

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

Cassava

CARDI: Improved techniques; greater yield in cassava, peppers. The Barbados Advocate, 5 December, 2013

<http://www.barbadosadvocate.com/newsitem.asp?more=local&NewsID=33728>

Full Article

THE introduction of improved varieties of cassava and an improved production process of hot pepper seeds will bring greater yield to farmers locally and regionally.

Yesterday, during the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute's (CARDI) Open Day, Barbados representative Dr. Cyril Roberts showcased some of the work carried out by his organisation over the past year, and the techniques which he said has the potential in some cases to triple the yield per acre.

He told the Barbados Advocate at CARDI's Graeme Hall Field Station headquarters after a tour, that the use of row covers over the pepper plants allows for a larger amount of pure pepper seeds at a lower cost.

As it relates to cassava, he said while the improved varieties will impact on the productivity, farmers must be willing to incorporate the use of proven technologies to maximise their yield.

"For example spacing, keeping the weeds down, pulling them at the right time, possibly even putting on some fertiliser before they pass three months old, then there is no reason why we can't move the yield from the current 12 000 lbs to 15 000 lbs per acre to 30 000 to 50 000 per acre."

Dr. Roberts further explained that for seed purposes, Barbados and Antigua are ideal countries for their production because of the dry weather. "Rain and water bring on and encourage diseases and insect problems that you can avoid by doing them here. So Barbados is making a significant contribution to the pepper industry in the Caribbean by being on the front-line when it comes to initial hot pepper seed production process."

He said the seed is made available to local farmers. "We have farmers that are getting 30 000-40 000 to the acre using our recommendations," he revealed.

The Barbados representative also made the point that during the economic downturn, farmers must get more "bang for his buck". It is for this reason, he said, that the work of CARDI is so important to the agricultural sector in the region.

"CARDI's work is designed to increase productivity, so that for the same or less input you can get optimum yield or returns."

He also revealed that there is a weather station on site and sensors in the field which help to substantiate their research. "So we can correlate rainfall and weather conditions with the activities that we are doing to be able to show that these techniques that we are using can work towards helping the farm directly."

Dr. Roberts, while giving a tour, also showcased rapid propagation of Mulberry, the cassava germplasm and Mulberry germplasm nursery. The extraction process of pepper seeds was also demonstrated.

He stressed the importance of moving toward Mulberry leaves to be used in feed for sheep as a supplement that can be grown and “cut and carried” by farmers to their animals. He also boasted of a breakthrough in the storage of pepper seeds in Barbados by lowering the temperature of the storage area. The viability of these seeds has now been extended to approximately 12 years, up from three years under the older process. (JH)

Cereals

Large increase in 2013 world cereal output expected by the FAO, 5 December, 2013

<http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/209438/icode/>

Full Article

World cereal production will reach a new high of almost 2 500 million tonnes, including rice in milled terms, according to new FAO estimates. The figure is almost 8.4 percent more than last year and some 6 percent above the previous record in 2011, according to the latest issue of the Crop Prospects and Food Situation Report.

While global cereal production is expected to increase, FAO warned that food security conditions in several parts of Africa and elsewhere are deteriorating.

In the Sahelian countries of West Africa - Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal - crops and pastures have been affected this year by late onset and early cessation of rains. The situation could lead to a new surge in food insecurity and malnutrition in the 2013/14 marketing year. A large Malian population displacement due to civil unrest is also contributing to regional food insecurity.

In Central African Republic, 1.3 million people are in need of emergency food assistance due to civil unrest.

In Southern Africa, prices of cereals are near or at record levels in several countries, underpinned by tighter supplies in the 2013/14 marketing year. Dry weather has delayed planting of the 2014 crops in parts.

In the Philippines, 14 million people have been adversely affected by Typhoon Haiyan. FAO has appealed for over \$30 million for agricultural rehabilitation and the World Food Programme has proposed emergency food assistance for 2.5 million people.

In Syria and Yemen, continued civil conflicts have resulted in severe food insecurity for 6 million and 4.5 million people, respectively, requiring emergency food assistance.

International food prices stable

The FAO Food Price Index, also published today, remained stable in November. It averaged 206.3 points last month, almost unchanged from the revised value of 206.6 points in October, but 9.5 points

(4.4 percent) below its November 2012 value. A sharp decline in sugar prices last month nearly offset the rise in oils. Cereals averaged slightly lower, but meat and dairy values were stable.

The index measures the monthly change in the international prices of a basket of 5 commodity groups, including some 73 price quotations.

Crop prospects

The latest estimates for world cereal production mostly reflect adjustments to estimates of maize output in the United States, the Russian Federation and Ukraine, which became firmer towards the completion of the harvests.

Based on the latest figures, the overall increase in world cereal output this year comprises a rise of 7.8 percent in wheat production, of 12 percent for coarse grains, and of only 1 percent for rice.

Early prospects for the winter wheat crop, already planted in the northern hemisphere, to be harvested in 2014, are mostly favourable.

World cereal stocks are predicted to increase to 572 million tonnes by the close of the 2014 crop seasons, which is 13.4 percent, or nearly 68 million tonnes, more than in the previous year. This forecast is almost 9 million tonnes higher than reported in November, reflecting upward revisions to ending stocks of wheat and coarse grains, while ending rice inventories were reduced slightly.

The sharp expansion in world cereal stocks this season would result in the global cereal stocks-to-use ratio reaching 23.5 percent, well above the historical low of 18.4 percent registered in 2007/08.

Banana

UN: Black Sigatoka threatens survival of Caribbean bananas by Fresh Fruit Portal, 13th December 2013

<http://www.freshfruitportal.com/2013/12/13/un-black-sigatoka-threatens-survival-of-caribbean-bananas/?country=trinidad%20and%20tobago>

Full Article

Banana and plantain growers in the Caribbean remain extremely vulnerable to Black Sigatoka, a disease that has already devastated production in many parts of the region. [bananas_square](#)

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) warned of the damage that the disease could inflict to food security if it does not receive adequate attention. Bananas are considered the world's fourth most important staple food, after rice, wheat and maize.

An estimated 107 million metric tons (MT) of bananas and 37 million MT of plantains are produced globally a year.

“Black Sigatoka disease is considered one of the most dangerous diseases of banana and plantain. It spread from Asia and reached the Caribbean in 1991. Smallholder banana farmers were unable to

shoulder the expense of fighting the disease on their own, and banana farms have been decimated,” FAO said.

Control of the disease in the Caribbean has been restricted due to constraints in funding for research, development and control inputs for farmers, such as fungicides.

Of the five countries targeted by FAO efforts - Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Guyana – total banana exports had dropped to 25,000 MT by 2011. This is contrasted by 80,000 MT in exports by St. Vincent and the Grenadines alone in 1990.

Grenada now has no banana exports, down from 8,400 MT shipped in 1990. Guyana had also lost all of its plantain exports until FAO intervened.

“The Caribbean island countries meanwhile saw similar declines of 90 to 100 percent of their banana and plantain exports, and trade practically ground to a halt,” FAO said.

Black Sigatoka does particularly well in hot and humid climates, making it a devastating fit for many Caribbean production areas.

“The disease first appears as narrow streaks and black spots, which as they proliferate can eventually blacken entire leaves of bananas and plantains, blocking photosynthesis. Banana bunches are smaller, as are the fruit, and due to premature ripening that can occur even while the fruit is still on the tree, the bananas are no longer suitable for export,” FAO explained.

The disease’s spread has been encouraged by informal trade and the inability of producers to keep up with control measures.

“Even before Black Sigatoka, however, many smallholder farmers were already struggling to cope after repeated natural disasters, from hurricanes to floods and droughts, as well as a loss of traditional export markets,” FAO said.

“The spread of Black Sigatoka contributed to many of these farmers abandoning their banana fields as they simply don’t have the resources for costly fungicide treatments that have helped keep other major banana exporters in business.”

The dominant banana sub-group for export, Cavendish, performs well in long-distance travel but is extremely susceptible to Black Sigatoka.

In response, Cuba and Jamaica have largely abandoned Cavendish banana production and turned to resistant banana and plantain cultivars for internal consumption.

In the Dominican Republic, growers have developed organic banana production using modern crop management techniques that reduce the need for fungicides.

Under FAO-recommended strategies, Guyana is expected to recover its banana exports in two to three years.

If Caribbean nations are to maintain banana exports, FAO emphasized the importance of developing new, more resistant cultivars.

“There could be reprieve worldwide if scientists were finally able to breed bananas that are similar to the Cavendish in texture, taste and durability, but which possess genetic resistance to this banana disease,” FAO said.

Pineapple

Pineapple Festival showcases diverse products made from the fruit by GINA, 7 December, 2013
<http://gina.gov.gy/wp/?p=17706>

Full Article

The Ministry of Agriculture in collaboration with the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) recently launched a pineapple festival at the New Guyana Shop on Robb Street, showcasing various products made from the fruit.

There were cakes, juices, fudge, jams, jellies, wine, salads, and finger foods, all made from pineapple.

Minister of Agriculture Dr. Leslie Ramsammy speaking at the exhibition pointed out that Guyana’s agriculture is about growing food which is aimed at feeding its people and the Caribbean.

“One of the things that we want to do with our agriculture is to diversify so that we can provide our people, not only with food security, but with nutrition security, and that we can help feed the Caribbean and therefore achieving our destiny which is the bread basket of the Caribbean,” Minister Ramsammy stated.

The monthly exhibitions at the Guyana Shop, of which the pineapple festival was one, are not just to showcase all the different products, but to allow the Guyanese public to see how the quality of the products are improving in terms of packaging.

“The Ministry of Agriculture through the Guyana Shop is working with our agro processors to improve the packaging and labels. They are helping them, to determine the nutrition content and we are ensuring that they are producing facilities that meet the standards so we are encouraging our agro processors to move away from the bottom house operations,” he continued.

Mr. Wilmot Garnett, IICA’S representative to Guyana, said that the organisation will remain committed to working with the Ministry of Agriculture to further develop and modernise the agriculture sector. He added that over the years IICA has been focusing on agro processing and value added because the maximisation of profit is important to the farmers.

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Plant Protection

Haiti - Agriculture: Campaign against the *Crypticerya genistae* by Haiti Libre, 5 December 2013

<http://www.haitilibre.com/en/news-10019-haiti-agriculture-campaign-against-the-crypticerya-genistae.html>

Full Article

The Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Rural Development (MARDNR) has officially launched the campaign against the *crypticerya genistae*, especially in the municipalities of Capotille, Ouanaminthe, Fort Liberté and Les Perches.

This control program which aims to reduce the level of infestation of 18,000 hectares of abandoned farmland by farmers in the department of North East, is funded by the World Bank to the tune of U.S. \$ 32.610 dollars.

Fresnel Dorcin, the Secretary of State for Plant Production, accompanied by Guyto Laureore, Director of Plant Protection, have pledged their support to farmers and called on local authorities to work together to carry out this program.

It should be noted that the *Crypticerya genistae* was observed in Capotille on the Haitian-Dominican border in the last quarter of 2011 on peanuts (its main host), but also on the pois congo, cassava, chilli and several pasture or forest species.

The Ministry of Agriculture in its concern to encourage national production, expressed motivation to fight against this insect and promote recovery of these crops in this department.

Climate Change

3rd International Conference on Climate Services Underway in Jamaica by [Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre](#) (CCCCC), 4 December, 2013

<http://caribbeanclimateblog.com/2013/12/04/3rd-international-conference-on-climate-services-underway-in-jamaica-bookmark-for-updates/>

Full Article

The [third International Conference on Climate Services \(ICCS3\)](#) is underway (Dec 4-6) in Montego Bay, Jamaica. [ICCS3](#) seeks to address current progress, challenges and opportunities in climate services implementation, and foster discussions regarding the transition from pilot activities to sustained services.

Climate services refers to the provision of climate information that supports decision making. Such information services play a crucial role in national development planning for managing development opportunities and risks and for mitigation and adaptation.

Dr Ulric Trotz, Deputy Director and Science Advisor at the [5Cs](#), says this first of its kind event in the Caribbean and any developing country is an opportunity to find linkages between international climate services and those in the region.

Climate services are crucial as climate variability and change are posing significant challenges to societies worldwide. Therefore, timely communication of climate information helps prevent the economic setbacks and humanitarian disasters that can result from climate extremes and long term climate change.

However, efficient application of climate services requires that climate information be integrated into various sectors' policies. The [5Cs](#) Science Officer Mr Ottis Joslyn notes that the need for such cross-sectoral approaches is one region the Centre's seminal risk management tool, the [Caribbean Climate Online Risk and Adaptation Tool \(CCORAL\)](#), is being prominently featured at [ICCS3](#). Mr Joslyn and Keith Nichols, Programme Development Specialist at the [5Cs](#), will lead a special training on this tool on Thursday, December 5 at 4:30pm.

The 5Cs is currently supporting a series of national consultations across the Caribbean under the [Global Framework for Climate Services \(GFCS\)](#), which was established in 2009 at the World Climate Conference-3 (WCC3). WCC3 was organized by the [World Meteorological Organization \(WMO\)](#) in collaboration with other [United Nations \(UN\)](#) agencies, governments and partners to steer the development of climate services worldwide.

The vision of the [GFCS](#) is to enable society to better manage the risks and opportunities arising from climate variability and change, especially for those who are most vulnerable to such risks.

The [GFCS](#), which was launched in the Caribbean in May 2013, use five components for the production, delivery and application of climate information and services in the four priority areas outlined:

- User Interface Platform
- Climate Services Information System
- Observations and Monitoring
- Research, Modelling and Prediction
- Capacity Development

The next National Consultation on a Framework for Climate Services will be held in Barbados.

Minister Fletcher calls for more regional response to Climate Change. Government of Saint Lucia, 2 December, 2013

<http://www.stlucia.gov.lc/press-release/minister-fletcher-calls-more-regional-response-climate-change>

Full Article

Saint Lucia's Minister for Sustainable Development, Energy, Science and Technology, Honorable Dr. James Fletcher has called on CARICOM Heads to step up their level of action on issues relating to Climate Change.

Minister Fletcher has just returned to Saint Lucia after the successful conclusion of the Warsaw Climate Change Conference, where Small Island Developing States (SIDS) scored a huge victory in

getting the Climate Change Conference to agree to the establishment of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage.

This new mechanism will operate under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and will allow the Convention to address Loss and Damage from extreme weather events and slow onset events like sea level rise, which for years Small Island States have argued extends beyond the scope of adaptation.

Speaking on the Caribbean's own response to addressing Climate Change, Dr. Fletcher said the island grouping has not demonstrated 'a big enough commitment' to Climate Change: "The Caribbean I believe has not demonstrated the level of commitment and coherence in addressing Climate Change as have our pacific neighbours. We did very well for a while when Grenada chaired the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS). There was definite leadership coming from the Caribbean. I think some of that leadership has been lost and there is a lot we have to do at our level."

Dr. Fletcher would like to work towards getting the issue of Climate Change to be 'the subject of greater discussion within our Cabinets and at the highest levels of our government', adding that he does not believe 'all of our policy makers understand the repercussions of Climate Change'.

Moreover, the Sustainable Development, Energy, Science and Technology Minister acknowledges that there needs to be more discourse with the public about the adverse effects of Climate Change.

Said the Minister: "We are also not having enough of that conversation with members of our public. The members of the public are not seized of the importance and urgency of Climate Change. [And] that's where I think the regional response needs to kick in."

Minister Fletcher noted that he is presently working with other authorities regionally and internationally to have 2014 recognized as "Climate Change Awareness" year for the Caribbean.

Climate Change phenomenon has begun to have debilitating effects on Small Island Developing States (SIDS), like Saint Lucia.

"Climate-smart" agriculture needed to steer food security through changing weather, Ban says by the UN News center, 5 December 2013

http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=46671&Cr=climate+change&Cr1=#.UqhXuPRDs_c

Full Article

Agroforestry, diversification of crops with legumes and other practical measures must be scaled up to end hunger while meeting the challenge of climate change, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon told a global conference on the issue today.

"Agriculture is a major contributor to global greenhouse gas emissions. At the same time, farmers worldwide are increasingly feeling the effects of a warming climate," Mr. Ban said in a message to the Third Global Conference on Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Security and Climate Change taking place in Johannesburg, South Africa.

“The answer to these interconnected problems lies in climate-smart agriculture,” he said, emphasizing in particular the need to eliminate of childhood under-nutrition through sustainable agriculture that benefits smallholders around the world.

Sahel reinforced his perception of how climate change compounds the challenges for small farmers, following three major droughts in a decade that exacerbated poverty, conflict and disease.

“The region’s Governments are working to help their people become more resilient, but they need international support, including through an ambitious climate change agreement in 2015,” he said.

He called on leaders from Government, finance, business and civil society to work together on solutions, welcoming proposals to develop a Climate-Smart Agriculture Alliance and inviting all stakeholders to bring bold initiatives to the table at next September’s Climate Summit, to be held at UN Headquarters in NY.

The Secretary-General’s message to the three-day Conference, which closed today, was delivered by David Nabarro, his Special Representative for Food Security and Nutrition.

In related news, the UN’s Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) reported today that a record world cereal output is predicted for the year 2013, reaching a new high of almost 2,500 tonnes. At the same time, it warned that food security in several parts of Africa and elsewhere is deteriorating.

The latest issue of the agency’s “Crop Prospects and Food Situation” report says that cereal production rose 8.4 per cent, while food security remains precarious in the Sahel, Central Africa, Southern Africa, parts of the Middle East and Philippines due to instability and/or drought, other types of severe weather and land degradation.

At FAO’s Rome headquarters, scientists and research organizations gathered today to draw attention to importance of better management of the Earth’s soil in the effort to feed a growing world population while coping with climate change.

Healthy soil is not only the foundation of food production but also sequesters twice as much carbon as the atmosphere, FAO Deputy Director-General, Maria Helena Semedo, told the gathering.

The UN General Assembly is currently considering a proposal to name 5 December of each year as “World Soil Day,” as supported by the FAO Conference this past June, to raise awareness of the importance of this natural resource to agriculture, biodiversity and climate change.

Food and Nutrition Security

Food production and processing as core aspects of nutrition-sensitive agriculture and sustainable diets by Biodiversity International, 7 December, 2013

<http://www.biodiversityinternational.org/news/detail/food-production-and-processing-as-core-aspects-of-nutrition-sensitive-agriculture-and-sustainable-di/>

Full Article

How to address malnutrition and hunger remains central to global debates. Latest figures from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) estimate that approximately 900 million people are undernourished, but this is just a small part of the global burden of malnutrition which affects all countries in the world. The World Health Organization estimates that 2 billion people suffer from one or more micronutrient deficiencies. In addition, overweight and obesity affect approximately 1.5 billion people and the numbers are increasing especially among children.

While agricultural research and development agendas still mainly focus on producing more calories and maximizing food production while minimizing costs, relatively new terms such as ‘nutrition-sensitive agriculture’ and ‘sustainable diets’ are influencing policies and programmes.

Gudrun Keding, a Biodiversity International Postdoctoral Fellow based in Nairobi, Kenya, and co-author of a newly published research paper ‘Production and processing of foods as core aspects of nutrition-sensitive agriculture and sustainable diets’, published in the November issue of Food Security, sets out to explain more about what these terms mean.

“Nutrition-sensitive agriculture and sustainable diets are becoming complementary terms in research-for-development agendas that seek not only to address hunger and malnutrition, but also to alleviate poverty and conserve the environment for future generations,” Keding explains.

“A nutrition-sensitive agricultural approach puts nutrition as a main goal of agriculture while a sustainable diets approach puts the health benefits, cultural acceptability, affordability, sustainability and low environmental impacts as central to food production, processing and marketing. How these complementary objectives could be achieved step-by-step was the basis of the research paper,” Keding continues.

The paper, one of a series of papers on nutrition-sensitive agriculture, focuses especially on agricultural production and food processing. It proposes a systematic trans-disciplinary approach that brings together different actors (agriculture, nutrition and health sectors) at different levels (research, extension and political), to achieve these multi-disciplinary aims of nutrition and sustainability. The paper is divided into three sections:

- Food production – the paper looks at five main factors connected with food production - water, soil, agricultural biodiversity, health hazards and seasonality - that directly or indirectly influence nutritional health. For example, helping smallholder farmers to use low cost and low-input methods, such as the carbon dioxide produced by composting materials, to kill insect pests that can attack grain in storage.
- Food processing – the paper gives an overview of entry points for nutrition in post-harvest processing methods - at the factory, household and individual level. For example, a sophisticated cropping schedule which includes diversification of crops, can distribute planting and harvesting more evenly, easing women’s agricultural burden which in a study in Bolivia, contributed to better nutrition.

•Education and knowledge – the paper proposes that to achieve nutrition-sensitive agriculture, stakeholders in the agricultural, nutrition and health sectors need to be aware of what constitutes a healthy and balanced diet. Consumers also need to be educated so they can make good choices from what is locally available and accessible to them.

The three authors of the paper agree that it is only by working across disciplines that we will see a shift and are keen to stress see the need for this in all future initiatives:

“One example we use in the paper is that of fruit and vegetables,” they explain. Nutritionists can do more to promote the healthy ‘5-a-day’ to consumers but this only works if these are accessible at a local level.

For example: agricultural researchers need to find better ways to store and process these highly perishable foods; farmers need access to seeds and incentives to grow them in sufficient quantities; the fruits and vegetables need to be culturally acceptable at the community level, so people will eat them; this needs to be supported by education of their nutritional values. There also needs to be more environmentally friendly production that respects biodiversity and ecosystems. We really need to come together across the food system to make this work.”

Agriculture Development

Enough Locally Produced Food on the Market for Christmas by Judith Hunter. JIS, 7 December, 2013

<http://jis.gov.jm/enough-locally-produced-food-market-christmas/>

Full Article

Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Donovan Stanberry, is appealing to consumers to “make it Jamaican” as much as possible this holiday season by consuming locally produced foods.

Speaking with JIS News, Mr. Stanberry said that there is an abundance of local produce for the season. He noted that the domestic food crop sub-sector grew by 8.5 per cent during the July to September quarter and further growth is expected for the October to December quarter.

“Yam production is at a record high, so much so that the price has gone down considerably and the banana sector has rebounded after it was severely impacted by Hurricane Sandy last year. There is an abundance of both ripe and green bananas and plantains,” Mr Stanberry stated.

He noted further that “for the third year running, we have not imported a pound of pork to make ham, which is heavily consumed during the Christmas season. As a matter of fact there is an over production of pork so much so that we are actively pursuing export as an outlet to rid ourselves of the excessive pork that has been produced.”

Mr. Stanberry credited the growth in the pork industry to improved genetic material and the support that the Ministry has been providing to the pig industry, as well as the huge investment by the farmers and other stakeholders.

As it relates to egg production, he said that “we do not expect a shortage of eggs either, as there should be sufficient to meet the demand.”

He mentioned, however, that the supply of locally produced potato has been exhausted and the Ministry has been importing Irish potato since October, to supply the local market.

“But even as we continue to import, we will also plant the fall crop. We are on target to produce enough Irish potato to increase our level of self sufficiency next year, over and above the 85 per cent we attained this year,” he stated.

Meanwhile, Mr. Stanberry noted that the farmers markets, which were introduced about two to three years ago, have been rationalized.

“They were introduced to absorb excess production but we are way up the learning curve in terms of synchronizing production with demand, because glut does not suit the farmer,” he explained.

“Additionally, the exception to this is that we have identified some strategic areas that will benefit from farmers market. Resort areas such as Negril, Montego Bay and Ocho Rios were targeted to give hotels a chance to buy fresh and directly from the farmers. So we now have a monthly farmers market in these areas since October,” he stated.

The Permanent Secretary said that the agriculture sector continues to grow, and is mainly affected by adverse weather conditions, but assured that the Ministry is putting the necessary infrastructure and technology in place to ensure that there is consistent production regardless of climatic conditions.

“Also, the Ministry has spent billions of dollars on irrigation and rain harvesting systems to ensure that whether or not there is drought, we can produce. Furthermore, we have rolled out six agro parks that are intended to also address the matter of consistent supply of food, so we are in fact doing quite a bit. The agro-parks have made a commendable start and are a significant source employment,” Mr. Stanberry said.

RADA Stages Open Day by Judith A. Hunter. JIS, 5 December, 2013

<http://jis.gov.jm/rada-stages-open-day/>

Full Article

Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA), in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, will host the St. Andrew leg of a series of Open Days on Friday, December 6, at 197 Old Hope Road, in Kingston, beginning at 10:00 a.m.

This event, which is in keeping with the on-going eat Jamaican campaign – ‘Grow What You Eat...Eat What You Grow’ – will feature a mini farmers’ market, container garden displays and vegetable demonstration plots. There will also be special presentations, giveaways and registration of farmers.

According to Public Relations and Communication Specialist at RADA, Camille Beckford, the objective of the Open Day is to highlight the agricultural activities within the parish and the contribution RADA-St. Andrew has made over the years to the farmers.

“We will also use the opportunity to recognize some of the dedicated farmers and farmer groups within the parish and also some of the agencies that we work closely with,” Ms. Beckford said.

Displays will be mounted by the Jamaica 4-H clubs, Hope Botanical Gardens, Toyota Jamaica Limited, Lasco Distributors, Agro-Grace, Fersan, PC Bank, Food storage and Prevention of Infestation Division of the Ministry of Industry, Investment and Commerce; Agency for Inner-city Renewal, Coffee Industry Board, Rock Hall Farmers Group, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Apiculture unit.

Sponsors of the event are the National Housing Trust, Tank Weld, Wallenford Coffee Company, Hope Gardens, Toyota Jamaica, Lasco, Agro-Grace, Fersan, PC Bank, Food storage and Prevention of Infestation Division and General Supermarket.

Haiti - Agriculture: The 2013-2014 agricultural year promises to be good by Haiti Libre, 1 December, 2013

<http://www.haitilibre.com/en/news-9989-haiti-agriculture-the-2013-2014-agricultural-year-promises-to-be-good.html>

Full Article

According to the National Coordination of Food Security (CNSA), in general, the agricultural year which began in March 2013 and will end in February 2014 promises to be a good year of production with already an increase of 45% of cereals compared to the previous crop year if harvests of summer/winter enjoy the same favorable climatic conditions observed until the end of September 2013 (no drought, no excess water, no cyclones or floods accentuated), the basic inputs are available.

For cons, the fiscal year (October 2012-September 2013) was completed with good productions correcting the losses observed in October 2012 after the passage of Sandy.

The evolution of production 2013-2014 in cereal equivalent, indicating an increase of 33% over 2012-2013 but below 11% of the year 2009-2010 [which was a very good year].

Production 2013-2014:

Total Cereal + 46% (350.348 tonnes) Total Pulses + 13% (175.945 tonnes) Total tubers +27% (369.876 tonnes) total Bananas and plantain +40% (105.677 tonnes) for an average of +33% (1millions , 485.700 tonnes) [the calculation of these estimates is based on the coefficient "Ton Equivalent Cereal" (TEC)].

Overall, considering the surface of maize, beans, pigeon peas, bananas and tubers, about 75% of the agricultural area, usually dedicated to the spring season, delivered a good production in spring and summer. Programs for local purchases established by the Ede Pèp program, WFP, private enterprise Ti-Malice encouraged producers to invest more.

The Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry for the Promotion of the peasantry and the various partners

(FAO, Winner, ACIDI-VOCA, IICA, RESEPAG, other programs, etc..) have put at the disposal of producers a volume of seed at planting. Several seed fairs were held. However, seeds are insufficient to meet the expectations of producers whose stock was low due to the drought of 2012 and the damage caused by the passage of Isaac and Sandy. Producers have be obliged to complete the inputs according to their purchasing power, sourcing market. The fertilizer was reached between 800 and 900 gourdes per 45 kg bag.

Limiting factors of the spring 2013 season are structural: the poor performance of the plant material, the low fertility of much of degraded soils, low resources of the producer to complete the grants received from MARNDR and its partners , low labor productivity.

CNSA states that these estimates for the 2013-2014 year were made by assuming that the summer and autumn-winter enjoy favorable production conditions, without heavy losses.

Upcoming Events

December 2013

3rd Global Conference on Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Security and Climate Change

Date: 3- 5 December 2013

Location: Johannesburg, South Africa

Description:

High-level discussions on a Climate Smart Agriculture Alliance. The Conference is organized by the governments of the Republic of South Africa, the Netherlands, and in collaboration with other partners, including FAO and the World Bank. The 3rd Global Conference in South Africa will provide the platform for global leaders; practitioners; scientists; farmers; organized agriculture; civil society; the private sector; and NGOs to discuss and share experiences on successes, and to deliberate the challenges and threats to food and nutrition security under the impact of climate change

Website:

<http://www.egfar.org/sites/default/files/files/Conference%20Announcement%2020%20September%202013.pdf>

Further information will be published at: <http://www.arc.agric.za/>