



Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute

Media Release

‘Think about the Coconut Tree industry’ says CARDI’s Executive Director at the Closing Ceremony of Regional Value Chain Workshop

September 29, 2014:- Thursday 24th September, 2014 brought the curtains down on the 2-day Regional Value Chain Workshop hosted at the Carlton Savannah, St Ann’s, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. In a brief Closing Ceremony, Dr. Arlington Chesney, CARDI’s Executive Director said *‘The discussions have been constructive, from a learning perspective’* and challenged participants to *‘ensure that the Project has sustainability’*.

The Closing Ceremony also saw the signing of an Agreement between CARDI and the Trinidad and Tobago Coconut Industry Cooperative Society Limited, which sees CARDI being *‘involved in the development of a resurging commodity’* said Chesney. Speaking of the potential in this sector, he said to participants that we should *‘think not just about the coconut industry, but about the coconut tree industry as there are many other things that can be derived from the coconut tree and be profitable to the entrepreneur.’* This Society receives CARDI’s support as it is an example of how *‘we can organize ourselves as farmers so that we can be heard, which delivers equity along the value chain’*.

Mr. Pranesh Maharaj, President of the Society, with some three hundred members, said it plans to *‘platform coconut as an alternative foodcrop ... because coconut has a global demand due to its health and other therapeutic value’*. The goal of the Society is to bring the local coconut industry up to a functional and productive standard, with the help of the Ministry of Food Production and CARDI. He called on regional partners to join this coconut production initiative.

The 2-day Workshop was executed as part of a collaborative Project between the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Co-operation ACP-EU (CTA) and the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) titled “Developing capacity to analyse and strengthen root and tuber value chains in the Caribbean Region, for improved food security”. Beneficiaries of this Project are six countries, namely Barbados, Dominica, Jamaica, St. Kitts, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, and Trinidad & Tobago.

The emphasis on roots and tubers is as a result of its recognition in the Caribbean Region as a major contributor in reducing the food import bill and as a substitute; along with increasing Regional food and nutrition security.

CARDI ... presenting the ‘facts on agriculture and research for development’.

Photo caption:

#VCW1 – Workshop participants

#VCW2 – l-r Mr. Pranesh Maharaj and Dr. Arlington Chesney sign the Agreement

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