



2007

A n n u a l R e p o r t

IICA's Contribution to
Agriculture and the Development
of the Rural Communities in
JAMAICA



IICA 
Inter-American Institute for
Cooperation on Agriculture

65th
ANNIVERSARY
1942 - 2007

OUR MISSION

To cooperate with the Government of Jamaica, the private sector, national, regional and international institutions in order to improve competitiveness and promote the sustainable development of agriculture in Jamaica.

**Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
Office in Jamaica**

**IICA's Contribution to Agriculture and the
Development of the Rural Communities in Jamaica**

Annual Report 2007

Kingston, Jamaica

April 2008

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ACRONYMS

CARDI	Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI)
CDC	Community Development Committee
CPGCA	Christiana Potato Growers Cooperative Association
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
COTED	CARICOM Council for Trade and Economic Development
DAC	Development Area Committee
DBJ	Development Bank of Jamaica
ECFS	Elim Community Friendly Society
EU	European Union
EUBSP	European Union Banana Support Programme
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IABA	Inter-American Board of Agriculture
IICA	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
JAS	Jamaica Agricultural Society
JFLL	Jamaica Foundation for Lifelong Learning
JGGA	Jamaica Greenhouse Growers Association
JNRWP	Jamaica Network of Rural Women Producers
MOA&L	Ministry of Agriculture and Lands
OAS	Organization of American States
PADF	Pan-American Development Foundation
PDC	Parish Development Committee
PSDP	Private Sector Development Programme
PIOJ	Planning Institute of Jamaica
RADA	Rural Agricultural Development Authority
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
UDC	Urban Development Corporation
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UWI	University of the West Indies
WTO	World Trade Organization

MESSAGE FROM THE REPRESENTATIVE



It is with great pride that I present the 2007 annual report of activities of the IICA Jamaica Office to Dr. the Honourable Christopher Tufton, Minister of Agriculture and Lands, and to the many supportive stakeholders this office has worked with over the years.

We have been busy. My arrival in Jamaica at the beginning of May marked the start of a hectic seven-month period. Trevor Murray, the former Representative (2005 – 2007), later that month took up a new position in IICA as Director of Operations and Integration for the Caribbean Region. His contribution to our Office and Jamaica's agriculture is highly appreciated and we wish him much future success.

Also in May, IICA's yearly Accountability Seminar introduced me to some of our major stakeholders and topical issues in agriculture. Shortly after, we began preparing for the 7th annual Caribbean Week of Agriculture, held in Jamaica last year, and the Institute's regional planning meeting held in Guyana. Around the same time, the country was gearing up for a national election, and bracing itself for a category four hurricane. Hurricane Dean battered Jamaica, badly bruising agriculture, with damage to the sector estimated at J\$3.7 billion (US\$52 million). Given this context, it is indeed a credit to the office's dedicated staff that we continued to serve our clientele and took on two hurricane recovery projects – one funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the other by Chevron, through the Pan-American Development Foundation (PADF).

The past year has been as rewarding as it has been eventful. I take this opportunity to thank the staff of the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands for their cooperation and our colleagues in the various agencies and organisations for their support. To the staff of IICA Jamaica, who I am fortunate to have as part of my team, I say a very special thank you for your help in assisting with my entry into this new job.

Our annual report details our activities and looks at the landscape where we operate. Our challenges are many, but the passion that we at the IICA Office have for making a difference in Jamaica's rural communities is unquestionable. We intend to help create an environment where rural Jamaicans are more aware of market realities and better equipped to benefit from rapidly globalizing trade. We will continue to be guided by the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands' plans for the sector as we accomplish our mandate in Jamaica. Additionally, we are committed to working in partnership with all agricultural stakeholders and with other organisations and groups to present a united and focused front. The opportunities for a vibrant agricultural sector in Jamaica are limitless. Success will be based on strong leadership and cooperation. We at IICA stand committed to contributing significantly to this process.

*Cynthia Currie
IICA Representative in Jamaica*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda is the four year medium term plan of the Office. The current Agenda runs from 2006 – 2010. This 2007 annual report documents the first full year of the implementation of this medium term plan.

In 2007, IICA continued to play a meaningful role in promoting agricultural and rural development in Jamaica in an environment of considerable adjustment. Internally, we welcomed new Representative Mrs. Cynthia Currie to replace Mr. Trevor W. Murray, now Director of Operations and Integration for the Caribbean.

Externally, Jamaica's agriculture experienced significant losses from a major hurricane in August. Additionally, a national election in September changed the government. Dr. the Honourable Christopher Tufton was appointed new Minister of Agriculture and Lands. This report discusses those changes and their effect on agriculture as well as the IICA Office's contribution to that sector.

Last year, the Office pursued four main goals: successful hosting of events and seminars beneficial to agriculture and rural life in Jamaica; promotion of agribusiness and trade; strengthening agricultural health and food safety systems; and the strengthening of rural communities. This was done through several projects including, but not limited to, the staging of the 7th Caribbean Week of Agriculture, two hurricane relief projects in response to Hurricane Dean, the launch of the Jamaica Greenhouse Growers Association (JGGA) and a review of the Veterinary Services Division in the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands. The Office also moved to modernize internally, re-organizing the information centre and re-launching our website. Another great success was the awarding of IICA's Inter-American Agricultural Medal to a Jamaican, Mr. Egbert Miller, of Circle B Farm in St. Ann.

One contribution in 2007 that makes us proud is bringing effective dialogue and coordination between Public and Private Sectors and Regional and International Agencies in agriculture. We collaborated with several regional IICA specialists and IICA offices (including Trinidad and Barbados), along with several international agencies (OAS, CARICOM and CIDA) and national groups (such as the Elim Community Friendly Society). In this report, we present a detailed overview of these and other major activities.

THE STATE OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL LIFE IN JAMAICA IN 2007

Factors in the National Context

The category four Hurricane Dean last August, and the September National Election that resulted in a change of government, were the two most significant events in the review year.

The national economy registered some growth for the first nine months of 2007, but it paled in comparison to that of the previous year. Jamaica's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the period increased by 1.6% compared to 2.5% for the same period in 2006. The negative impact of Hurricane Dean was a major factor.

Finance, distribution services, and construction recorded the strongest growth for the nine month period. Agriculture began the year with a bang, posting some of the strongest sectoral growth rates – 3.7% and 4.7% for the first and second quarters respectively. Hurricane Dean, however, severely curtailed the fortunes of the sector. Damage was estimated at approximately J\$3.7 billion (US\$52 million). The most severely affected sub-sectors included bananas, coffee, vegetable crops, condiments, poultry, fishery, and infrastructure (such as greenhouse structures and irrigation systems).

After the hurricane, the main assistance to the sector included distribution of fertilizer for replanting; financial support to rebuild damaged greenhouse infrastructure; loans to affected banana farmers; funds to fruit farmers to rehabilitate damaged trees; grants to the coffee and cocoa industries to address damages; and financial assistance to rehabilitate polluted beaches and replace damaged fishing equipment.

Changes in Legislation and Policies on Agriculture and Rural Life

Under the leadership of the newly appointed Minister, Dr. the Honourable Christopher Tufton, the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands is currently redefining the policy priorities for the Agricultural and Rural sectors. The Ministry is now developing the Agriculture component of the 2030 National Development Plan, spearheaded by the Planning Institute of Jamaica. Also in progress, is the development of a Comprehensive Agricultural Policy that will



*Dr. the Honourable
Christopher Tufton, M.P.
Minister of Agriculture
and Lands*

present a framework for rural and agricultural development to promote investment, job creation and rural prosperity.

A significant policy thrust of the Government is the divestment of state-owned sugar factories that are seen as un-competitive, in an environment of declining prices because of changes in the EU Sugar Regime. Privatisation should bring an injection of new investment and a subsequent improvement in productivity and efficiency levels.

Institutional Reforms in Agriculture and the Rural Milieu

The Ministry of Agriculture and Lands is restructuring the Ministry and its associated agencies to rationalize their services.

Agri-food Trade and Development of Agribusiness

Domestic crop production performed creditably for the first half of the year. The sub-sector grew 3.8% and 2.2% in the first and second quarters of the year respectively. Hurricane Dean, however, substantially altered this performance with a third quarter 9.9% decline in production. Output losses in five domestic crop segments - Condiments (down 23.9%), Vegetables (down 19.3%), Fruits (down 15.4%), Cereals (down 15.6%), and Potatoes (down 5.6%) - contributed to the overall decline. The livestock sector, however, managed to maintain steady growth throughout the year.

Export crops were buoyant in the first half of the year, particularly in the second quarter, because of substantial increases in production levels of sugar cane (up 29.1%), coffee (up 166.6%) and cocoa (up 108.2%). The fall-out in export crop production was less severe than the domestic



Fallen banana trees in St. Mary in the aftermath of Hurricane Dean.

crops, given an overall 2.5% reduction for the third quarter. Nevertheless, the banana sub-sector was perhaps the most severely affected by the hurricane, posting a 64% reduction for the third quarter. Projections for the final quarter of 2007 were similarly dismal, given prolonged heavy rains in the months after the hurricane, as well as rising commodity and crude oil prices.

In trade, the country's food import bill continued to increase in 2007, with figures for the first nine months showing a 16.2% jump in food imports to \$350.4 million.

Major initiatives in agribusiness during 2007 included: promotion of greenhouse and hydroponics technology; capacity development of the pig industry; establishment of a liquid egg processing plant and the start of the European Union Rural Diversification Programme.

Greenhouse technology use expanded significantly in 2007 through the efforts of the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, the Rural

Agricultural Development Authority (RADA), IICA and others, to promote protected agriculture as a means for improving horticulture. Compared to 'open field' cultivation, greenhouse production better generates uniform crop growth, consistent production, longer harvesting periods, higher yields and reduces pest infestation.

In 2007, a J\$20.9 million grant from the Private Sector Development Programme (PSDP) helped to strengthen the pig industry. Initiatives to be funded by the grant include the establishment of a project management unit for the Jamaica Pig Farmers Association; development of systems for data collection, information management and dissemination; organizational strengthening of the Association; technical training for pig farmers; improving the genetic stock of pigs; encouraging greater record keeping and promoting the consumption of pork. The industry has already shown strong output levels for 2007 that is likely to have contributed significantly to the sustained growth in the livestock sector despite Hurricane Dean.

A \$40 million liquid egg processing plant was opened in 2007 to sell pasteurized liquid eggs to hoteliers in the region. The first of its kind in the Caribbean, the factory is also expected to increase the consumption of eggs, given the longer shelf life of liquid eggs. Caribbean Egg Processors Limited, based in St. James, has the capacity to convert approximately 18,000 eggs per hour.

The Rural Diversification Programme under The European Union Banana Support Programme (EUBSP) was launched in 2007. Scheduled to run for six years, the programme is being executed through the MOA&L with direct implementation by RADA. It will help former banana farmers, port workers and farm workers get involved in alternative income-earning activities. It is expected that business opportunities will be created through potentially viable agricultural and non-agricultural enterprises.

In 2007, the government also approved a Government guarantee for \$250 million in loans for agriculture. The Bank of Nova Scotia is providing the loans to the Development Bank of Jamaica (DBJ) for on lending to farmers, with a maximum seven-year repayment period at 7.625% per annum, which is below market.

The Ministry also indicated other priority areas that include fruit tree crop production, increased investment in irrigation, small ruminants (sheep and goats), apiculture/beekeeping, and fisheries.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety

The primary agricultural health concerns centred on the containment and eradication of two main pests – the screwworm (mostly affects animals) and the pink mealy bug. The Ministry of Agriculture and Lands aimed to eradicate the screwworm pest by the end of the year through: the box fly approach, where sterile flies are dispersed into the wild to contain the pest; a public awareness campaign; and treating infested animals free of cost. The Ministry confirmed the presence of the pink mealy bug in the island, particularly in Portland, and reported the training of technical officers to detect it and to rear the Parasitoid wasp, a natural predator of the bug. The wasp was imported to contain the pest.

The Ministry also re-confirmed its commitment to prevent and control any outbreak of Avian Influenza, ceasing to issue import permits for pet birds, ducks, geese, swans and other aquatic birds, game birds, poultry, and hatching eggs or egg products from any country affected by the virus. The Veterinary Services Division of the Ministry, the Ministry of Health and the Public Health and Customs Departments have all been collaborating to ensure compliance with import permits and veterinary certification requirements for the importation of these products from any country.

Sustainable Rural Development

During the review year, Cabinet approved the Sustainable Rural Development Policy, spearheaded by the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ). The PIOJ reports that elements of the Sustainable Rural Development Policy are being included in the 2030 National Development Plan. The PIOJ has formed a team at the Urban Development Corporation (UDC) to identify projects.

Given the recent change in government, the PIOJ will be consulting with the relevant authorities to determine how to proceed.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL TECHNICAL COOPERATION AGENDA IN JAMAICA IN 2007

IICA Director General Dr. Chelston Brathwaite (left), signs a MOU with CARDI's Chairman and St. Lucia's Minister of Agriculture, Ezekiel Joseph (centre) during the ceremony to mark IICA's 65th Anniversary at the Caribbean Week of Agriculture. Caribbean Week of Agriculture Coordinator, Sonia Rickards, assists the signing.



IICA's Contribution to the Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life

The 7th Caribbean Week of Agriculture

Under the theme 'Agriculture - Harvesting Wealth through Tourism', IICA, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, staged the 7th Caribbean Week of Agriculture at the Gran Bahia Principe Hotel from October 8 to 13. This was the major agricultural event in Jamaica for 2007, with more than 200 overseas participants (including Ministers of Agriculture from the region), and several hundred Jamaicans. The North Coast resort setting was particularly appropriate in demonstrating the link between the growing tourist trade and agriculture.

Minister of Agriculture and Lands Dr. the Honourable Christopher Tufton (right), with IICA Director General Dr. Chelston Brathwaite (centre) and IICA Director of Operations and Regional Integration for the Caribbean Region at a field trip during Caribbean Week of Agriculture in October 2007.



Jamaican entrants in IICA's 65th anniversary regional painting competition on the theme "The Impact of Climate Change on the Agricultural Sector", pose with IICA Representative in Jamaica, Cynthia Currie (third left), and IICA Sustainable Rural Development Specialist, Shauna Brandon (far right). To the right of Mrs. Currie is Antoine Chung, second place winner in the regional competition.



Workshops were held on topical subjects such as Agro-tourism, Risk Management, Nutrition, and Youth Involvement in Agriculture. The CARICOM Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) also met at the same venue during that week.

The IICA Director General, Dr. Chelston Brathwaite, and the Minister of Agriculture, Dr. the Honourable Christopher Tufton, both addressed a special function to commemorate IICA's 65th anniversary. Dr. Brathwaite also announced the winners for the 65th anniversary regional painting competition on the theme, The Impact of Climate Change on the Agricultural Sector. The top paintings from the four Caribbean Countries that entered the competition were displayed in the IICA booth during the Trade Show. The event culminated in a Trade Show that gave Jamaicans and overseas agribusiness interests opportunities to establish contacts with prospective clients.



Some of the display booths at the Trade Exposition during Caribbean Week of Agriculture.



The winning entrant in IICA's 65th anniversary regional painting competition on the theme "The Impact of Climate Change on the Agricultural Sector."



Damaged chicken coop in Mountain Pass, St. Catherine where 28 poultry operators benefited from the CIDA/IICA Hurricane Relief Programme.



Head of CIDA in Jamaica, Lorraine Belisle (left), hands a baby chick to poultry operator Fay Martin, while IICA Representative in Jamaica, Cynthia Currie, hands over a certificate for hurricane relief supplies.



An example of the kind of damage caused by Hurricane Dean to 90% of the island's greenhouses.



Beneficiary farmer Uton Williams helps to pack bags of fertilizer for himself and other farmers in Elim.

Hurricane Dean Recovery Assistance

Responding to Hurricane Dean's damage to Jamaica's agriculture, the Office implemented two hurricane relief projects: one in collaboration with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to help greenhouse growers and poultry farmers; the other in collaboration with the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF)/Chevron to deliver agricultural inputs to affected farmers in Elim, St. Elizabeth. The combined value of these programmes was US\$110,300.00.

The C\$100,000 (J\$6.75 million) CIDA funded project focused on the restoration of the productive capacity of vegetable and poultry farming enterprises in Central and Southern parishes affected by Hurricane Dean. The recovery effort for poultry farmers focused on the Mountain Pass area of St. Catherine. Twenty-eight (28) poultry operators (mostly women) received chicks, feed, and materials to reconstruct their damaged poultry houses. The poultry farmers contributed 50% of the cost of refurbishing the houses. The poultry operators also benefited from training in proper poultry rearing practices. The project will also include the construction of three (3) mini-slaughtering facilities in the community, to be undertaken in early 2008.

Hurricane Dean heavily damaged the greenhouse sector, with most growers losing 80 – 100% of their infrastructure and crops. Four of them in Clarendon and Manchester were slated to get new, more resilient greenhouses. Designs were completed by year-end and fabrication started on two of the four greenhouses.

The PADF/Chevron funded hurricane recovery project in St. Elizabeth concentrated on the delivery of fertilizer and planting materials to help farmers in the Elim community to re-establish their damaged plots. The recovery project also delivered agricultural inputs to the Sydney Pagon Agricultural High School in Elim, one of only two agricultural high schools in the country. The school received materials to enable the re-establishment of its nursery and shade house that were damaged in the hurricane.

Inter-American Awards

During 2007, the Office facilitated the nomination of candidates for the Institute's Inter-American Awards. Jamaica's candidate Mr. Egbert Miller won the Inter-American Agricultural Medal. Mr. Miller received his award at the July 2007 bi-annual meeting of IICA's governing body, the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), in Guatemala. Mr. Luke Lee, a young Jamaican farmer, received a commendation for the Inter-American Agricultural Award for Young Professionals since the Institute did not assign an awardee to this category.

Best Community Competition

Last year, IICA supported the Government's Best Community Competition by sponsoring an award for Best Improved Agricultural Practices. The award was presented to the Bunkers Hill Community in Trelawny. The competition, initiated last year by the Cabinet Office of the Government, fosters sustainable development of communities by encouraging self help activities and establishing partnerships between communities and entities with technical and financial capabilities.

Agricultural Development Plan 2030

In the second half of 2007, the IICA Office collaborated with the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, the PIOJ, and other agricultural related agencies, in forming a long-term development plan for the agricultural sector. IICA was a member of the Steering Committee responsible for designing the consultation process with stakeholders. As part of the process, a workshop for stakeholders was held at the Terra Nova Hotel on October 30, 2007. The final plan is scheduled to be completed in early 2008.

National Accountability Seminar

The IICA Jamaica Office hosted a National Accountability Seminar in May 2007 to discuss with stakeholders the assistance it rendered to the sector in 2006. A wide cross-section of stakeholders in the agricultural sector attended the seminar at the Knutsford Court Hotel in Kingston.



Jamaica's candidate for the Inter-American Agricultural Award for Young Professionals, Luke Lee (right), receives a plaque from Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Donovan Stanberry at IICA Jamaica's National Accountability Seminar in May 2007.



2007 Inter-American Agricultural Medal Awardee Egbert Miller (left) receives a plaque from former Minister of State in the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Victor Cummings at IICA Jamaica's National Accountability Seminar in May 2007.



Participants in the Agricultural Development Plan 2030 workshop for sector stakeholders.

Former IICA Representative in Jamaica, Mr. Trevor Murray, brought greetings on behalf of the Director General, Dr. Chelston W.D. Brathwaite, who stressed “participatory cooperation”, accountability and transparency as fundamental to the operation of IICA in member countries. Mr. Murray also introduced the incoming Representative, Mrs. Cynthia Currie, who gave brief greetings.

During the seminar, the IICA Office outlined its 2006 activities in repositioning agriculture, promoting trade and competitive agribusiness, strengthening rural communities, promoting agricultural health and food safety, and introducing technology and innovation to modernize agriculture.

The seminar gave agriculture stakeholders an opportunity to identify areas they believed needed IICA’s attention. Some of the concerns pertained to the review and documentation of local agricultural/rural development approaches; research and development for root crops (e.g. sweet potato, yam); support for commercial agribusiness activities; greater due diligence for the implementation of irrigation systems; and practical ways to link agriculture and tourism.

The highlight of the National Accountability Seminar was the presentation of IICA Awards for excellence. The Seminar recognized five deserving awardees – including a 20 year old – in agriculture who demonstrated substantial successes, innovativeness, adherence to international standards, and commitment to community development.



Jamaica Standards Products Marketing Manager Annette Salmon (left), receives a poster of the company’s 2006 IICA Agribusiness Award from IICA Agribusiness Specialist Robert Reid at IICA’s 2007 National Accountability Seminar.



Former IICA Representative in Jamaica Trevor Murray addresses the National Accountability Seminar. At the head table from left are: former Minister of State in the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Victor Cummings, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Donovan Stanberry, IICA Representative in Jamaica, Cynthia Currie.

In a surprise visit, former Prime Minister Hon. Portia Simpson-Miller congratulated the awardees:

- **Mr. Egbert Miller:** Owner and Manager of the internationally recognized Circle B Farm in St. Ann (2007 IICA Inter-American Agricultural Medal Awardee)
- **Mr. Luke Lee:** Operations Manager of Jamaica Floral Exports, a hydroponic farm, and owner and operator of a scotch bonnet pepper business in Riversdale, St. Catherine. (Jamaica’s national candidate for the 2007 IICA American Agricultural Award for Young Professionals)
- **Walkerswood Caribbean Foods:** Manufacturer of Jamaican condiments. (Jamaica’s national candidate for the 2007 Inter-American Agricultural/ Rural Award for Institutions)
- **Jamaica Standard Products Company Ltd:** Coffee Manufacturer and producer of Jamaican condiments (2006 IICA Agribusiness Awardee)
- **Ms. Karen Tamassa:** 20 year old grocery store operator and wholesaler/ retailer of packaged vegetables and coconut water (2006 IICA Youth in Agribusiness Awardee)

Repositioning IICA's Information Centre and Office Website

The Office in Jamaica completed a major overhaul of its Library and Information Centre, significantly increasing its catalogued documents, restoring its electronic database and labelling the Library material. The result is an environment that is much more user friendly.

With the assistance of the Information and Communications Specialist in the IICA Trinidad Office, we re-launched the website for the Jamaica Office. The site now hosts current information on the activities of the Office.

Promotion of Trade and Agribusiness

Technical Assistance to Greenhouse Growers

The IICA Office facilitated registration and the official launch of the Jamaica Greenhouse Growers Association (JGGA) on August 4, 2007 (at the Denbigh Agricultural and Industrial Show). The six-month US\$12,710.00 technical assistance programme was aimed at promoting the development of modern greenhouse technology in Jamaica.



IICA Agribusiness Specialist Robert Reid speaking at the launch of the Jamaica Greenhouse Growers Association at the Denbigh Agricultural and Industrial Show. At the head table are JAS President, Norman Grant, and former Minister of Agriculture and Lands, Roger Clarke.

Under the programme, members of the JGGA, and the Rural Agricultural Development Authority got technical assistance in best practices for greenhouse production methods, and compiling greenhouse production data.

In the last quarter of 2007, this compilation of production and other information was subsequently upgraded to a more comprehensive electronic database for use by the JGGA and other support institutions. In closing the year, the Office in December 2007 collaborated with the JGGA and the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands to convene a major Strategic Planning and Training workshop for over 40 JGGA members and RADA extension personnel.

Promoting the Development of the Pork Value Chain

The Office facilitated dialogue among pig farmers, pork processors, feed input suppliers and public support services through meetings of the Pig/Pork Industry Committee at the IICA Office. These meetings addressed matters related to imports of pork products, research on substitute animal feeds, animal health, and the collection of production data for development planning. They also developed the protocol for issuing import permits now being implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands.

Agribusiness Awards

The Office continued to promote excellence through its annual Agribusiness and Youth in Agribusiness Awards, presented at the Denbigh Agricultural and Industrial Show in August. With its representatives from IICA, Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, RADA and the Jamaica Agricultural Society (JAS), the Agribusiness Awards Selection Committee faced a particularly competitive field of nominees in 2007, reviewing 25 nominations and short-listing ten.



Dave Rankin, farmer, and CANCO Chairman Norman McDonald, winners of the IICA 2007 Agribusiness Awards, at the Denbigh Agricultural and Industrial Show.



2007 Youth in Agribusiness Awardee, Dave Rankin, on his pepper farm in St. Elizabeth.

CANCO Ltd was the winner in the Agribusiness category and pepper farmer Dave Rankin won in the Youth in Agribusiness category. Based in St. Thomas, CANCO is one of the island's major producers of canned ackee and callaloo. The company also produces canned products under the Linstead Market brand, including Jamaican soups, peas and a range of jams and jellies. CANCO topped the competition in indigenous raw material use, development of new products, adherence to international processing standards and employment. Dave Rankin is a 20 year-old hot pepper farmer in St. Elizabeth who was recognized for his spirit of entrepreneurship in the production and sale of hot pepper to the local agro-processing industry.

Strengthening Agricultural Health and Food Safety Systems

Review of Veterinary Services Division, Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

In April 2007, the Office facilitated a review of the Veterinary Services Division in the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, conducted by IICA's Regional Specialist in Agricultural Health and Food Safety, and IICA's Director of Performance Management and Evaluation. The Ministry accepted the recommendations and is now implementing them.

Facilitating Participation in WTO SPS Fora

During 2007 IICA sponsored the participation of Ministry of Agriculture and Lands officials in World Trade Organisation meetings on sanitary and phytosanitary measures.

Support for the Production of Disease-Free Planting Material

The IICA Office gave financial support to the collaborative research exercise on the production of disease-free sweet potato planting material. The collaborating agencies include the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) and the Christiana Potato Growers Cooperative Association (CPGCA).

Strengthening Rural Communities

Support to the Jamaica Network of Rural Women Producers (JNRWP)

Throughout the year, the IICA Jamaica Office continued its support to the Jamaica Network of Rural Women Producers. In February, the Office organised the Network's Annual General Meeting, where a new Executive body was elected. The Office gave guidance to the Executive at quarterly meetings, and helped convene regional meetings with its membership. The IICA Office also developed a proposal for a strategic planning retreat for the Executive, scheduled for the first quarter of 2008.



A section of the audience attending the JNRWP AGM.



The JNRWP executive elected at the February 2007 AGM. From left (top row): Mildred Crawford, President; Angella Bardowell, Vice President; Donna Maragh, Secretary; Petal Brown, Treasurer; Audette Lawes, Public Relations Officer. Bottom row, from left are: Vonette Johnson, Assistant Secretary; Avis Rowe, Assistant Treasurer; Edna Edwards and Gwendolyn Panton, Assistant Public Relations Officers.

Strengthening Governance Mechanisms in Rural Communities

The IICA Jamaica Office collaborated with the Social Development Commission (SDC) on a governance training exercise in Buff Bay, Portland in early 2007. Participants included representatives from Charles Town’s Community Development Committee and other CDCs in the surrounding area. The workshop covered “Roles and Responsibilities of the Executive Body”, “Meeting Protocol” and “Roles and Functions of CDCs, Development Area Committees (DACs) and Parish Development Committees (PDCs)”. The workshop proved to be a useful networking exercise for community representatives to share plans among the CDCs, and it resulted in the selection of members to sit on the Development Area Committee for the Buff Bay Development Area.



IICA Sustainable Rural Development Specialist Shauna Brandon addresses the governance training exercise in Buff Bay, Portland.

IICA also conducted a training session on proposal writing for executive members of the Elim Community Friendly Society (ECFS) in St. Elizabeth. Acting as the governing body for the community, the ECFS requested the training to enhance its efforts to solicit funding for several infrastructural and community assistance projects. It has since submitted a proposal requesting funding for community transport.

Supporting Income Earning Opportunities in Rural Communities

During 2007, IICA began a herb demonstration plot exercise in Charles Town, Portland. The exercise included a workshop to review project steps in collaboration with CARDI, RADA and University of the West Indies (UWI) Biotechnology Unit, and establishing a nursery for five selected herbs, and the subsequent planting of these herbs in demonstration plots across the community.



Lemongrass and peppermint suckers in the nursery constructed by farmers participating in the herb demonstration plot exercise in Charles Town.

The herb demonstration plot exercise represents the first phase of an initiative to develop a herb/ medicinal plants industry in Charles Town. A 2005 feasibility study had recommended the gathering and cultivation of eight herbs for sale, based on the prevalence of certain herbs in the community, the suitability of the Charles Town environment and availability of markets for these herbs. The feasibility study had further recommended the cultivation of the five selected herbs, beginning with a demonstration plot exercise to monitor and gather information on the growth of the cultivated plants and allow interested farmers to learn about the process. The five cultivated herbs are cerassee, peppermint, spearmint/ black mint, sorrel and lemongrass.

The herb demonstration plot exercise in Charles Town is proceeding in collaboration with the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute, which is undertaking a similar exercise at its Mona, Kingston based station. This study will provide a manual on growing practices and expected results for the selected herbs.

Additionally, the IICA Office was successful in securing funding for a beekeeping expansion project in Charles Town. In collaboration with the Charles Town Bee Farmers Association, the Office proposed that the USAID REACT Project fund additional hives for members of the group and the establishment of a Queen Rearing Station. The Association and USAID REACT signed the funding agreement in December 2007. Project activities are expected to start early in 2008.

The IICA Office also collaborated with the Social Development Commission in St. Elizabeth to organise a workshop on peanut processing in May that was attended by women from the Elim Community and representatives from surrounding communities. Elim and those communities are heavy peanut growing areas, and the women have expressed an interest in developing a peanut processing enterprise.

Improving Literacy Levels in Elim

The Office continued to collaborate with the Jamaica Foundation for Lifelong Learning (JFLL) to facilitate the Elim Literacy Programme. The third six-month module was completed in the second quarter of 2007 and 16 students sat the JFLL Final Level Achievement Exam, which included tests in English, Mathematics and General Paper. The students had an overall average of 80% plus. A graduation ceremony for the students has been planned for early 2008.



Several colonies of bees owned and managed by the Charles Town Bee Farmers Association.

RESULTS OF INTER-AGENCY COOPERATION

Farmer-to-Farmer Programme

The IICA Jamaica Office continued in 2007 to execute the Farmer-to-Farmer programme, in collaboration with Partners of the Americas. Funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) the programme delivers technical assistance to the agricultural sector in Jamaica. Last year, it facilitated the visit of 20 volunteers to conduct training sessions with nine producer organisations and training institutions, including the Jamaica Egg Farmers Association, Santoy Cooperative, Ebony Park Heart Academy, Organics, Ornamental Fish Farmers Association, Cotton Growers, The Jamaica Pig Farmers Association, The Christiana Sweet Potato Growers Association and Jamaica Farms.

The training sessions included:

- Swine diagnostic lab development
- On-farm intervention in pig nutrition
- Use and installation of Pig Champ Electronic Record Management System
- Integrated pest and disease management
- Horticulture/vegetable production
- Composting
- Greenhouse production (including curriculum development for this technology)
- Ornamental fish production
- Preparation of strategic business plan
- Funding proposal development
- Marketing and Marketing plan development, including logo design
- Community development



Members of the Jamaica Pig Farmers Association in a training session on use of Pig Champ software which manages all aspects of pig production.

Several participants have reported beneficial impacts since the training exercises. For example, the Santoy Cooperative found improved yields and revenue when it introduced high tunnel houses and more effective pests and disease control.

The Jamaica Pig Farmers Association reported improvement in traceability records and general animal performance and an overall



IICA Agribusiness Specialist, Robert Reid (at podium) addresses the Farmer-to-Farmer Stakeholders Workshop in April 2007 at the Medallion Hall Hotel in Kingston.

enhancement of its operations because it can now track feed costs. An improvement in waste management has also been noted.

The Ebony Park Agricultural Academy reported the knowledge base of its students and faculty improved in the training areas (e.g. vegetable production). The Academy is also now able to employ best practices in pig nutrition.

Agro-Tourism

As part of a 3-year Regional project titled "Strengthening of the Tourism Sector through the Development of Linkages with the Agricultural Sector in the Caribbean", the IICA Jamaica office, in collaboration with the Organization of American States, hosted a two day agro-tourism workshop. This workshop took place during the 7th Caribbean Week of Agriculture and was formally opened by Jamaica's new Minister of Agriculture and Lands, Dr. the Honourable Christopher Tufton. Minister Tufton declared



From right, at the Agro Tourism Workshop: JHTA President, Wayne Cummings; former IICA Representative in Barbados, Ena Harvey; Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Donovan Stanberry; Minister of Agriculture and Lands, Dr. the Honourable Christopher Tufton; IICA Representative in Jamaica, Cynthia Currie; and OAS Jamaica Director, Joan Neil.

the Government’s commitment to strengthen links between agriculture and to benefit the country’s rural communities. A cross-section of agro-tourism entrepreneurs, hoteliers, suppliers, farmers and industry officials participated in the workshop, which developed a strategy to help guide the way forward for linking these sectors.

The workshop sessions included several discussions: the concept of agro-tourism; the issues that affect agro-tourism linkages; requirements for operating in the tourism industry; strategic planning; potential role of tourism in rural development; facilitation of business plans; and agro-tourism products. The workshop identified four agro-tourism products: Festivals and Events, Accommodation, Food and Beverage, and Adventure and Attractions.

Work groups at the sessions also produced a SWOT analysis of each of the agro-tourism products, identifying several issues that needed to be addressed to promote successful agro-tourism links. These included DNA fingerprinting of species, rural community infrastructure (both on and off-farm), community security and praedial larceny, educational and technical skills capacity development, good agricultural practices, technology for product improvement, product marketing and post-harvest systems, cultural and wellness promotion, and education and micro-project financing.

The discussions were stimulating, and the workshop advanced a new definition of agro-tourism to reflect the Jamaican scenario: “Repositioning of the agricultural sector to maximize the integration of indigenous food, culture, wellness and the environment into a sustainable tourism experience”.

The workshop outlined four main recommendations that were presented to the CARICOM Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) to spur development of greater agro-tourism links. The recommendations are listed below.

1. Implement mechanisms to further Inter-Ministerial dialogue on the ‘Concept of Agro-tourism and the need for National Agro-Tourism Policy Frameworks’, thereby engendering deeper collaboration between the region’s agriculture and tourism sectors.
2. Give due consideration to the formulation of National (Agricultural) Development Plans that incorporate objectives, strategies, and programmes to make tangible the repositioning of the agricultural sector, while maximizing the integration of indigenous food, culture, wellness, and the environment, into a sustainable tourism experience.
3. The Ministries of Agriculture and Tourism in CARICOM Member States should put in place the human and financial resources to concretize collaboration with Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and the Organization of American States in developing and implementing various types of community-based agro-tourism projects.
4. Take initiatives to explore and realize collaborative funding and technical support from international, regional donor, and development agencies in support of agro-tourism projects and programmes.

The October Agro-Tourism Workshop is the first step in the development of an agro-tourism strategy for Jamaica that will feed into a Caribbean-wide strategy.

RESULTS OF HORIZONTAL TECHNICAL COOPERATION

During 2007, the IICA Office in Jamaica benefited from collaborations with several specialists within the IICA network. These included the following:

- IICA's Regional Specialist in Agricultural Health and Food Safety, and IICA's Director of Performance Management and Evaluation conducted a review of the Veterinary Services Division of the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands.
- The Information and Communications Specialist in the IICA Office in Trinidad and Tobago was instrumental in the re-launch of the Office website, and also helped guide the re-organisation of the Information Centre.
- The Regional Specialist in Sustainable Rural Development collaborated with the office in sourcing a greenhouse specialist to conduct a workshop on the greenhouse experience in other Caribbean territories.
- The Regional Specialist in Agribusiness jointly hosted a workshop with the Jamaica Office on potential financing options for the greenhouse sector.
- IICA's Representative in Barbados and Coordinator of the IICA/OAS Agro-Tourism Project presented an overview of the three-year project - "Strengthening of the Tourism Sector through the Development of Linkages with the Agricultural Sector in the Caribbean" – at the Agro Tourism Workshop during Caribbean Week of Agriculture.
- The Regional Specialist in Policy and Trade presented an overview of the Agro Matrix to the CARICOM Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) during the Caribbean Week of Agriculture. The Agro Matrix is an electronic monitoring tool that combines the goals of the Agro Plan¹ and the Jagdeo Initiative².
- The IICA Jamaica Office collaborated with the Herbal Specialist in the Office in Trinidad and Tobago for participation in a Wellness Exposition in Jamaica.
- A team from the Directorate of Performance Management and Evaluation conducted a review of the Jamaica Office, which included interviews with stakeholders and staff and visits to programme beneficiaries. The team presented an overview of their findings as well as an Office Improvement Plan.
- IICA's Representative in Barbados and the Regional Agribusiness Specialist collaborated with the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) to host a two-day hot pepper workshop in Jamaica. Agro-processors from across the Caribbean attended the workshop. IICA Director for Agribusiness, based in the Miami Office, also presented a case for the market potential for hot pepper products.

¹ *Agro Plan: The AGRO 2003-2015 Plan is the shared long-term agenda for promoting the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu in the countries of the Western Hemisphere. The Agro Plan identifies 12 purposes or objectives to be promoted in the areas of rural territories, agricultural production-trade chains and the national and international context in agriculture.*

² *Jagdeo Initiative: The Jagdeo Initiative is aimed at promoting the competitiveness of agriculture within CARICOM. The Initiative identifies key binding constraints, with the objectives of removing these constraints that hinder the progress of agriculture in the region. Guyanese President, Bharrat Jagdeo, principal spokesperson on agriculture for CARICOM, is responsible for spearheading the Initiative, with support being provided by IICA, the CARICOM Secretariat and FAO.*

NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR TECHNICAL COOPERATION

Jamaica's diverse agricultural base and its development needs offer many opportunities for IICA's technical cooperation. The island now invests in a range of crops and livestock, and has the agro-climate to become a regional leader in agricultural production. This is a dynamic period for agriculture as it explores new technologies and markets in the face of severe changes in Jamaica's traditional industries.

There are challenges, of course, especially those triggered by the damage Hurricane Dean wrought last year. The Economic Partnership Agreement with the European Union is also likely to affect Jamaica's agriculture environment. IICA sees substantial potential for strengthening the sector's sustainability and making it more resilient to unexpected shocks.

The IICA Jamaica Office intends to expand future technical cooperation in Jamaica as much as our resources will allow. We will draw on our core competency that has already benefited the local agricultural community. In recent years, the Office has demonstrated expertise in guiding and providing technical assistance to producer organisations and rural community groups. We are now building on the experience gained from working with the Jamaica Greenhouse Growers Association, the Jamaica Pig Farmers Association, the Charles Town Bee Farmers Association, the Jamaica Network of Rural Women Producers and the communities of Elim and Charles Town. Our longer history in managing agricultural projects will further guide our strategy as we intensify our operations.

The Institute is also promoting closer links between agriculture and tourism. Improved performance in Jamaica's tourism can greatly benefit the island's farmers and rural communities if they pursue strategies to take advantage of this growth. The current expansion of the country's hotel stock brings even greater opportunities. We at IICA will be developing initiatives to facilitate those links. Now in its final phase, the IICA/OAS agro-tourism project provides the base to deliver well-executed programmes for this agro-tourism drive.

We recognize that the IICA Jamaica Office must adopt a more focused approach to technical assistance given our limited human and financial resources. We are already collaborating with relevant partners to bolster our capabilities so we can offer unique and distinctive value. Our strategic planning retreat in 2008 will help define our future modus operandi. The retreat will be followed by our annual accountability seminar, where we solicit feedback on the Office's operations from you our stakeholders. We intend to have a productive 2008 in Jamaica, with your help and support.

MAIN ACTIVITIES ORGANISED BY IICA

The main 2007 activities organized by IICA:

- The 7th Caribbean Week of Agriculture
- The Agro Tourism Workshop
- Hurricane Dean relief activities
- Launch of the Jamaica Greenhouse Growers Association
- Organisation of the Jamaica Network of Rural Women Producers (JNRWP) Annual General Meeting
- The Strategic Planning and Training workshop for the Jamaica Greenhouse Growers Association and RADA extension personnel.

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