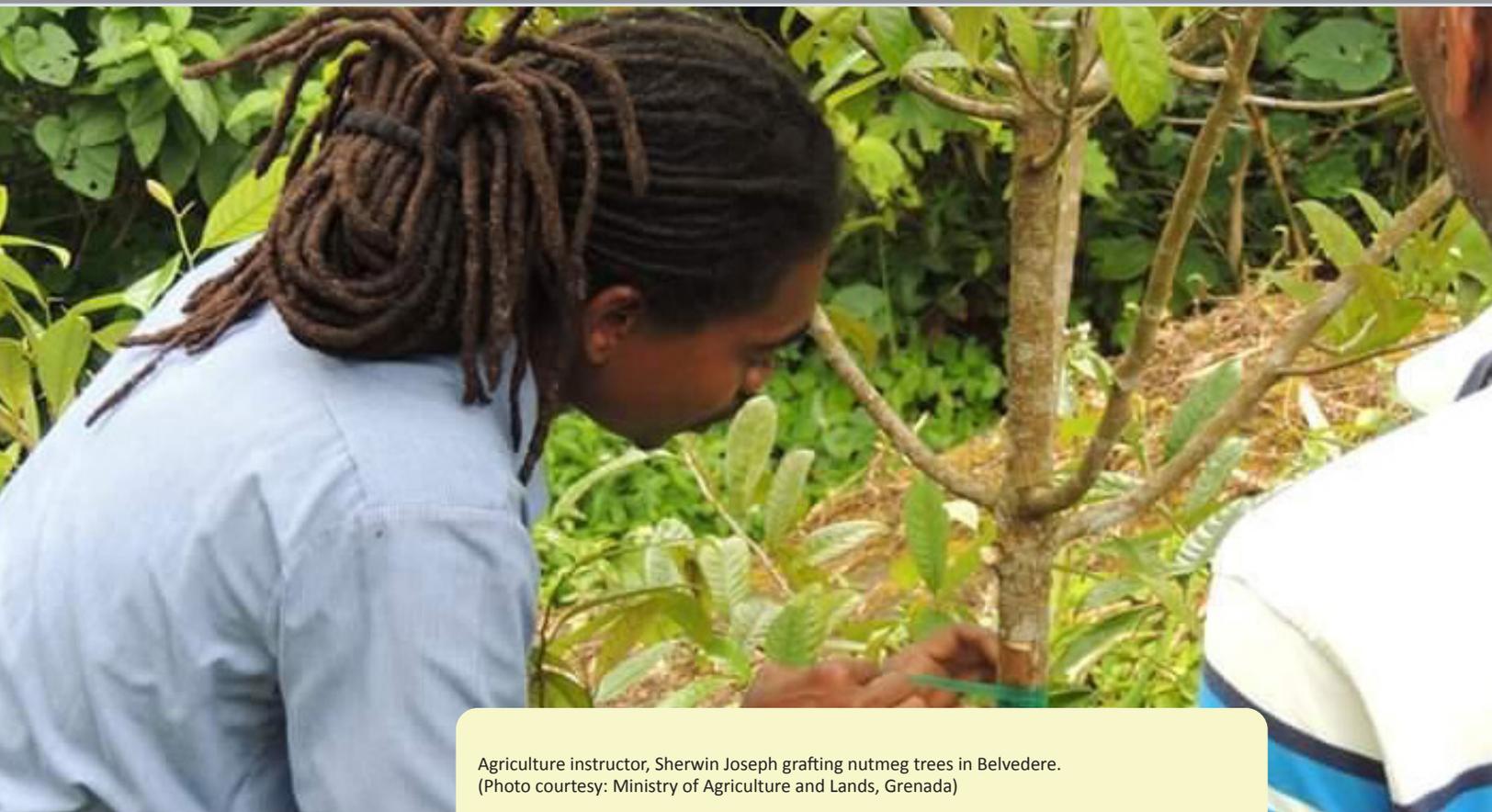


Ministers' Brief



Agriculture instructor, Sherwin Joseph grafting nutmeg trees in Belvedere. (Photo courtesy: Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Grenada)

Joint collaboration seeks to improve Nutmeg production in Grenada

In Grenada, the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI), the Ministry of Agriculture and the Grenada Cooperative Nutmeg Association (GCNA) have initiated a grafting trial on a nutmeg field established in 2016 by farmer Ambrose Phillip in Belvedere.

Last April when the trees began flowering Phillip discovered that 80% of his plants were males.

Biologically nutmeg trees are dioecious with only the female plants able to produce fruits. The agencies are trialing the use of grafting to convert these unproductive male trees into productive fruit bearing ones using

bud wood sourced from female trees with the desirable characteristics such as thick mace and big seeds. CARDI Representative in Grenada, Reginald Andall explained that grafting is a cheaper option than techniques such as DNA sequencing and once successful it will protect the farmers' investments.

Checkout this video to learn more about the procedure <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tn3bH3mHcQk&t=5s>

The success of this trial will bring hope to hundreds of farmers who continue experience this setback to production said General Manager of the GCNA, Roderick St. Clair. The GCNA has the

mandate to develop and market nutmeg.

Following several challenges, Grenada's Nutmeg industry is on the cusp of a resurgence. The growth in demand for the dried and value added products are offering significant economic opportunities to farmers on the island. In 2019 the GCNA reported that it purchased 2.6 million pounds of nutmeg from farmers for export and value added product development. Also in June 2019, Grenadian nutmeg received US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval, allowing the country to exploit untapped opportunities within the United States export market.



Judges of the CCAT stands beside the institution's logo (Photo courtesy: CXC)

The CARICOM Community Administrative Tribunal (CCAT) launched

CARDI is a member of the newest CARICOM organisation, the Caribbean Community Administrative Tribunal (CCAT). The CCAT was launched in Barbados on February 17, 2020 at the Caribbean Examinations Council Headquarters. Staff of the community organizations who are members of CCAT are now provided with a forum to settle disputes after exhausting their internal resolution processes. The establishment of the CCAT is being hailed as a progressive move since most CARICOM institutions enjoy immunity in the national courts.

The Tribunal will be based at the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) in Trinidad. Five judges: President, Patterson Cheltenham (Barbados); Lisa Shoman (Belize); J. Emile Ferdinand (St. Kitts and Nevis, Commonwealth of Dominica); Dancia Penn (The British Virgin Islands); and Westmin James (Trinidad and Tobago) were sworn at the launch by Adrian Saunders, Chairman of the Regional Judicial and Legal Services Commission Justice.

In his address Justice Saunders said "The tribunal provides enhanced access to justice for staff members of CARICOM institutions, and it is therefore with a deep sense of pride and satisfaction that we witness today's launch." Barton Clarke, CARDI Executive Director urged institutions to network and share best practices so that human resource issues can be dealt efficiently internally.

CCAT held a competition for the design of its logo. It was opened to all staff of CARICOM Institutions and Associate Institutions. The winning logo designed by Ms Dionne Hunte, a Graphics Illustrator at CXC was unveiled at the launch.

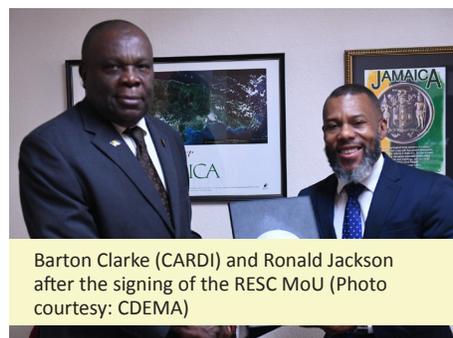
CARDI part of the Regional Early Warning Systems Consortium

CARDI is one of 14 regional organisations that is part of Regional Early Warning Systems Consortium (REWSC). The Consortium, which was launched on 5th December, 2019 will serve as an advisory body for the advancement and strengthened coordination of the Early Warning Systems (EWS) within the Region, taking into consideration the realities of a changing climate. Initial focus will be placed on the natural hazards. Executive Director of CARDI, Barton Clarke and Executive Director of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Authority (CDEMA), Ronald Jackson signed the REWSC Memorandum of Understanding on 18 February 2020 at CDEMA's office in Barbados. CDEMA chairs the Consortium.

Some areas of focus of the REWSC will be the establishment of a regional vision, development of a harmonised action plan and the communication of scientific information to policy makers and practitioners. Focus will also be on resource mobilisation – to support the EWS in the Region.

CARDI will oversee the agriculture activities. The Institute will assist with research, monitoring and modeling particularly as it relates to biological and drought hazards, data generation, risk communication and information dissemination particularly to the agricultural community. CARDI will also support and collaborate on capacity building - farm-level disaster risk reduction practices, training and awareness initiatives and preparedness.

The other REWSC partners represent the hydro-meteorological, seismic, tsunami and coastal hazards, health, academia, multidisciplinary training, research and technical expertise and information and communications technology sectors.



Barton Clarke (CARDI) and Ronald Jackson after the signing of the REWSC MoU (Photo courtesy: CDEMA)



Farmers' consultation on exploring the potential of climate smart agriculture in St Kitts and Nevis

Exploring the potential of Climate Smart Agriculture in St Kitts and Nevis

CARDI St. Kitts and Nevis together with a consortium of researchers and practitioners from Wageningen University in the Netherlands, Padova University Italy, Cambisol Consultancy and Mac and Field Consultancy hosted a consultation in St. Kitts and Nevis during the period February 10-13, 2020 entitled "Land remediation in the Caribbean: Exploring the potential of Climate Smart Agriculture in policy and practice".

The aim of the consultancy was to generate a deeper understanding of the agro-ecological context in St. Kitts and Nevis through a participatory and interdisciplinary approach. To this end, local stakeholders including farmers, extension officers, representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture, Tourism and Disaster Management and allied agencies participated in several interactive sessions, providing local knowledge on the key challenges and potential opportunities surrounding agriculture. Some of the areas the consultants focused on were sustainable agriculture practices, land degradation and climate change.

This information gleaned would serve as a knowledge database and further lend itself to the development of a full scale project proposal to be submitted for funding.

This activity was funded by the Interdisciplinary Research and Education Fund (INREF) of Wageningen University.