Ministers’ Brief

Pacific–Caribbean learning exchange

CARDI with support from Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) and Pacific Community (SPC) hosted a 2-week exchange visit for nine Pacific researchers and extension officers to the Caribbean in October 2016. The visitors had the opportunity to learn and share with their Caribbean counterparts production practices for yams, dasheen (taro), cocoa, cocoyam (xanthosoma) and sweet potatoes at the Biotechnology Centres, the University of the West Indies (UWI) Mona and St Augustine Campuses, the Scientific Research Council (Jamaica) and the Cocoa Research Centre (UWI St Augustine).

The group met several farmers in Jamaica and Trinidad and gained exposure to such initiatives as the Red Stripe cassava project and UWI / Colombia cassava flour project. They also toured the Trinidad and Tobago Agribusiness Association (TTABA) processing plant where they got a first-hand view of the processing of sweet potato and cassava. The group visited the cocoa germplasm bank in Trinidad.

The Caribbean, like the Pacific, is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. These exchange visits facilitate learning and information sharing which will contribute to the development of resilient agricultural production systems.

This visit was the third in a series of south-south initiatives for knowledge sharing and learning across the two regions under the Intra-ACP Agriculture Policy Programme (APP).
CARDI launches two apps for the small ruminant industry

The CARDI SR-Market and CARDI SR-Learn apps are available for download from the Google Play store.

CARDI and the University of the West Indies (UWI) AgriNett have developed two apps for the regional small ruminant industry.

CARDI SR-Market brings buyers and sellers together in order to facilitate the sharing of information on the availability of live animals, meat, and farm inputs including small equipment, machinery and veterinary supplies, which can then be traded offline by those participating in this virtual market.

The CARDI SR-Learn is an e-learning Moodle based platform which will be used for training and information sharing. The mobile application offers another level of functionality by delivering the training and information resources to stakeholders on their mobile devices.

Both apps were developed as part of the CARDI/New Zealand Small Ruminants project which aims to help sheep and goat farmers increase their productivity through the use of best husbandry practices and enterprise management techniques.

Download both apps for free from the Google Play store:
- CARDI SR-Market
- CARDI SR-Learn

New CARDI Representative appointed for Belize

Omaira Avila Rostant has been appointed the CARDI Representative for Belize. Her appointment became effective on 1st October 2016.

Omaira replaces Mr Anil Sinha who passed away in February 2016, after serving for 27 years as the CARDI Representative to Belize.

Omaira would oversee the day to day operations of the Belize office. She will work in close collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and other partners to implement the Institute’s work programme which has a strong focus on the production of cereals, grains and legumes, the commercial production of seeds and maintenance of seed banks. Prior to joining CARDI, Omaira coordinated the implementation of several roots and tubers projects in Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and Grenada. She was coordinator for the AgriNett project that created information and communication tools specific for the agricultural sector. She also held the position of Manager for Research and Development at the Trinidad and Tobago Agribusiness Association (TTABA) from 2008.

Omaira has extensive training and experience in Biotechnology, specifically plant tissue culture development strongly focused on the management and conservation of in vitro planting material.

CARDI Tobago celebrates World Food Day

The Department of Agriculture, Marine Affairs, Marketing and the Environment of the Tobago House of Assembly hosted their annual World Food Day agricultural exhibition at the Dwight York Stadium on 19 October 2016. The CARDI Tobago Unit participated and highlighted aspects of the Institute’s work in building a climate resilient regional agricultural sector. A range of information resources were displayed showcasing CARDI’s work in the adoption of climate smart practices and technologies.

This exhibition provided an opportunity for partners, stakeholders, farmers and members of the private sector to showcase the work they are doing to contribute to agriculture development on the island. This year, the event was hosted under the theme “Climate is Changing, Food and Agriculture must too”.

Omaira Avila Rostant is the new CARDI Representative to Belize

Omaira Avila Rostant

Visitors at the CARDI Booth, Tobago

The Department of Agriculture, Marine Affairs, Marketing and the Environment of the Tobago House of Assembly hosted their annual World Food Day agricultural exhibition at the Dwight York Stadium on 19 October 2016. The CARDI Tobago Unit participated and highlighted aspects of the Institute’s work in building a climate resilient regional agricultural sector. A range of information resources were displayed showcasing CARDI’s work in the adoption of climate smart practices and technologies. Visitors to the CARDI Booth were also able to sample feta cheese, ice cream made from goat’s milk, sorrel anchar, corn soup, cassava and sweet potato pone. All these value added products were made with raw materials obtained from sustainable crop and livestock systems.

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