

MANGO

OECS mango biodiversity project. By Julita Peter, GIS. Saint Lucia Ministry of Agriculture, Physical Planning, Natural Resources and Co-operatives, 31 July 2017.

<http://agriculture.govt.lc/news/oecs-mango-biodiversity-project>

Full article

IN 2007, A SURVEY REVEALED THAT THERE ARE OVER 60,000 MANGO-BEARING TREES IN SAINT LUCIA.

A mango biodiversity project is underway in several OECS states.

The project is a highly participatory exercise which involves the planting of mango trees in areas prone to erosion.

In Saint Lucia, an estimated 6000 mango plants will be planted across the island. It has been realized that because of the deep root system of the mango tree, they are extremely effective in holding the soil together, thus preventing erosion and stabilizing the soil.

Nicole La Force-Haynes, Environmental Education Officer in the Department of Forestry said the project caters mainly to farmers.

“The majority of it is on private lands, so there is interface with the farmers, showing them how agro forestry could be to their benefit. Not only will it protect their soil so that their great grandchildren will have soil to farm on, but they could reap economic benefits as well. The Forestry Department has been interacting with farmers and the plants are already being propagated in nurseries, so not long from now they will be planted.”

Mrs. Haynes said the mango biodiversity project will not focus on a specific type of mango but will see the planting of a wide variety of mango plants. She also spoke of the sustainable livelihood that can be derived from mangoes.

“One of the things we have planned is to have a series of workshops where farmers as well agro processors are invited to the workshops to show them how further value can be added to the mango. We know a lot can be done with the mango, like pickled mango, jelly, jam, juice, and we know that our unemployment is very high, so this is another avenue where young people can be empowered.”

The Ministry of Agriculture is working on niche markets to spur further employment.

LIVESTOCK

Effort on to preserve Black Belly Sheep, key food crops. By Regina Selman Moore, Barbados Advocate, 31 July 2017.

<https://www.barbadosadvocate.com/news/effort-preserve-black-belly-sheep-key-food-crops>

Full article

Recognizing the impact a national disaster could have on Barbados in terms of wiping out valuable crops and livestock, the Ministry of Agriculture is moving to set up a lab where germplasm can be stored, to ensure the continued existence of key food crops, as well as animals.

Deputy Chief Agriculture Officer, Charleston Lucas, acknowledged the above as he spoke at the launch of a project to promote sustainable livelihoods among Eastern Caribbean farmers, which is being implemented by the Caribbean Policy Development Centre (CPDC) in three Caribbean countries, including Barbados. The launch was held at Almond Bay in Hastings, Christ Church.

Lucas acknowledged that the Ministry is currently embracing climate smart agricultural practices and is currently evaluating a number of food crop varieties to determine which ones are the more resistant to some of the problems seen by farmers in Barbados. The aim is to bring the lab on stream and store the germplasm (living genetic resources such as seeds or tissues that are maintained for the purpose of animal and plant breeding, preservation and other research uses) in the lab, for future use.

“So in the case of a catastrophe, a national disaster and all the germplasm for a particular crop is lost, we can go to the lab and they can take it from some of the vials and propagate it. So you haven’t lost that germplasm, which might be the one that has adapted to our conditions,” Lucas explained.

“If you look at the animals, we have the Barbados Black Belly sheep and shortly we will be setting up a lab to collect and store the semen. It can be used in trading, because everybody wants the Black belly Sheep semen, all over the world,” he noted.

“If we don’t have storage of the semen of the Black Belly Sheep and we have a natural disaster and all is lost, where will we start again? We would have to search across the island and see if persons have the material and then we would have to go back and breed them (all over again)” he further commented.

As such, he noted that the Ministry of Agriculture is working with the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) on this project, and may also embrace other partners, to ensure the success of the initiative. (RSM)

GINGER

Jamaica looking to harness value chain to revive ginger production. Jamaica Observer, 3 August 2017. http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/jamaica-looking-to-harness-value-chain-to-revive-ginger-production_106222?profile=1373

Full article

OVER the last six months, close to 100 farmers have been trained in a series of consultations aimed at providing technical support under the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) ginger value chain programme.

The programme, which is in collaboration with the Government of Jamaica (GOJ), seeks to revive the country's ginger sector by improving production and looking into secondary ginger products for local and international consumption.

Public and private sector partners were also part of the consultations.

According to a release from the local FAO office, this process applies a public-private partnership approach and supports Jamaica's economic growth strategy, which highlighted ginger as one of several crops considered to have high potential for contributing to commercial development.

The training sessions have focused on mainstreaming the value chain process, which includes all stakeholders such as farmers, buyers and processors involved from “farm to fork”.

Based on the technical input of FAO consultants Martine Raine and Cordia Thompson, field research has been completed, and training and development sessions, as well as stakeholder feedback around the strategic findings and the proposed future strategy for Jamaica's ginger sector have been conducted. The consultants also highlighted that the interventions, to date, are important inputs to the Government's strategy to revive the sector.

They also noted that, so far, the measures are aimed at the creation of the Ginger Value Chain Committee, which will be steeped in public and private sector partnership. While this committee is expected to be established by the end of 2017, several project activities have already been completed and initiated, including awareness and training courses in the value chain approach and how to institutionalize it within the ministry.

Additionally, there has been a value chain analysis and upgrading strategy planning exercise, and the development of clean planting material as well as the current plant propagation component, which is well under way at the Bodles Agricultural Research Station in St Catherine.

The FAO stated that there are also plans to renovate existing greenhouses to further support the growth of a more robust ginger value chain sector. In considering the prospects for the Jamaican

ginger value chain programme, FAO has referenced experiences from other countries such as Fiji, Costa Rica and Thailand. The pineapple value chain in Dominica and Irish potato value chain in Jamaica have also been noted as successful approaches to value chain development.

When fully implemented, the GOJ/FAO ginger value chain programme is expected to help to improve ginger production, tap into existing market opportunities for ginger farmers and new ginger products, and increase opportunities/innovations for agro-processors.

CLIMATE CHANGE

The Virgin Islands Climate Change Trust Fund on the Move. Caribbean Climate Blog, 4 August 2017. <https://caribbeanclimateblog.com/2017/08/04/the-virgin-islands-climate-change-trust-fund-on-the-move/>

Full article

The excitement in the room was palatable. You know you have something special going when a volunteer group from a wide variety of backgrounds can eagerly sit through and enthusiastically discuss a near 100 slide PowerPoint presentation on ordinarily mundane topics such as requirements for governance, project cycle management, financial management and so on. Such was the agenda and mood as the Virgin Islands Climate Change Trust Fund Board met for just the second time following their formal installation and inaugural meeting on 17th July, 2017. The Board has quickly become steeped in an exercise to develop the Trust Fund's Operational Manual which would ensure it meets the highest global fiduciary standard.

The Virgin Islands Climate Change Trust Fund (VICCTF) is on a trailblazing path. From its inception it has had a unique and interesting story and is continuing to position itself to make a major mark on the climate finance landscape of the Caribbean. Established among a number of biodiversity, conservation or mixed portfolio Trust Funds in the region, the VICCF is set apart as being the first Trust Fund in the region established by statute, focused exclusively on climate change adaptation and mitigation. Another distinguishing feature of the Fund is that it is also being supported by a strong country institutional framework for climate change management and a comprehensive national climate change policy.

The concept of the VICCTF was born in late 2009 following the 15th Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Copenhagen. COP15 was a turning point in the life of the Convention and an "aha moment" for the British Virgin Islands (BVI). It was then that the BVI resolved to directly tackle the unique position it found itself in, as a Small Island Developing State (SID), but, at the same time as an Overseas Territory of the United Kingdom. While facing the same urgent and severe impacts from climate change, due to its political status, the BVI is currently barred from accessing the major global sources of climate finance and

other forms of assistance available under the UNFCCC and does not receive any sustainable climate financing directly from the UK.

Inspired by and closely working with and supported by the Caribbean Community Climate Change Center, the BVI worked to establish the legal framework to provide an independent, transparent and secure vehicle to raise, manage and administer blended funds to support actions to respond to climate change. The vision became a reality in 2015 when the Virgin Islands Climate Change Trust Fund Act was passed establishing the VICCTF. With a strong and highly engaged Board now installed, the Trust Fund is moving quickly to operationalization over the next couple years.

The Trust Fund will bring together climate finance from a number of sources, including already instituted local levies, bi-lateral support, private donations, support from foundations, market-based mechanisms and hopefully the Green Climate Fund. What started as a National Climate Fund has the potential to quickly evolve into a Fund supporting regional projects, perhaps focused particularly on channeling resources to other Overseas Territories facing the same plight, as it seeks to achieve Green Climate Fund accreditation as an International Accredited Entity.

The VICCTF is certainly on the move and is “moving with a purpose” driven by the key role it must fulfill. Speaking to the importance of the Trust Fund in his remarks on installing the Board, Dr. Hon. Kedrick Pickering, Minister for Natural Resources and Labour said “There are milestones in the development of any country, and there are turning points that determine the destiny of a place under shifting circumstances. In a global era defined by climate change, the establishment of the Virgin Islands Climate Change Trust Fund and now the installment of its first Board of Trustees is one such marker for the Virgin Islands. The Virgin Islands Climate Change Trust Fund will be the single most important vehicle to ensure a sustainable flow of financing from local and international sources to support climate change adaptation and mitigation.”

SOIL AND WATER MANAGEMENT

Alkaline soil, sensible sensor. By Kaine Korzekwa, American Society of Agronomy, 2 August 2017. <https://www.agronomy.org/science-news/alkaline-soil-sensible-sensor>

Full article

Producers sometimes face challenges that go deep into the soil. They need answers to help the soil, on site. A portable field sensor can accurately measure minerals in soils more easily and efficiently than existing methods. And a research team, including a middle school student and her scientist father, can confirm it.

Calcium, like other minerals, is necessary for healthy plant growth. However, an excess of calcium — particularly in the form of calcium carbonate — can cause issues as it builds up in the soil.

“Calcium carbonate is basically a type of salt. It dissolves in water after a rainfall event and moves down through the soil,” explains David Weindorf. Weindorf is at the Department of Plant and Soil Science at Texas Tech University.

One main source of this calcium is limestone. At low levels, it makes thin threads or small white masses in the soil. However, in extreme cases it can actually take over the entire subsoil. Its hard surface can limit the ability of plant roots to grow. Getting this information on-the-fly is important for growers and soil scientists solving problems in the field.

Traditionally, soil scientists use their expertise to look at the soil and determine the stage of the calcium visually. There are also laboratory-based techniques that are very accurate, but they are not portable. The researchers wanted to see if a portable x-ray device — called PXRF, portable x-ray fluorescence spectrometry — would be better.

Based on their comparisons, the researchers found that, indeed, the device is a good method for measuring the calcium in the soil. The device can provide data on about 20 different elements, all in 60 seconds.

This can be a big advantage for soil scientists working in the field. It can also help scientists and farmers in developing countries who can’t afford expensive laboratory tests, or don’t have the expertise to visually appraise the soil.

“We are not advocating doing away with traditional assessment. We are simply providing a new data stream to help field soil scientists when evaluating carbonates in the field,” Weindorf explains. “Essentially, PXRF is another tool in the tool belt of the modern soil scientist, but it is by no means the only tool.”

Weindorf’s daughter was also part of the research. For Camille, this study was a way to branch out for her school’s science fair and do some original research. She scanned the soil samples and then helped her father perform the laboratory tests. She also helped calculate the summary statistics and write the paper.

“As a father, I just can’t overemphasize how proud I am of my daughter for taking on this science challenge with me,” he says. “I hope a project like this can inspire other students around her age to engage in original scientific inquiry. Truly, they are the future which will keep our country at the forefront of scientific innovation.”

[Read](https://doi.org/10.2136/sssaj2017.01.0019) this study in the *Soil Science Society of American Journal*. Chakraborty, S., D. C. Weindorf, C. A. Weindorf, B. S. Das, B. Li, B. Duda, S. Pennington, and R. Ortiz. 2017. Semiquantitative Evaluation of Secondary Carbonates via Portable X-ray Fluorescence Spectrometry. *Soil Sci. Soc. Am. J.* 0. doi:10.2136/sssaj2017.01.0019
<https://dl.sciencesocieties.org/publications/citation-manager/prev/zt/sssaj/0/0/sssaj2017.01.0019>

Newly appointed World Bank Specialist calls on Agri. Minister -additional funds to be made available for critical drainage projects. Guyana Ministry of Agriculture, 31 July 2017.

<http://agriculture.gov.gy/2017/07/31/newly-appointed-world-bank-specialist-calls-on-agri-minister-additional-funds-to-be-made-available-for-critical-drainage-projects/>

Full article

Agriculture Minister, Noel Holder today met with a team from the World Bank’s Social, Urban, Rural and Resilience Group to discuss a number of important issues relating to climate change and development within the agricultural sector.

Among the issues discussed were the status of the Flood Risk Management and Cunha Canal Rehabilitation Projects which are being executed by the Agriculture Sector Development Unit (ASDU). At the meeting, newly appointed Senior Disaster Risk Management Specialist, Mr. Doekle Geert Wielinga who replaced Mr Pierre Nadji, World Bank Senior Country Director, was introduced to the Agriculture Minister, who announced that additional funding could be made available for critical drainage and irrigation needs.

Among the works which will be done, would include the construction of dams along the East Demerara Water Conservancy (EDWC) and Pump Stations at critical locations.

Additional projects that are being developed for the agriculture sector between the World Bank and the ASDU were also discussed.

Agriculture Sector Development Unit’s Project Coordinator, Dhaneshwar James, indicated that these projects, which will be executed by ASDU, will be completed by the scheduled January 2019 deadline.

Agriculture Minister, Noel Holder, reiterated the importance of projects of this nature in Guyana’s fight to combat climate change, adding that his ministry looks forward to continued collaboration with the World Bank in order to further advance agriculture in the Guyana.

He spoke of the need to have effective drainage and irrigation structures so as better support farmers’ livelihood.

“Being able to provide the necessary services whereby, farmers’ livelihood are protected is one of the mandates of the ASDU and the NDIA by-and-large and something the Government of Guyana is committed.” the Minister said.

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

CATIE, MOA to advance research and development through collaboration - training, exchange of genetic materials high on agenda. Guyana Ministry of Agriculture, 31 July 2017. <http://agriculture.gov.gy/2017/07/31/catie-moa-to-advance-research-and-development-through-collaboration-training-exchange-of-genetic-materials-high-on-agenda/>

Full article

Director General of the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE), Guyanese born Dr. Mohammed Ibrahim, today called on Agriculture Minister, Hon. Noel Holder, where a number of areas for possible collaboration through research and development were discussed.

Among the areas discussed, the team will be looking to boost Guyana's livestock capabilities with the introduction of a new model for dairy development in the tropics. Boosting the capabilities of extension officers is another area of which CATIE and the Guyana Livestock Development Authority (GLDA) will collaborate.

New Zealand has been utilizing the skills of CATIE for sponsored training of technical officers in central Latin America and the Caribbean and this will be extended to Guyana. A proposal will be developed shortly between CATIE and the Ministry of Agriculture for financing such training.

Research and Development have always been a high priority for the Ministry of Agriculture and through the aegis of the National Agricultural Research and Extension Institute (NAREI) and GLDA, much has been achieved in this regard, assisting farmers in boosting their production and productivity.

While there have been successes, CATIE will be working with NAREI and the GLDA over the next few months where the exchange of genetic materials and exposure to dairy cooperative systems between Guyana and Costa Rica will be realized.

“Ensuring that NAREI has access to cultivars which show more resilience to climate change is important as we move forward with our cause for a green economy. Climate Change is real and unless we take a more adaptive approach to agriculture we cannot bridge that productivity gap,” the Minister said.

The Agriculture Minister, in welcoming the collaboration between the Institute and the Ministry stated that this augurs well for the advancement of agriculture in the CARICOM Region, and Guyana's ability to address its US\$4B import bill.

“With our research aspect strengthened, we (Ministry of Agriculture) will be better able to assist investors with not only new breeds but the high line of new genetic materials for crop production,” he said.

The aim of CATIE is to increase sustainable agricultural production and include the training of professionals in Latin America and the Caribbean with an enhanced focus on sustainable management of agriculture and conservation of natural resources.

Integrated and differentiated agricultural policies can contribute to achieving sustainable development objectives. Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture, 31 July 2017
<http://www.iica.int/en/press/news/integrated-and-differentiated-agricultural-policies-can-contribute-achieving-sustainable>

Full article

A new IICA publication brings together experiences in the Americas, China and the EU on this topic; readers are urged to take advantage of it to replicate actions in other countries around the hemisphere.

San Jose, 31 July, 2017 (IICA). The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture, in an effort to support modernization of the agricultural policies that many countries in the Americas require, has launched a new publication that contains **an analysis of agricultural policies and their contribution to sustainable development**, which is a series of recommendations that can be adapted to the particular needs of each country for further implementation.

In light of the objectives defined in the United Nations [2030 Sustainable Development Agenda](#) it is imperative that integrated agricultural policies be pursued, given that this economic activity extends way beyond primary food production and the rural environment: it touches all aspects of modern life.

The objectives of this Agenda are closely linked to agriculture, since, as outlined in the Agenda, agriculture can contribute to putting an end to poverty and hunger, promoting the use of clean energy, reducing inequalities, producing and consuming responsibly and combatting climate change and its effects.

The new document, which is available in Spanish and English, systematizes **seven hemispheric dialogues** that were coordinated by IICA between 2014 and 2016, and in which specialists from the Institute, government officers, representatives from the academic and private sectors as well as commentators, analyzed the agricultural policies of the United States, Brazil, Canada, the European Union, the Central American region, China and the Caribbean.

“During these discussion, there was an exchange of knowledge, analysis and identification of lessons to be learnt regarding the design of policies that can then be applied to the specific conditions of each country, taking into account their differences and peculiarities”, stated Joaquín Arias, author of the publication and IICA specialist in policies and sectoral analysis.

[The publication summarizes](#) all the topics discussed during the seminars in four areas: market-oriented agricultural policies, regional integration and market development, sustainable management of natural resources in agriculture and efficient use of inputs, and factors of production.

According to Arias, the systematization also seeks to support the deliberations of the ministers of agriculture and other stakeholders towards improving the effectiveness of their agricultural policies in light of changes worldwide.

More information: Joaquín Arias, IICA specialist in policies and sectoral analysis joaquin.arias@iica.int

Publication: **Trends and Policy Innovations for Agriculture in Light of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda** <http://www.iica.int/en/publications/trends-and-policy-innovations-agriculture-light-2030-sustainable-development-agenda>

Launch of the Morne Longue Productive Farmers Organization's Agricultural Input Shop.
Government of Grenada, 4 August 2017.
http://www.gov.gd/egov/news/2017/aug17/04_08_17/item_1/launch-morne-longue-productive-farmers-organisation-agri-input-shop.html

Full article

On Tuesday, August 1st 2017, the Morne Longue Productive Farmers Organization, one of MAREP's Rural Investment Fund (RIF) Enterprise Window Project, officially launched its Agricultural Input Shop.

The Project costing \$40,042.58XCD will focus on providing agricultural supplies and equipment rental to farmers within the community of Morne Longue and surrounding communities in St. Andrew.

This will provide sustainable avenues for direct income and employment to its eight (8) members.

In attendance were: Honorable Delma Thomas, Parliamentary Representative; Mr Byron Campbell, Programme Manager, MAREP; Mr George Phillip, Senior Extension Officer, Ministry of Agriculture; Pastor Leroy Pursue; members of Morne Longue Organization, community persons and MAREP staff.

Parliamentary Representative for St. Andrew North West, Honorable Delma Thomas expressed pleasure and welcomed the launch of the Agricultural Input Shop.

In her remark, she stated: “the project focuses on empowerment of people” and “positively believes that the goals of the Community Organization are viable and achievable to assist in the development of the community.”

President of the Morne Longue Productive Farmers Organization, Mr. Imotep Baptiste, voiced his appreciation to MAREP on the continuous support: “the journey was a long 2 years, however, through it all we were able to press forward with God, hard work and assistance from the MAREP team, especially, Ms. Danessa Joseph, Community and Youth Officer for St. Andrew.”

MAREP is therefore pleased to have reached this stage of implementation with the completion of the fifth Rural Investment Fund (RIF) Projects.

The community based projects seek to contribute to the establishment of profitable and competitive rural businesses of legally registered organizations.

The MAREP programme is fulfilling its commitment to increased employment and income generation opportunities, sustainable rural businesses’ growth, as well as, increased level of empowerment of rural men and women within parishes across Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique.

CARICOM ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY DRAFT

CARICOM opens environment policy, action plan for discussions. Caribbean Community (CARICOM), 31 July 2017. <http://caricom.org/media-center/communications/press-releases/caricom-opens-environment-policy-action-plan-for-discussions>

Full article

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat has opened the [draft CARICOM Environment and Natural Resources Policy](#), as well as the Action Plan for national, sub-regional and regional discussions beginning early August.

The consultations have been planned for Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, the OECS Sub-region and Trinidad and Tobago involving wide-ranging stakeholders drawn from the public and private sectors, civil society, CARICOM Institutions, and academia. Discussions are scheduled for August 3-4 in Barbados, 7-8 in Guyana; 14-15, Jamaica; 17-18, Saint Lucia, and 21-22 in Trinidad and Tobago.

Under review are the Draft Caribbean Community Environment and Natural Resources Policy Framework; and First Environmental and Natural Resources Action Plan of the Caribbean Community Environment and Natural Resources Policy Framework (July 2017-June 2022). The Policy Framework articulates a regional approach to the sustainable management of the

environmental and natural resources of the Community and its Member States.

The CARICOM Environment and Natural Resources Policy Framework has its genesis in a 2008 decision of Ministers of Environment at the Twenty-Fifth Meeting of the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) – Environment. The CARICOM Secretariat was mandated to mobilize resources to proceed with the development of the Policy Framework. In pursuit of that mandate, the CARICOM Secretariat conducted assessments of the environmental governance structure of Member States. It also examined the environmental dimensions of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas. A number of regional consultations followed. The outcomes served as the foundation for the design of the Draft CARICOM Environmental and Natural Resource Policy Framework, and First Action Programme (2017-2022) which will be reviewed in August.

This round of discussion is important in advancing the process towards presenting the Policy Framework to the CARICOM Ministers of Environment. Further, successful implementation will be predicated on regional ownership of the CARICOM Environment Policy. A collective regional response will also be required to promote the prudent, rational management and conservation of the Region's environmental, and natural resources, the Policy envisions.

The CARICOM Environment Policy has been formulated with the awareness that unsustainable use of resources could undermine regional sustainable development options within the context of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. It therefore proposes a structure for environmental and natural resources management in CARICOM, balancing the need to exploit the land, air, water and oceans for economic development while maintaining healthy environments in the Community.

The CARICOM Environment Policy Action Plan is viewed as the first step in making the policy actionable. It provides a basis for a collective regional response to the environmental and sustainable development revolution, which is underscored by the adoption of the international community sustainable development agenda.

YOUTH

High school students explore issues in agriculture, natural resources at Florida Youth Institute. By Samantha Grenrock, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences and University of Florida, 1 August 2017. <http://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/news/2017/08/01/high-school-students-explore-issues-in-agriculture-natural-resources-at-florida-youth-institute/>

Full article

While 20 high school students examined freshly picked peanut plants at the UF/IFAS Suwannee Valley Agricultural Extension Center, farm manager Ben Broughton explained how researchers

utilize the farm for a variety of experiments. He shared how these projects range in topic from food and water quality, to insects, nematodes and more.

The interactive experience was one of several lessons and activities the students encountered at Florida Youth Institute (FYI), a week-long summer program sponsored by the University of Florida College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALs), the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) and The World Food Prize Foundation. Open to rising high school juniors and seniors, FYI introduced participants to life at the university while they explored agricultural, natural resource and food security issues.

“Our hope is that we engage more students who don’t know much about agriculture or don’t necessarily come from an agricultural background, and help them to see how they might fit in the future of agriculture,” said CALs Dean Elaine Turner.

Participants engaged in hands-on activities during visits to the UF/IFAS Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants, FDACS Division of Plant Industry, Sensory Lab in the UF/IFAS food science and human nutrition department, and UF/IFAS animal science research and teaching units, among others.

“There is a lot more to agriculture than what I have known, especially how there is a lot of technology involved,” said FYI participant Madeline Stophel of St. Johns, Florida. “I think it is really interesting how you can use fields like engineering and computer science, and incorporate natural resources and life sciences into them.”

On the last evening of the program, CALs presented FYI participant Lucia Carrero with a \$2,500 renewable scholarship to study in the college.

In addition to learning about careers in the agricultural and life sciences, students had the opportunity to brainstorm possible solutions to issues contributing to food insecurity worldwide.

“The most critical challenges we face, not just in Florida and around the United States, but around the world, are being tackled every day by UF faculty members: teachers, researchers and extension educators,” said Keegan Kautzky, director of national education programs for The World Food Prize Foundation. “Identifying some of the most promising high school students in the state, bringing them to the campus and letting them interact with those incredible leaders’ shows these students in a very practical way how they can take action as a student at the University of Florida.”

As part of the program application process, FYI students researched and wrote about a global food security issue in a developing country. During FYI, students presented their findings in a roundtable with industry professionals from the USDA, FDACS, Florida Farm Bureau Federation and UF/IFAS. Four of these students were selected to attend the Global Youth Institute in October, a prestigious international conference hosted by The World Food Prize Foundation held each year in Des Moines, Iowa.

The following FYI participants advanced to the Global Youth Institute:

Carrero, a Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School student from Parkland, Florida;

Maddie Dvorak, a Kathleen High School student from Lakeland, Florida;

Katleen Jolicoeur, a Palm Beach Gardens High School student from Palm Beach Gardens, Florida;

Ainsley Peterson, a Lafayette High School student from Mayo, Florida.

“The paper was really interesting to write; food security is something we face as farmers every day,” said Peterson. “I am interested in animal genetics and how to improve animal crop yields to help expand protein resources. I knew this camp would open my eyes to what I can do to help impact others.”

During the three-day experience of Global Youth Institute, student delegates will interact with World Food Prize laureates, visit innovative research facilities, participate in team projects and service opportunities, and discuss food security and agricultural issues with international experts. Participation in both Florida and Global Youth Institutes allows these young scholars to further develop their leadership skills to tackle current and future issues in agriculture and natural resources around the globe.

The World Food Prize Foundation recognized all FYI participants as Wallace-Carver Fellows, allowing them the opportunity to collaborate with scientists and policymakers through a paid fellowship at a USDA research center or office of their choice. This summer, FYI 2016 participant Roddra Johnson studied at the Sugarcane Production Research Unit in Canal Point, Florida. Laiken Kinsey and Maryn Neuhofer, two FYI 2016 participants, spent their summers interning with FDACS in the Tallahassee administration office and Florida Forest Service Field Operation in Perry, Florida. respectively.

“FYI is important because we need smart young people to meet these challenges,” said Mike Joyner, assistant commissioner and chief of staff at FDACS. “We have some tough challenges ahead in our industry, and it is going to take smart, diverse students to solve those problems.”

UPCOMING EVENTS

August

Denbigh Show, Jamaica

Date: August 5-7

Location: Denbigh Showground, May Pen, Clarendon,

Theme: ‘Grow What You Eat... Eat What You Grow: A Salute to Our Farmers, Nation Builders’.

Website: <http://www.jas.gov.jm/Denbigh.html>

32nd West Indies Agricultural Economics Conference 2017

Date: 6-11 August 2017

Location: Georgetown, Guyana

Description: Theme: Food & Nutrition Security: the pathway to sustainable agricultural development in the Caribbean. Organised by Caribbean Agro-Economic Society

Website: <http://www.caestt.com/home/32nd%20W.I.A.EConference.php>

September

Caribbean Wellness Day

Date: 9 September 2017

Description: Theme: "A Brighter Future for our Youth". Focus is on youth ages 15-29

Website: <http://carpha.org/>

Agribusiness Expo 2017

Date: 28 September- 1 October 2017

Location: Grenada

Description: Hosted by Ministry of Agriculture, Grenada. Theme: "Agribusiness generating wealth, wellness and employment"

Website: <http://www.gov.gd/>

October

World Food Day

Date: 16 October 2017

Description: Theme is “Change the future of migration. Invest in food security and rural development”.

Website: <http://www.fao.org/world-food-day/2017/home/en/>

November

TropAg2017

Date: 20-22 November, 2017

Location: Brisbane, Australia

Description: Theme is “high impact science to nourish the world”, reflecting the critical role of science, technology and innovation to the many challenges facing tropical and sub-tropical agriculture and food production globally.

Website: <http://tropagconference.org/>

December
CARDI Day
Date: 5 December 2017

2018

October 2018

18th International Triennial Symposium of the ISTRC (International Society for Tropical Root Crops) will be in Cali, Colombia from 22nd to 26th October 2018.

<http://www.istrc.org/194-18th-international-triennial-symposium-of-the-international-society-for-tropical-root-crops-istrc-cali-colombia-from-22nd-to-26th-october-2018>