Agriculture in the News

Issues Affecting Caribbean Agriculture

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Container Farms
The Bahamas Agriculture & Marine Science Institute (BAMSI) was yesterday the recipient of two container farms
Bamsi Bahamas
May 7, 2024
https://www.facebook.com/BAMSI242/posts/pfbid0SUXgCw8u4du5L9CksgL8TmfXyZFEV65hR8JhAR L6Xswbdgy9tR56NL2tpj9yXDQyl
The Bahamas Agriculture & Marine Science Institute (BAMSI) was yesterday the recipient of two container farms via a joint partnership between the Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources and Eeden Farms, a Bahamian owned tech-enabled farming company. The gift is part of a wider initiative to bolster National Food Security and is an important investment in BAMSI and the country’s agriculture sector, supporting the Institute as it continues its leading role in driving food production through education, training, and research and development.

Climate Change Resilience
Empowering East African Farmers with Weather and Climate Information Services: ECREA’s Climate-Smart Strategies for Resilient Agriculture in the Bean Value Chain
Alliance Bioversity & CIAT
May 9, 2024 By: Joseline Kiogora and Desire Kagabo
In the face of escalating climate crisis and its profound impact on small-scale agricultural producers in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), initiatives such as the Enhancing Climate Change Resilience in East Africa (ECREA) project emerge as beacons of hope. The ECREA project is spearheaded by the Climate Action lever of the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT through the Pan-Africa Bean Research Alliance (PABRA), with the goal of upscaling the provision of Weather and Climate Information Services (WCIS) to bean value chain actors in East Africa. ECREA - funded by the UK Government’s Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) - is a concerted effort to address the pressing challenges exacerbated by shifting weather patterns.

Dominica, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and IICA renew cooperation strategies to increase climate resilience and promote food security in the region
Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)
May 9, 2024
Roland Royer, the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, Blue and Green Economy of Dominica, and Didacus Jules, Director General of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), met with the Director General of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), Manuel Otero, to discuss joint actions designed to promote climate resilience in agrifood systems across the Caribbean countries.

During a visit to IICA Headquarters in Costa Rica, they highlighted the urgent need to institute adaptable agricultural systems in the Caribbean capable of thriving despite constantly evolving climate challenges. They emphasized the importance of technological innovation, the inclusion of young people in agricultural production, and the formulation of sound trade policies to support food self-sufficiency.
**Seamoss Industry**

*Nurturing the nature island’s sea moss industry*

FAO

May 8, 2024


In a small island nation on the eastern edge of the Caribbean, there is a species of wild sea moss, or red algae, called Gracilaria that Dominicans have traditionally farmed and used to make drinks, gels and other products such as textile dyes.

Gracilaria, like other sea moss varieties, has a lot of dietary and cosmetic advantages. But this slow-growing variety has caused production and supply challenges for its farmers, leading to a reliance on imports of other varieties from neighbouring islands to meet local demand.

Farming sea moss is an intricate process that involves harvesting the algae, cleaning off foreign weeds and debris, bleaching and drying the harvested algae in the sunlight, before packaging the dried raw material for sale.

**Sweet Potato Production – St. Vincent and the Grenadines**

Eighteen farmers from District Six North, have benefitted from training on ‘Best practices for sweet potato production.’ The training was facilitated by CARDIcaribbean’s Representative, Donawa Jackson

CARDIcaribbean

May 8, 2024

[https://www.facebook.com/CARDIcaribbean/posts/pfbid0tQ911ciyFPiojNBE4zKXGHymXTVEHoqfrsHarAZd1fNwEZfS4jLyH55CfkXS5sG](https://www.facebook.com/CARDIcaribbean/posts/pfbid0tQ911ciyFPiojNBE4zKXGHymXTVEHoqfrsHarAZd1fNwEZfS4jLyH55CfkXS5sG)

A classroom session at the GREMCO Cooperative was conducted to introduce the concepts of: site selection, land preparation, planting, fertilizing, weed control and harvesting. Later, demonstration sessions on the recommended practices for planting material selection, land preparation, fertilizing and planting were done in the field.

**Potato Cultivation**

*Experts from the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation of Peru conduct capacity building training in Belize*

Belize Breaking News

May 6, 2024 By Zoila Palma Gonzalez


The Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Enterprise is hosting 2 potato experts from Peru.

Ingeniera Flavia Felix, expert with the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation of Peru is sharing about potato cultivation in Peru, while also looking into our planting systems and offering advice on potato cultivation in Belize.
The lack of quality seed for improved varieties has been attributed to the limited capacity of seed multipliers to produce enough to meet farmer’s demands. The limited capacity has been due to the long process involved in producing seed as well as the fact that it is expensive and may not be affordable to most seed multipliers. On average, the process to produce certified seed takes at least four planting seasons for a farmer to get seed to plant from mini tubers, a process that is only managed by a handful of public and private sector players including Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Board (RAB), the Early Generation Seed Production (EGSP), Agriseed and other seed multipliers.

The International Potato Center (CIP), in partnership with the Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board (RAB) and with technical and financial support of the CGIAR RTB Program and USAID USAID-funded project, unveiled an initiative to revolutionize the potato industry in Rwanda. This initiative marked the release of 11 new potato varieties in 2019 and 2020. between 2019-2021, a testament to the commitment to addressing the challenges faced by the potato sector in the country. The new varieties include Ndamira, Cyerekezo, Kazeneza, Seka, Gisubizo, Twigire, Jyambere, Ndeze, Nkunganire, and others.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Enterprise (MAFSE) announced that, as part of the Bilateral Cooperation Agreement between the Government of Belize and the Government of Peru, is currently hosting a Technical Capacity Building Presentation on the project entitled “Strengthening Potato and Vegetable Value Chain in Belize” from May 10th, 2024. “This event signifies a significant milestone in the collaboration between Belize and Peru, with the shared goal of enhancing agriculture practices and fostering economic development in the region. The presentations aim to facilitate high-level exchanges and explore agricultural opportunities between the two countries,” the Ministry said.

Here, they got the opportunity to observe the performance of 7 lines of tomatoes under field conditions. These lines were obtained from World Vegetable Center under their project - Promoting vegetable diversity for more resilient livelihoods and healthier diets in the Latin America and Caribbean Region, financed by the Government of Taiwan.
Soursop Industry - Grenada
Grenada takes firm action to safeguard develop its US$2.6 million soursop industry
iWitness News
May 7, 2024
https://www.iwnsvg.com/2024/05/07/grenada-takes-firm-action-to-safeguard-develop-its-us2-6-
	 million-soursop-industry/?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZWoCMTEAAR31hn6TrR2Z4BTVQcVDFviw4wNyxpQXtskEX8hEGmCfrXh

A three-year project has been launched to help Grenada enhance its industry traceability and
surveillance systems, as well as the soursop industry’s ability to manage future pest risks and
investigate potential diversification into new markets.

The soursop industry in Grenada, which has a projected annual value of US$2.6 million, is thriving and
robust with the United States as its main export market, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the
United Nations (FAO) said.

The lack of two pests — the fruit borer and the seed borer — allows the island to have advantageous
access to this market. Additionally, due to the large number of immigrant communities in the United
States, soursop has become more popular over the years.

Small-scale Agriculture and Farmers’ Income
IFAD and Cambodia to continue to collaborate on key initiatives to boost small-scale agriculture and
farmers’ incomes
IFAD
May 8, 2024
https://www.ifad.org/en/web/latest/-/ifad-and-cambodia-to-continue-to-collaborate-on-key-
	 initiatives-to-boost-small-scale-agriculture-and-farmers-incomes

An International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) delegation to the Kingdom of Cambodia
led by Donal Brown, Associate Vice-President of the Programme Management Department, met key
officials, including Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Economy and Finance Aun Pornmoniroth,
to discuss investments that will promote inclusive and sustainable agricultural growth in rural areas.

The visit reaffirms IFAD’s commitment to supporting Cambodia’s long-term rural development goals,
ensuring that the benefits reach the most marginalized communities. While Cambodia has seen a
significant reduction in poverty over the last two decades, poverty has increased as a result of the
COVID-19 pandemic. Rural families, especially small-scale farmers, are particularly vulnerable. Three-
fourths of all of Cambodia’s 6.8 million farmers are categorised as small-scale farmers and they
struggle to achieve the scale and consistent quality of produce needed by export and domestic
markets. Most supplement their incomes with non-farm wage labour.

Agricultural Trade and Resilience
Trade and the sustainability of small-scale producers in the Americas
IICA
May 9, 2024
https://iica.int/en/press/news/chief-agricultural-negotiator-us-supports-iica-actions-promote-
agricultural-trade-and

The actions of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) to promote
agricultural trade and the resilience and sustainability of small-scale producers, as well as its position
in international cooperation discussions, is vital for the development of agricultural markets in the hemisphere, said Doug McKalip, Chief Agricultural Negotiator of the Office of the United States Trade Representative, during a visit to IICA Headquarters in Costa Rica.

McKalip stressed that the Institute’s work in the Americas aligns with the objectives of the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) and affirmed that the defense of sustainable trade in international debates is key to guaranteeing the success of small-scale producers in the region.

**Pineapple Industry – Trinidad and Tobago**

**Pineapple Farmers’ Strategic Meeting**
Trinidad and Tobago. Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries
May 10, 2024
[https://www.facebook.com/AgricultureTT/posts/pfbid0d8Z4QwwRGCVm42EvXR2P62AvMbFrw3ruvulzAZQJoKtqmRKTzqhp1eV6tNQSiVKn](https://www.facebook.com/AgricultureTT/posts/pfbid0d8Z4QwwRGCVm42EvXR2P62AvMbFrw3ruvulzAZQJoKtqmRKTzqhp1eV6tNQSiVKn)

Today marks a significant milestone for agriculture in Trinidad and Tobago as we host a pivotal meeting with pineapple farmers from across the nation. This gathering brings together esteemed leaders and technical experts to enhance the growth and sustainability of our pineapple industry.

**Livestock Production**

**New bloodlines to be introduced into Saint Lucia’s livestock sector**
Government of Saint Lucia
May 8, 2024

On Friday April 19, a contingent of technical officers from the Veterinary and Livestock Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Unleashing the Blue Economy of the Caribbean (UBEC) Project, travelled to the United States to commence their inspection and selection of animals to be introduced into St. Lucia’s livestock sector.

This initiative is being facilitated by the UBEC Project, to inject new bloodlines into Saint Lucia’s livestock industry. This is intended to boost food security, assist farmers in their continued post COVID-19 recovery, and bolster overall sustainability of livestock production. These bloodlines comprise a total of 154 animals including pigs, sheep, goats, and cattle, which are expected to arrive in Saint Lucia within the next few weeks.

**Broiler Meat and Egg production increases significantly**
May 6, 2024
[https://www.nbcsvg.com/2024/05/06/broiler-meat-and-egg-production-increases-significantly/](https://www.nbcsvg.com/2024/05/06/broiler-meat-and-egg-production-increases-significantly/)

Minister of Agriculture Saboto Caesar has expressed his pleasure at the increased production of Broiler Meat and Eggs through the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Food Insecurity Project.

Several Poultry farmers have already benefited from the distribution of Broiler and Layer Chicks, as part of efforts to improve the livelihood of farmers and bolster food and nutrition security locally.

Speaking on Radio recently, Minister Caesar said with the growth in Egg production locally, they have been able to supply Eggs for local consumption including Hotels and Guest Houses.
Sustainable livestock farming is key to combating the effects of climate change and hunger in the Americas

IICA
May 10, 2024

Diego Montenegro, the Representative of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) in Mexico, emphasized the fact that the Americas play a strategic role in supplying high-value animal protein, reducing rural poverty, and preventing climate change.

Ginger Production and Field Production - St. Lucia
Ginger development and Field Production Workshop ends
Government of Saint Lucia
May 7, 2024

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Rural Development, in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), have completed a Ginger Single Bud Technology/Nursery Development and Field Production Workshop.

The workshop aimed to boost local production and enhance export potential by equipping participants with advanced ginger cultivation techniques like single bud technology, nursery development, and efficient field practices through interactive sessions and practical demonstrations. The three-day workshop held at the Union Orchid Garden Centre drew a diverse group of stakeholders, including farmers, experts, and government officials. Perishables Manager of Massy Stores, Dunstan Demille says the ginger market is showing promising signs of growth and diversification, providing ample opportunities for both local producers and international buyers alike.

Cocoa Prices – West and Central Africa
Soaring cocoa prices: Diverse impacts and implications for key West African producers
IFPRI
May 8, 2024 by Martin Paul Jr. Tabe-Ojong, Onasis Tharcisse Adetumi Guedegbe, and Joseph Glauber
https://www.ifpri.org/blog/soaring-cocoa-prices-diverse-impacts-and-implications-key-west-african-producers

Cocoa bean prices have been rising since the last quarter of 2023, hitting a record high of $10.97 per kilogram on April 19 (Figure 1). The price spike is due to a significant drop in bean production by major global suppliers—four key producing nations in West and Central Africa account for more than 60% of the world’s supply of cocoa beans: Cote d’Ivoire (with 38% of the global production in 2022), Ghana (19%), Nigeria (5%), and Cameroon (5%).

The current price spike was triggered by intertwined effects of climate change and El Niño, which led to erratic rainfall and higher temperatures in cocoa-growing regions, encouraging the proliferation of cocoa tree pests and diseases such as black pod disease and cocoa swollen shoot virus disease (CSSVD). Collectively, these climate-induced shocks have substantially reduced yields.
Climate Risk Financing
Climate & Disaster Risk Finance and Insurance (CDRFI) Technical Capacity Building Workshop
Antigua and Barbuda Ministry of Agriculture
May 6, 2024 By Carol-Faye Bynoe
The Caribbean Policy Development Centre (CPDC), funded by the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), is implementing a project called “Multi-Actor Partnership for pro-poor and gender-equitable climate risk financing in the context of the IGP’s 2025 vision”. Under this initiative, the CPDC hosted a two-day workshop in Antigua and Barbuda on 24th and 25th April for stakeholders such as government, Academia, NGOs, Private Sector, farmers and others.

The Caribbean Policy Development Centre (CPDC) is a coalition of Caribbean Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO). It was established in 1991 to sensitize NGOs and the general public on key policy issues and to impact policy makers on decisions which put the interest of Caribbean people at the centre of Caribbean development.

AI in Crop Production
AI to make crop production more sustainable
University of Bonn
May 2, 2024
Drones monitoring fields for weeds and robots targeting and treating crop diseases may sound like science fiction but is actually happening already, at least on some experimental farms. Researchers are working on driving forward the smart digitalization of agriculture and have now published a list of the research questions that will need to be tackled as a priority in the future. Their paper has appeared in the “European Journal of Agronomy.”

Events
MAY 2024
4th International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS4, 27 to 30 May 2024
St John’s, Antigua and Barbuda.
https://sdgs.un.org/conferences/sids2024

Advancing Data Management in the Caribbean for a Climate Resilient Future
Thursday 30th May 2024, 10:00-11:30
Room 10: American University of Antigua
St. Johns, Antigua and Barbuda

ICTforAg 2024, May 28-30th
https://www.ictforag.com/
Localizing impact through inclusion, inspiration, and innovation.
Mark your calendars, pack your bags, and prepare to embark on an unforgettable journey as ICTforAg 2024 unfolds from May 28-30th across five vibrant locations (+ online).

World Seed Congress, 27 to 29 May 2024
hosted by the International Seed Federation (ISF). Rotterdam, the Netherlands
https://congress.worldseed.org/
JULY 2024
57th Annual Meeting of the Caribbean Food Crops Society, July 15 to 19, 2024
Dominican Republic
https://sodiaf.org.do/cfcs2024/programa.html

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