release, 11 October 2013

Fill Article

(CARICOM Secretariat, Turkeyen, Greater Georgetown, Guyana) With renewed emphasis on agriculture to ensure food and nutrition security in the Region and to spur development, the sector is finally getting the recognition it deserved, His Excellency Donald Ramotar, President of Guyana said on Wednesday.

He was at the time delivering the feature address at the opening of the Caribbean Week of Agriculture 2013, being hosted in Georgetown under the theme ‘Linking the Caribbean for Regional Food and Nutrition Security and Rural Development’. The formal opening ceremony was held at the Guyana International Conference Centre where the CWA activities, including an exhibition and trade show, are based. The CWA has attracted wide participation from across the Caribbean, and from as far as the Pacific and Canada.

“The wide participation (at the CWA) tells us that agriculture in the Region is finally getting the recognition that it deserves because when we look around the world and hear about the great challenges … one of them is the question of food, we cannot solve that problem without a good, strong agriculture (sector) in our own Region as well,” the President said.

He called for a change of the image of agriculture and pointed out that the agriculturalists of today and
tomorrow had to be more educated, using more science and technology to farm and to produce more food.

“We have a lot to do to satisfy our needs in the Region,” he told the packed auditorium, and added that he was happy that the Jagdeo Initiative, which addresses the key binding constraints to agriculture in the Region, was “beginning gradually to come to reality”.

Mr. Michael Hailu, Director of the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), also referred to the need to change the old thinking of agriculture. What was necessary, Mr. Hailu said, was the raising of the profile of agriculture, a quest his organization was pursuing. Noting the challenges the Region faced, he called for those challenges to be turned into opportunities for agriculture.

**Jagdeo Initiative high on COTED agenda.** CARICOM Secretariat Press Release, 11 October 2013

**Full Article**

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Ms. Nisa Surujbally, Programme Manager, Agriculture and Industry at the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat said Thursday that lead agencies and governments that manage each of the nine key binding constraints to agriculture, which form the basis for the Jagdeo Initiative, will present their findings and updates to the COTED meeting.

The Jagdeo Initiative on Agriculture, conceptualised by the former President of Guyana Mr Bharat Jagdeo is a strategy formulated to develop agriculture in the Region. It identifies and defines nine key, critical and binding constraints to the development of the agriculture sector in the Caribbean region and also practical interventions at both the regional and national levels to alleviate these constraints. “This year we have been able to show the Ministers a huge chunk of work that has come out of these lead agencies and governments and these reports will be presented,” Ms. Surujbally said. Barriers to intra-regional trade and the impact of climate change on agriculture are among the other matters that will also be addressed at the one-day meeting.

“Coming out of our COTED and the press conference that will ensue, we will hear from the ministers about how they see the future,” she said.
COTED wants Governments to place agriculture on front burner. Guyana, Government Information Agency, 11 October 2013

Full Article

The Government of Guyana and the Agriculture Ministry today came in for high praise by countries of the region for hosting a well organised Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA) at the Guyana International Conference Centre (GICC), Liliendaal. The Week culminated with a Ministerial Meeting of the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED).

Speaking at a press conference this evening, Minister of Agriculture, Dr. Leslie Ramsammy said that this CWA brought together the Region’s key stakeholders in a way that they have never been brought together before.

He noted that the event was well-attended not only by officials at the ministerial level, but by key bodies such as Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI), University of the West Indies (UWI) Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), Caribbean AgriBusiness Association (CABA), Caribbean Farmers’ Network (CaFAN), the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA) and Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO).

For countries whose ministers could not have attended, other senior functionaries were present. Minister Ramsammy said that there was a strong commitment by all to use the Jagdeo Initiative to transform agriculture with the aim of ensuring that the Caribbean becomes the first region in the world to end poverty and hunger by 2025.

The Jagdeo Initiative on Agriculture, conceptualised by the former President of Guyana Bharrat Jagdeo is a strategy formulated to develop agriculture in the Region. It identifies and defines nine key, critical and binding constraints to the development of the agriculture sector in the Caribbean region and also practical interventions at both the regional and national levels to alleviate these constraints. Cassava and sweet potato were identified as key agriculture produce that can contribute to the generation of wealth and the production of health food choices for the Region’s people. Additionally, it was agreed that much more focus must be placed on processing and value-added rather than just exporting raw products.

The Agriculture Ministry will be teaming up with the FAO to host the first cassava festival on World Food Day on October 16. This event will see the commercialising of cassava recipes. Additionally, the FAO will be publishing a recipe book of the different meals that can be prepared from cassava.

Meanwhile, Grenada’s Minister of Agriculture, Lands, Forestry, Fisheries and Environment, Roland Bhola said that with the economic pressure facing the Region, most countries are looking at agriculture to transform their economies.

He said that, “we have long overdue to deliver on food security to our people…we have the capacity and the availability of all the basics to achieve that objective.”

He said this meeting put a lot of the outstanding issues into perspective and has clearly outlined the next steps to be taken on the way forward.
Minister for Agriculture and Forestry of Dominica, Matthew Walter said that the objective of food security and poverty reduction will not be achieved if countries of the Region work in isolation of each other.

He said that if agriculture is well planned and placed on the front burner by all Governments, then issues such as rural poverty, unemployment, hunger and other social problems will be comprehensively addressed.

He pointed out however, that countries are hindered by many constraints particularly in terms of the availability of sufficient financial resources. This, he said, is an issue that must be addressed at all cost.

With regards to the sanitary and phyto-sanitary condition of foods produced in the Region, a CAHFSA body has been put in place to certify these standards, which have to be adhered to in the process of international exportation of food.

The Dominican Agriculture Minister also spoke of the importance of attracting more youths in the sector and pointed to the need for putting in place the requisite programmes to keep young people interested in this field.

Officer-in-Charge of Trade and Economic Integration in CARICOM, Desiree Field-Ridley emphasised that all stakeholders must work together to address the issue of the Region’s high food importation bill. She added that there must be synergies in countries’ work programmes so as to develop a strategy to plan, improve and increase production and trade.

This, the 12th CWA, was held under the theme “Linking the Caribbean for Regional Food and Nutrition Security and Rural Development”. The next CWA is tentatively scheduled to be held in neighbouring Suriname.

CWA was conceptualised by IICA as a facility to place agriculture and rural life on the front burner of regional integration activities and in doing so enable key decision-makers in the public and private sectors to better acknowledge the importance of agriculture and rural life to the economic, social and environmental stability of the region.

It also provides a forum for major stakeholders in agriculture and related sectors to have an opportunity to dialogue and forge a common vision for the repositioning of agriculture and the enhancement of rural life.

Believe in agriculture – rallying call at CWA 2013 opening. CARICOM Secretariat Press Release, 10 October 2013

Full Article

(CARICOM Secretariat, Turkeyen, Greater Georgetown, Guyana) The Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA) 2013 was formally opened on Wednesday evening with rallying calls for belief in the agricultural potential of the Region, and action, at all levels, to realize that potential. At the Guyana International Conference Centre at Liliendaal, Greater Georgetown, where activities of
the twelfth edition of CWA are anchored, speakers at the opening ceremony were confident about the movement towards food security and the alleviation of poverty.

Dr the Hon Leslie Ramsammy, Minister of Agriculture of Guyana, led the chorus of calls for belief in agriculture as a vehicle for regional development, as a wealth creator, and as the key to food and nutrition security. In his welcoming remarks, the Minister called on the Region to reaffirm its commitment to agriculture, to ensure that it was a vehicle through which the future was guaranteed; and the means through which all citizens could live in food security.

“We must leave this evening saying ‘I believe’ … ‘I believe’ is a new Guyana campaign because I believe that Guyana is taking our place in the family of CARICOM truly as the breadbasket of this Region. We are committed, and we believe that we do not have to import US$5B worth of food from outside the Caribbean. Working together we can feed our people; we can produce all the food we need,” he told the packed auditorium.

Dr. Arlington Chesney, Executive Director of the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) underscored the necessity for belief in the sector. “We need to believe in ourselves,” he reiterated, as he pointed to the gains the Region had made in agriculture and the benefits of the CWA, as well as to the steps that needed to be taken to ensure food security. Among those steps were increasing capacity, facilitating farmers working together, and more investment in agriculture.

Dr. Douglas Slater, Assistant Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM)’s Directorate of Human and Social Development, said that the Region had to recognize that “we have to be integrated in all our efforts”, and added that “we believe that we can do it, but we must work at it”. Dr. Slater stressed that while high credit was assigned to ‘business people’ – traders who buy and sell – recognition needed to be given to those who engage in agriculture who “really create value, create wealth”.

“It is time for you to recognize that and to ensure that it is understood that there is real business in agriculture,” he said. Dr. Slater said that the CWA was being held at an opportune time, when intense focus was being placed on non-communicable diseases. There could not be human and social development without people being properly fed, he pointed out. He threw out challenges to the youth to understand the economics of agriculture so they could earn a living from it; and to the media to ensure that the people of the Caribbean were well informed about what was happening in the Community.

Caribbean Week of Agriculture 2013, which began on 4 October and concludes on Friday following a Special meeting of the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) on Agriculture, is being held under the theme ‘Linking the Caribbean for Regional Food and Nutrition Security and Rural Development’.
Government procurement to be set aside for domestic producers. Barbados Advocate, 10 October, 2013

Full Article

The Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Fisheries and Water Resource Management is moving to ensure that a percentage of all government procurement is to be set aside for local producers.

Minister Dr. David Estwick made this statement to the applause of those gathered at the Annual General Meeting of the Barbados Agricultural Society on Saturday at the Radisson Aquatica Beach Resort.

“It is the intention of my ministry to require a policy position of the Cabinet very soon that a percentage of all government procurement be set aside for domestic producers. That doesn’t breach any rules. It is national policy and it does not affect competition, it is national policy,” he stated.

He noted that while the island’s commitments to the World Trade Organisation limits the extent to which it could provide the level of protection that the sector demands, his ministry was embarking on a methodology of moral suasion to encourage all government institutions to secure a greater quantity of local products at the level of procurement. “In the long run, it is anticipated that they tourism sector will be brought on board as well, as was enunciated in the budgetary proposals presented in August this year. Wherever, possible, other ministries will be asked to play a similar role in tandem. Recently, and in collaboration with the School Meals Department of the Ministry of Education, we were able to secure an undertaking that more local milk would be procured under the School Meals program,” he stated.

In addition, Estwick also pointed to the welfare voucher program that would be done in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Care. (JMB)

Remarks by Dr. Douglas Slater, Assistant Secretary-General, Human and Social Development, Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat On the Occasion of the Opening of the Twelfth Caribbean Week of Agriculture. CARICOM Secretariat Press Release, 9 October, 2013

Full Article

I speak to you this evening on behalf of Ambassador Irwin LaRocque, the CARICOM Secretary-General who, unfortunately, is out of the country.

Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA) has come to be known as the premier agriculture event in the Caribbean and rightly so. After 14 years, CWA is increasingly becoming the ‘go-to’ event in which stakeholders from across the Region meet to discuss issues of importance to the Region. The increasing fervour of successive host countries to produce a ‘week to remember’ emphasizes the importance of agriculture for our individual Member States and the presence of so many stakeholders across the agriculture value chain no doubt augurs well for an exciting and productive week of activities.

This year CWA returns to Guyana after last being held here 10 years ago. As we know, agriculture is
one of the major contributors to the Guyana economy, and among CARICOM Member States Guyana is perhaps the leading country in respect of self-sufficiency in food production as well as the lead agricultural exporter to other CARICOM countries. Guyana’s potential to contribute considerably to Regional food security should therefore not be underestimated. It is also noteworthy that the President of Guyana, His Excellency, Donald Ramoutar, is the CARICOM Lead Head of Government for Agriculture in the Quasi Cabinet of the Heads of Government of CARICOM.

Agriculture has always held high priority on CARICOM’s agenda in light of its contribution to the development of Caribbean economies. Over the years we have seen agriculture grown from a sector focused on primary production to one of significant interventions throughout the value-chain. Heads of Government in seeking to address the current problems of high levels of debt and low levels of growth in our Member States have established a Commission on the Economy which will give priority to stabilisation, resource mobilisation and employment together with energy and ICT. This will be done within a context of innovation and enhanced competitiveness.

Agriculture has been identified as one of the key sectors that can engender growth and economic development in Caribbean economies and has been targeted for investment at both public and private sector levels. It is therefore appropriate that the theme for this year’s CWA is Linking the Caribbean for Regional Food and Nutrition Security and Rural Development. This lends itself so easily to the focus on increased production and exports.

In seeking to address the issue of food and nutrition security, therefore, we must seek to create that link between agriculture and the overall economic growth of the Region. Over the years several policy frameworks have been developed and are being implemented in support of the sector. We now have a Community Agricultural Policy (CAP) which sets out long-term and immediate priorities. The CAP will soon be supported by an Action Plan to help individual countries to implement the policy at the national level. We also have a fully elaborated Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy and Action Plan which Member States have started implementing. These policies are particularly designed to arm farmers, producers, agroprocessors and exporters with the right strategies to increase production and gain larger market share.

Key to the success of these policies, however, is the ability to implement at the national level. Our Regional institutions and bodies like the Caribbean Agri-Business Association (CABA), the Caribbean Farmers Network (CAFAN) and the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI), have a critical role to play given their interaction with stakeholders at all levels. As CWA illustrates, the support of other agricultural institutions like the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) are integral to the success of our initiatives. It is not possible to deliberate on regional agriculture matters without dealing with the still vexing issue of transportation in all its dimensions. It is indeed timely that the Heads of Government of CARICOM at their last meeting had, as a central focus, Transportation in the Region, and, preparatory to that, the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) met to advise, inter alia, on the transportation of agriculture produce. The result has been the establishment of a Transportation Commission. Some of the issues we have to address relate to the high cost of regional air and sea transportation. For example, freight costs between Antigua and Barbuda, and Guadeloupe and Martinique are twice as high as freight costs from France to Guadeloupe. Further, the Special COTED on Transportation held earlier this year agreed that key stakeholders including the Caribbean Shipping Association, LIAT, producers and exporters meet to discuss the issue of availability of adequate transportation to move goods from one country to the next.

Mr. Chairman, as the Region continues its journey towards a food secure Community we must also
create that link with efforts to reduce the food import bill which is estimated to be more than US$4 billion. While it is not feasible, nor is it possible to produce all our food, it is crucial that we target those categories of food imports that can be profitably produced in the Caribbean and are necessary for food and nutrition security. A large segment of our food imports go directly into tourism and the growing fast food sector. This is one area that we should be able to target but it requires that we arm ourselves with detailed information on the products involved, the form in which they are imported and the cost factors that have to be addressed. There are some encouraging signs that we are making progress in penetrating the tourism and fast food industries, particularly in products like poultry.

As we continue the process of implementation, we must use the infrastructure of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) and the expanded space for trade, investment and innovation that it creates. Regional industries should therefore move to take advantage of the removal of all barriers to the trade in goods and services, and the movement of capital and skills. The more cross-border investment takes place, the greater the opportunities for employment, productivity and growth. The agricultural sector is no different from any other in this respect. Though sanitary and phyto-sanitary measures which are critical in ensuring trade among CARICOM Member States and beyond could complicate our lives, it really should not. In this respect, we look forward to an operating Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA) to smooth the process.

Mr. Chairman, within CARICOM, the productive sector of agriculture is not the only concern. We must also ensure that link between food security and nutrition security. Ensuring access to safe and nutritious food to meet dietary requirements and food preferences for an active and healthy lifestyle is equally important. As a Region we must ensure that Caribbean populations are armed with information that will enable them to make the right choices with respect to nutrition. Data has shown that the rate of non-communicable diseases otherwise known as ‘lifestyle’ diseases such as diabetes and hypertension are particularly high in the Caribbean. The risk of contracting such diseases is greatly lowered if we make the right dietary choices.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, as we focus this week on food and nutrition security let us ensure that in our discussions we keep in mind the need to create that link with production, the overall economic growth of the Region and the overall health of the Region.

CWA’s intent is for hunger and poverty to be eradicated -CARDI’s Executive Director. Guyana Government Information Service, 8 October, 2013

Full Article

Heads of several regional and other agricultural bodies today updated the media on what transpired in the sessions hosted thus far for Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA). These organisations are partnering on water management, impact of climate change on bio-diversity, impact of climate change on pest incidents, pest and diseases, movement of plant materials and ICTs and value chains. Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI), Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the Caricom Secretariat are all participating in the CWA 2013.
CARDI’s Executive Director Dr. Arlington Chesney said even though the CWA has a lot of activities, the intent is for hunger and poverty to be eradicated. He underscored the close relationship among the agencies which saw the formation of the Alliance for Sustainable Development, and the Jagdeo Initiative which provides a framework within which they can operate.

Dr. J. R. Deep Ford, FAO Regional Director noted that on Monday, the FAO held what he considers to be a successful session on policy development for promoting food and nutrition security in the Caribbean. He explained that one of the resounding issues discussed was the importance of translating the support of the agriculture sector into concrete results, especially in the area of financial and technical support.

“If the agriculture sector is in fact on the growth and development agenda of the Caribbean the sector must be supported…we need to rebuild our agricultural extension and technology systems, we need to rebuild our policy units in our Ministries of Agriculture across the region, we need to link with the private sector and civil society and communities much more effectively than we are doing,” he said.

Dr. Ford explained that there is a need for policies to be in place since sectors are no longer being built, but industries. “We are filling the space that has been left by the decline of sugar and banana…if we are going to be doing these things, we have to have policies in place to provide the incentives for investors to invest in the sector,” he said.

Dr. Ford added that this perspective speaks to the import policy, market shares and developing the value chains of the commodities.

“There is a major crowding out effect that is taking place in the Caribbean that has to be addressed, and that crowding out effect is food imports coming into the region, it is multi-national corporations selling food in the region…all of these need to be considered from a policy standpoint where we need to recognise that if we are going to produce domestic products for our consumption we must have policies in place,” he said.

Another matter of concern is addressing consumption and demand, and in this regard Dr. Ford urged the citizens of the Caribbean to consume more domestic products. Transportation and connectivity was also discussed.

Meanwhile, IICA’s Regional Coordinator, Gregg Rawlins indicated that the organisation was able to facilitate the convening of the Regional Caribbean Network for Rural Women Producers which is an importance member of the Alliance for sustainable agriculture in the Region.

Rural women are important participants in the development of agriculture, in farming and agro-processing. “What we are seeking to do is strengthen the governance of the network of Rural Women Producers in the Caribbean, as well as the national chapters so that they can more effectively manage the operation and interact and collaborate with donors to get the type of assistance that they need,” he pointed out.

Further, decisions were taken regarding the by-laws of the national chapters so as to improve governance, and by this time next year new arrangements will be in place for the national and regional networks.

Discussions were also had on the two projects funded by the European Union (EU) and implemented by IICA. The first project, the Intra Agricultural Policy Programme for the Caribbean is valued at EURO 8.6M and has an implementation phase of over three- and-a-half years, in close collaboration
with the Caricom Secretariat and CARDI among others. It is anticipated that all Cariforum countries will be able to benefit.

Rawlins explained that the programme will address issues relating to policy, technology transfer and adoption, market linkages and improved entrepreneurship, and enterprise development in the Caribbean.

The second project deals with the sanitary and phyto-sanitary measures’ component of the Economic Partnership Agreement capacity building programme. “We recognise that if the countries in Cariforum are able to trade both within the region as well as meet the standards of the international markets, they need to adopt appropriate sanitary and phyto-sanitary measures, address the issues of plant health, animal health and food safety,” he said.

CTA’s Michael Hailu noted that they were able to give support to four sessions in partnership with IICA and CARDI, one of which was the development of the coconut industry which had a large turnout of participants. He indicated that the workshop was based on study done by the EU. The participants were able to look at the report and share experiences on the development of the coconut industry which has been deteriorating for a number of reasons. Nevertheless, the industry has a lot of potential.

The other workshops spoke to the adaption of climate change, use of ICTs in value chains and engaging youths and the Caribbean regional fisheries mechanism.

Committee on World Food Security meets on hunger challenges. FAO News, 7 October 2013

Full Article

International platform promotes policy convergence for better food security

7 October 2013, Rome - The Committee on World Food Security, the world’s most important intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder platform for food security and nutrition, opened its 40th session (CFS 40) at FAO headquarters, amid urgent calls to build more effective links between international policies and the daily needs of millions of the world’s most vulnerable people.

“The latest estimates signal there are nearly 30 million less hungry people in the world in 2013, compared to last year,” said FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva. “And we continue to progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goal hunger target of reducing by half the proportion of the undernourished population between 1990 and 2015.”

“I see many challenges ahead of us, but also progress and successful experiences that we can build on,” Graziano da Silva added. “We are convinced that working together is the only way forward.”

“Working with a spirit of trust and mutual accountability, the multiple actors within this Committee are collaborating to address some of the thorniest issues that stand in the way of all people being able to enjoy food security,” said David Nabarro, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-
General for Food Security and Nutrition. Key issues, said Nabarro, included “land tenure; mitigation of and adaptation to climate change; food price volatility; biofuels.”

During the week-long session, two round tables were scheduled to focus, respectively, on biofuels and food security, and investing in smallholder agriculture for food security and nutrition.

The roundtables were expected to be followed by consultations and negotiations to arrive at widely accepted policy recommendations on those issues.

“Poverty and hunger go hand-in-hand and poverty runs deepest in rural areas. Let us not forget that rural areas are a key element of any new development agenda and global food security. Let us not forget that investing in smallholder agriculture is the most cost effective way for developing countries to tackle poverty and hunger,” said Kanayo F. Nwanze, President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

Other initiatives include the development of an agenda for action to address food insecurity in protracted crisis situations and the development of guidelines for responsible agricultural investments.

“The world needs a strong and effective CFS,” said Ertharin Cousin, Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP). “Together, we shoulder an enormous responsibility, but our burdens weigh nothing in comparison to the suffering of the 840 million chronically undernourished people depending on us to get it right.”

Hunger numbers

CFS 40 opened one week after a UN hunger report showed overall declines in undernourishment, but with mixed performance among regions and countries against the most extreme and lasting forms of food deprivation.

The report, the State of Food Insecurity in the World, estimates that 842 million people globally suffered from chronic hunger in 2011-13. This figure is down from 868 million during 2010-12, and represents a decline of 17 percent since 1990-92.

Regionally, as many as one in four persons experiencing undernourishment in sub-Saharan Africa, despite impressive improvements in some countries, while East Asia, Southeastern Asia, and Latin America saw more substantial improvements.

About 75 per cent of the world’s poorest people live in rural areas and mainly depend on agriculture for their livelihoods.

Those attending CFS 40 included agriculture ministers and deputy ministers from around the world who were in Rome to attend a separate event, the Second Ministerial Meeting on International Food Prices.

More than 30 side events dealing with a wide array of issues regarding food security and nutrition are scheduled to take place at the margins of the plenary session. The events have been set up by a number of governments and organisations, including civil society and the private sector.
Minister Encourages Bahamians to Support Local Food Systems in Observance of World Food Day
by Betty Vedrine, 7 October, 2013
http://www.bahamas.gov.bs/

Full Article

Nassau, The Bahamas – The Bahamas will join some 150 countries in the observance of World Food Day on Wednesday, October 16. Held under the auspices of the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), the theme for this year’s celebration is ‘Sustainable food Systems for Food Security and Nutrition.’

At a press conference held on Monday, October 7 at the Manx Corporate Centre, Minister of Agriculture, Marine Resources and Local Government, V. Alfred Gray said that this year’s theme is geared towards ‘identifying sustainable food systems and what changes needed in order to move towards a greater level of food security.’

“Today almost 870 million people worldwide are chronically undernourished,” said Mr. Gray. “Unsustainable models of development are degrading the national environment, threatening ecosystems and biodiversity that will be needed for our future food supply. Calls for profound changes in our agriculture and food systems are becoming more frequent and more insistent.”

Mr. Gray explained that a food system is a process whose objective is to create a more direct link between producers (farmers) of food and fibre and consumers. He said that a food system could be characterised as being ‘local, regional, national or global.’

“A sustainable food system, whether it’s local or regional, brings farmers closer to consumers by producing fruits and vegetables or raising livestock or fish closer to the places they are sold.” Said Minister Gray. “Advocates of the system believe that when it comes to food security, the closer producers are to homes and neighbourhoods, the greater the access to more nutritious and affordable food.”

The minister said that consumers in The Bahamas can promote sustainable local food systems by: buying fresh food from local farmers’ markets; supporting urban and backyard gardening initiatives and supporting all local farmers and fishermen.

World Food Day will be celebrated on Wednesday, October 16. In commemoration of the event, an exhibition will be on display at the Heritage site on Arawak Cay from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on that day.
CWA workshops tackle emerging issues in agriculture. Guyana Government Information Service, 7 October, 2013

Full Article

CWA workshops tackle emerging issues in agriculture

During this week of activities for Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA) 2013, a host of interesting workshops will be held, geared towards addressing emerging issues in the agriculture sector, some of which include the involvement of women and youths in the field, and even the role the media can play.

Some of the other workshops include sanitary and phytosanitary standards, the coconut industry, pest control in a climate changing environment, projects that are supported by Canada’s Ministry of Agriculture, imperative for the small ruminant industry in the Caribbean, strengthening ICTs in value chains, mainstreaming and implementation of fisheries policies, and youth in agriculture.

Wesley Gibbings, President, Association of Caribbean Media Workers (ACM) noted that the organisation is pleased with its relationship with the Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation (CTA) which has gone far beyond the initial expectations of providing media coverage.

“CARDI (Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute) over the years has taken us on as a fraternal partner – side by side and not necessarily one behind the other – in the development of a strategy to ensure our future as Caribbean people,” he said. Further, media practice is not meaningful in any way if it does not have as its core mandate the process of development and assuring the future of the Caribbean people.

Gibbings emphasised that the relationship between ACM and CARDI has not been uneventful. “The ACM has recognised the great value in engaging in this great effort to recognise, reorient, reposition and recalibrate the relationship between the food and agriculture sector and the broader development agenda,” he indicated.

Gibbings illustrated that the media workshop which was held on Saturday has grown in stature and value.

Apart from Guyana’s Ministry of Agriculture, the planning of the 12th CWA is a collaborative effort between the alliance members which include the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), CARICOM, CARDI and CTA.

Gregg Rawlins, Regional Coordinator, IICA expressed appreciation to the Government of Guyana for hosting the CWA 2013. “CWA continues to be a premium regional agriculture event on the CARICOM calendar...the event provides for dialogue and networking among stakeholders drawn from across the agriculture sector and represents an opportunity to showcase development in the sector and bring attention to the important role the sector plays in relation to food and nutrition security,” he said.

With regards to the CWA 2013 theme, ‘Linking the Caribbean for Regional Food and Nutrition Security and Rural Development’, Rawlins noted that IICA can closely identify with it and for years the institute has supported the adoption of regional approaches for the development of agriculture and the rural sectors in the Caribbean region.
In making reference to the small ruminant industry workshop, which has already concluded, Rawlins expressed hope that the discussions will lead to the stimulation of the subsector. “We will continue to foster our support linkages between our youth and women entrepreneurs,” he posited.

He also stressed that the response to the various workshops that are slated are clear indications that CWA is alive and well, and continues to be a vehicle for driving the development of agriculture in the Caribbean. IICA pledged its continued support to the event.

CARDI’s Executive Director, Dr. Arlington Chesney explained that the joint technical sessions were established a few years ago to allow participants who have been involved in the CWA to be exposed to a range of critical emerging issues that have an impact on the future of the agriculture sector in the region.

“It also allows all of us to work together so that we could collectively utilise the relatively small resources that we each have which together could make a significant difference to what we want to do, and what we want to do is to achieve the major objective – to reduce hunger and poverty in the region and thus enhance the economic state and quality of life of Caricom states and rural populations,” he said.

These efforts will esteem agriculture as the major economic driver in the development of the region.

Since several of the workshops are facilitated by CTA, the organisation’s Director, Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation, Michael Hailu explained that participating in the event is very high on the organisation’s calendar as it provides opportunities for partners to reflect on progress made in the last year.

“In recent years we have made it a tradition to have most of our workshops planned for the Caribbean during the CWA so that we can take advantage of the great number of participants who are present,” he said. However the challenge is to ensure that decisions made at previous meetings were fulfilled.

Officer-in-Charge, Trade and Economic Integration CARICOM, Desiree Field–Ridley during her interaction with the stakeholders highlighted what needs to be done in the agriculture sector. She stressed that the theme makes clear the way forward for the industry especially since the community has identified agriculture as the key sector that drives growth and development.

Since the challenges are evident, initiatives like the CWA present the opportunity to ensure that agriculture plays the role for which it is earmarked.

“We have identified in the region the various priorities for agriculture, but we need to be able to demonstrate particularly to the non-agriculture people how important agriculture is…this CWA is one way of showcasing what agriculture is and what agriculture can be,” Field- Ridley highlighted.

Guyana is hosting, for the second time, the 12th Caribbean Week of Agriculture from October 4-12, 2013. The activities tie in with that of Agriculture Month 2013.
Gender Issues in Agriculture


Full Article

(CARICOM Secretariat, Turkeyen, Greater Georgetown, Guyana) The contribution of women to agriculture and agribusiness, and by extension, to national and regional development was hailed on Tuesday as a Women’s Forum got underway at the Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA) 2013 in Georgetown, Guyana.

The one-day forum, part of a series of activities of the 12th CWA provided a unique opportunity to raise the issue of the economic empowerment of women amongst policy-makers in the Region. The Forum was held under the theme ‘Expanding Economic Opportunities for Women in Agriculture in the Caribbean and the Pacific’. It was organized by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) and the United States Department of State.

Delivering the feature address at the opening of the Forum, the Hon. Jennifer Webster, Minister of Human Services and Social Security, Guyana, reiterated that the empowerment of women was a catalyst for development in every society, especially in the Caribbean. This was particularly so, she said, in the area of food and nutrition security.

Highlighting examples of the impact women in Guyana were making in the agriculture sector, the Minister said that prospects for women in agribusiness in both the Caribbean and the Pacific, were promising.

“The good news is that women in agribusiness are the ‘new sexy’ in developmental circles,” she said. As she focused on efforts to empower women in the agriculture sector, Minister Webster called for the general support for and protection of women’s right to securing food for their families, communities and countries, in light of natural disasters, social and economic challenges and other vulnerabilities. Innovative ways to create new opportunities and expand existing ones had to be found, she said, while pointing to the power of networking and the establishment of linkages between agriculture and other industries to motivate women’s involvement, increase economic gains and enjoy food and nutrition security.

“There is also a greater need for financial support for women in agribusiness. Micro credit has made it possible for many women to do business. We need to make access to financing for projects to be undertaken by our women more accessible through more competitive rates which could be negotiated through incentive regimes with the commercial banks. It is therefore necessary to expand and reorient training programmes, which target skills training development in these and other new areas of agribusiness. Similarly, as a matter of urgency, we need to address the issue of packaging and labeling our products, as we seek to compete in today’s globalised world and in a highly competitive market place,” the Minister told the well-attended Forum.

The Forum’s objectives are discussion on economic opportunities for women in the Caribbean and Pacific; development of an Inter-Regional Action Plan for Caribbean-Pacific collaboration;
development of a Caribbean Action Plan for Economic Empowerment of Women; and sensitizing the Alliance of Ministers of Agriculture and Pacific Ministerial delegations present at the CWA on the specific support needed for women’s farmers and entrepreneurs.

Sessions included those on strengthening the image of farmers and farming, focusing on success stories; building business relationships to link to greater markets and stakeholders in tourism, supermarket and distributive trade; and promoting capacity building, networking and knowledge sharing.

The CWA is being held under the theme ‘Linking the Caribbean for Regional Food and Nutrition Security and Rural Development. Although activities began on 4 October, the Caribbean’s premier agricultural event will be formally opened on Wednesday 9 October. CWA concludes on 12 October.

Agricultural Education

GSA to facilitate regional students during 2013-2014 academic year. Guyana Government Information Service, 8 October, 2013

Full Article

GSA to facilitate regional students during 2013-2014 academic year

More and more Caribbean countries are looking towards Guyana for Food and Nutrition security through agriculture cooperation and development. Trinidad and Tobago, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Barbados, Suriname and several others have since made overtures to Guyana in this regard.

During the Caribbean Farmers Network Inc. (CAFAN), youth Consultation on the CAP-YRM Pillars workshop during Caribbean Week of Agriculture 2013, Agriculture Minister Dr. Leslie Ramsammy disclosed that five students will be arriving to attend the Guyana School of Agriculture (GSA). “This is part of a regional strategy for knowledge sharing…you will treat them as if they are Guyanese with no difference and will you work together with them to make their stay here a memorable one,” he said.

While in Guyana, the Guyana Government will take full responsibility for the tuition and accommodation expenses for the students.

Five other students from Barbados will also be joining the Guyanese students at the GSA.

Meanwhile, a delegation from Trinidad and Tobago which is attending the CWA also had discussions with Minister Ramsammy. They are looking at the Guyana School of Agriculture’s model for development in Trinidad and Tobago. (Ministry of Agriculture)
Upcoming Events

October 2013

First Global Yam Conference “Yams 2013”
Date: 3-6 October, 2013
Location: Accra, Ghana
Description: First Global Yam Conference “Yams 2013” will be held in conjunction with the 12th Symposium of the International Society for Tropical Root Crops (ISTRC)-African Branch, from 3 to 6 October 2013 in Accra, Ghana
Website: http://www.iita.org/web/yams2013

12th Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA)
Date: 4-12 October, 2013
Location: Guyana International Conference Centre, Guyana
Theme: Linking the Caribbean for Regional Food and Nutrition Security and Rural Development
Email: cwaguyana2013@gmail.com

Global Water Partnership-Caribbean - 9th High Level Session (HLS 9) Ministerial Forum
Date: 10 - 11 October 2013
Location: Hilton Barbados Resort, Barbados
Description: Ministers with responsibility for Water in several Caribbean countries will gather at the 9th High Level Session (HLS 9) Ministerial Forum which takes place on 10 - 11 October 2013 at the Hilton Barbados Resort. This Ministerial Forum is part of the Caribbean Water and Wastewater Association’s (CWWA’s) 22nd Annual Conference and Exhibition, which is being hosted by the Barbados Water Authority (BWA). Ministers with responsibility for Water in several Caribbean countries will gather at the 9th High Level Session (HLS 9) Ministerial Forum which takes place on 10 - 11 October 2013 at the Hilton Barbados Resort. This Ministerial Forum is part of the Caribbean Water and Wastewater Association’s (CWWA’s) 22nd Annual Conference and Exhibition, which is being hosted by the Barbados Water Authority (BWA).
Website: http://www.gwp.org/en/GWP-Caribbean/
Contact:
- Ms. Gabrielle Lee Look, Communications Officer, Global Water Partnership-Caribbean (GWP-C). Tel: +868 663 4829; Fax: +868 645 7805. E-mail: gleelook@gwp-caribbean.org
- Mrs. Donna Sue Spencer, Communications Specialist, Caribbean Regional Fund for Wastewater (CReW). Tel: +876 922 9267-9; Fax: +876 922 9292. E-mail: ds@cep.unep.org

Cassava-Based feed system in Africa: Roadmap to a commercial feasibility
Date: 28-30 October 2013
Location: IITA, Ibadan, Nigeria
Description The Global Cassava Partnership for the 21st Century, the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD), the CGIAR research programs – Roots, Tubers and Bananas, Livestock and Fish, Humid Tropics, and the feed private sector, having common interests in the development of a cassava-base feed system in Africa are partnering to organize a workshop in IITA, Ibadan, Oct 28-30, 2013, to ask the question: What is the best way to develop a cassava-based feed system in Africa? http://livestockfish.cgiar.org/2013/08/19/cassava-feed/
Contact: Dr. Claude M. Fauquet, Director GCP21, CIAT. Email: c.fauquet@cgiar.org
November 2013

**International Conference on ICT4ag**
**Date:** 4-8 November 2013  
**Location:** Kigali, Rwanda  
**Website:** [http://www.ict4ag.org/en/](http://www.ict4ag.org/en/)

**Entomology 2013: Entomological Society of America (ESA) 61st Annual Meeting**
**Date:** 10-13 November 2013  
**Location:** Austin, Texas, USA  
**Theme:** Science Impacting a Connected World  
**Website:** [http://www.entsoc.org/entomology2013](http://www.entsoc.org/entomology2013)