November 10, 2014: The Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) and the International Trade Centre (ITC) will host a Workshop on “Repositioning the Coconut Industry within nine Caribbean countries for resuscitation and sustainable development” 12th and 13th November, 2014 at the Carlton Savannah Hotel in Trinidad.

This Workshop follows the deliberations/decisions taken by stakeholders at the Regional Coconut Workshop which was conducted during the Caribbean Week of Agriculture held October 2013 in Guyana. The stakeholder recommendations comprised short term and long term solutions, with responses. Based on those findings, the European Commission (EC) has agreed to provide preliminary funding to prepare the industry for this resuscitation process. It is expected that the workshop will facilitate dialogue among the Regional stakeholders, the ITC (as the Project Executing Agency) and CARDI (as the Implementing Agency) and pave the way for the implementation of Phase 1 initiatives, involving activities linked to the short term stakeholder recommendations.

Over the last four decades, the fate of the Regional coconut industry has been characterised by three significant factors: the recent boost in the industry re. the increase in demand for food products (e.g. coconut water, coconut milk, desiccated coconut, virgin oil etc.) nutraceuticals and non-food products (e.g. fibre, charcoal etc.); the effect of pests and the consequent decline in production and productivity; and the debilitating impact of the soybean campaign in the 1970’s against coconut oil which resulted in the collapse of the copra industry. These factors have prompted a significant and progressive Regional refocus on the coconut industry as a viable economic option with major implications for intra-Regional and global trade.

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