News >>>

Two new emerging invasive species threaten Caribbean agriculture

At the 2013 Annual Meeting for the Caribbean Invasive Species Working Group (CISWG), it was disclosed that two new invasive species pose a threat to the Region’s agricultural sector. The first is the Laurel Wilt disease of Avocados which is caused by the fungus *(Raffaelea lauricola)* and is vectored by the Ambrosia beetle *(Xyleborus glabatus)*. Laurel Wilt disease has been listed as an immediate threat to avocado production in Florida. Similar to their Caribbean counterparts Florida farmers cultivate the West Indian type avocados, which have been found to be highly susceptible to the disease. The second disease identified was Witches Broom which is caused by *(Fusarium subglutinans)*. This is now an important pest of mango in the Dominican Republic.

CISWG was formed in 2003 and its objectives are: I) to develop strategies which safeguard the Caribbean against attacks by invasive species; II) to prevent as far as possible, the introduction of alien invasive species; III) to develop strategies for those which do manage to enter the Region and IV) to focus on invasive species which present a threat to agriculture and trade in agricultural commodities and products. The meeting took place on July 6 at Hyatt Regency, Trinidad. Participants represented the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Ministry of Food Production Trinidad and Tobago, the University of Florida, CARICOM Secretariat, The University of Maryland Eastern Shore, University of Puerto Rico and CARDI.

CARDI and CTA launch 3rd Regional Media Awards for Excellence in Agricultural Journalism

For the third consecutive year CARDI and CTA have teamed up to host the Regional Media Awards for Excellence in Agricultural Journalism Competition. The competition targets regional journalists and is intended for them to deepen their understanding of agricultural issues, to probe and report on opportunities and innovations in the Caribbean and to improve the interaction between the agriculture industry and the media. This year’s competition is being held under the theme ‘Achieving food security through Regional Cooperation’ and covers the period, September 2012 – June, 2013. Journalists are invited to submit entries for the following categories: print, radio, new media, youth and television. The competition closes on 6 September, 2013 with the winners being announced on 20 September. The winners in each category will receive a round trip ticket to attend the Awards Ceremony which will take place during the Official Opening of the Caribbean Week of Agriculture, on 9 October in Guyana. For more information on the competition please visit [http://www.cardi.org/blog/cardi-cta-launches-the-3rd-regional-excellence-in-agricultural-journalism-awards/](http://www.cardi.org/blog/cardi-cta-launches-the-3rd-regional-excellence-in-agricultural-journalism-awards/).
**TMACs gaining momentum**

The Jagdeo Initiative identified nine key binding constraints which must be removed in order to reposition and revitalise Caribbean Agriculture. For each of these constraints a Technical Management Advisory Committee (TMAC) has been set up to advise on removal. Two TMACs have been making significant progress and these both met in June. These two TMACs are those removing the constraints of Deficient and Uncoordinated Disaster Risk Management and Ineffective Research and Development. The Risk Management TMAC met in Antigua and Barbuda on June 24 and 25. The work accomplished during the last 3 years was reviewed and the framework set for the TMAC Programme of Work for the next 3 years. The achievements are many including a comprehensive study of the problem of praedial larceny and several many disaster risk management activities. CARDI’s contribution included the development of small holder risk management training modules for CaFAN (funded by World Bank) and the shipping of seeds to Haiti to assist in the post earthquake disaster programme. The Research and Development TMAC (for which CARDI is the Lead Agency) met in Trinidad and Tobago on June 28 and 29 under the Chairmanship of the Government of St Lucia (the country leading that TMAC). The meeting agreed that the next meeting of the CARICOM Council for Trade and Economic Development (CoTED) will be presented with an action plan based on the CARDI document “Towards a Caribbean Regional Strategy for Agricultural Research and Development”.

**Soybean Futures (June 2013) >>>**

Soybean futures showed a slight downward trend during the month of June. Weather patterns in the United States of America and other major producers continue to affect prices. In addition, delays in crop rotation cycles by weather and other factors contribute to fluctuation in prices.

**Upcoming Events >>>**

CARDI Board of Directors  
10 – 11 September 2013, Port of Spain, Trinidad

CGIAR Science Forum 2013 - Nutrition and health outcomes: targets for agricultural research  
23 September 2013, Bonn, Germany  
www.sciencecouncil.cgiar.org

International Course on genomic selection prediction  
23-27 September, 2013, Mexico City  

IICA Board of Governors  
24-27 September 2013, Argentina

12th Caribbean Week of Agriculture  
4-12 October, 2013, Guyana  
http://www.cwa.caricom.org/

World Food Day, “Sustainable Food Systems for Food Security and Nutrition”

The CARDI Bi-weekly is a fortnightly electronic publication, published on the 15th and 30th of each month. The aim is to keep you informed of the latest news, publications, upcoming events on CARDI and our partners. We encourage you to contribute to the CARDI Bi-weekly by sending relevant information that can be included in the upcoming issue to Denise Besai.

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