Ministers’ Brief

The Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) is collaborating with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, the Environment, Sustainable Development and Immigration (MAFFESDI) on a data collection exercise towards the preparation of Belize’s “Fourth National Communication and First Biennial Update Report.”

Commencing in 2019 CARDI will assist the MAFFESDI in guiding the data collection process during the Green House Gas Inventory (GHGI) reporting period for 2007 and 2017. In addition, both partners will conduct a GHGI of emissions and sinks within the Agriculture Sector utilising the IPCC 2006 Guidelines for 2018-2020.

Over the two year project which is being implemented by the National Climate Change Office (NCCO), CARDI and the MAFESDI will also participate in capacity building activities, national consultations and coordinate the preparation of annual reports for submission to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

This data collection drive will help to better understand the sector’s contribution to greenhouse gases and inform the development of appropriate measures to mitigate and adapt against climate change in Belize. The achievement of these activities are in keeping with Belize’s commitment as a party state to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

CARDI participates in a data collection drive to inform development of climate change strategies for the Agriculture Sector in Belize

CARDI partners with the MAFFESDI on a data collection exercise to better understand the sector’s contribution to greenhouse gases.
In keeping with The Bahamas’ thrust to improve domestic production and adoption of agriculture, the “Strengthening Livestock Production” seminar, hosted by CARDI Bahamas and the Ministry of Education served to introduce teachers to best practices in ruminant and small ruminant production. On the opening day, participants were familiarised with a variety of unconventional materials that can be used as alternative feed sources for ruminants such as sweet potato, banana, cassava and coconut. As pressures exacerbate shortages of feed resources, non-conventional sources are options available to farmers for supplementing feeding in a cost effective and efficient manner. Teachers were presented with Moringa, Trichantera and Mulberry plants and issued a challenge to start their forage banks.

Day 2 focused on layers and table egg production. Bahamas produces less than 2% of the chicken it consumes annually! Participants were exposed to housing requirements for layers and received hands on training in the construction of battery cages for single and multiple birds.

Strengthening the capacities of Agriculture Science teachers mean they are now better equipped to deliver a more diversified and innovative programme as well as oversee the implementation of science based projects in schools. Teachers are key to ensuring students have access to the knowledge, skills and experience needed to adapt to a more sustainable future!

A series of Farmer Field Schools (FFS) are being held in Dominica for extension officers, on cassava production. CARDI and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) are working together to assist extension officers enhance their knowledge and practical skills so they are better equipped to advise and serve cassava farmers. Rebuilding the Cassava industry has been prioritized for Dominica after the passage of hurricane Maria in 2017. Inherently a resistant crop, Cassava is also important for food security, economic growth and rural development.

Dorian Etienne, CARDI Representative in Dominica said that “a value chain approach is being used to guide the training sessions”. A baseline study was conducted to inform the development of the training needs. Some of the topics covered to date included soil testing and preparation, plant nutrition, pest and disease management and selection and preparation of planting material.

The FFS approach takes place in a field setting where the extension officers are able to discuss, discover, experiment and develop strategies and best practices for managing on farm issues. By being part of the decision making process, information exchange and learning by doing extension officers will be better able to advise cassava farmers on practical production issues.

Calibishie village on the north east coast of Dominica was the site of the training sessions.

The Economic Review published by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) reports that Grenada (5.2%), Antigua and Barbuda (3.5%) and Guyana (3.4%) were the fastest growing economies in 2018. While all CARDI member states experienced positive economic growth it was St Lucia’s agricultural sector that stood out, contributing 11.4% to agricultural output. The CDB is predicting that in 2019 the sector will also remain buoyant.

Grenada’s agriculture sector is also projected to drive economic performance in 2019, after recording a decline in production during the first half of 2018. The decline in production was attributed to adverse weather conditions which affected major crops such as cocoa and nutmeg. The recovery being predicted for the sector is based on the start of projects aimed at mitigating the effects of weather conditions.

The agriculture sector in Jamaica is also projected to experience a positive growth in 2019. The CDB is attributing this to investments in infrastructure (including irrigation) which will directly and indirectly lead to increases in incomes. The Bank is also forecasting that agriculture will make a positive contribution to St Vincent and the Grenadines’ economy in 2019. This is based on this initiatives that are taking place in the sector.

To learn more how the countries’ economies performed in 2018 and their outlook for 2019, download the full report @ https://www.caribbank.org/publications-and-resources/resource-library/economic-reviews/regional-economic-summary-2018