



Agriculture in the News

Issues Affecting Caribbean Agriculture

31 July - 5 August 2018 Issue, compiled by CARDI

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Sweet Potato

How WhatsApp is enhancing demand for sweetpotato vines in Tanzania. International Potato Center (CIP), July 24, 2018

<https://cipotato.org/blog/how-whatsapp-is-enhancing-demand-for-sweetpotato-vines-in-tanzania/>

... through the mobile phone application—WhatsApp—information related to buying of quality vines, roots and products is disseminated to subscribers. The group has 112 members and comprises of government extension workers, professionals and experts in OFSP, Decentralised Vine Multipliers (DVMs), root producers and processors. This platform has eased the accessibility to vines or roots for participating members and other interested parties. This forum also serves as a good platform to share information on good farming practices.....

Improving Lives Through Agricultural Research

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Goats

Natural feed supplements and dewormer developed for goats by CLSU and VSU by Anna Marie P. Alo, DOST-PCAARRD S&T Media Services, Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development, 2 August 2018

<http://www.pcaarrd.dost.gov.ph/home/portal/index.php/quick-information-dispatch/3263-natural-feed-supplements-and-dewormer-developed-for-goats-by-clsu-and-vs>

... researchers from the Visayas State University (VSU) and the Central Luzon State University (CLSU) developed natural plant-based dewormers and feed supplements to prime the does (female goats) for kidding and lactation and to ensure survival of their kids...

.. Specifically, a dewormer made from extracts of 'Makahiya' (*Mimosa pudica*), 'Caimito' or star apple (*Chrysophyllum cainito*), and 'Makabuhay' (*Tinospora rumphii*) was formulated and packaged into 500 mg capsules by Dr. Tomas J. Fernandez, Jr of VSU. This dewormer has the ability to fight *Haemonchus contortus*, the most pathogenic parasite in goats that attaches itself to the goat's stomach and feed on its blood, thereby causing anemia and ultimate death of the goat if left untreated...

... To ensure the newborn survives, a coco-water drench was formulated by Dr. Lolito C. Bestil, also of VSU. This nutritional supplement is a high glucose drink that contains coconut water, dextrose powder, liquid seaweed, and vitamin-mineral premix. It has the ability to alleviate hypoglycemia (low blood glucose) in newborn kids and enable faster weight gain in the first 30days of the kids...

..For lactating does, Orden formulated a special feed known as SFEED-Lactating. It is an Indigofera-based diet complete with rice bran, copra meal, molasses and minerals, dry-ground and pelleted to prevent selection...

Citrus Greening Disease

Early Findings Show Plant Hormone May Help in Citrus Greening Fight. University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, 3 August 2018

<http://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/news/2018/08/03/early-findings-show-plant-hormone-may-help-in-citrus-greening-fight/>

EXCERPT

GAINESVILLE, Fla. — University of Florida scientists think a group of hormones may eventually help growers battle citrus greening, but they still want to study them before recommending growers use the chemical.

Fernando Alferez, an assistant professor of horticultural sciences at the UF Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, leads a team of UF/IFAS researchers studying the effects of Homobrassinolides (HBr), a type of plant hormone, on greening-infected citrus trees.

"In preliminary research, we have been able to see some positive effects of HBr on citrus tree health and fruit production," said Alferez, a faculty member at the UF/IFAS Southwest Florida Research and Education Center in Immokalee, Florida.

Although HBr is commercially available and can be used for Florida citrus, UF/IFAS researchers are still researching its impact on citrus greening before making a final recommendation to growers.

But early research shows that with the hormone, fruit is maturing faster and is 20 percent heavier, Alferez said. The hormone also helps reduce the number of oranges that drop from the trees, he said. In treated trees, scientists have seen 15 to 20 percent more fruit per tree....

UF/IFAS Researchers Give Nutrient Recommendations for Citrus Greening. University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, 3 August 2018
<http://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/news/2018/08/03/uf-ifas-researchers-give-nutrient-recommendations-for-citrus-greening/>

UF/IFAS Scientists Use Fungus to Manage Asian Citrus Psyllid. University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, 30 July 2018
<http://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/news/2018/07/30/uf-ifas-scientists-use-fungus-to-manage-asian-citrus-psyllid/>

.. The fungus, *Isaria fumosorosea*

Field Efficacy of Autodissemination and Foliar Sprays of an Entomopathogenic Fungus, *Isaria fumosorosea* (Hypocreales: Cordycipitaceae), for Control of Asian Citrus Psyllid, *Diaphorina citri* (Hemiptera: Liviidae), on Residential Citrus by Andrew Chow, Christopher A Dunlap, Mark A Jackson, Pasco B Avery, Joseph M Patt, Mamoudou Sétamou; *Journal of Economic Entomology*, toy216, Published: 30 July 2018 <https://doi.org/10.1093/jee/toy216>

Cocoa

Duty-free and VAT-free concessions possible for farmers. Trinidad and Tobago Government Information Services Ltd

<http://www.news.gov.tt/content/duty-free-and-vat-free-concessions-possible-farmers#.W2tU87gpCM8>

EXCERPT

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago intends to look at the wording of the regulations relating to the grant of duty-free and VAT-free concessions to farmers, particularly those involved in agro-processing.

So said the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries, Senator the Honourable Clarence Rambharat at a Cocoa Farmers Outreach Meeting on Tuesday 31st July, 2018, held at the Rio Claro Demonstration Centre. The meeting was hosted by the Cocoa Research Centre (CRC) of the University of the West Indies (UWI) in St. Augustine as part of the IMPACTT project.

Minister Rambharat, who underscored the importance of the Ministry's focus on productive farmers, assured that they will benefit from incentives available from the Ministry. "We will provide the training, land, technical support, some quality assurance and food safety support and give the appropriate incentives", he said. The Minister also indicated that there were at present, some issues with the VAT and duty-free concessions, particularly as it pertained to equipment used in agro-processing, including fish processing.

Cocoa Farmers Outreach Meeting. Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries 31 July 2018

https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/cocoafarmersoutreachmeeting?source=feed_text

Senator the Honourable Clarence Rambharat, Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries (MALF) attended the IMPACTT Project Cocoa Farmers Outreach Meeting held at the Ministry's Rio Claro Demonstration Centre.

IMPACTT (Improving Marketing and Production of Artisanal Cocoa from Trinidad and Tobago), is a project undertaken by the Cocoa Research Centre of the University of the West Indies (UWI) St Augustine Campus.

Topics discussed at the session included :

- Improving cocoa production through the adoption of best practices
- Increasing productivity in existing cocoa fields
- Management of cocoa diseases with emphasis on Black Pod Disease
- Post-harvest processing and quality management.

Minister Rambharat, in his address to the farmers, indicated that they were indeed fortunate to have some of the “best minds” in the industry at the session and described the IMPACTT Project as “excellent”.

Also addressing the attendees were Mr Raffick Ali, Director, Regional Administration, South, (MALF); Mr Kamaldeo Maharaj; Technical Consultant, IMPACTT Project and Prof. Path Umaharan, Director, Cocoa Research Centre, UWI

Climate Change

FAO hosts climate resiliency workshop. DPI Guyana, Thursday, August 2, 2018

<http://dpi.gov.gy/fao-hosts-climate-resiliency-workshop/>

– *\$40M for studies to build resilience in Agri-sector*

– *University of Guyana/International Centre for Tropical Agriculture to conduct studies*

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (UN/FAO) has committed \$40Million for Guyana to undertake baseline studies for developing a full proposal to address Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience Building in the Agriculture Sector.

Belize Agriculture Census

BELIZE AGRICULTURE CENSUS 2018. Ministry of Agriculture, Belize

<https://www.agriculture.gov.bz/2018-belize-national-agriculture-census/>

The time frame for the completion of the Census is nine (9) months, commencing in the month of June 2018 and ending in the month of February 2019.

Census flyer can be download here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Q9gKQXNrTL6w6t6msbj4A_p_B1VfU5ci/view?usp=sharing

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1iDDEa_-2TsE8uGFR6qKW3qZlsNydzW6g/view?usp=sharing

Biosecurity

Barbados Home To Biosecurity Studies Centre by Julia Rawlins-Bentham. Barbados Government Information Service (BGIS), August 3, 2018

<http://gisbarbados.gov.bb/blog/barbados-home-to-biosecurity-studies-centre/>

Barbados will be home to the Caribbean’s Centre for Biosecurity Studies, which will be housed at the University of the West Indies’ (UWI) Cave Hill Campus.

This was revealed during Thursday’s opening ceremony of the Caribbean’s inaugural Biosecurity Symposium held under the theme: **Building Resilience to Biosecurity Threats in the Caribbean** at the Errol Barrow Centre for Creative Imagination.

Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Dale Marshall, congratulated the University for its proactive approach stating: “This interdisciplinary Centre will integrate the fields of law, medical research, international relations and public health to build regional capacity to deal with threats arising from biosecurity issues.”

He explained that while the concept of biosecurity was relatively new to the Caribbean, “regional coordination and mutual support are critical elements in addressing biosecurity, and a failure to do so could result in severe economic consequences...”

He noted that Barbados did not have legislation which specifically addressed biosecurity concerns. “Therefore the laws currently in place will have to be assessed with a view to strengthening existing provisions or even drafting new laws,” he pointed out.

He told those present that existing legislation in Barbados which might impact on the issue of biosecurity included the Animal (Diseases and Importation) Act, Cap. 253; the Health Services Act; the Quarantine Act; the Customs Act; and the Miscellaneous Controls (General Open Import License) Regulations.

However, Mr. Marshall said that Government was seeking to establish a Law Reform Commission, and one of the benefits of such a body would be the identification of legislation that needed to be introduced. "That Commission will benefit greatly from the inputs of your deliberations here today," he said.

Pro Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the UWI Cave Hill Campus, Professor Eudine Barriteau, explained that: "The Centre will provide greater access to training and research in bio-risk management; facilitate the greater alignment with the Caribbean community by bringing together stakeholders of biosecurity governance while raising awareness of risk and mitigation plans; demonstrate agility by providing consulting research and policy advice to governments and agencies in responding to the new challenges presented by biological threats."

She added that the Campus was confident in its ability to develop accredited programmes of study within the Faculty of Social Sciences, where the Centre will be located.

Agricultural Development – Bahamas, Jamaica

Bahamians Appreciating Fresh Produce from Family Island Farmers by Stirling Strachan. Bahamas Information Services, August 3, 2018. The Official Website of the Government of The Bahamas
<http://www.bahamas.gov.bs/>

"Many Bahamians have come to appreciate the fresh produce from our Family Island farmers," said the Hon. Michael Foulkes, Member of Parliament for Golden Gates and Executive Chairman of The Bahamas Agricultural and Industrial Corporation (BAIC) while addressing a press conference, Friday, August 3, on the Corporation's next "Pop-up" market in Fox Hill, set for Saturday, August 4.

The pop-up market initiative has taken farm fresh, Bahamian grown produce to communities such as Bain Town and Grants Town, Centreville, Saint Barnabas and Englerston.

Mr. Foulkes said, "We have also ventured to the Elizabeth constituency and the Yamacraw constituency."

Mr. Foulkes noted that the initiative has also been taken to Grand Bahama.

"BAIC is pleased to bring fresh food from the farm to your table and we look forward to making this happen throughout The Bahamas, as we support the development of the agriculture sector and seek to attain greater food security, which is vital to our country," he said.

Funding Initiative for Farmers to be Launched at Denbigh by [Tomeica Gunn](#). Jamaica Information Service (JIS), August 1, 2018
<https://jis.gov.jm/funding-initiative-for-farmers-to-be-launched-at-denbigh/>

Local farmers are set to benefit from grant funding through the Jamaica Diaspora Agriculture Taskforce (JDAT) Investor Circle, micro farming enterprise social fund.

The initiative will be officially launched at the Denbigh Agricultural, Industrial and Food Show in Clarendon on August 6.

Speaking with JIS News Chairperson of JDAT, Kimone Gooden said the project's aim is to create a mechanism for farmers "to be able to ask for a grant, get it quickly, prove that they use the funds appropriately, and get the support that they need."

Food and Nutrition Security

How countries can achieve nutrition goals through the food system approach by Suresh Babu
International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), August 2, 2018

<http://www.ifpri.org/blog/how-countries-can-achieve-nutrition-goals-through-food-system-approach>

Youth

Youth in Agriculture Village at Denbigh by Peta Gay Rowe. Jamaica Information Service (JIS), August 3, 2018

<https://jis.gov.jm/youth-in-agriculture-village-at-denbigh/>

The Youth in Agriculture (YIA) village at this year's Denbigh Agricultural, Industrial and Food Show, will highlight methods to reduce the impact of climate change on agriculture under the theme 'Youth in Agri-business: Sustaining the Environment'.

Denbigh is being held from August 4 to 6 at the Denbigh Showground in May Pen, Clarendon....

Education

GSA graduates encouraged to develop agri-sector. Ministry of Agriculture, Guyana, August 3, 2018

<http://agriculture.gov.gy/2018/08/03/gsa-graduates-encouraged-to-develop-agri-sector/>

Recent graduates of the Guyana School of Agriculture have been encouraged to realise the potential of the agriculture sector in the twenty-first century and utilise information and communication technology....

Scientific Publishing

How to get your high-impact research published in leading journals: top tips from the Senior Editor of Nature Genetics by [Katelyn Roett](#) / August 2, 2018

<https://www.cimmyt.org/how-to-get-your-high-impact-research-published-in-leading-journals-top-tips-from-the-senior-editor-of-nature-genetics/>

EXCERPT

At CIMMYT's [Science Week 2018](#), Nature Genetics Senior Editor Catherine Potenski spoke on how to publish plant genomics research that has broad, novel impact.

Having research that is high-impact is not only critical to doing excellent science that has meaning, but also a premier way to let the research community know what you are doing and reach a broader audience, according to Catherine Potenski, Senior Editor at [Nature Genetics](#), one of the more than 70 high-quality academic journals of publishing company [Springer Nature](#)...

UPCOMING EVENTS

September

International conference on agricultural emissions and food security: Connecting research to policy and practice

Date: 10-13 September 2018

Location: Berlin, Germany

Website: <https://www.agrighg-2018.org/>

<https://ccafs.cgiar.org/international-conference-agricultural-emissions-and-food-security-connecting-research-policy-and#.W2xeCbgpCM8>

October

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>

November

2018 International Annual Meeting, "Enhancing Productivity in a Changing Climate," of The American Society of Agronomy, the Crop Science Society of America, and the Canadian Society of Agronomy

Date: 4-7 November, 2018

Location: Baltimore, Maryland, USA

Website: <https://www.acsmeetings.org/>