11th – 17th February 2024 Issue, compiled by CARDI

Contents

St. Kitts and Nevis: 2024 Work Plan - Ministry of Agriculture, pp. 2
Grenada: A dynamic agricultural sector - 50 years of constant change
Dasheen pp. 2
Banana: Fusarium Wilt Tropical Race 4 pp. 3
Rice: Global Rice Breeding Program pp. 3
Pigs pp. 3
African swine fever vaccine pp. 4
Sheep pp. 4
Covered Structure and Capacity Enhancement Project – Belize pp. 4
Feral Animal Control pp. 5
Climate Services for Agriculture pp. 5
Agricultural Science Teachers pp. 5
Sustainable Finance: ImpactSF Analyzer pp. 8
EVENTS pp. 6
St. Kitts and Nevis: 2024 Work Plan - Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Marine Resources

Crop Programme Leader at the Department of Agriculture, Mr. Ian Chapman, highlighting the plans for the Crop Division at the recently held 2024 Work Plan Presentation, hosted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Marine Resources. St. Kitts, 1st Feb 2024


The presentation was held under the theme, ‘Agricultural Transformation for a Sustainable Island State.”

Hon. Samal Duggins delivered the Minister’s Message at the recently held 2024 Work Plan Presentation, hosted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Marine Resources. St. Kitts, 30 Jan 2024


The presentation was held under the theme, 'Agricultural Transformation for a Sustainable Island State.”

Grenada: A dynamic agricultural sector - 50 years of constant change.

A dynamic agricultural sector - 50 years of constant change. [Video]

Ministry of Agriculture & Lands, Forestry, Marine Resources & Cooperatives – Grenada, 12 February 2024


Dasheen

Technical Mission on Dasheen Value Chain for Dominica February 4-8, 2024

Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries Blue and Green Economy, Dominica, 7 February 2024

https://www.facebook.com/minofagridom/posts/pfbid0GS4utZPgfPfdLsYBxcGAsTqazUc8uFClYwrucinWRVwGLokFo7ZnTPi5hCoBdJ


Through this project, and as part of the FAO Technical Cooperation Programme consultants will focus on support for the development of the dasheen crop for domestic, regional and international markets through the training of private and public sector representatives and those attached to technical organizations.

During the course of this three day mission the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) consultants Dr. Jai Rampersad/Agronomist and Dr. Omardath Maharaj/Finance will facilitate training in Cost of Production and Upgrading Strategy for Dasheen for farmers, extension officers, lending institutions, supermarkets and marketing agencies.
**Banana: Fusarium Wilt Tropical Race 4**

**OIRSA and ICDF Collaborate to Strengthen Response to Foc TR4 Threat in Belize and Guatemala**

Ministry of Agriculture Food Security and Enterprise, Belize, 12th February 2024:
https://www.facebook.com/maf.gov.bz/posts/pfbid0iPXeR6mp8EwFzQKCViwAvrC6yJLGqwap1HaVGiEn6HsmCahNfsWtoQgB4h6RTuVi

The Organization for the Regional Agricultural Health (OIRSA), in partnership with the International Cooperation and Development Fund (ICDF) of Taiwan, has engaged Dr. Catalina Quintero, a Colombian biosecurity expert, to update the contingency response plan for Fusarium Wilt Tropical Race 4 (Foc TR4) in Belize and Guatemala.

Dr. Quintero, renowned for her expertise in biosecurity and response planning, is leading a two-day event attended by stakeholders from Ministry of Agriculture Food Security and Enterprise (MAFSE), BAHA, BGA, ICDF, and OIRSA. The first day focuses on sharing experiences and familiarizing participants with the updated plan at the MAFSE conference room.

**Rice: Global Rice Breeding Program**

**Rice breeding research becomes globally integrated**

CGIAR, 12 February 2024

CGIAR has launched a major new crop-focused global breeding research program that brings together its rice breeding Centers and national partners to accelerate research developing and delivering better varieties, faster.

Launched at a strategic planning meeting on January 24-25, 2024 in Dubai, UAE, the **Global Rice Breeding Program (GRBP)** aims to improve the quality of life of small holding rice farmers and consumers in low- and middle-income countries.

The meeting participants agreed to (1) establish a common framework of global market segments, breeding pipelines, product concepts and CGIAR-NARES (national agricultural research and extension services) partners network that will facilitate the implementation of a global CGIAR rice breeding program; (2) identify working teams and their respective responsibilities; (3) establish operating principles to effectively achieve the GRBP objectives; and (4) develop a time-bound work plan to implement the GRBP across the participating Centers – AfricaRice, CIAT, and IRRI.

**Pigs**

**BAMSI holds official opening of its Piggery Unit**

BAMSI Bahamas, 6 February 2024
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pEwDH4ecF4A

Deputy Prime Minister Chester Cooper joined Executive Chairman of BAMSI Tyrel Young, BAMSI President Dr. Raveenia Roberts-Hanna and Member of Parliament for North Andros and the Berry Islands Hon. Leonardo Lightbourne for the opening of the Institute’s Piggery Unit. The facility, located at the Institute’s North Andros campus, is expected to help improve food security in the Bahamas and reduce the amount of pork imported into the country. With 16 pigs, the unit will serve as a research and educational hub to support students, farmers and agri-preneurs understand and demonstrate best practices. It will also help to improve the variety of swine within the Bahamas.
**African swine fever vaccine**

ILRI joins new EU-funded research consortium to develop African swine fever vaccine

International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), 9 February 2024


The International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) has partnered with a consortium of 16 institutions from Europe and the United States of America to launch a new project aimed at developing a next-generation vaccine against African swine fever, a deadly viral disease that has killed close to 2 million pigs globally since 2021.

The work of the four-year project, **New Technologies for African Swine Fever (Vax4ASF)**, will contribute towards prevention, control and eradication of African swine fever globally.

The project is funded by the European Union under the Horizon Europe program and led by HIPRA, a biotechnological pharmaceutical company headquartered in Spain.

**Sheep**

**Sharing the Exciting News of the Lamb and Mutton Culinary Craft Workshops!**

Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Enterprise, Belize February 9, 2024


In a groundbreaking collaboration between the Republic of China (Taiwan) and the Government of Belize, the Genetic Improvement in Sheep and Goat Project has achieved a significant milestone! The highly acclaimed 'Lamb and Mutton Culinary Craft Workshops' have been instrumental in enhancing culinary skills and promoting sustainable practices within Belize's sheep industry. At the same time, the marketing of lamb and mutton has been boosted significantly and more Belizean households and restaurants are now aware of the preparation, seasoning, cooking and taste of this delicious alternative.

**Covered Structure and Capacity Enhancement Project - Belize**

Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Enterprise (MAFSE) and CARICOM Development Fund (CDF) Conclude Advanced Training Program for Extension Personnel and Technicians

Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Enterprise, Belize 9th February 2024;

https://www.facebook.com/maf.gov.bz/posts/pfbid022V1G1VfjtxxEMTW51mkCdRC6aSqpeWpfVskE8TREyqBVXZ1Dun3kyeHBkhCseQGMI

The Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Enterprise (MAFSE), in partnership with the CARICOM Development Fund (CDF), successfully concluded a comprehensive 4-day training program aimed at enhancing the skills of MAFSE Extension Personnel and Technicians in the operation, management, and maintenance of cover structures.

The training program, which took place from the 6th to the 9th of February brought together 25 technicians from esteemed institutions such as the Ministry of Agriculture, BAHU, PCB, UB, and SIRDI. Participants received intensive instruction and hands-on experience in various aspects of managing protective structures vital to agricultural productivity.

4-Day Advanced Training Program Launched for MAFSE Extension Personnel and Technicians

Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Enterprise, Belize,  February 6, 2024

https://www.facebook.com/maf.gov.bz/posts/pfbid02DJfa6pm4DIrMvJfrQvBqLch62fFirReQygRr4YZg3urEsmTgsURJwQyzupNcPcKTF!

The Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Enterprise (MAFSE), in collaboration with the CARICOM Development Fund (CDF), has commenced a 4-day advanced training program aimed at enhancing the
skills of MAFSE Extension Personnel and Technicians in the Operation, Management, and Maintenance of Cover Structures. ... 
... This initiative underscores the Government’s unwavering commitment to advancing agricultural production strategies geared towards resilience and sustainability. The Covered Structure and Capacity Enhancement Project, is valued a total of 348,678.73 US dollars, supported by the CDF and the Government of Belize executed through MAFSE. By embracing covered structures for alternative cultivation methods, the project endeavors to achieve promising outcomes, including improved crop quality, extended production cycles, amplified yields, and reduced reliance on harmful pesticides. The overarching aspiration is to bolster the supply of vegetables in the local market, particularly those cultivated under cover structures, thereby elevating income levels and enriching the quality of life for project participants.

**Feral Animal Control**

**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE ST. KITTS GEARING UP TO HOST NATIONAL CONSULTATION TO ADDRESS FERAL ANIMAL CONTROL CONCERNS**

Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Marine Resources St. Kitts, 6 Feb 2024
https://www.facebook.com/moafmrstkitts/posts/pfbid02ExDz4A9yTrbxL9Ul96tgTPWKnea63J9gNxXsBsmfZ1waSjiU7YoRt136gjwV8bUl

The general public is invited to attend an important Feral Animal Control Consultation, hosted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Marine Resources St. Kitts on Tuesday, 13th February 2024. The forum will provide an opportunity for the general public, farmers, backyard gardeners, food producers and other agricultural stakeholders to engage in meaningful discussion about strategies that can help to alleviate challenges caused by wild pigs and the monkey population.

**Climate Services for Agriculture**

**Meeting with Representatives of the Participatory Integrated Climate Services for Agriculture (PICSA) in Belize**

Ministry of Agriculture Food Security and Enterprise, Belize, 15th February 2024
https://www.facebook.com/maf.gov.bz/posts/pfbid0bTxsh8FcMAVvmVRJQ8ardLUNaRvypwZTY7KDEtEhHTmwy2WB8WmR5V6fU8S5dpl

Today, a pivotal meeting was convened in Belmopan, with the Chief Agriculture Officer, Dr. Victoriano Pascual, Mr. Miguel Balan, Belize District Agriculture Coordinator, and representatives from the Meteorological Service and Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology, Ms. Shanea Young, Senior Climatologist and Dwayne Scott, Electronic Technician. The gathering also welcomed Mr. Peter Dorward from the University of Reading, engaging in discussions stemming from the recent field visit conducted in the Belize and Corozal Districts to implement and evaluate the use of Participatory Integrated Climate Services for Agriculture (PICSA) in Belize.

**Agricultural Science Teachers**

**Ministry of Education’s Primary Schools Agricultural Science Teachers Workshop**

Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Barbuda Affairs, Antigua and Barbuda, 1 Feb 2024

The Ministry of Education held its first Primary Schools Agricultural workshop on Tuesday 30th January. This forum, under the theme “Growing Greatness” was hosted by Mrs. Nicolette Francis, Agricultural Science Education officer (Ag). The objectives of the meeting were:
Introductions of the newly appointed education officer and all participants present
Familiarize the teachers to the MOE mandate in regards to Agricultural Science
Deliberate on the SWOT Analysis
Create the Mission & Vision Statements

**Sustainable Finance: ImpactSF Analyzer**
**Bridging the Gap: How CGIAR’s ImpactSF Analyzer Empowers Banks to Finance a Sustainable Future for Agriculture** by Burra Dharani Dhar, Richard Newman, Godefroy Grosjean
*The Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT* February 1, 2024

Access to finance has long been a challenge for the agriculture and food sectors, despite being the backbone of food security for millions of people across the world. Small-scale farmers and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in developing countries often need help to secure loans due to perceived high risks and low profitability, despite their significant contribution to global food production.

To respond to this challenge, the CGIAR Hub for Sustainable Finance (ImpactSF) has developed a unique AI-powered solution, the ImpactSF Analyzer, which is currently being piloted by multiple banks in Southeast Asia and Africa.

The ImpactSF Analyzer leverages science and data from the CGIAR and predictive AI to deliver location-specific insights and risk assessments, empowering financial institutions to:

- Quantify potential environmental and social impacts of their investments: This enables banks to align their lending portfolios with sustainability goals and promote responsible investing.
- Improve financial returns: Precise risk assessments and granular insights lead to better-informed investment decisions, potentially boosting revenue from agricultural lending.
- Provide advisory services to beneficiaries: By understanding the multifaceted challenges faced by smallholder farmers, banks can offer targeted support and guidance, fostering resilience and productivity.

**Events**
**FEBRUARY 2024**
Cayman Islands: **55th Agriculture Show, Feb 14th 2024**

Barbados: **AgroFest 23-25 Feb 2024**
[https://www.facebook.com/AgrofestBarbados/](https://www.facebook.com/AgrofestBarbados/)

**APRIL 2024**
St. Kitts Agriculture Open Day, 25-26th April 2024
Hosted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Marine Resources

Belize: **52nd National Agriculture and Trade Show**, 26-28 April 2024,
National Agriculture and Trade Show Grounds, Belmopan
[https://www.facebook.com/maf.gov.bz/posts/pfbid02LLSvnt9Vxgauqzzpx3aoAHLD3qLPjkqqwr8Z7mWH8adPywDgdhE52gZQLB6hSTR4I](https://www.facebook.com/maf.gov.bz/posts/pfbid02LLSvnt9Vxgauqzzpx3aoAHLD3qLPjkqqwr8Z7mWH8adPywDgdhE52gZQLB6hSTR4I)

**AUGUST 2024**
Jamaica: **Denbigh Agricultural Industrial Food Show, 4-6 August 2024**