



For Immediate Release

PRESS RELEASE

“Grow, Nourish, Sustain. Together” Our Actions are Our Future

13th October 2020

The Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) is happy to join with the global community to celebrate World Food Day, 2020. This year’s theme “Grow, Nourish, Sustain. Together. Our Actions are Our Future” puts into focus the need for collective actions, to ensure all people have access to safe and nutritious food at all times.

The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed very clearly that although the world is producing enough food to feed all 7 billion+ of us, widening inequality gaps are threatening the most vulnerable with hunger and malnutrition. In May, the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) estimated that the number of people experiencing severe food insecurity in Latin America and the Caribbean will increase from 3.4 million to 13.7 million over the course of 2020.

COVID-19 has placed the Region’s food insecurity in the spotlight. As countries slowly embark on post COVID-19 recovery plans, we must be mindful and fiercely guard against a hunger pandemic. As rebuilding efforts continue it is important that plans are grounded in improving productivity, access and availability to safe, nutritious food, climate proofing the sector and preventing food wastage.

On the occasion of World Food Day, CARDI takes the opportunity to highlight some of the areas we are working on to improve regional food and nutrition security.

The Institute continues to leverage our extensive network of regional and national partners to ensure the agriculture sector is productive, resilient and sustainable. We remain supportive of Governments initiatives which target vulnerable households to expand and improve emergency food assistance and social protection programmes.

Ongoing evaluation trials for key commodities such as roots and tubers, herbs and spices, coconuts and small ruminants are geared towards improving the quality and availability of planting materials and introducing new technologies and practices for boosting productivity.

Resilience, continues to be a priority area to guarantee impacted countries and communities quickly recover from climate related shocks. Evaluations on drought tolerance and other

resilient high yielding varieties are ongoing in Jamaica and other territories. Complementing this work are focused efforts on preserving and safeguarding local agro biodiversity.

Availability and affordability to nutritious food must be a pillar in all countries development plans. In Belize, yield trials are ongoing to identify and select the most adaptable bio fortified beans. These beans will be useful in delivering much needed micro-nutrients to lower income families, where nutritional needs are largely unmet across the Caribbean.

Our vision is to have a food secure region. We view this “as a shared responsibility and CARDI remains committed to working with all stakeholders to improve the Region’s self-sufficiency whilst, exploiting our full production potential in a sustainable manner” says Executive Director, Barton Clarke.

This year we are inviting you to join with us in celebrating some of our food heroes- the people who continued during these challenging times to maintain our food supply chains. Follow our social media channels @CARDICaribbean as we celebrate them from 12th to 16th October.

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About CARDI

CARDI (www.cardi.org) was established in 1974 to serve the agricultural research and development needs of the Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). CARDI is positioned to contribute to the sustainable development of the Caribbean by the co-generation, diffusion and application of knowledge, through agricultural research for development. The Institute’s Headquarters is located at the University Campus, St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago.