

ANNUAL REPORT *2009*

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

Caribbean Region



IICA





**IICA's Contribution to the Development of
Agriculture and Rural Communities
In the Caribbean**

2009

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ACRONYMS

AHFS	Agricultural Health and Food Safety
AI	Avian Influenza
BAPA	Bahamas Agricultural Producers Association
CABA	Caribbean Agribusiness Association
CAFY	Caribbean Agricultural Forum of Youth
CAHFS	Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency
CANROP	Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers
CARDI	Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CARAPN	Caribbean Regional Agricultural Policy Network
CCS	Caribbean Community Secretariat
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CDERA	Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency
CFLI	Canada Fund for Local Initiatives
CET	Common External Tariff
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIRAD	French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development
CMCD	Centre for Managing Chronic Disease
COTED	Council for Trade and Economic Development
CRDN	Caribbean Regional Diagnostic Network
CRSTDP	Caribbean Regional Sustainable Tourism Development Programme
CTA	Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation
CWA	Caribbean Week of Agriculture
DSIF	Dominica Social Investment Fund
DNCW	Dominica National Council of Women
ECS	Eastern Caribbean States
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreement
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GAPS	Good Agricultural Practices
INDOSAIA	Dominican Institute of Food Safety and Plant Health
BMPs	Good Manufacturing Practices
GTA	Guyana Tourism Authority
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points
IABA	Inter-American Board of Agriculture
IDIAF	Dominican Agricultural and Forestry Research Institute
IICA	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
LLPB	Livestock and Livestock Products Board
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
MALFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Forestry and Fisheries
MAMR	Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources
MAR	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MIOA	Market Information Organization of the Americas
MOLVV	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries

MTP	Medium Term Plan
NAHFSS	National Agricultural Health and Food Safety Systems
NAIE	National Agricultural and Agro-based Industrial Exhibition
NAMDEVCO	National Agricultural Marketing Development Corporation
NAYA	National Association of Youth in Agriculture (Dominica)
NGMC	New Guyana Marketing Corporation
NRWP	Network of Rural Women Producers, Guyana
OAS	Organization of American States
OECS	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
OIE	World Organization for Animal Health
OIRSA	Organismo Internacional Regional de Sanidad Agropecuaria
PADF	Pan American Development Foundation
PAHO	Pan-American Health Organization
PROCICARIBE	Caribbean Research, Science and Technology Networking System
PVS	Performance, Vision, Strategy
PWSCA	Pomeroon Women Small Cottage Association
SEA	Secretaría de Agricultura
SLAFY	St. Lucia Agriculture Forum for Youth
SLNRWP	St. Lucia Network of Rural Women Producers
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary
STDF	Standards and Trade Development Facility
TTABA	Trinidad & Tobago Agribusiness Association
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USDA-APHIS	United States Department of Agriculture – Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
UTT	University of Trinidad and Tobago
UWI	University of the West Indies
VEP	Veterinary Epidemiology Project
WTO	World Trade Organization

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Avian Influenza
simulation exercise held
in Trinidad in April 2009

1.0 Foreword



The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA) is pleased to present its Annual Report for 2009 for the Caribbean Region entitled: “IICA’s Contribution to the Development of Agriculture and Rural Communities in the Caribbean (2009)”. This report is a major component of an institutional mandate which requires the Regional Directorate in response to the needs of clients and stakeholders engage in a participatory preparation of National and Regional Technical Agendas.

The Institute’s National Annual Reports and the Accountability Seminars are part of the Institutional mechanism which reflects the Institute’s guidelines on accountability and transparency in the conduct of its affairs at the national, regional and hemispheric levels.

The report is organized basically in three (3) sections. The first section addresses the State of Agriculture in the Caribbean which provides a comprehensive overview

of the status of agriculture and the development efforts in the Region. The second section outlines the results of the implementation of the Institute’s Regional Technical Cooperation Agenda. These regional actions aim to add value to the actions taken by the Institute’s Offices at the national level.

The various actions at the regional level are outlined within the Strategic Areas of: The Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life; Promoting Trade and Agribusiness; Strengthening Agricultural Health and Food Safety Systems; Strengthening Rural Communities; Introduction of Technologies and Innovation; Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment.

The third section of the report comprises the Executive Summaries of the National Reports of the offices in all the fourteen (14) Member States of the Caribbean Region which highlight the national actions in the countries.

During the year under review (2009), the Institute consistently demonstrated its commitment to assist the Member States in their efforts at repositioning agriculture and the rural milieu in their countries. To this end, the Institute has focused its attention on working closely with the CARICOM Secretariat in achieving the goals and objectives of the Regional Transformation Programme through the implementation of the Jagdeo Initiative.

The Region's Food Security has also been a major area of the focus for the Institute's Regional Technical Cooperation Agenda. Given the fact, that the Caribbean Region is a net food importer, the continuing food price crisis has significantly impacted on the economies of the countries of the Region. In an attempt to assist Member States in addressing the Regional Food and Nutrition Security issue, the Institute commissioned a regional study to examine the various options available for the Region in reducing food insecurity.

This study provided the basic framework for the hosting of a Food Security Symposium which was organized in collaboration with other strategic partners, bringing together major regional stakeholders to arrive at solutions to the regional challenges. The results of this exercise are expected to assist with the development of a Regional Food Security Strategy and identify IICA's strategic actions in the implementation of this strategy.

The Institute's effort also focused on assisting with the development of a draft Caribbean Agriculture Policy. This initiative provided a framework for discussion and collaboration among stakeholders in the Region in an attempt to harmonize regional agricultural development efforts. It is expected, that within this overall framework, the goals of the Hemispheric Agro Plan 2003-2015; the Millennium

Development Goals; the Regional Technical Cooperation Agenda; and the Regional Food Security Programme can be achieved.

The Institute will continue its efforts to provide tangible support and service to the Regional Agricultural Sector and the Rural Milieu in its attempts at making a positive contribution to the sustainable development of the lives of regional populations.

In conclusion, I wish to take this opportunity to thank all our stakeholders and development partners throughout the Region for their continued support towards the contributions which the Institute is making for the Region's Agricultural Sector and the Rural Milieu. These efforts would not be possible without the hard work, commitment and dedication of the excellent team of professionals and support staff in the Offices in the Member States, the members of staff of the Regional Directorate at Head Office, as well as the other Regional Directorates in the other Regions of the Hemisphere. My sincere appreciation and thanks to all for the support provided during the period and best wishes for continued success in future endeavours.

Trevor W. Murray
Director of Operations
and Integration
for the Caribbean Region



Mango (*Mangifera indica*) festivals were popular across the Caribbean region in 2009. Some of these festivals were supported by IICA.

2.0

Executive Summary

technologies for horticultural crops (greenhouse), inland fishing (aquaculture), and root crops. Additionally a project proposal was approved by the United Nations Development Funds for Women (UNIFEM), entitled “Capacity Building for the Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers” for US\$16,000.

In response to a request by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development in Haiti, IICA undertook a mission to Haiti to develop an approach for exports of agricultural products into the CARICOM region. Also, through IICA in the Bahamas, technical assistance to the Bahamas Agricultural and Industrial Corporation (BAIC) was provided for developing a project aimed at promoting greenhouse (cluster) production.

Caribbean Agricultural Network of Rural Women Producers (CANROP) and the Caribbean Agricultural Forum for Youths (CAFY) have enhanced capacities to assess relevant food chains by the development and implementation of an assessment tool to prioritize the training, technical assistance and horizontal cooperation needs of the members in the national chapters of CANROP and CAFY. Results from two assessment instruments tested, developed and implemented to evaluate the enabling environment; and the role of Producer Organizations in the Promotion and Regulation of Organic Production and Marketing have been obtained from Guyana, Trinidad, Barbados, Dominica and Jamaica.

Agricultural Credit and Insurance Programs were facilitated in Guyana, leading to the conduct and organization of an Agricultural Credit and Insurance Symposium. In collaboration with the Agricultural Development Bank (ADB) of Trinidad and Tobago, IICA provided technical assistance in the promotion of agricultural insurance and capacity building in risk analysis. In the OECS, the need was highlighted for the articulation of a restructured agricultural insurance scheme for the agricultural sector.

Related to agricultural health and under the Veterinary Epidemiologist/Para-epidemiologist (VEP) Project for the region, a training workshop in Emergency Response Systems for the Veterinary Epidemiologists and Para-Epidemiologists (VEPs) was conducted in Trinidad. The workshop included training in Incident Command System

With support from IICA, the Caribbean Agribusiness Association, the CARICOM Secretariat and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries of Jamaica, a dialogue forum entitled “Promoting Agri-business within the Americas” was held in Jamaica during the Week of the 5th Hemispheric Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture and the 15th InterAmerican Board of Agriculture. This event provided the private sector within the hemisphere with an excellent opportunity to interface with the Ministers of Agriculture of the Hemisphere in submitting policy recommendations in three specific areas which were deemed critical to the development of the agricultural and agri-business sectors namely, Research and Development; Innovation and Technology Transfer; Finance, Credit and Risk Management; and Enhanced Marketing of Agri-business within the framework of Regional Trade Agreements.

IICA provided support for the building of institutional capacity to facilitate the development of competitive food value-chains. Over a period of six months, seven persons from two local institutions (i.e. the National Agricultural Marketing and Development Company (NAMDEVCO) and the Trinidad and Tobago Agribusiness Association - TTABA) were trained in the application of the CADIAC methodology.

A horizontal cooperation activity was organized by IICA in Trinidad and Tobago, the Bahamas and Jamaica that allow six persons, four from the NAMDEVCO in Trinidad, and two from the Bahamas Agricultural and Industrial Corporation (BAIC) to participate in a one week mission to Jamaica where they observed food production

(ICS), Geographic Information System (GIS), Global Positioning System (GPS) and also included a table top simulation exercise and a field simulation exercise on Avian Influenza. The workshop was conducted in collaboration with USDA-APHIS and CIRAD. The training in ICS and GPS were delivered by trainers from the USDA and the field simulation exercise was planned and executed by the Veterinary Division of the Ministry of Agriculture.

Two other training activities for VEPs were held, one on the Live Bird Market, which was held in New York and another on Epidemiology which was held in Fort Collins, Colorado. On-going surveillance and epidemiology activities continue to take place in the countries under the VEP programme.

An extensive vaccination programme for animals against Newcastle's Disease, Anthrax and Classical Swine Fever was undertaken in Haiti. Over 250,000 chickens, 450,000 cattle and goats and 105,000 pigs have been vaccinated under this programme.

In collaboration with USDA-APHIS, FAVACA (Florida Association for Volunteer Action in the Caribbean), the St. George's University and the Ministry of Agriculture in Grenada, a Regional workshop on the identification of Coleopteran pests of economic importance was held in Grenada. A total of 21 persons from 13 countries in the Region benefitted from the workshop. The training was provided by experts sourced through FAVACA.

The World Bank Project (TF-092679 DR) for the Prevention and Control of Avian and Human Influenza was launched in the Dominican Republic, where IICA is responsible for the administrative coordination. Two workshops were held at the beginning of this project. Approximately 60 field veterinarians were trained. A meeting was also held during the workshop to announce and to discuss the "Project for Strengthening of the Veterinary Services and the Systems of Prevention of Avian Influenza in the Island of Hispaniola.

IICA participated in the First International Steering Committee Meeting and the first Regional meeting to develop a Caribbean Invasive Alien Species (IAS) Strategy in furtherance of the implementation of the UNEP/GEF

project, "Mitigating the Threats of Invasive Alien Species in the Insular Caribbean." IICA's specific actions in this regard are: (a) in collaboration with USDA-APHIS and FAO to prepare a report on IAS interventions and initiatives in the Region over the last two decades; (b) execution of specific IAS related actions in IICA's AHFS annual action plan and (c) the application of the AgroMatrix as outlined above.

IICA participated in a special World Bank Mission to Belize to conduct a Rapid Agricultural Supply Chain Risk Assessment in that country. The results of this assessment will be used by the Bank to identify options in supporting Belize in developing more efficient agricultural risk management tools.

In the area of financial resources, the Institute enhanced capabilities of stakeholders in the private and public agriculture sector of the Caribbean to mobilize external resources by the conduct of three regional workshops to 21 agricultural leaders in the rural milieu of Grenada; 15 Agricultural Science teachers from 14 secondary schools and one primary school in St. Lucia and 19 technicians from the newly established Planning Unit within the Ministry of Agriculture in Grenada.

IICA with support from the Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation under the Caribbean Agricultural Regional Agricultural Policy Network (CaRAPN) project, completed a technical discussion paper titled "Implementing a CARICOM Community Agricultural Policy (CCAP): issues, options and process". A two-day regional meeting discussed the technical paper and agreed that this was an opportune time to move towards articulating a regional agriculture policy.

A national seminar, held in collaboration with the Trinidad and Tobago Agribusiness Association (TTABA), placed the CARICOM-Canada negotiations in context, explored opportunities for business in Canadian markets and encouraged stakeholders to keep informed and to participate in the process. The information provided and issues raised in the seminar clarified some of the misinformation and enhanced understanding of the issues of interest from both the CARICOM and Canada perspectives.

IICA also collaborated with TTABA to assess the issues related to non-tariff measures that have been limiting growth and dynamism in intra-regional trade, particularly in the area of agricultural and food products. This issue featured prominently on the agenda and discussions of the Thirty-Second Special COTED on Agriculture (18 September 2009). The program provided technical support to TTABA's efforts to make a determination of the non-tariff measures that hinder trade in the region and recommendations for their removal. The report acted as a basis for undertaking a more detailed inventory on the use of NTMs affecting agricultural trade within CARICOM. This will be a critical step in the process of removing such barriers and fostering greater intra-regional trade.

In contributing to the problem of lack of sufficient information on agriculture specific to the Caribbean, efforts were made to continue generating a range of information products through the CaRAPN project. Among these included the new series, 'Critical Issues, Perspectives and Options' (CIPO) under theme the 'Agriculture, Food and Health Challenge'. The CIPO series responds to the need for more regional-oriented thinking, perspectives and opinions on global issues that impact and influence agricultural and by extension, human development in the Caribbean.

Another instalment of the 'Media Kits' was prepared under the theme 'Negotiating Trade and Economic Relations in the 21st Century'. The Media Kit also seeks to contribute to the public dialogue on critical issues impacting agricultural development, but particularly seeks to encourage media and development communicators to disseminate more objective information to the public generally and stakeholders in particular.

The publications generated sought to contribute to enhancing knowledge, promoting agriculture in a positive way, encourage sharing of experiences and critically, encouraging the wider documentation of experiences, best practices, issues and other information products on agriculture in the Caribbean as an indispensable part of the process of empowerment of stakeholders.



Coffee beans collected
for drying at Belmont
Estate in Grenada

2.0

The State of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Caribbean in 2008

Agricultural Performance ...

“While the recession has affected almost every sphere of life in Grenada, there have been some bright spots. Of tremendous importance is the fact that Agricultural activity rose by 9.3% [in 2009] reflecting the impact of ongoing crop recovery and rehabilitation programs. This notable performance so far, is clear testimony of our government’s major policy focus to revitalize the agricultural sector.”

Prime Minister of Grenada, Tillman Thomas,
New Year’s Address (January, 2010)

The year 2009 appeared to be a relatively good year for agriculture, compared to performance in the rest of the economy, particularly tourism on which most of the region’s growth potential was hinged. Barbados reported that agriculture was the only sector of the economy to register growth over most of 2009 (January-September), noting that *‘amidst a dark and looming global economic recession, Barbados’ agricultural sector is lighting the way’*. Much of this growth was reportedly led by increased production in the sugar industry, complemented by growth in non-sugar agriculture, such as, milk and chicken production and fishing sectors. A similar good performance was reported for Jamaica, where during the first half of 2009, agriculture including forestry and fishing was the only sector reporting growth, estimated to have expanded by 9.5% between January and June 2009. Good weather conditions and coordinated initiatives by the government to promote agriculture were responsible for this growth.

The year 2009 was particularly productive for both traditional and non-traditional agriculture in Guyana, traditionally considered as the regional food basket. The Guyana Rice Development Board recorded the highest ever cultivation of rice (130,080 hectares) in Guyana’s

history, also releasing two new high yielding varieties that are adaptable to Guyana’s climatic conditions.¹ There were also significant improvements in the sugar industry, buoyed by the fact that 2009 saw the Guyana Sugar Corporation (GuySuCo) emerging from four consecutive years of very poor weather that caused significant damage to the crop and field activities. Total exports of non-traditional agricultural commodities (mainly coconut products, pumpkin and watermelon) registered a 32% increase when compared to 2008 exports. These results and transformation of Guyana’s agriculture sector were supported by the commencement a US\$6.9M Rural Enterprise and Agricultural Development Project (READ) and a US\$22.9M Agricultural Export Diversification Program (ADP) funded by the IDB and Government of Guyana in 2009.

Provisional estimates indicate a marginal contraction in agriculture by 1% in 2009 for Trinidad and Tobago, in contrast to growth of 10.7% in 2008. This was explained by a continued weakening of Domestic Agriculture which is expected to outweigh a 3.9% increase in Sugar Refining and a 63.9% increase in Export Agriculture during 2009. The Agricultural sector is projected to account for 0.5% of real GDP in 2009. Despite of its relatively low share in gross domestic products (GDP) in Trinidad and Tobago, positive growth recorded in agriculture was attributed to government development programs and a reported increase in employment in the agriculture sector by 30.7% during the first quarter of 2009². Food price inflation has significantly declined, moving from 33.4 percent in October 2008 to 10.1 percent in July 2009, the lowest recorded since July 2004.³ This was most notably buttressed by improvements in local agriculture production and international food price reversals which contributed to a significant reduction in the cost of agricultural produce during 2009.

1 Ministry of Agriculture, Guyana “Diversification & Modernization of the Agriculture Sector 2009 Highlights” January 2010.

2 Review of the Economy of Trinidad and Tobago

3 Budget Statement 2010 - Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Recent and notable trends ...

...placing agriculture at the centre of development

“..After almost half a century of pursuing alternative paths, which were felt could offer better returns; we are now finding that we have to look to the stone that the builder rejected and to recognize that for many countries like Jamaica, agriculture is the cornerstone to which we have to return”.

(Hon. Bruce Golding, Prime Minister of Jamaica, opening of the 5th Hemispheric Agricultural Ministerial Meeting in Montego Bay, Jamaica, October 2009)

In 2009, of note, was the fact that agriculture was afforded high priority on the development policy agenda. This was a result of the lingering, albeit less severe impacts of rising food prices over the 2007 to 2008 period and the concerted efforts taken by member states to build sustained capacity for food security. At the 30th CARICOM Conference of Heads of Government (CHoG) in July, Heads of Government acknowledged that agriculture was an important contributor to rural development, GDP, employment, export earnings and to the overall sustainable development of the Member States of the Caribbean Community. They re-committed to providing financial and other support measures for agriculture to contribute to, *inter alia*, food and nutrition security and development of Caribbean economies.

These regional commitments were reinforced at the hemispheric and global level, through the 5th Summit of the Americas, the Fifth Hemispheric Ministerial Meeting of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas and the FAO World Food Summit, the latter two occurring during the last quarter of 2009. These high-level fora underscored the importance of agriculture in poverty reduction and the need to place the highest priority in the national, regional and international agendas on mobilizing greater investment in agriculture for social, economic and political stability and environmental preservation. All these issues are critical aspects to be addressed within the context of a regional agricultural policy. Consequently, 2009 represented an important year for moving policy from dialogue to action. The process to development of a regional community agricultural policy was accelerated, following the launch in late 2008, of a process to develop a Strategic Plan for Regional Development (SPRD). The SPRD

seeks to provide clear direction to the implementation of the CSME's Single Development Vision and integrally includes agriculture chains, including agri-tourism.

The heightened level of priority accorded to agriculture at the regional level, was built up at the national level as governments committed to provide more unwavering support to farmers and rural communities as a necessary part of the solution set. For example, The Bahamas Government announced that it was moving **“resolutely to reposition agriculture as a strong pillar of the Bahamian economy”**, recognizing that **‘ad hoc and crisis management of the agricultural sector is not sustainable’**. The Jamaican Government also recognized the crucial importance of agriculture to rural development through Prime Minister, The Hon. Bruce Golding acknowledgment that **“tourism, mining nor other similar investments, will never ever have the penetration of agriculture to provide a real base for generating economic growth in rural communities”**.

...moving from policy dialogue to action

“We are now in 2009! We need to be able to identify what we need to put in place for agriculture. We have a framework. We have learnt lessons from our various initiatives. We have to be able to bring this all together in a coherent manner so that we can in fact identify what it is to agriculture policy.”

Desiree Field-Ridley, CARICOM Secretariat (April, 2009)

The base for community agriculture policy was established in the Regional Transformation Program (RTP), drafted more than a decade ago and reiterated in the 2001 Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas. These provide the base for which a full-blown policy can be developed. At an IICA-CTA-CARICOM regional meeting in April, issues, options and processes that would need to be considered in the development of CSME community agriculture policy (CCAP) were explored. Among the issues raised in a technical discussion paper⁴ was that the region must now respond to new developments that were either not present or as dynamic at the time of the RTP and the Revised Treaty. The CCAP paper also offered a set of issue-based recommendations for consideration in the effort to develop a comprehensive CCAP.

4 ‘Implementing the CSME Community Agricultural Policy: Issues, Options and Process’ (2009) by Patrick Antoine. ISBN 13:978-92-9248-019-6, IICA and CTA, May 2009

The meeting⁵ concluded that the CCAP proposal provided the background to a community agricultural policy as envisaged in Article 56 of the Revised Treaty, which provides the model for the CCAP. There was general agreement that agribusiness development, based on the value chain that integrated small and medium sized producers, must form a critical pillar of regional policy for agriculture. There was also agreement that consideration must also be given to programs for farm production, stabilization for food security/stockpiling, trade, environmental and climate change issues, human resource development and critically, financing and implementation requirements. In particular, the issue of nutrition far more critical in the context of Chronic Non-Communicable Diseases (CNCDs). There was also agreement that regional policy for agriculture should integrate policy considerations and requirements for fisheries and forestry, despite the several different issues that attend sustainable forestry and fisheries development in CARICOM.

The meeting also provided the opportunity to evaluate the number of initiatives aimed at strengthening the policy base for agricultural development in CARICOM. The issues raised will provide input into the process of implementing the CSME's Single Development Vision that identifies agriculture and agro-tourism as key drivers of growth. In this regard, the CARICOM Secretariat initiated a process to develop a Regional Strategic Development Plan (RSDP) for agriculture. The process clearly identified the issue of 'regional public goods' as a critical underlying factor to regional economic integration. In a regional approach to agriculture, a determination has to be made with respect to which are the particular public goods that the region should focus on to foster integration. This determination was facilitated by the initiation of a 'Background Paper' on 'Growth and Development of Intra-regional Agricultural Production and Trade' which highlighted Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures, a Food Safety/Quality Assurance, Market Intelligence/Facilitation and Intra-Regional Transport and associated infrastructure, as among the critical regional public goods that requires consideration for agricultural development.

⁵ Report of the Regional Technical Meeting "Implementing the CARICOM Community Agricultural Policy (CCAP)- Issues, Options, Process, held on April 30 – May 1, 2009 in Trinidad and Tobago

With regards to the above, in 2009, the CARICOM Secretariat continued the process to establish the Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA) a regional public agency, which will strengthen the regional capacity for SPS and food safety and quality assurance – critical regional agricultural public goods. The CARICOM Secretariat also launched a consultancy in late 2009 to prepare a comprehensive Community Agricultural Policy and accompanying Implementation Plan, consistent with relevant global trading arrangements and the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas. This CARICOM CAP and Implementation plan, to be completed in 2010, is expected to act as a base for development initiatives and resource mobilisation for regional integration, agricultural development and food security in the region.

.....building capacity for food security
"...approximately 74% of Barbados' food requirements were being sourced through imports and Government remains concerned over the extremely high dependence on imports to meet domestic food requirements, which has placed Barbados in the category of Net Food Importing Developing Countries".

Senator Haynesley Benn, Minister of Agriculture of Barbados, November 2009

Throughout the Community in 2009, there was a sustained drive to strengthen capacity for more locally produced foods, whether in the form of fresh farm produce, or locally-based processed foods. In response, member states individually and within the context of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) accelerated efforts to develop food security policies. This activity was also in response to continued concerns over CARICOM's food import bill, approximating US\$4 billion. Since the mid-1980s, as agricultural exports declined, most Caribbean countries joined the category of NFIDCs, including countries in the Windward Islands, such as Grenada, according to Government estimates, currently imports approximately 90% of its food. Examples of a renewed thrust in building capacity for food security, with emphasis on crop production, can be found throughout the Caribbean, in islands as small as Nevis to the mainland territory of Guyana.

In Nevis, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Taiwan

Food sales hurting

single mothers told **The Gleaner** it was becoming extremely difficult to provide nutritional meals to school-age children as food prices increase and salaries remain constant. According to Charlene Powell, mother of two, *“with two teenage children, both attending high schools, the easiest breakfast is a meat of choice with bread in the mornings”*.However, within the past few weeks, Powell has scaled down to buying one instead of two loaves of bread each week. *“That bread lasts for two days,”* said Powell. *“But I can’t afford to buy another one.”* Angela Martin, guardian of three children - all under age 16, loves a slice of bread with sausages and eggs for breakfast. Three loaves per week of hard dough sliced bread have dwindled to only one for the three boys. The decrease in bread purchases, for Martin, began about a month ago. The single parent also said chicken will now only be bought for Sunday dinner.

Technical Mission provided support for the expansion of sweet potato production in that island as part of an import displacement strategy. In his 2009 budget speech, the Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, the Honorable Balwin Spencer, unveiled a national production plan that includes creation of commodity specialists to improve product quality; production of 19 crops; the establishment of production schedules with 30 large farmers for the domestic and export markets; and the completion of a 15,000 square foot post harvest pack house for the handling of produce. Like its regional counterparts, the Ministry of Agriculture in Barbados was proactive with regard to food sovereignty increasing budget allocations for agriculture by over 10% each for the past three years. The urgent issue of food sovereignty was also addressed through the Ministry’s collaboration with IICA through the drafting of a food sovereignty plan and creation of a peri-urban backyard gardening project with focus on supplementing nutrition and reducing costs through gardens at home.

In Trinidad and Tobago, a major part of the response continued to be the development of mega farms and other measures aimed at assisting the local farming industry. These other measures included the collaborative efforts between the Ministry of Agriculture and a major input supplier, to reduce the price of fertilizer by approximately 31%. Other measures taken to improve productivity and increase output and distribution were underpinned by the Vision 2020 policy of “Investing in Sound Infrastructure

and the Environment”, which was successful in providing an enabling environment for investment in the sector and the promotion of efficient and sustainable agricultural business, and infrastructure development. As a result, employment in the agricultural sector increased by 30.7 percent in the quarter ending March 2009 to reach 21,300. In addition, increased production, most notably from the Tucker Valley large farm initiative, improved distribution and supply of agri-produce through the National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation (NAMDEVCO) and the farmers’ markets all contributed to a significant reduction in the cost of agricultural produce during 2009⁶.

As part of its 2030 vision strategy, Jamaica intends to, among other things, strengthen agricultural research institutions, diversify agricultural production range, promote national food security and support local farmers by ensuring that they have assistance with meeting quality and food safety standards and in accessing markets. The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, the European Commission (EC) and the United Nation’s Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) committed €5.9 million (J\$730 million) to a program to help 5,000 small farmers including those who grow livestock to boost farm productivity and therein increase food production. A \$70 million fertilizer subsidy was also provided, allowing farmers to benefit from a 10% reduction in the price of all grades of fertilizer. By the end of 2009, the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries reported a 70% decline in fresh produce imports in the July-September period, compared to the corresponding period in 2008. The Ministry noted that this marked the fifth consecutive quarter of increased local production from a population of approximately 200,000 farmers across Jamaica. This result was attributed to both a Production and Productivity Program, launched in late 2007 and a positive response from consumers to the thrust towards eating more local produce played a major role in the decrease in imports of fresh produce.

Guyana, which seeks to regain its status as the regional food basket, accelerated efforts to substantially increase its capacity for food production with infusion of technology, such as, greenhouse and hydroponics and

⁶ Budget speech 2010

with efforts to strengthen its capacity to trade with the rest of the region. As part of a \$400M package, the Ministry of Agriculture also provided fertilizer assistance for 5,364 rice farmers, cutting the cost of urea by approximately 50%. However despite these interventions, it is anticipated that with higher energy costs, the upward pressure on fertilizer prices will continue into 2010.

The region's preoccupation with ensuring its own food security through a strengthening of local food production, was fully recognised and acknowledged by international organisations in the region. This was evident at the hemispheric meeting of the Fifth Hemispheric Agriculture Ministerial Meeting in Jamaica in October, where the theme was 'Building Capacity for Enhanced Food Security and Rural Life in the Americas', and also at the global level, the FAO's three-day World Summit on Food Security towards a common objective of 'a world free from hunger' was an apt reflection of the pulse of the region in 2009. In keeping with the global emphasis on food security and the various factors that pose serious threats to food insecurity, the theme for World Food Day 2009 of 'Achieving Food Security in Times of Crisis', emphasised the pivotal role of agriculture generally, but more specifically, in times of weather and economic induced crises. However, as admitted by all stakeholders, the capacity of agriculture to fulfil its development objectives will depend critically on the quality of the policy environment at both national and regional levels.

The region's Ministers of Agriculture reaffirmed their commitments at the World Food Security Summit to increase agricultural investment needs by about 50% a year in order to alleviate food security issues in the Caribbean. Among the primary areas for investments included crops and livestock production, storage and market facilities and food processing. There was also clear recognition of the need to encourage private sector investment at all stages in the agriculture development process generally, and critically, in building competitive and sustainable value chains in agriculture.

In this regard there were several noted consultations and dialogue forums where private agribusiness (producer organizations, processors and marketers) met with policy makers. In May 2009, a Regional Public-Private Sector Consultation was held in Guyana under the auspices of the EU/CARICOM Agribusiness Development program; at the Thirty-Second Special Meeting of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Council for Trade and

Food for Thought
from 'The View from Europe: Caribbean Agriculture & Food Security' 05 May 2009

"... no nation can afford to continue to import such huge volumes of food; let alone maintain the food price subsidies that many nations provide. In short, if the Caribbean's food import bill was unsustainable before the global economic crisis, the austerity budgets that governments now have to introduce to weather the recession are making essential the development of a new Caribbean agricultural model.

One broader consequence now emerging is that the prices surges in 2007 had the consequence of causing some wealthy, but water-poor and agriculturally weak nations to embark on overseas programs that seek to establish large scale agricultural investments in other nations to ensure their own domestic food security. This approach is leading to the development of two very different economic models. In the first, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, China and others have established development funds to finance investments in agriculture across the world, with the objective of producing enough food to underwrite domestic demand and meet their own food security needs. An alternative model is being pursued by Japan which is considering overseas agricultural investments in Latin America and Eastern Europe in order to increase food production globally.

These developments have serious moral, economic and political implications especially in the case of the former approach, where there is little intention to supply the nation in which the investment is located. Foreign investment in agriculture also raises ethical questions in relation to small farmers, the industrialization of agriculture, the impact on land prices, and national sovereignty, to say nothing about the implied rise of a new colonialism. Meanwhile, the Caribbean is still struggling to develop a new agricultural model."

http://www.shridathramphalcentre.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=498:the-view-from-europe-caribbean-agriculture-a-food-security&catid=22&Itemid=100014

Economic Development (COTED) on Agriculture held in September, 2009, the establishment of the Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA), Agricultural Trade Facilitation, and issues pertaining to Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary Risk Assessment as well as priority commodities for focus on agriculture interventions; and issues pertaining to Agricultural Policy and Planning Framework were deliberated. In October 2009, within the context of the 'Week of Agriculture and Rural Life', a major private sector dialogue forum was convened and it called on the Ministers to develop and implement a clear policy and plan that recognizes the multi-sectoral role of agriculture and agribusiness in national development.

...developing agriculture through value chains

"The Value Chain Methodology allows one to identify and to remove constraints to gain access to particular markets, even if these markets are local/regional, and in so doing, to position oneself, in a competitive manner on a continuous basis".

Robert Reid, IICA Regional Agribusiness Specialist (2009)

In 2009, there was also deliberate focus to place agribusiness at the centre of agriculture policy and programs. Against the backdrop of national efforts to boost crop production output and in turn food security, there was a revived interest at the Regional level to support agribusiness and food value chain development in the Caribbean. The 'value chain' became the new buzz word, with organizations taking concerted steps to foster understanding and implementation of the concept. The CARICOM Secretariat, IICA, the FAO, the Centre for Enterprise Development (CDE), the Caribbean Agribusiness Association (CABA), Trinidad and Tobago Agribusiness Association (TTABA) and the Caribbean Farmers Network (CaFAN) are among the agencies involved in promoting the Value Chain methodology and approach.

In early 2009, the EU/CARICOM Agribusiness Development Program under the 9th EDF was launched, coordinated by the CARICOM Secretariat. Also initiated was the US\$ 4.07 million Food and Agriculture Organization's CARICOM/CARIFORUM Food Security Project (Phase II) which seeks to improve the food security situation of Caribbean member states at different levels through the provision of support services that promote efficient and sustainable

food value-chains, as well as the strengthening of the food policy environment. IICA's Agribusiness Unit is a collaborating partner in both initiatives as it also seeks to promote the development of value chain dialogue platforms in selected countries such as Trinidad and Tobago, the Dominican Republic and the Bahamas.

The emphasis of all these initiatives was to create and sustain competitive value chains by, *inter alia*, transforming farming culture, promoting the establishment of dialogue platforms between small and medium sized producers and buyers and building capacity among agriculture stakeholders as a basis for strengthening production capacity and 'linkages' within and beyond agriculture and expanding trade. This is based on a recognition that all analytical tools for assessing competitiveness, on their own, will not lead to competitiveness. Globalization demands that analysis is matched with dialogue leading to a competitiveness agreement between and among actors along a particular value chain.

As part of this chain-building thrust, there were renewed efforts towards expanding agro-processing capacity. For example in 2009, Saint Lucia placed high priority on the development and use of agro-processing techniques to add value to locally grown produce and introduce new technologies to enhance the agriculture sector. In this context, construction began on a new Fond Assau Agro-processing Facility and a multi-million-dollar National Meat Processing Facility at the Beausejour Agricultural Station in Vieux-Fort. When operational, the Fond Assau agro-processing facility is expected to facilitate the manufacturing of vacuum-packed products from locally grown breadfruit, dasheen, green plantain and green fig for marketing locally, regionally and internationally. The meat processing facility is poised to significantly decrease the country's food import bill over time and modernize the livestock sector in particular, and the agriculture industry in general. Construction of both facilities is being supported by the Taiwanese government and they are expected to play an important role in creating employment and income-earning opportunities in the rural community.

Notwithstanding the global economic crisis, rising food import bills and food security which remained high on

the political agenda during 2009, at the Regional level, effective national policy frameworks that addresses the development of supply-side capacity and the stimulation of entrepreneurship through value chain agribusiness development are still lacking.

...removing barriers to intra-regional trade

“Cheaper chicken from Guyana that should have begun flooding Trinidad supermarkets at the beginning of the year never arrived because of sanitary requirement trade barriers.... We have less tariff restrictions and more non-tariff barriers put up to trade in the region”.

President Bharrat Jagdeo, 28th CHOg, Barbados, July 2007

In spite of concerted efforts to boost production capacity for food security and intra-regional trade, 2009 continued to be a year for trade disputes, with several CARICOM states lamenting the fact of too many barriers to intra-regional trade in agriculture. The Common Market agreement makes provisions for the free movement of commodities as the basis of intra-regional policies and specifically prohibits the imposition of import duties on goods of Common Market origin. However, while substantial progress has been made since the mid-1990s in removing several impediments to intra-CARICOM trade, a number of member countries still impose discretionary non-tariff measures (NTMs) that act as barriers to imports from other member states.

The issue of agricultural health and food safety (AHFS) is at the heart of the NTBs in intra-regional trade in CARICOM. Countries in the region continue to be affected by various pests and diseases. These include Citrus greening disease in Belize; Black Sigatoka disease of bananas and plantains in Guyana; the Giant African Snail in several islands including Barbados, St. Lucia and Antigua and Barbuda; Lethal Yellowing of coconut in Jamaica; and the Red Palm Mite which has spread to several islands in the Region. Under the VEP programme protocols are being developed and surveillance activities are on-going for animal diseases such as Avian Influenza, Classical Swine Fever, Brucellosis, and New Castle Disease. The occurrence of these pests and diseases has resulted in significant drop in production of the affected commodity.

Some member states have prevented entry of some agricultural produce based on AHFS concerns, such as the barring of yams, breadfruit, lime, citrus and mango exports from Dominica to Trinidad. Such concerns and removal of barriers can only be achieved through, among other measures, the completion of pest risk analysis (PRA). Standards and the capacity for AHFS regulation differs within the Caribbean. In CARICOM, the discrepancy in standardization often occurs between the more developed CARICOM members and the less developed ones. Many of the smaller members have expressed an interest in mirroring the standardization procedures of the more advanced islands. It is the expectation that the establishment and operation of the CAHFSA will reduce the incidence of such barriers to intra-regional trade.

In the absence of an operating CAHSFA, the plant and veterinary bodies in the region maintained their vigilance over AHFS issues. In 2009, the Regional Plant Health Directors' Forum (PHDF) convened their second meeting. USDA-APHIS, IICA, FAO, CARICOM Secretariat, CABI, CARDI and CIRAD are also partners in the PHDF. The third meeting of the PHDF is scheduled to be held in April 2010 in collaboration with the CARICOM Secretariat, USDA-APHIS, FAO, CIRAD and IICA. The CaribVET Network and the Chief Veterinary Officers meetings continue to successfully guide policies and address relevant issues related to animal health in the Region.

The PHDF was formed against the background of the need to have a forum of plant health directors in the Region to guide policies and address relevant issues such as plant pests that are of importance to the Region. It is recognized by COTED as the regional group for policy guidance. Members of the PHDF also collaborated to develop the Greater Caribbean Safeguarding Initiative (GCSI) (USDA-APHIS, IICA, the CARICOM Secretariat, FAO and CABI) aimed at providing the partners with the opportunity to establish a perimeter defense against the introduction of high risk plant pests into the greater Caribbean region (GCR). This is to be achieved through collaborative efforts to harmonize quarantines, exclusion strategies and other safeguarding initiatives before they reach the borders of these nations. This is complemented by the UNEP/GEF project on 'Mitigating the threats of invasive species in the insular Caribbean', being implemented by CABI along

with several co-financiers including IICA, USDA-APHIS, USGS, UTT-MESCA and GISP. The overall project objective is to mitigate the threats to local biodiversity from invasive alien species in the insular Caribbean, including terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems.

The contentious issue of AHFS-driven non-tariff barriers (NTBs) to intra-regional trade featured prominently on the agenda and discussions of the Thirty-Second Special COTED on Agriculture (18 September 2009). This issue was addressed in discussions on agricultural trade facilitation, AHFS Systems and Infrastructure and on the identification of a list of priority commodities for focus on agriculture interventions. CARICOM Ministers of Agriculture committed to reviewing the situation with respect to existing NTBs within CARICOM and to interventions aimed at rectifying the situation established a Ministerial Sub Committee to review the present situation as it exists in the region and make recommendations to the COTED for its consideration aimed at enhanced facilitation of regional trade in agricultural products. IICA, FAO, CARDI and the CARICOM Secretariat are providing technical support to the Ministerial Sub Committee in this regard.

...stimulating financing and investment in agriculture

“We are trying to position agriculture as a good investment prospect, especially in this global economic decline where paper trading has collapsed. It is now time to invest in the real sector, and agriculture is where that should start”, Earl Jarrett, Jamaica, Private Sector Forum (October 2009)

Lack of financing and new investments continued to be among the major key binding constraint to agricultural development in the Caribbean. In CARICOM in particular, much of the investment in agriculture remains public sector driven, through government-government projects funded, for example, by the European Union’s (EU) Economic Development Fund (EDF), and the Taiwanese, Chinese and Brazilian governments, as noted above in the cases of Taiwanese investment in Saint Lucia and Nevis. The Chinese were particularly active in 2009 in several Caribbean countries, signing cooperation agreements with The Bahamas and Barbados aimed at boosting the development of crop production, fisheries/fish farming

and fish processing, livestock production and water-saving irrigation.

Such investments have complemented efforts of several Ministries of Agriculture to develop internal capacity for stimulating greater investment in agriculture. Since 2008, Ministries of Agriculture in the Caribbean have been exploring the benefits of establishing agriculture investment units. For example, such a unit was established in Dominica in late 2008, while in mid-2009, the Minister of Jamaica announced the intent to establish an Agro-Investment Corporation (AIC) to package and promote medium and large scale investments to drive production in the sector. The Corporation will act as a one-stop facility within the Ministry and is intended to work closely with the Jamaica Trade and Invest (JTI) and the Ministry of Industry, Investment and Commerce. Of significance, is that the proposed AIC has recognized the need to encourage and support efforts of small farmers to group, or cluster, to enhance the delivery of services, in a manner similar to community based farmers’ groups called Production and Marketing Organizations (PMOs). This initiative of the Jamaican Government will contribute simultaneously to the alleviation of two key binding constraints – limited financing and new investments and fragmented and disorganized private sector, with positive benefits on the other seven key binding constraints.

However, while there is a view that the Caribbean region has a relatively large and untapped reservoir of investments in almost all major components of agriculture, 2009 saw a renewed effort to improve the conditions that will attract greater financing and investment in agriculture in the Caribbean, as governments of the region were subject to much critique in the regional press for the under-financing of agriculture. For example, in early July, the Daily Nation reported that Minister of Agriculture of Barbados, Senator Haynesley Benn, called for further investments in the agricultural sector across the region. The newspaper noted that ***‘as the region’s food import bill marches towards US\$4 billion, governments across the region came under fire for their continued reduction in agricultural funding, particularly in the areas of technology and innovation’***. The newspaper also reported that Minister Benn indicated ***“investment into the agricultural sector has been reducing over the years. In the last 20***

years or so, the world has seen a reduction in the financing of agriculture. The governments of our countries have been investing less in technology and innovation. We have seen a reduction to the agricultural extension and other services’.

Towards the end of 2009, in addressing Heads of State at the FAO Global Food Summit, President Bharrat Jagdeo of Guyana and Lead CARICOM Head with responsibility for Agriculture, arrived at a similar conclusion, that... “we simply can’t move the sector forward unless there is the political will to do so in the country and the political will has to express itself in policies, incentives and specific budgetary allocations to tackle important issues like drainage and irrigation, research and development. Unless we do these things as Government we can talk just rhetorically about how important agriculture is, and how much we want food security, but it will not happen and unfortunately in some countries we have not seen that expression of that political will”.⁷

However, while there continues to be an urgent need for greater investments in agriculture in the region, Ligeon and Jolly (2009) noted that Caribbean countries are investing in agricultural development with limited knowledge of present levels of efficiency and technical efficiencies emanating from recent changes within the sector.⁸ The authors concluded that technical efficiencies of these countries’ agriculture vary from 30% for St. Vincent and the Grenadines to 95% for Dominican Republic. Dominica and Saint Lucia experience efficiencies of 32% and 33%, respectively, whereas Haiti and Barbados have 93% and 94%, respectively. Jamaica has 80%, while Guyana has 57%. All other CARICOM countries have less than 50% efficiency. The authors concluded that industrial growth and sugar production reduce levels of technical inefficiencies, while urban population growth rate positively influences inefficiency in the sector. They recommended that, as part of the efforts to address deficiencies related to limited

financing and new investments, countries must examine the factors that influence agricultural efficiency both at the micro-and macro level, and use a holistic approach which encompasses the involvement of other sectors that provide linkages to the agricultural sector.

For the period 2009 - 2010, mainly due to the shocks of the global economic crisis combined with high national food prices and high unemployment rates, the level of agricultural investment and rural credit declined in the Caribbean region. The slowdown of the world economy, which has affected the price of primary commodities and volume of exports, has had an impact in reducing remittances, demand for tourism services, foreign direct investments and official development assistance (ODA) to agriculture for the Caribbean region. Since 2000, global ODA in real terms has increased steadily over the last years, however, the ODA to agriculture declined by an average of 4 % per year, a trend that has left the Caribbean region vulnerable and less capable of achieving food security and weathering shocks like the current financial and food crisis. From 1988 – 2008, donors committed ten times the amounts to Asia than they committed to Central America, Mexico and the Caribbean.

Main Institutional Policy-related Changes

In the region, an oft-cited limiting factor to agricultural development has been the slow pace of institutional change of agriculture-related bodies. This is particularly so for public sector institutions established to provide guidance and build capacity for agricultural development.

...strengthening regional coordination

At the Regional level, despite the fact that the Jagdeo Initiative has established a vision for agricultural development in the Caribbean region and clearly pinpoints the bottlenecks hindering its development, there were no significant reforms to strengthen the institutional and public administrative framework for agricultural policy and programming. The Committee of Lead Agencies (CLA) established to coordinate RTP implementation has been largely inactive. The CLA was re-constituted and widened to include private sector representation for implementation of the Jagdeo Initiative. This CORE group has also been largely inactive. A more recent attempt to

7 “President Jagdeo to advocate further assistance for Region’s agriculture sector - at FAO World Food Summit in Rome”, Friday, 13 November 2009, from <http://opnew.op.gov.gy>

8 ‘Technical Efficiency in the Agricultural Sectors of Selected CARICOM Countries’ (2009) C.M. Ligeon, Associate Professor, School of Business, Auburn University, Montgomery and C. M. Jolly, Professor and Chair, Department of Agricultural economics and Rural Sociology, Auburn University, Auburn Alabama. 2009 CAES Conference

institutionalize an oversight and management system for enhancing implementation of the Jagdeo Initiative has been the Technical Management Advisory Committees (TMACs) with responsibility for each one of the nine Key Binding Constraints (KBCs). These TMACs are intended to provide technical advice to the respective Minister of Agriculture with responsibility for a KBC. The TMAC system was in response to what is described as “*the lack of a systematic, well coordinated institutional mechanism for implementation and follow-up, (coupled with) low levels of resource mobilization and allocation*”⁹ which continues to hinder progress.

...expanding regional R&D capacity

The institutional environment for promoting sustainable agricultural development received a boost with the launch of a regional research facility - the Centre of Excellence for Advanced Technology in Agriculture (CEATA) in March 2009. The Centre, in Jamaica serves as a coordinating agency to address research and training in the agricultural sector. It comprises a large body of stakeholder groups representing international agencies, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), and other institutions, in Jamaica that are involved in the promotion and capacity building of agriculture, such as the Scientific Research Council (SCR), the University of the West Indies, and Northern Caribbean University. The primary function of CEATA is two-fold: to help to define the agricultural research agenda based on a practical assessment of the challenges facing the sector; and to coordinate local and external stakeholder agencies in engaging in appropriate research to address these challenges.

The Centre was established with financing from the Government of Spain. The Jamaica Ministry of Agriculture reported that the first tranche, a grant of US\$ of 389,000, was allocated to the construction of two greenhouses, to promote capacity building in protected agriculture, so as to expose more farmers to the technology in an effort to move it into the mainstream; and to develop a variety of training modules with the aim of strengthening RADA’s capacity in the delivery of farmer training. Although the

centre will be located in Jamaica, it is intended to serve the entire region, and will be managed by a 15-member Advisory Board drawn from various local, regional and international agricultural related institutions.

...improving the environment for trade

An institutional change with implications for agriculture trade was the establishment of the **Office of Trade Negotiations (OTN)** in July 2009. This followed a decision of the CARICOM Conference of Heads of Government (CHoG), at its 20th Inter-Sessional Meeting in Belize (March 2009), to incorporate the functions of the then CRNM into the CARICOM Secretariat as a Specialized Department. The OTN has the potential to influence the pace of agricultural development in the CSME and representation of agricultural interests in trade and economic negotiations. The office will also spearhead the CARICOM-Canada negotiations which commenced the first round of negotiations in November 2009. This followed a CHoG decision (at the Twentieth Inter-Sessional Meeting, 12-13 March) and approval of a CARICOM Negotiating Brief as the basis for the commencement of negotiations of the Agreement. The Brief placed emphasis on the need for a strong development dimension particularly given the impact of the current global financial and economic crisis on the Region. The new Free Trade Agreement will govern trade and economic relations between the CARICOM and Canada. By the end of 2009, while the early discussions did not explore the entire range of negotiating issues, agriculture took priority among the limited yet critical topics that included Services, Investment and Market Access in goods.

Another important aspect of the institutional development in CARICOM in the area of trade and economic negotiations was progress made regarding the institutional arrangements for the efficient implementation of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). The EPA was signed in late 2008 for implementation in 2009. As a result, an EPA Implementation Unit to facilitate effective implementation was established at the CARICOM Secretariat.

...preparing for climate change adaptation

In the immediate future, climate change will be a powerful aspect of global change having a significant impact on

9 V. Little (IICA’s Regional Specialist Caribbean Regional Technical Agenda), ‘Perspectives on a Regional Strategy: the Jagdeo Initiative’

agriculture, food security and sustainable rural livelihoods in the Caribbean region. Critically, in 2009 there were some signs of institutional changes in the region in relation to climate change that promise to have some implications for the agricultural policy and development process.

In January, the **Caribbean Drought and Precipitation Monitoring Network (CDPMN)** – Barbados Component, was launched under the project The Caribbean Water Initiative. The goal is to deliver sustainable and equitable Integrated Water Resources Management to partner Caribbean countries. Through a collaborative project between the Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH) and the University of Applied Sciences, of Southern Switzerland, Barbados is being included in the CDPMN. In a press release, the CIMH noted that CDPMN is one way to deal with the impacts of climate variability and change and the uncertainty surrounding these by providing early warning of drought and flood by monitoring and predicting precipitation.

Under the CDPMN, precipitation will be monitored on two scales: (i) regional, encompassing the entire Caribbean basin and (ii) national, using a number of climate related (mainly precipitation) indices and indicators (river/stream flow, ground water levels, vegetation status). The final drought and precipitation status of the region or country will be determined, by consensus, by networks of persons from different sectors, institutions, communities and backgrounds embracing the diversity in definitions and impacts of drought and by utilizing the spectrum of indices and indicators. Precipitation forecasts will be used in combination with the monitoring output to provide forecasts of indices with lead times of up to three months. Sectors like agriculture and water resources in Barbados stand to benefit from this activity as policy making with respect to the management of water resources are expected to improve. What will eventually be the Barbados Water Monitor, will become operational by 2010.

Caribbean Prime Ministers were among world leaders who met in November in Copenhagen for international negotiations aimed at arriving at a new intergovernmental regime to address causes and impacts of climate change. However, the Copenhagen conference did not arrive

at a new global consensus through the signing of an agreement that was legally binding on contracting parties. At both the Summit of Americas and Commonwealth Summits in Trinidad and Tobago during the last quarter of 2009, CARICOM Heads of Government reiterated the need for a united front for trying to ‘seal a firm deal on climate change’ at the upcoming Copenhagen conference, notably to obtain commitment for significant adaptation funds for many countries to deal with this issue of strategic importance to the Region. For the region, among the positive results of the conference were the financial pledges made to help the poorer and more vulnerable countries and the widening of the concept of the framework of REDD (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation) to REDD+, which provides other options to obtain financing for forest protection and conservation of forest stock.

...building MoA institutional capacity

For the region, operationalizing the CAHFSA will mark another important institutional advancement. At the last agriculture COTED in September 2009, discussions centred on the offer of the Suriname Government to host the CAHFSA and the associated administrative, legal, financial and human resource requirements. A functioning CAHFSA is essential to secure the AHFS priorities of the region, and will be instrumental in building capacity for risk assessment, including the capacity to undertake Pest Risk Analysis (PRAs) that is central to solving many of the disputes in intra-regional trade in agricultural products. The outbreak of the H1N1 flu virus, commonly known as the ‘swine flu’ sent shock waves through the Caribbean, not only in terms of impact on human health, but also in terms of the impact of mis-information on a major aspect of the agriculture sector - the pork industry. Amidst the concerns over contracting the virus, Ministries of Agriculture officials were at pains to reassure the public that ‘pork is safe to eat –once it is properly cooked’; a message that is perhaps as old as the pork industry. It is situations such as these that make the need for the operation of the CAHFSA more urgent now, than before.

Within the region, Jamaica took concerted efforts to strengthen its PRA capacity, which was a major institutional change necessary to give effect to its agricultural development policy. Jamaica also made

headway with respect to other changes and re-design of its administrative apparatus to support institutional reform. This action resulted in the establishment of the Agro Investment Corporation aimed at packaging and promoting agribusiness investment opportunities in medium and large farms, and establishment of Productivity and Protected Agriculture Units within the Ministry of Agriculture. The Ministry of Agriculture in Dominica also established an Agricultural Investment Unit in late 2008 aimed at spearheading actions to attract and increase financing and investment in agricultural development project.

The Global Financial Crisis and Agriculture Development in the Caribbean

Reduced remittances and a projected decline in ODA to agriculture will further limit the ability of member states in the Caribbean region to access investment capital for sustaining agricultural production and creating safety nets and social protection schemes for the rural producers and residents. Unlike previous crises, the Caribbean region

Jamaica develops Pest Risk Analysis Capacity

The Agriculture Ministry has established A Pest Risk Analysis (PRA) unit as part of its Plant Quarantine/ Produce Inspection Branch. This will strengthen its capacity to curtail the infestation of pests in Jamaica through investigation and evaluation and provision of technical information. Pest-risk analysis is conducted to protect the agricultural sector from damage that can be caused by harmful foreign pests brought into Jamaica with imported goods. The unit will also provide a level of protection for the consuming public. Such trade monitoring systems will ensure that foods meet certain basic standards for trade, particularly those imported from abroad.

Adapted from 'Unit set up to prevent pest infestation'

Published: Friday | January 15, 2010 (The Jamaica Gleaner)

has less room to adjust to the deteriorating economic conditions, because the turmoil is affecting practically all parts of the world more or less simultaneously. The scope for remedial mechanisms including the borrowing from international markets to adjust to macroeconomic shocks is much more limited in a global crisis.

The Ministers of Agriculture in the Caribbean region gave a commitment at the World Food Security summit to increase agricultural investment by about 50 percent a year in order to alleviate food security issues in the Caribbean. The primary areas recommended for investments include crops and livestock production, storage facilities, market facilities and food processing. Investments in agricultural research and development; sectors strongly linked to the agricultural productivity growth such as extension and agricultural institutions and non agricultural investments to enhance rural life like health and education particularly of women. Private sector investment needs to be encouraged in the Caribbean region at all stages in the value chain. Changes are needed in the investment climate such as the lending policies of commercial and development banks to agriculture, risks and the limitations on the ability of microfinance systems to bring significant improvements in production and productivity.

Global Investment collaboration between institutions

The food crisis has propelled agriculture and food security, especially in developing countries, including the Caribbean, back onto the front pages of newspapers and the top of policy-makers' agendas. The Joint Statement on Global Food Security ("L'Aquila Food Security Initiative") produced by the G8 with partner governments, agencies and institutions, is a testimony to this renewed collaboration and commitment of the global community to improve investment and rural credit to agricultural production and productivity. Nevertheless, there is a risk that a preoccupation with stagnating developed country economies and failing corporations due to the financial and economic crisis will shift resources away from the Caribbean countries. Yet food, the most basic of all human needs, is no more affordable, leaving more and more people without the means to consistently obtain nutritious food throughout the year. Indeed, if the food crisis was about higher prices, the economic crisis is about lower household incomes, which can be even more devastating, aggravating already unacceptable levels of food insecurity and poverty. Past economic crises have typically led to declines in public investment in agriculture. Despite the difficult global economic conditions, investments and support to agriculture should not be reduced; indeed, it must be increased. A healthy

agriculture sector, combined with a growing non-farm economy and effective safety nets and social-protection programmes, including food safety nets and nutrition-assistance programmes, is a proven way to eradicate poverty and food insecurity in a sustainable manner.

This year's State of Food Insecurity in the World was a true collaborative effort between institutions such as: the World Food Programme (WFP); the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI); the World Bank; the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB); the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean; (ECLAC); the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); the Norman Borlaug Institute for International Agriculture; the International Markets Bureau-Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO); the University of California-Davis; and the Latin American Agribusiness Development Corporation. These institutions combined different strengths to create new insights and prepared a publication to promote increased short and long term investments in agriculture from joint cooperation in collaboration with the United States Department of Agriculture.

In the Caribbean region, the conduct and organization of a regional workshop and a regional meeting on Food Security was facilitated by the collaborative effort between FAO, IICA and the CARICOM Secretariat to maximize each institution's expertise and comparative advantage so their combined efforts better serve the Caribbean to mobilize and use scarce resources effectively and efficiently. The hosting of the Symposium in Agricultural Insurance was also an effective collaborative effort between the World Bank and IICA to promote enhanced investment in agricultural insurance by producer organizations, public sector and private insurance companies for the Caribbean region.

The World Bank's World Development Report 2010 focuses on Development and Climate Change. The report suggests that developing countries including the Caribbean region, can shift to lower-carbon paths while promoting development and reducing poverty, but only if financial and technical investment from high-income countries is forthcoming.

The World Bank's Environment Department has published a report that sets out a compelling argument for including ecosystem-based approaches to mitigation and adaptation as a third and essential pillar in national strategies to address climate change. Such ecosystem-based strategies can offer cost-effective, proven and sustainable solutions contributing to, and complementing, other national and regional adaptation strategies. The report notes three of the world's greatest challenges over the coming decades will be biodiversity loss, climate change, and water shortages. It highlights that promoting further integration of ecosystem-based approaches into climate change responses and national adaptation strategies will require access to much greater sources of funding, including capitalizing on opportunities to protect natural ecosystems as part of major energy and infrastructure projects.

Consistent, comparable databases on national expenditure on agriculture are not easy to find in the Caribbean. When viewed from the perspective of sectoral shares to total public expenditures, government's commitments to agriculture are the weakest in the Caribbean and greatest in Asia, relative to Africa (Source: Fan, Yu Saurkur, 2007, based on IMF). Data on private sector investments in research and development for the Caribbean region remains very limited. The role of private sector investment in Caribbean agriculture should be encouraged by the promotion of funding opportunities and incentives for private research.



Scotch Bonnet Pepper
(*Capsicum chinense*) - a
revered commodity on
the Caribbean palate

4.0

Implementation of the Regional Technical Cooperation Agenda in 2008

Jagdeo Initiative (JI).

The relatively recent international imperatives, including the current global financial crisis, food price shocks, globalization, trade liberalization, CARIFORUM-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), and advances in information and communication technology have presented both challenges and opportunities to Caribbean Agriculture and the development of the Rural Spaces. Analysis of the global situation, based on 'analytical work recently reported by the UN Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), and UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), indicates that:

4.1 Introduction

This Chapter presents a brief description of the main institutional mechanisms for regional Inter-Agency Cooperation in the Caribbean, as well as the major initiatives executed within the framework of these mechanisms during 2009. The presentation is made within the context of a declining trend in Agriculture's contribution to the Caribbean economy and hence its importance. The decline experienced by the sector is evidenced by the slow to negative growth, aged population, inadequate investment by both the public and private sectors and non-innovative entrepreneurship. The situation has resulted in social dislocation through reduction in farm numbers, increased rural unemployment and poverty and increased food imports with consequential food insecurity and governance anxieties. It was against this background that the Region became convinced that in the context of new and changing international developments and environmental conditions, *that there was a need to reposition the agricultural sector.*

The repositioning of Agriculture has taken centre stage at the level of Heads of Government, both in its own right and as part of the deepening CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME). The Heads called for a *fundamentally different approach in terms of policy and strategy, which would allow the Region to decide on the sort of institutions and mechanisms needed to reposition agriculture. In 2003, President Jagdeo asked IICA and FAO to assist in the development of a framework for a regional agricultural repositioning strategy, and in particularly the development and implementation of policies, strategies and projects in support of the repositioning of the sector. One such strategy is the Regional Transformation Programme for Agriculture (RTP) as is being operationalized through the*

- **Availability of Food** is expected to worsen with time – demand is outstripping supply and productivity has declined. This situation could be exacerbated by the impact of climate change and reduced availability of water for agricultural purposes.
- **Prices of Food** will not return to levels experienced before the food crisis of 2007/2008 and they will be extremely volatile.
- **Food Inflation** is driving **general Inflation** and a large section of the population is having substantially fewer resources to address other basic human requirements, such as, health, housing and education.
- It is very likely that the **Millennium Development Goal (MDG)** of reducing poverty and hunger by 2015 will not be achieved – numbers for undernourished have in fact increased to 963 million in 2008 from 848 million in 2003.

In the context of the global and regional food situation, The Objectives agreed by the Region for Agriculture include:

- The fundamental transformation of the agricultural sector towards market-oriented, internationally competitive and environmentally sound production of agriculture products.
- Increased production, productivity and world market share.
- Increased diversification of processed agriculture products.

- Improved food and nutrition security.

The required political support to the achievements of these objectives were given by the Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community at their Thirtieth Meeting in Liliendaal, Guyana, 2-5 July, 2009, where they declare that agriculture is of strategic significance for the sustainable development of Caribbean Community, and have identified the sector as one of the drivers of the region's economic growth, contributing as it does to rural development, GDP, employment and export earnings of the Member States.

In what is now known as the **LILIENDAAL DECLARATION ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY**, the Heads of Governments of the Caribbean Community renewed their commitments to pursue a strategic approach to transforming the agricultural sector into an internationally competitive one with increased capacity to contribute to the sustained economic development of the Community, profitability for entrepreneurs and the economic livelihood of the rural sector and to food and nutrition security.

They recommitted to the provision of necessary financial and other resources to ensure internationally competitive, market led production, and the identification and effective employment of the appropriate policies and strategies which will aim to bring about the desired improvements to the sector. They issued a call on their development partners to assist Caribbean.

The Heads also issued a commitment to provide nationally and regionally, the enabling policy environment and financial support to encourage the development of the agri-business sector.

They reaffirmed their commitments to remove the key binding constraints to the development of the agriculture sector and food and nutrition security

4.2 Framework of Inter-Agency Cooperation – The Jagdeo Initiative

The key strategy for providing the enabling environment and support for agriculture in the Caribbean Region relates to the measures to alleviate key binding constraints at the regional and national levels. The process to define and

implement actions focused on the alleviation of major Key-Binding Constraints to agricultural development in the region was initiated in early 2004 by the President of Guyana, His Excellency President Bharrat Jagdeo, Lead Head of Government of CARICOM with responsibility for Agriculture. This Strategy, which has become known as the 'Jagdeo Initiative' aims at *“building on past efforts in a more coherent, comprehensive and long-term framework of Agricultural Development that takes into consideration the changed global environment.”*

In late 2004, the CARICOM Member States identified and defined what they considered to be nine (9) major Key-Binding Constraints to the Agricultural Development process. These constraints, which are presented in a Summary Matrix (**Table 1**), span the range from resource inputs necessary for increased agricultural production and productivity to the administrative and institutional framework needed to facilitate change.

The nine Key-Binding Constraints of the Jagdeo Initiative are deemed consistent and compatible with the thematic priorities of the OECS Strategic Framework for Developing the Sector, the Caribbean Regional Transformation Programme (RTP) for Agriculture, the Hemispheric Agro 2003 – 2015 Plan of Action, the Food Security Strategy of the FAO, and the United Nations MDG and therefore presents a suitable framework for Caribbean to meet the development objectives of the agricultural sector.

TABLE 1: JAGDEO INITIATIVE NINE (9) KEY BINDING CONSTRAINTS

No.	Constraints	Lead Country/Agency
1	Inadequate Financing and Investment in the Sector	Barbados / CARIBBEAN Development Bank (CDB)
2	Inefficient and outdated Agricultural Health and Food Safety Regulations	Trinidad and Tobago/CARICOM Secretariat
3	Inadequate Land and Water Resource Management and Distribution Systems	Guyana/ Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
4	Deficient and uncoordinated Disaster Risk Management	Antigua and Barbuda/FAO/IICA/CARDI
5	Market and Marketing Development and its linkages	Jamaica/Caribbean Agribusiness Association (CABA)
6	Ineffective Research and Development	St. Lucia/CARDI
7	Lack of skilled human resources	Dominica/University of the West Indies
8	Disorganized, Un-Coordinated Private Sector	St. Vincent and the Grenadines/ Caribbean Agribusiness Association
9	Inadequate Transportation System	St. Kitts and Nevis/CARICOM Secretariat

The Jagdeo Initiative underpins the implementation of intervention strategies aimed fundamentally at transforming the sector into a market-oriented and internationally competitive one.

The Lead Country/Lead Agency institutional mechanism for coordinating the elaboration and execution of interventions was strengthened in 2008 based on the decision taken at the **TWENTY-SEVENTH SPECIAL MEETING OF COTED AGRICULTURE (held in Guyana 19-21 May, 2008)** for “The establishment of a Technical Management Advisory Committee (TMAC) for each of the Constraints, with the Lead Country Minister or his Nominee chairing the Committee and the Lead Agency having responsibility for ensuring the technical and regional perspectives and synergies and for coordinating the development and implementation of the (Annual) Work Programme. Each TMAC included in its membership two to three experts in the related technical areas. The Permanent Secretary, as the Focal Point in the Country, will have responsibility as *cutive Secretary* of the TMAC.”



4.3 Inter-Agency Cooperation Initiatives During 2009

4.3.1 Overview

The Jagdeo Initiative institutional mechanism for coordinating the elaboration and implementation of interventions has provided the Caribbean Region with a suitable programmatic framework for Inter-Agency Cooperation. In fact, during 2009, Work Plans and Programmes were developed by the TMACs for each constraint. The nine (9) Work Plans and Programmes has since being integrated in an overall implementation Programme, in which areas of synergies and duplications were identified and necessary programmatic adjustments made to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the allocation of scarce resources and execution of activities.

Work commenced on the development and implementation of an Information Platform to determine, *inter alia*, the relevance, appropriateness and progress made in the implementation of the various programmed actions to measure progress in achieving food and nutrition security in the Caribbean and to serve as an early warning system for Food and Nutrition Security. The various Inter-Agency Cooperation Initiatives executed in 2009 are presented within the framework of the nine (9) Key – Binding Constraints.

4.3.2 Inadequate Financing and Investment

Regional Actions

Donor and Loan Resources to the Sector:

Concerted efforts to mobilize donor and loan resources for the development of the agricultural sector started in 2007, with the holding of the Agricultural Donor Conference in Trinidad and Tobago, where financing for Projects valued US \$283 million was sought. The response has been:

- Initial financial pledges of US \$11.6 million made at Donor Conference; and
- Additional funding from the **Government of Spain** valued at US \$3.9 million has been sourced for three projects.

During 2009, the CARICOM Secretariat in collaboration with the Lead Agencies continued the efforts to mobilize resources for the Projects through the further elaboration of the necessary instruments for accessing funding. In addition, the mission which had been agreed in the follow up action is being planned to key donors who had expressed interest – EU, IDB, CIDA and Japan. This would cover about 46 projects at a value of about US \$266 million.

Investment Forum:

The Investment Forum which was held in Guyana in June 2008 sought US \$50 million for some twenty-five projects has yielded to date,

- Six (6) successfully funded projects which had originally sought US\$5.8 million;
- Twelve (12) projects valued at US\$32m are in the negotiation stages; and
- No progress in the remaining 7 projects

The Agricultural Modernization Fund (AMF): Work started, during 2009, to determine the feasibility of establishing the Agricultural Modernization Fund within the newly established CARICOM Development Fund (CDF). The intention is that with the establishment of the AMF,

- Member States will have direct access to funds for the development and implementation of programmes which will assist with agricultural infrastructure development; and
- Entrepreneurs will have access to funds for the establishment of cross-border investments.

The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) as the Lead Agency with responsibility for addressing this financing constraint has allocated US\$45,000 towards this study.

The Agricultural Food Needs Study commissioned by IICA to identify potential investment opportunities within the Agri-Food Industry in the Region was completed during 2009 and is to be utilized to inform and guide the lending policy and regime of the Agricultural Modernization Fund. The TMAC for this constraint is utilizing this report to identify a portfolio of investment projects, from which

at least two regional projects will be elaborated and presented for funding.

The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) in attempting to ameliorate the impact of rising food, fuel and feed prices in the region, pledged to Latin America and the Caribbean US \$500 million, in support of efforts aimed at ensuring food security.

Against the backdrop of national efforts made to cushion the increasing cost of agricultural inputs as well as boost crop production output and in turn, food security, there was a revived interest at the Regional level to support agribusiness and food value chain development in the Caribbean. In early 2009, the EU/CARICOM Agribusiness Development Programme was launched. Also initiated was the US \$4.07 million Food and Agriculture Organization's CARICOM/CARIFORUM Food Security Project (Phase II) which seeks to improve the food security situation of Caribbean member states at different levels through the provision of support services that promote efficient and sustainable food value-chains, as well as the strengthening of the food policy environment.

CARDI has redoubled its efforts to secure additional resources for implementing the various interventions under its portfolio. These efforts successfully obtained:

- US \$3.3 million from the Common Fund for Commodity (CFC) to undertake research and development activities related to Root Crops and Tubers in Barbados, Dominica, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago;
- US \$3.0 million from the Common Fund for Commodity to undertake research and development activities related to Protected Agriculture (green/shade houses) in Jamaica, Haiti and Trinidad and Tobago;
- US \$100,000 to develop seeds/seedling bank for critical crops as a disaster mitigation initiative;
- US \$150,000 from the Caribbean Development Bank to support research and development activities related to protected Agriculture, in collaboration with the University of the West Indies (UWI).

National Actions

There were also several National financing activities in 2009.

- The Barbados Government continued its support to farmers involved in food production through the use of government's farm Credit Schemes such as the Agricultural Development Fund, the Enterprise Growth Fund and the Rural Development Commission Enterprise Fund.
- Guyana received US\$6.0 million for Rural Enterprise and Agricultural Development Programme from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

The Guyana Government was actively engaged in the implementation of a US \$21.9 million Agricultural Export Diversification Programme. Guyana increased its investment in drainage and irrigation with a budget allocation of US\$5.0 million to address a frequent flooding problem associated with the drainage system.

Guyana also initiated a World Bank US \$5.0 million Conservancy Adaptation Project in respect of climate change. Rehabilitation of important drainage structures associated with the East Coast Demerara conservancy is contemplated.

Financing of US\$469,635 was made available from the Government of Spain for a project to be implemented in the hinterland Rupununi District where indigenous peoples will be supported in the production of rice and beans.

The Government of Guyana continued the implementation of the Agricultural Sector Support Programme (ASSP), which is designed to rehabilitate drainage and irrigation structures, organize farmers to manage the Operation and Maintenance [O&M] of rehabilitated structures and support rice research and agricultural diversification. This is an IDB funded project worth US\$20 million.

Guyana initiated the implementation of the "Expanding Bioenergy Opportunities in Guyana Project" which was signed on September 23, 2008. This project is valued at US\$1.288 million.

Haiti prepared a portfolio document “Invest for the future of Food Security for Haiti,” which comprises of 23 project profiles which is before a consortium of Donor Institutions for their consideration.

In Jamaica

- The Government continued the implementation of a Lending Programme for farmers under a loan of US \$6.7 million provided by Caribbean Development Bank (CDB).
- IICA is executing a CIDA funded project to develop the greenhouse and fisheries sectors valued at US\$1-7 million.
- A Rural Diversification and Enterprise Development Programme was launched for the banana producing areas with support from the European Union. The programme seeks to fund new income earning enterprises given the expected decline in banana production stemming from the new trade regime.
- The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, the European Commission (EC) and the United Nation’s Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) committed J \$730 million to a programme to help 5,000 small farmers, including livestock producers, to boost farm productivity and hence production.
- The Government continued the implementation of the J\$1,550million Fishermen Revolving Loan Scheme.
- The Ministry of Agriculture engaged FAO to fund a study to determine the feasibility of establishing a Grameen Bank Loan Model (GBM) to finance small farmers.
- An Investment Unit has been established in the Ministry of Agriculture.
- The Government of Suriname developed an Agricultural Sector Plan which is in the implementation stage, through resources made available by the Holland Development Funds and the European Union.

Suriname initiated actions aimed at expanding the 2.3 million Euros Credit Fund to a value of 9.8 million Euros to include the rice industry.

- The Government of Trinidad and Tobago increased its budgetary allocation (2008/2009) for the Ministry of Agriculture Land and Marine Resources for

infrastructural development (access roads, irrigation and drainage works) from TT \$1.2 billion in 2008 to TT \$1.7 billion in 2009.

In addition, the Government increased its allocation to the Agricultural Development Bank (ADB) for on-lending to the sector from TT \$100 million in the 2007/2008 fiscal year to TT \$125 million in the 2008/2009. The ADB reduced its lending rate from 12% to 6% for former Caroni Limited sugar workers to 5% and adjusted collateral requirements to facilitate farmers.

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago also strengthened the Community Development Fund to enhance the granting of funds to rural community groups for agricultural projects.

The Government provided support for traditional small and medium size private farms through a range of incentives, including soft loan facilities.

4.3.3

Outdated and Inefficient Agricultural Health and Food Safety Systems

Limited progress has been made with respect to the ability to coordinate the vast number of diverse issues related to Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary measures, both at the national and regional levels.

Regional Actions

- The **Expert CARICOM Team (ECT) on Sanitary Phyto-Sanitary (SPS)** Measures established to facilitate trade in agricultural products, have examined the lists of products submitted from eight Member States indicating an interest in exporting eighteen (18) commodities show trade export import matches. However, the risk assessment process is being impacted negatively by limitations of financial resources and the availability of dedicated technical capacity in the Region.
- Though endorsed by COTED at its Twenty-Seventh Meeting held in Guyana in May 2009, mandated the CARICOM Secretariat to review the proposal made by Suriname for the establishment of **Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety**

Agency (CAHFSA), taking into account the offer by Suriname for the hosting of CAHFSA. In this regard, the Thirteenth Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community, held in Guyana, 2-5 July 2009.

- Welcomed and accepted the offer by Suriname to host the CAHFSA. The CAHFSA was launched in Suriname in March 2010
- The Bills to update and harmonise legislation on Animal Health, Plant Health and Food Safety in CARICOM are being revised (based on comments received) for submission to the next meeting of the Legal Affairs Committee (LAC) of CARICOM Community for its final acceptance.
- A project for the Strengthening the Capacity and Capability of Agricultural Health and Food Safety Laboratories and Systems in CARICOM Member States under the CISP (Ninth EDF funds) is currently being implemented.
- With respect to the Assessment of National AHFS Systems, both IICA and the World Animal Health Organization (OIE) have conducted assessments in several countries. The performance, vision and strategy (PVS tool developed by IICA) was applied to all countries in order to determine their status with respect to AHFS.
- The CARICOM Secretariat engaged the USDA/APHIS in preliminary discussions regarding assistance to CARICOM countries to benefit from the USDA/APHIS Programme on the Offshore Pest Information Programme (OPIP). The dialogue is ongoing.

National Actions

- Two Member States (**Barbados and Jamaica**) conducted OIE evaluation of their veterinary services in 2009. Both countries are now seeking funding for the design of holistic programmes for implementation of improvement and strengthening activities re their animal health systems including infrastructure.
- The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is implementing a project on **Strengthening of the Plant Health Services in St Lucia and St Vincent and the Grenadines**.
- CAB International (CABI) with funding from UNEP GEF Global Fund is implementing an invasive species project

in five countries (**Barbados, Jamaica, Dominican Republic, St Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago**) which aims to mitigate, control, and eradicate the **red palm mite problem** – from marine to terrestrial.

- **With respect to National Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agencies (NAHFSA)**
 - Belize has fully established its NAHFSA and other Member States are at various stages towards the establishment of national bodies.
 - Barbados has also established safe and sanitary amenities for the sale of fish products, including modern market facilities, fish landing sites and processing facilities, all aimed at complying with international standards.
 - Guyana's IDB funded Agricultural Export Diversification Project has an Agricultural Health and Food Safety Component through which legislation is being drafted and updated. The creation of semi- autonomous Plant and Animal Services Agencies will result in upgraded services to farmers to enhance Guyana's ability to export and access regional and international markets.
 - Jamaica, as a precursor to the Food Safety Agency, has established a "one stop shop" for import and export inspection.
 - **Suriname** has established:
 - a trace back system to monitor banana and vegetable exports
 - a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) for the safe sustainable use of marine resources
 - an animal disease monitoring system which has been supported by farmers registration and animal identification and registration system Some 40 extension officers have been trained in animal health
 - a Fish Disease Monitoring System
 - Trinidad and Tobago has hired three technicians for risk assessment of invasive species and has developed an Emergency Animal Disease Preparedness Plan.
 - Other Member States have either established Committees (Grenada, Jamaica, **St Kitts and Nevis**

and Saint Lucia) or are establishing Committees (Dominica).

- In the case of Haiti there is a lack of resources to organize activities with respect to a NAHFSA.

4.3.4 Inefficient Land and Water Distribution and Management Systems

Regional Actions

- The Caribbean Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH), during 2009 initiated the process for continued implementing the following actions:
 - (a) Drought and flood analysis and monitoring
 - (b) Seasonal precipitation forecast
 - (c) Agro-climatic studies
 - (d) Flood plain mapping
 - (e) Crop water requirements analysis

National Actions

In Antigua and Barbuda, the GEF Project for Sustainable Island Resource Use (SIRM) developed an Environmental Information Management and Advisory System to address all natural resources. Studies on agriculture water supply and rainwater harvesting feasibility are currently being implemented.

- Barbados allocated the Bath Estate and other lands specifically for the production of root crops and vegetables.
- Guyana increased its average annual allocation to drainage and irrigation by US \$5.0 million

Guyana, during 2009 pursued a very aggressive Land Lease programme which has resulted in some Cross-border investments. Lands have been leased on a long term basis (up to 99 years) for between US\$1.00 – US\$2.50 per acre per year renewable. Investors have been provided with investment incentives, mainly in the form of a waiver of duties and taxes on all farm machinery and other items.

The Lands and Surveys Commission has completed land use planning exercises in respect of some coastal and hinterland regions such as the Corentyne and Rupununi (Regions 6 and 9, respectively). The exercise will continue for the other regions.

- Haiti was engaged in the implementation of medium term actions, of which the main activities were focus on supporting the rehabilitation of irrigation systems, watershed management, support to the urban and semi-urban agriculture, implementation of infrastructures for storage of water, as well as assistance to fishing, including aquaculture.
- Jamaica established a Water Resource Information System (WRIS) and Feasibility Studies on Irrigation and Rainwater Harvesting were being implemented.

Jamaica continued the implementation of the GOJ-CDB/ IDB funded National Development Irrigation Programme (NIDP), with the commissioning of three (3) CDB projects and the implementation of a further two (2) IDB projects. Hounslow pipeline system was extended by 17 kilometres. In addition, pipeline distributaries at Hounslow and Braco have been replaced to eliminate leaks and limestone sedimentation.

The Government launched a Black Tank (Water Supply) programme to enhance production in “dry farming” areas through small plot gravity-flow drip irrigation. By the end of 2009, some one hundred (100) 1,000 gallons imperial plastic tanks have been distributed in the parish of St. Elizabeth.

Government piped sections of the open canals in Clarendon which were known as “problem areas” to control seepage and spillage as well as illicit use of water. Some 2.48 kilometers of canals have been replaced with pipes of appropriate internal diameter.

Approximately 550 meters of earthen canals in St. Catherine (Rio Cobre System) have been lined with concrete to prevent seepage and reduce maintenance cost. In addition, approximately 5.6 kilometres of open canals were desilted to restore inverted gradient. Water measuring and flow control devices have been installed/ replaced to improve the control of water distribution to farmers.

- Montserrat regularized the land tenure system on government owned lands.
- **Suriname** developed a land information system which is ready for implementation.

Seven Water Boards have been established, while the legislation process is being put in place for the establishment of another seven. Members are being trained to manage the Boards.

A Feasibility study was conducted to rehabilitate the Pumping stations at Wakay.

- **Trinidad and Tobago** developed an agricultural land information system and inventory of state lands. Field inventory for 7,094 parcels of lands has been completed.

The Government demonstrated the sustainable management of on-farm irrigation system, through the establishment of demonstration irrigation systems on farm plots. Government commenced the survey and subdivision of state lands for distribution to farmers.

Trinidad and Tobago initiated the process for the (a) creation, maintenance and upgrading of parcel index maps, and (b) revision of geographic/topographic database.

The country developed a Wetlands Management Project. All State lands for agricultural purposes by the end of 2009 were transferred to the Estate Management and Business Development Company (EMBDC). The EMBDC is to establish sub-leases with eligible applicants for all usage of State Lands for agricultural purposes.

4.3.5 Deficient and Uncoordinated Risk Management Measures

Regional Actions

- The mandate of the Twenty-Ninth Meeting of the COTED to rationalize the initiatives of the TMAC on “Deficient and Uncoordinated Risk Management Measures” and those of the Agricultural Sector Sub-Committee (ASSC) of Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) Strategy of CDEMA was executed in 2009, with the amalgamation of both Committees. In this context, a Committee dealing with agricultural risk management was constituted and is chaired by the Minister of Agriculture of Antigua and Barbuda,

with FAO as the Lead Agency, and IICA and CARDI as Support Lead Agencies. A three-year Work Plan was being developed for the newly constituted Committee.

- IICA conducted a thorough review of the Weather Based Parametric Agricultural Insurance Product developed for the **Bahamas** and the **Jamaica** Feasibility Study, funded by the World Bank, for the introduction of Parametric Based Agricultural Insurance Products, with a view to determine their applicability for other countries of the Caribbean Region. Based on the reviews, a draft Position Paper was prepared on the “Challenges, Opportunities and Options for the Establishment of a Viable Agricultural Insurance Regime in the Caribbean.”
- Thirty-seven professionals from relevant institutions in Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago were trained in the Damage and Loss Assessment (DALA) Methodology for evaluating the impact of Natural Hazards on the economy.

National Actions

- A Disaster Damage Assessment of the agricultural sector was conducted for **Belize** in March 2009, following the passage of Tropical Depression 16 (TD 16) in late 2009.
- In December 2009, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture and the World Bank, in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture in **Guyana** organized an Agricultural Risk Management Symposium for public and private sector stakeholders. Participants were able to obtain a better understanding of predominant risk management instruments available to address the myriad of risk management problems of the sector. The Outcomes of the Symposium is to form the basis for the development of an overarching agricultural risk management strategy for Guyana.

Guyana installed a Doppler Weather Radar system in the country, from which is expected more accurate weather forecasting and effective warning systems.

- **Jamaica** has just completed a World Bank study on the design and implementation of a country strategy to manage weather risk in the agricultural sector.

The World Bank and IDB subsequently agreed to fund a pre-feasibility study to develop agricultural insurance products for better management of catastrophic climate risks in the agricultural sector at the level of individual farmer or group of farmers.

A Pilot Insurance Scheme for the coffee industry is being implemented.

In 2009, the Government adopted a range of strategies for combating praedial larceny, including the allocation of J\$23.6 million for the implementation of a National Animal Identification System.

- **Trinidad and Tobago** initiated actions for the development of an agricultural insurance scheme for that country.

Trinidad and Tobago announced a new arrangement, including support from private security services, to treat with the issue of praedial larceny and is recruiting an Agriculture Ranger Squad.

4.3.6 Weak Market Information, Market Development and Linkages

Regional Actions

Concerted efforts were renewed in 2009 to strengthen the market information systems. The current proposal, is to build on Caribbean Agriculture Market Information Development Network (CAMID), to establish market information platforms across CARICOM Member States, using the National Agricultural Marketing Information System (NAMIS) model developed by the National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation (NAMDEVCO) of Trinidad & Tobago. Given the complexity of this task, the proposal is to implement the model in Member States on a phased basis, beginning with:

- Trinidad & Tobago
- Jamaica
- And two Member States who have significant trade with Trinidad & Tobago, in particular Guyana and an OECS state e.g. St Vincent & the Grenadines.

Implementation is to be led by NAMDEVCO in collaboration with national marketing agencies (Guyana, Jamaica), producer and private sector organisations (CAFAN, CABA), which are currently involved in the generation and dissemination of market information and trade facilitation services.

National Actions

- Guyana is expected to benefit from collaboration with NAMDEVCO of Trinidad and Tobago in developing an appropriate Market information System. The existing rudimentary system is expected to benefit from training and will be supported by the New Guyana Marketing Corporation.

Guyana commenced the upgrading of its existing Website, resulting in farmer's market data being made readily available. In a collaborative effort with a cell phone company, producers and customers obtain live information on market prices of certain commodities.

- Jamaica was engaged in the development of databases and market information systems, including the Agribusiness information system (ABIS) developed by the Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA).

Jamaica established a "One Stop" trade facilitation unit, which integrates the Ministry of Agriculture, Customs and the Trade Board.

Jamaica also established an Agri-Business Co-ordination Unit with responsibility for the collection and dissemination of relevant marketing data.

The Government of Jamaica is in the process of establishing packaging houses, wholesale markets, ripening houses, and cold storage facilities to ensure proper handling and storage of produce.

- Suriname initiated the implementation of a Trade Support Programme funded by the IDB, which is aimed at the development of modern trade system and has established an Agricultural Information System (SAIS).

An agricultural census was conducted in 2008/2009. Market studies were conducted for fruits, vegetables and rice.

- In **Trinidad and Tobago**, the National Agricultural Marketing Corporation and the Trinidad and Tobago Agribusiness Association were engaged in the process of successfully linking farmers to markets, locally and internationally (**NAMIS**), and in identifying and promoting business opportunities in value added production, utilizing primary agricultural produce.

Cost of production studies, market information and other surveys were conducted for major staple food, tree crops and livestock commodities.

The Government developed a livestock database Management Information System.

4.3.7 Inadequate Research and Development

Regional Actions

CARDI:

- Redoubled its efforts to address its key constraint and securing resources for implementing the various interventions under its portfolio. These efforts obtained:
 - Funding totalling US \$6.55 million from various sources to undertake research and development activities.
 - Established partnership arrangements with the Caribbean Climate Change Centre to conduct relevant research on crop sequencing as a risk mitigation mechanism.
 - Initiated Technical Cooperation discussions among IICA, Instituto de Investigacion y Tecnologias Alimentarias de Espana (IRTA) of Spain and CARDI aimed at the development of protected agriculture technology in the Region.
 - Initiated discussions with the Caribbean Development Bank with a view to obtain the necessary resource to provide virus-free sweet potato and cassava planting materials. This is to be effective through the tissue culture laboratories in

the region (Scientific Research Council of Jamaica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and the Ministry of Agriculture of Trinidad and Tobago).

- Regional consultations with relevant stakeholders to determine priority areas for research and development in the agri-food chain. A Strategy document has been developed and is under review by a Task Force. The relevant comments and recommendations emanating from the review process will be taken into account in the preparation of the final Strategy Document, which is to be submitted to the next special COTED (Agriculture) for decision.
- Initiated actions to map the DNA structure of the West Indies Sea Island cotton and to develop hybrid hot pepper varieties that are resistant to the CMV and PVY viruses.
- The **CARICOM Secretariat** provided coordinating functions for the development of a regional biotechnology and bio-safety policy and a framework for action, which is ongoing.

National Actions

- The Bahamas MAMR with CARDI and the Bahamas Agricultural Industrial Cooperatives (BAIC) to enhance the country's capacity in small ruminant management, and with the BAIC and the Department of Cooperative Societies to build capacity in Greenhouse technology.
- In **Barbados**, CARDI completed the DNA mapping of the Barbados Blackbelly sheep.
- **Guyana** provided enhanced extension service to farmers. Efforts were made in improving the genetic material of livestock such as cattle, pigs, small ruminants, duck etc., which is expected to continue with the establishment of The Livestock Development Authority. Actions were initiated to rehabilitate the Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory.

A Memorandum Understanding was signed between the British Texel Sheep Society and the National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI) to introduce the Texel breed of sheep into **Guyana**. The methods selected for the introduction of the breed will be embryo transplant for the purebred animals and laparoscopic artificial insemination for the Texana. The "Texana" is a cross between the Texel

and/or the Barbados Blackbelly, Virgin Island White and Barbados Blackbelly crossed female. The name Texana originated from the word Texel and the 'ana' ending from Guyana.

- Jamaica promoted public and private sector investment in research technology. The country initiated actions to reposition its main research station, the Bodles Agricultural Station, as a Centre of Excellence with financial assistance from the Spanish government. The Centre of Excellence was launched in 2009.

The Government adopted a policy of increased use of Protected Agriculture to enhance the productivity of a range of vegetables as well as to promote greater capacity to recover from hurricanes.

- Suriname developed a National Agriculture R&D Agenda and a National Research Council was established.

Consultations took place with potential partners for the cultivation of sugar cane for bio-fuel production.

- Trinidad and Tobago pursued a livestock improvement research programme and work on the upgrading of the R&D programme at the Central Experimental Station was initiated.

4.3.8

Lack of Skilled Human Resources

Regional Actions

- UWI initiated actions aimed at the rationalisation of two (2) Projects, including one being implemented by the Caribbean Council for Higher Education in Agriculture (CACHE), to determine the human resource skills competencies and needs of the regional agricultural sector as the basis for the development of a Plan of Action.
- The University of the West Indies (St. Augustine), School of Veterinary Medicine (SVM) engaged the Community in discussions, with respect to Establishment of a Centre for Regional Registration Examinations (CRRE) for Veterinarians.

National Actions

- In Guyana the tertiary agricultural institutions continued its effort to strive for more relevant programmes. The Guyana School of Agriculture introduced a fisheries programme, which has also taken its classrooms into the rural districts.

The Farmers Training School of the Guyana Rice Development Board has proven to be a useful tool in the rice industry and considerations were given to utilizing the concept in other disciplines.

- Jamaica initiated actions to reform agricultural education at the secondary and vocational levels and is in the process of developing a strategy for utilizing the Centre of Excellence for Advanced technologies to provide training for extension officers and farmers.

The government developed a programme for providing special concessions to students pursuing studies in agriculture and the interest rate charged on loans to students pursuing agricultural studies was reduced from 12% to 4%.

Extension officers will be recertified each year to ensure that farmers are provided with high quality extension services.

- Suriname reorganized its Extension Services to improve efficiency and effectiveness. Actions were taken to develop the Curricula to train extension officers.

Farmers were retrained in Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs), Integrated Pest Management, Artificial Insemination, Milk Production Techniques and Animal Hygiene and Health.

- Trinidad and Tobago

PCS Nitrogen developed a large demonstration Farm, with three Greenhouses and was engaged in the training of farmers in the production of a range of crops under protective agriculture.

4.3.9 Fragmented and Unorganized Private Sector

Regional Actions

- The Caribbean Agribusiness Association (CABA) worked to, inter alia.
 - Expand its membership to include key regional buyer groups that are not now members of the regional body
 - Provide funds from the MIF Programme and other sources to:
 - strengthen selected national chapters with staffing
 - Develop a production, processing and marketing programme for at least one commodity in each country directly involved in the project (Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago, St. Lucia, Grenada, Antigua & Barbuda, Dominica, Bahamas).
 - An Agri-Business Consultation to facilitate buyer/seller dialogue of Agri-Business stakeholders was held in May 2009 in which the needs of the large scale processors were identified as well as the conditions under which they were willing to source raw materials from the Region. The Forum also addressed the strengthening and training of the Agri-business Associations, including the Caribbean Agri-business Association (CABA) and selected Commodity Associations and the fostering of greater collaboration among the agencies giving support to the sector.

National Actions

- In Barbados, the Government was engaged in initiatives, in collaboration with the private sector to: (a) increase pork production, (b) develop actions aimed at addressing the viability of producing feed from local feed ingredients, and (c) privatize the government owned Barbados Black Belly sheep feedlots.
- In Guyana, there were efforts to organize the private sector. The Guyana Agricultural Producers Association (GAPA) was resuscitated and is expected to play a pivotal role as Guyana prepares to increase its capacity to market agricultural products in the region.

The Agricultural Diversification Project initiated actions to develop its Cluster Managers for aquaculture, beef, and vegetables. These Cluster Managers will bring together stakeholders in the various production sectors for their mutual benefit.

- Jamaica began the development of a sector strategy for roots and tubers, fruits and vegetables and herbs and spices in a process that involved consultations with all stakeholders.
- Suriname established a Rice Commodity Board and preparations are ongoing to establish Commodity Boards for Dairy, Horticulture and Fisheries.
- In the area related to entrepreneurship and private sector development, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago initiated the process for implementing a range of actions aimed at addressing the issue of food production.

4.3.10 Inadequate Transportation Systems

Regional Actions

- The CARICOM Secretariat continued coordinating efforts to initiate a feasibility study for the establishment of a fast ferry service in the southern Caribbean. The process is at the Tender stage.
- The OECS, with financial support from the ECCB, initiated the process of establishing a Third Party Logistics Distribution and Transportation Company for that sub-region.
- Tropical Shipping begun work with the TMAC for Transportation to develop a proposal to reduce shipping costs in the Region including some port charges.

National Actions

- In Guyana efforts were made to provide access to hinterland areas to allow for the movement of inputs and products in an expected hinterland agricultural drive. One can now access Region 9 by vehicles. Farm to market access roads continued to be maintained and new products for surfacing roads were tested.
- Jamaica embarked on a comprehensive programme of

rehabilitation of farm roads and other infrastructure.

- Suriname's major rehabilitation of the port facility in Paramaribo, which started in 2008, continued into 2009.
- Trinidad and Tobago started actions to upgrade and expand the road network to farm lands throughout the country.



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5.0

Results of Inter-Agency Cooperation

IICA, FAO and CARICOM collaborated in facilitating a two day symposium for the region's major stakeholders in reviewing the regional food and nutrition security status and determining the appropriate strategies for the 3 institutions to assist Member States with their food and nutrition security initiatives.

There was further collaboration in the conduct of market surveys and value chain risk assessment for root crops, especially for cassava in Guyana, Suriname, and sweet potatoes in St. Lucia, Bahamas and Jamaica.

FAO

IICA collaborated with FAO, both as Members of in the Secretariat of the Alliance and the Core Group (appointed by the CARICOM Conference of Heads) for the implementation of the Jagdeo Initiative – both entities being responsible for facilitating the development of agriculture in the Region. IICA also collaborated with FAO in the implementation of a Regional Technical Cooperation Project – “Strengthening and Expanding Rural Income Streams”. IICA has also been collaborating with the FAO in the implementation of the Regional Food Security Programme (Phase II). IICA participated with FAO in a regional project for AI preparedness.

Both institutions collaborated on a major regional workshop aimed at enhancing food safety in the regional tourism sector through the application of GAP and HACCP. IICA and FAO also collaborated on another regional project aimed at building capacity for farmers and agripreneurs in the management and operations of greenhouses.

Collaboration was also undertaken in the area of emergency preparedness for the highly pathogenic AI through simulation exercises in Guyana, St. Lucia, Suriname and Jamaica.

In collaboration with FAO and CARDI, the Institute facilitated a clean seed rapid multiplication and distribution system for root crops in the Bahamas. The Institute and FAO also collaborated in the delivery of training in excellence of extension services in Trinidad and Tobago as part of the effort to strengthen institutional capacity of the Ministry for more coordinated and integrated services to agribusiness entrepreneurs.

PAHO

The joint meeting on Animal Disease Surveillance and Preparedness – Focus on Avian Influenza (AI) in the Caribbean was held in collaboration with PAHO as well as several other regional and international agencies and institutions: CARICOM Secretariat (CCS); Caribbean Poultry Association (CPA); CaribVet Network; CIRAD; Livestock and Livestock Products Board (LLPB); FAO; the French Embassy; and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

There was also further collaboration between the two agencies in the area animal health in the Dominican Republic and Haiti (Swine Fever, Avian Influenza, Livestock Quarantine).

IICA collaborated with PAHO and the OAS in a number of Avian Influenza preparedness simulation exercises in a number of countries (Barbados, Guyana, St. Lucia, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and Suriname.

CARDI

IICA continued its collaboration with CARDI, through a Technical Cooperation Agreement between the two agencies. Several projects have been jointly implemented throughout the various countries in the Region. The emphasis of these projects has been to assist with the enhancement of food and nutrition security in the Member States.

The Institute is collaborating with CARDI in the work of the Alliance as members of the Secretariat and the Core Group with the implementation of the Jagdeo Initiative.

Both institutions are mandated to work together by the Caricom Conference of Heads of Governments, to produce a R&D strategy for the Caribbean Region. IICA and CARDI have been collaborating with the development of project proposals for funding in respect of the development of protected agriculture for the region.

IICA and CARDI collaborated on the preparation of CD ROM for agripreneurs in enhancing their capacities for developing successful agri-enterprises. Both institutions have been collaborating in providing technical assistance to the COTED Ministerial Sub Committee established to examine the use of non tariff measures in the trade of agriculture products.

CARICOM

The Institute established several collaborative initiatives with the CARICOM Secretariat (CARISEC). The major initiative continues to be that of the Alliance for Sustainable Rural Development. Through the Technical Cooperation Agreement both agencies facilitated meetings of the Alliance.

The agencies continue to collaborate with respect to the implementation of the Jagdeo Initiative through the provision of support by a senior professional attached to the Secretariat. Collaboration is on-going with respect to the development of a Caribbean Agriculture Policy as well as the development of a regional strategy for addressing food and nutrition security.

Both agencies continue to collaborate in assisting member countries with capacity building in the areas of plant protection and quarantine; health and food safety legislation and the development of modern, efficient institutional mechanisms.

CDB

Through a Technical Cooperation Agreement, IICA collaborated with the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) in several initiatives including:

- Capacity building for farmers and agripreneurs in greenhouses management and operations.
- Training workshops for rural women network in agro-processing and food safety practices aimed at establishing linkages with the tourism sector.
- Training workshop for trainers in Food Hygiene and Sanitation practices.

CTA

In 2009, IICA continued its relationship with the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), through the implementation of the Caribbean Regional Agricultural Policy Network (CaRAPN) project. Essentially, CaRAPN seeks to involve key stakeholders in shaping the policy and institutional framework for the “New Agriculture”. Its activities are also designed to promote agriculture’s image, provide information to strengthen policy formulation and create a virtual ‘space’ as a platform for dialogue for consensus, decision-making and cooperation. The activities undertaken under this relationship can be categorized as (a) capacity/consensus building, (b) research and publications and (c) networking and communications.

In collaboration with the CTA and Cornell University, the University of Guyana benefitted from a library enhancement program – Lan TEEAL 2-0 system. IICA and CTA facilitated the participation of several countries in the Caribbean Agriculture Policy consultation and dialogue.

The CaRAPN website www.carapn.net continues to be developed and maintained. It focuses more on encouraging communication and sharing of information and to create a space to get regular updates from stakeholders across the region involved in agriculture and the formulation of agricultural policy. Communication is one of the main reasons for upgrading the website format of this site to enhance more effective and open communication within the agricultural community. Web2-based ICT tools are being used to make the website more interactive, easier to navigate and more attractive to the user.

The IICA-CTA-CaRAPN programme is implemented and managed by the Caribbean Regional Trade Policies and Negotiations (TPN) Program. The activities complement

and add value to IICA's Technical Work program and enhance IICA's and Agriculture's visibility in the Caribbean and among strategic partners and in supporting the agricultural development agenda in the Caribbean region.

OAS

IICA collaborated with the Organization of the American States (OAS) with the completion of the OAS-funded project "Strengthening of the Tourism Sector through the Development of Linkages with the Agricultural Sector in the Caribbean". The Institute and the OAS also hosted the accountability seminars for the Project where the participating countries reported on their achievements to regional and national authorities. OAS collaborated with the Institute in developing responses for the countries in dealing with the H1N1 virus.

IICA and OAS facilitated a flood relief project for affected communities along the Upper Suriname River with the provision of new and improved planting varieties and farming techniques.

UWI

IICA collaborated with UWI in matters relating to biotechnology and biosafety. Two workshops were organized with regional stakeholders and technical assistance provided for the development of the Caribbean Strategy for Biotechnology and Biosafety. A Technical Cooperation Agreement is being implemented by the two Institutions and areas of further collaboration continue to be development.

CIDA

Collaboration was initiated with CIDA in Jamaica and Haiti. In Jamaica CIDA facilitated the capacity building exercises for greenhouses farmers and extension officers. CIDA also collaborated with the Institute in the provision of resources for the construction and operations of protected agricultural systems across the island together with post harvest handling facilities.

CIDA also collaborated with the Institute in providing capacity building for several rural communities and

producers organizations in Haiti.

CIDA also collaborated in providing support to the Agribusiness associations in the region in enhancing their capability in the area of organic waste management.

USDA/APHIS

USDA/APHIS continues to provide support to IICA in facilitating the training and capacity building of the region's Vets and Plant Quarantine officials; collaboration is on-going with respect to boarder surveillance for the Carambola Fruit Fly; coleopteron pests and other invasive species; training and capacity building for the development of national Health and Food Safety Systems, regulations and legislation in all the countries in the region.

EU

The EU continues to partner with the Institute in building capacity through training in financial management, strategic management, business development, agronomic practices, organizational development, etc. in Jamaica, Haiti, Guyana, St. Lucia.

Several other productive partnerships were established with several other development partners including the World Bank, USAID, WFP, OXFAM Quebec, UNDP, CIRAD, WHO, IFAD.



Cassava (*Manihot esculenta*) an important staple in the Caribbean food basket

6.0 National Executive Summaries



ANTIGUA Y BARBUDA

Repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- Presentation of agricultural input supplies distributed by the Ministry of Agriculture among farmers affected by Hurricane Omar in late 2008 enabled producers in the agricultural sector to improve their income-earning capabilities.
- Senior officers in the Ministry of Agriculture enhanced their capacity to analyze issues affecting the development of the sector. Specifically, the ministerial delegates received technical assistance in preparing the national report on progress and challenges for the Week of Agriculture and Rural Life.
- Two young people enhanced their capacity to become stronger leaders in the development of the agricultural sector by participating in IICA's Forum for Young Leaders, held in Costa Rica.
- IICA's clients and partners in the country agreed to the priorities for intervention and accepted the national annual report through their participation in the Accountability Seminar.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

Producers and agro-processors increased their income-earning opportunities by participating in the Fourth Christian Valley Mango Festival and the IICA Most-Outstanding Agro-processors Award Competition, as well as a Food Preservation Workshop. These events provided opportunities for the enhanced sale of local produce and processed products.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- Food service providers improved their ability to prepare safe food for consumers by participating in

a series of training events on the Five Keys to Food Safety. This was done in collaboration with Central Board of Health in the Ministry of Health.

- The Veterinary and Livestock Division improved its ability to monitor and control animal health issues through participation in the regional Veterinary Epidemiology Project (VEP), which seeks to improve the surveillance of two major animal health diseases.
- Pest control operators are better equipped to provide improved services to their clients after participating in a National Certification Course for Pest Control Operators organized by the Pesticides Control Board and the University of Florida, with technical assistance from IICA.

Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment

The Antigua Beekeepers Cooperative is better equipped to revive the bee industry following the technical assistance its members received to implement a project funded by the Global Environmental Facility/Small Grants Program. Technical assistance was provided to develop a public awareness program and to organize interest group meetings and training for new beekeepers.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on a territorial approach

- One young person had the opportunity to further develop on understanding of agribusiness management through a scholarship for a three-year program in agribusiness management at the Simon Bolivar United World College, in Venezuela. The Office promoted the program and assisted the college, through the Venezuelan Embassy in Antigua, in selecting a candidate.
- The Antigua and Barbuda Agriculture Forum, Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Education, with technical assistance from IICA, organized a school garden competition to strengthen the agricultural science program in schools.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation

for the modernization of agriculture and rural life

Agribusiness enterprises enhanced their capacity to use modern approaches for production through a training program in protected agriculture organized by the Caribbean Agribusiness Association, with technical assistance from IICA. As follow-up to the protected agriculture training, a Greenhouse Growers' Group was formed and developed plans for launching into this technology.



Repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- The Minister of Agriculture and Marine Resources and his delegation participated in the Week of Agriculture and Rural Life of the Americas, in Montego Bay, Jamaica.
- In support of the agro-tourism project initiative of the Bahamas Agricultural Producers Association, the importance of linking tourism with agriculture was discussed within the framework of an agro-tourism roundtable.
- The Institute participated in the Ministry's agricultural sector rapid assessment exercise coordinated by FAO.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- The theme of the 2009 Agricultural Expo was "Strengthening food security." Farmers from the Family Islands, as well as major producers and exporters, training institutions and backyard gardeners participated, some of them with support from IICA.
- A number of workshops and seminars were

presented on the principles of the value chain, and projects developed and funded to provide technical support for the strengthening of cooperatives for competitiveness and increase market penetration.

- The Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources also signed an agreement to participate in the Market Information Organization of the Americas.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- In support of the initiative to consolidate the SPS national committee, the Institute hosted a series of meetings with the SPS Ad-hoc Committee, which started the protocol to formalize its function.
- The Office provided follow-up to the good agricultural practices training and reached agreement on priority actions. It also revisited the recommendations of the policy, visioning and strategy exercise.

Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment

IICA facilitated access to technical support for the rapid assessment of potential interventions to the forestry initiative of the Ministry of the Environment. The ministry agreed to implement follow-up recommendations.

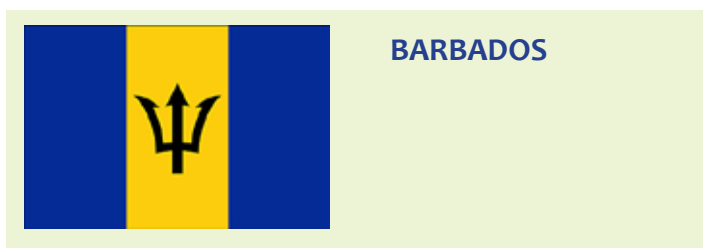
Promoting the development of rural communities based on a territorial approach

IICA facilitated the clustering of youth around agriculture through a number of activities designed to stimulate interest in the sector. The Bahamas Agricultural Forum for Youth, in collaboration with the Caribbean Forum for Youth, organized a number of activities including career talks/presentations, the Agricultural Think Tank Forum and poster competitions.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural life

- IICA facilitated biotechnology-biosafety consultation in the Bahamas, as well as capacity building in a specialized area at the Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) for the private sector biotechnology initiative.

- In collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources and the Bahamas Agricultural Industrial Corporation, IICA held a series of workshops on different Family Islands and organized a follow-up orientation visit to Jamaica to select appropriate greenhouse technologies for the Bahamas.
- In collaboration with FAO and the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute, a clean seed rapid multiplication and distribution system for root crops was introduced to Family Islands in the Bahamas.



Repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- IICA continued to support the MoA in the promotion of small-scale urban/periurban gardening as a part of its national food sovereignty drive. The Institute promoted the concept among a number of professional and community-based organizations with many householders and public technical agencies, based on experiences with a model project. The aim was to show how this approach could improve the quality of life of ordinary Barbadians by reducing the prevalence of diet-related, non-communicable diseases.
- The Institute, in collaboration with FAO, CDB and Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS), hosted a greenhouse training program for the benefit of extension personnel, research agronomists and entrepreneurs in protected agriculture production systems.
- IICA supported a greenhouse operation at Balls Plantation by installing a water tank to augment its irrigation requirements.
- The Institute facilitated training for the MoA officers responsible for organic agriculture at the Earth University in Costa Rica, while also continuing to advance its agrotourism programme.

Promoting trade and competitiveness of agribusinesses

- The Institute hosted the accountability seminar for the three-year OAS-sponsored Regional Agrotourism Project, where participating countries reported on their achievements to regional and national officials.
- A workshop entitled “Managing an Agrotourism Business from Seed to Success” was facilitated, where best practices in agrotourism, GAPs and instructions in tour packaging were passed on to existing and potential agrotourism entrepreneurs.
- IICA provided technical support to the BADMC in developing a feasibility study to determine the mechanisms needed to improve the quality, quantity and timely production of agricultural commodities; an implementation strategy for a commodity distribution mechanism to facilitate greater inter-sectoral market linkages for locally produced agricultural products; and the design of the modern market facility and its supporting infrastructure.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- The Institute continued to support the VEP project and the national contacts, including their protocol for surveillance of Salmonella enteritidis (SE) and their epidemiological investigation of the infected poultry farms to prevent the further spread of the disease.
- National contacts also received training in monitoring for highly pathogenic avian influenza and basic epidemiology to bolster the surveillance capacity of the veterinary division.
- IICA collaborated with PAHO and the OAS in developing a response to the A H1N1 virus.
- The Office supported the MoA by providing relevant documents pertaining to the WTO/SPS Committee Meetings. However, due to the cessation of funding under the IICA’s SPS Initiative of the Americas, Barbados has been unable to attend further

meetings.

- Under the IICA-STDF project, the Sanitary and Phytosanitary - Performance, Vision and Strategy (SPS-PVS) tool was administered in Barbados. The findings of this assessment were presented to the MoA, with follow-up activities planned for 2010.
- The Institute provided technical support to the consultancy team contracted by the MoA to develop the National Agricultural Health and Food Control Authority (NAHFCA); provided training in GAPs for the potential entrepreneurs who attended the “Managing an Agrotourism Business from Seed to Success” workshop; and distributed a WTO questionnaire on private standards and provided follow-up support to ensure that the responses were duly submitted.

Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment

- In response to the 60% increase in water rates, IICA was responsible for the construction of two 14,000- gallon ferro-cement tanks on a pig farm and a vegetable farm respectively, in an attempt to significantly reduce the cost of production for the farming enterprises concerned.
- The Institute conducted an assessment of the state of the enabling environment for certified organic agriculture on the island. The aim of this assessment was to determine the level of institutional support on the island for organic production.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on the territorial approach

- The Institute, in conjunction with St. Thomas Church, FAO, MoA and UNDP, made a site visit to Rock Hall and conceptualized a project for the benefit of this community.
- The construction of an IICA-facilitated ferro-cement tank in Rock Hall also provided the opportunity for unemployed youths in the area to learn about this low-cost technology and encourage them to look at

creating businesses for themselves.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural life

The ferro-cement tanks mentioned earlier were constructed at a cost of approximately \$0.75/gallon compared to a price of roughly \$3.00/gallon for concrete, aluminum or fiberglass tanks of the same capacity. The Prime Minister and the Minister of Agriculture endorsed the promotion of these tanks among the farming community.



DOMINICA

Repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- On the recommendation of the Cabinet of Ministers, IICA worked closely with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, through the Division of Agriculture, to amend the draft policy framework entitled “Invest in Dominica - Secure Agriculture - National Policy for the Agriculture Environment (Agri-Eco) System, 2007-2025.” The original policy framework was delivered by IICA to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.
- IICA provided technical support to the Division of Agriculture that enhanced and strengthened the capacity of extension officers to provide services to farmers and other clients and to adapt to new methodologies introduced by the Division.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- IICA developed project proposals aimed at strengthening the capabilities of the membership of agribusiness groups in production technologies, quality and food safety, and business management. The agribusiness groups targeted included the

Dominica Herbal Business Association (DHBA), the National Bee Keepers Cooperative and Toloma Women in Action. The proposals were submitted to various agencies for funding.

- The Institute conducted a review of the Dominica National Fair Trade Organization (DNFTO), examining its current structure and operations and the capacity of the organization to deliver on its current mandate, given the rapid changes in the banana industry and the continuous threat to the financial viability of the organization.
- IICA continued the partnership with the OAS to successfully implement the OAS/IICA project “*Strengthening of Linkages with the Agriculture Sector in the Caribbean,*” with support from the Agro-tourism Linkages Centre at the IICA Office in Barbados. The draft strategy paper for agro-tourism was completed and findings presented in the National accountability seminar.
- In collaboration with the Dominica Social Investment Fund and NAYA, IICA hosted a workshop on entrepreneurship and business management for members of NAYA and the Greenhouse Association.

Promotion of agricultural health and food safety

- IICA completed an assessment of the level of performance of the plant health, animal health and food safety systems based on the use of the PVS instruments. The findings were documented and recommendations made to improve agricultural health and food safety services in Dominica.
- IICA provided inspection kits that enhanced the capacity of the plant quarantine unit to undertake diagnostic and inspection activities.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on the territorial approach

- IICA facilitated training sessions to enhance the capacity of bee producers in food safety, labelling

and packaging.

- The DHBA received technical assistance to undertake a profiling of persons engaged in the production of herbal products and services, as well as to initiate discussion among these businesses as to the way forward for the herbal subsector.
- The Office assisted a group of young female entrepreneurs, Hilltop Fruit Plus, in securing financial assistance to help start up their business.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development

The Office continued to manage the IICA/CARDI Greenhouse project and the DSIF-funded project, both of which are designed to enhance the capacities of greenhouse producers and introduce new technologies for greenhouse production. Two of the three greenhouse structures were erected and materials for nursery establishment and agronomic practices procured. Resource persons were recruited to deliver on the training.



Repositioning agriculture and rural life

- As part of its role of coordinating and facilitating the formulation of studies for the reform and modernization of the agricultural sector, IICA helped draft an agricultural insurance bill and the corresponding implementing regulations.
- The Institute assisted the Planning Department of the Ministry of Agriculture (SEA) in setting up the Risk Analysis Office that will work parallel to the insurance program.
- The Third International Seminar on Agrifood

Policies took place. The participants discussed food security, competitiveness and technology, and laid the groundwork for the construction of a new development model for the national agricultural sector.

- IICA promoted the creation of the Forum of Donors and Cooperation Agencies of the National Agricultural Sector, comprised of the international organizations active in the country on the sector's behalf. The forum closely coordinates the agencies' efforts, focusing on the country's priority needs.
- The Institute modified the proposal for renewing the SEA's extension service and took part in the dissemination of the proposal among groups of producers and technical personnel throughout the country.
- IICA held two courses on the management of distance learning processes in agriculture, the first for trainers from the *Universidad Instituto Superior de Agricultura (ISA)* and the second for trainers from other universities and institutions involved with the national agricultural sector. As a result, a network of distance trainers specializing in the subject was established.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- The Institute executed the Third Agro-export Platform, targeted at the Miami market. It handled both the process of selecting the companies that took part and the training program itself. Furthermore, negotiations were initiated for the implementation of a fourth platform, targeted at the European Union.
- IICA carried out a training program on technical barriers to the U.S. market and, with the Dominican Exporters Association (ADOEXPO) and the Office for Agricultural Trade Treaties (OTCA), held a workshop on the management of trade agreements.
- The Office and FUPAD implemented training workshops for producers in the border region on

topics related to agribusiness, GAPs, GLPs and AHFS.

- Assistance was provided to a pilot project involving production in a controlled environment in the province of Samaná; and support was secured for the establishment of a spice garden.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- As part of its support for the SEA, and with a one million dollar donation from the World Bank, IICA initiated execution of the Project to Prevent and Control AI.
- In support of the Dominican Landowners and Farmers Association (ADHA), the Institute initiated the formulation of a livestock development plan that will be used as the strategic framework for promoting the sector's competitiveness in the years ahead.

Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment

- IICA signed a cooperation agreement with the Universidad ISA and actions undertaken to validate the production of organic rice and guava; create an organic fertilizer production module; and prepare a training program in organic agriculture for students from the university.
- More than 30 training activities were carried out in practically all parts of the country. Over 500 producers acquired new expertise in relation to techniques for organic production and the preparation of organic fertilizers, among other sustainable production practices.

Promoting the development of rural communities with a territorial approach

- IICA laid the groundwork for the National Program for Rural Development with a Territorial Approach by producing and disseminating a document entitled "Competitive rural development in the Dominican Republic: guidelines for the formulation of the National Rural Development Program." The Institute

promoted the program among the members of the Forum of Agricultural Sector Donors and Cooperation Agencies and began looking for the funding needed to implement the program.

- The Institute, AECID and IFAD hosted a seminar-workshop on methodologies for rural development with a territorial approach. They trained the specialists who will be responsible for formulating plans at the local level.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development

- As part of the cooperation provided by IICA's Center for Leadership, an intern from Argentina formulated the following proposals for the Dominican Republic: a project to prepare technological profiles, a methodology for prioritizing research projects, a national seed strategy and a policy paper on national agro-biotechnology.



Repositioning agriculture and rural life

Twenty young leaders in agriculture and rural development enhanced their leadership skills and team building capabilities, and gained a greater appreciation of global strategic issues (e.g., climate change and food security) by participating in the first-ever *National Forum for Young Leaders in Agriculture and Rural Development*.

Promotion of trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- Sixteen agricultural entrepreneurs (representing CABA and CANROP), two agricultural science teachers and one student increased their knowledge of, and skills in, cassava production and processing by participating in an intensive two-day workshop on the

subject.

- Twenty-six people, mainly young agricultural extension officers and members of the national chapters of CABA, CAFY and CANROP, enhanced their technical capabilities through their participation in a workshop on agro-tourism and agribusiness management.
- Twenty-four people greatly enhanced their capability to prepare and manage bankable projects by participating in a two-day Resource Mobilization Workshop. Participants were drawn from the national chapters of CABA and CANROP as well as the Ministry of Agriculture and the Grenada Association of Beekeepers.
- One project proposal, entitled "Developing the Capability of CABA Members to Collect, Re-use, and Recycle Organic Waste," received funding of around US\$17,300 from the Canadian Fund for Local Initiative. The project is being implemented by CABA.
- Farmers involved in agricultural production under shade houses improved their technological capabilities. These farmers received hands-on training from a highly qualified and experienced shadehouse/greenhouse technologist from Jamaica.

Promotion of agricultural health and food safety

- Three plant quarantine technicians increased their capability to identify and effectively manage specific pests of quarantine significance. They participated in a Regional Workshop (held in Grenada) for the Identification of Coleopteran Pests of Importance to the Region. The workshop was organized and conducted jointly by IICA, USDA-APHIS, FAVACA and the Ministry of Agriculture in Grenada.
- Grenada's capability to establish and maintain an active surveillance program was enhanced through the country's participation in the VEP project, which facilitated the training (in epidemiology principles) of local livestock personnel, and the provision of necessary materials for the conduct of relevant surveillance programs.

- The ability of 24 farmers (mainly members of CABA, CAFY and CANROP) to produce safer foods was enhanced, through their participation in a workshop on organic agriculture and good agricultural practices.



Repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- Organizing a Symposium on Agricultural Risk and Insurance through collaboration with the MoA, World Bank, FAO and other strategic partners that attracted 15 international presenters and 100 local participants.
- IICA provided all relevant information and support services to ensure the participation of the country's delegates to the 5th Hemispheric Ministerial on Agriculture and the 17th IABA in Jamaica.
- The promotion of Youth in Agriculture programs in the country included, among other things: two young Guyanese participating in the annual IICA Young Leaders in Agriculture Forum at IICA Headquarters, in Costa Rica; a young leader from the inaugural program completing a six-month internship at the IICA Office in Ecuador; and four final year students of the University of Guyana completing a two-month internship at the local IICA Office.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- IICA collaborated with the MoA, the National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI) and FAO in conducting the surveys and report writing on two studies on market demand and value chain risk assessment for cassava; and facilitated the participation of technical specialists in the CLAYUCA Conference in Colombia in support of Guyana's cassava development program.

- With IICA support, two representatives each from three women's agro-processing groups were trained in agro-processing by Entrepreneurship for Technology (EMPRETEC), in collaboration with the Canadian Executive Service Organization (CESO).

- IICA partnered with the National Working Group (NWG) on the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in facilitating the training of members of the Kuru Kururu Farmers' Association in Apiculture (Beekeeping). Some 20 hives were established and 30 gallons of honey were harvested in the first five months.

- IICA assisted the Hauraruni Farmers' Association and the Guyana Forum for Youth in Agriculture (GFYA) in developing proposals for mobilizing resources to start hydroponics farming and seedling production.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- IICA and USDA/APHIS signed a one-year agreement to assist the MoA with border surveillance for the Carambola Fruit Fly (CFF); and 35 field staff of the MoA were trained in CFF Surveillance and Control Methods.
- The Institute facilitated the participation of MoA officials and technicians in regional and international meetings: the VEP Meeting in Trinidad, CaribVET/Chief Veterinary Officers meeting in Jamaica, and IICA/USDA-APHIS/FAVACA regional training on identification of coleopteran pests in Grenada.

- IICA submitted the final country report on the Standards and Trade Development Facilitation (STDF) Project to the MoA.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on the territorial approach

The Institute completed the OAS/IICA Agro-tourism Project with an Agrotourism Accountability Seminar and the delivery to the National Authorities of a Community Tourism Engagement Strategy Document for Lake Capoey. Through IICA's support for the development and

promotion of the Tri-Lakes Agro-tourism Experience, Lake Mainstay Village received the Minister of Tourism/ Guyana Tourism Authority Agro-tourism Award 2009, in recognition of the Village's new products - Organic Pineapple Farm and Factory Tour, and the Nature/ Heritage Trail.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development

- IICA, in collaboration with the Partners of the Americas (PoA), trained the farming groups of five communities in methods of hydroponics farming and provided technical support to these groups in establishing hydroponics units.
- IICA partnered with NARI to conduct field trials for hydroponics systems to review and recommend appropriate media and fertilizers.
- As part of its promotion of bio-energy, IICA provided technical support and facilitated the importation of plastics for the construction of low-cost biogas digesters by clients of the Institute of Private Enterprise Development (IPED), resulting in four digesters installed to date.
- Through IICA's coordination, the University of Guyana (UG) was the beneficiary of the "Library in a Box Teal - LanTEEAL 2.0 System" from the University of Cornell, made possible through IICA cooperation with the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA).



Repositioning agriculture and rural life

IICA helped the country deal with the effects of the tropical storms in specific areas of Jacmel and Fonds des

Blancs, supporting various groups of women producers.

- The Institute organized a mission to Costa Rica, the Forum for Young Leaders (part of the IICA Center for Leadership's efforts to promote new leaders in agriculture) and a workshop on leadership and the new vision of agriculture for senior MoA officials.
- The Office provided technical support to strengthen pest control and promote the cultivation of taro.
- IICA provided technical assistance and contributed to the preinvestment required to develop proposals related to agricultural credit and insurance in Haiti.
- The Office enhanced the capabilities of the *Coordination Nationale de la Sécurité Alimentaire* (CNSA) for managing and developing observatories.
- IICA supported the conceptualization of the National Program for the Modernization of Banana Production and carried out an inventory of Haiti's agricultural legislation.
- Productive partnerships were established with a number of organizations, including CIDA, the World Bank, USAID, FAO, PAHO/WHO, WFP, USDA, OXFAM-Quebec, the EU and CARDI. Some of these partners provided funding for development activities.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- Market research was carried out on Haitian products that could be exported to the CARICOM countries.
- IICA supported the participation of the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Rural Development (MARNDR) in the MIOA conference held in Mexico.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- Under the Vaccination Program to Prevent Classical Swine Fever, more than 630,000 heads of cattle were vaccinated.
- IICA supported the vaccination campaign to combat

rabies and the application of the control and follow-up of the avian flu project.

- Thanks to the strengthening of ties with the Dominican Republic, the Institute was able to facilitate international trade between the two countries and relations between their plant health committees.

Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment

- IICA supported the drafting of a project document for sustainable mango growing in the Central region.

Promoting the development of rural communities with a territorial approach

- With funding from OXFAM-Quebec, IICA contributed to the development of the community of Arreguy.
- The Institute worked with Brazil on the rehabilitation of farms in Fonds des Nègres.



Repositioning agriculture and rural life

- Working with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MoAF), the Institute hosted the Fifth Ministerial Meeting and the Seventeenth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) at the Week of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas, held in Jamaica. This meeting resulted in the signing of the Jamaica Ministerial Agreement, a 16-point strategic plan aimed at fulfilling the mandate of the 2003-2015 AGRO Plan to advance the development of agriculture and enhance food security in the Americas.
- A study to determine the true contribution of

agriculture to the Jamaican economy was completed under the guidance of IICA and provided to the MoAF. That study put the sector's true contribution to the economy at 9.52 percent, or 1.9 times its contribution to primary GDP.

- IICA and the Technical Centre for Agriculture & Rural Cooperation (CTA) facilitated the participation of Jamaica in the first technical meeting on "Implementing the Caribbean Community Agricultural Policy."

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- In its first year of implementation, the Improving Jamaica's Agricultural Productivity Project (IJAP), funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), facilitated capacity building activities for 70 greenhouse farmers, 37 extension officers and 504 fisher folk; and developed a national standard design of greenhouses suited to the island's geo-climatic conditions and therefore, better able to withstand hurricane-force winds. Under the project, construction also began of the 40 commercial greenhouses that will enhance the nation's capacity for greenhouse production from 15.5 acres to 19.8 acres, and the ground was broken for one of two postharvest and packing facilities that will provide a ready market for the produce from the 40 commercial greenhouses and 2000 open field farmers.
- The Youth in Agri-business Award, which recognizes entrepreneurship, innovation and employment among youth engaged in agriculture, was this year expanded to six awards.
- The Institute assisted the Jamaica Greenhouse Growers Association (JGGA) in creating technical content for inclusion on its website and developing a technical manual on critical subject areas for tropical green house production.
- The Office assisted the Jamaica Pig Farmers Association (JPFA) in developing a cost of production survey. This will equip members to better negotiate

and derive prices for pork. A survey instrument was also developed to capture relevant data that will inform the local pork industry of the supply levels of pork.

profiling of varieties and disease-free planting materials; and, ii) a review of the agronomic practices of selected herbs and exploration of ventilation systems for protected agriculture.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

IICA provided the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries with a detailed report of an assessment of the country's existing compliance with SPS standards completed under the Standards Trade Development Facility (STDF) project. The report was accompanied by an agenda with recommendations for sustainable strengthening of its institutional capabilities.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on the territorial approach

- Over 150 community members from ten Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in the Buff Bay Valley benefited from capacity building initiatives coordinated by the EU-funded agro-tourism project implemented by IICA in the area. The residents received training in strategic management, organizational development, financial management, business development, tourism certificate training, agronomic practices required for the production of specific crops and cooperative management.
- The agrotourism project also collaborated with the local communities to build infrastructure that can facilitate the operation of several agriculture, nature and heritage tours, thus creating an alternative base for boosting increased economic activity within the area. Marketing linkages between the local farmers and hotels were established following a survey of the produce needs of the hospitality sector. Organization of the farmer groups was formalized with the establishment of a marketing cooperative.
- IICA continued its support to the Jamaica Network of Rural Women Producers (JNRWP).

The following IICA/CARDI projects are under way in Jamaica: i) two sweet potato projects that cover postharvest practices, value-added potential, chemical



Repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- Senior officials of the Ministry of Agriculture, along with representatives from 33 other countries, participated in the Week of Agriculture and Rural Life of the Americas and approved a number of strategic actions aimed at promoting food security in the hemisphere.
- The Director of Agriculture on Nevis enhanced his leadership skills by participating in the Forum for Young Leaders.
- The constituent members of the Alliance increased their opportunities along the value chain and engaged in joint training and dialogue on topics of mutual interest.
- The Institute promoted excellence in the sector by presenting four outstanding producers with awards during the activities held to commemorate World Food Day.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- The mechanism for the marketing of agricultural products to local hotels and supermarkets was greatly enhanced and institutionalized as a result of a consultation which was organized for various stakeholders.
- Two producers improved the presentation and sale

of their products as a result of being provided with professional packages and labels.

- The organizational and entrepreneurial capabilities of 65 agricultural producers were strengthened as a result of training workshops held on group dynamics, financial management and entrepreneurship.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- The Ministry of Agriculture increased its capacity to improve the surveillance of targeted animal health diseases. Three veterinarians participated in training activities and online modules.
- Twenty-eight agricultural producers were sensitized regarding the importance of labeling and food safety after participating in a one-day seminar.
- Nineteen farmers are adopting the principles and practices of GAPs after being trained in a one-day workshop.
- Quarantine officers, port workers and importers enhanced their ability to manage emergencies as a result of knowledge gained from a workshop held on exotic pests.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on a territorial approach

- The Institute continued to support the development of agricultural infrastructure, such as an agro-processing facility and a marketing outlet. This resulted in increased productivity and income and contributed to the empowerment of the rural communities.
- Access to grant finance was greatly enhanced and this has resulted in the removal of myriad development constraints.
- IICA spearheaded an initiative that provided exposure to the cultural, agricultural, artistic and culinary talents of a selected community. This activity was aimed at strengthening the bond between tourism and agriculture as well as to foster community tourism.

- St. Kitts and Nevis forms part of the IICA Caribbean Agro-tourism website. This site facilitates the exchange of knowledge and information relating to agro-tourism.

Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment

Targeted stakeholders enhanced their access to funding from the Global Environmental Facility's Small Grant Program for management of natural resources and environment projects through technical assistance provided to the National Focal Group.



SAINT LUCIA

Repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- The Agro Matrix tool was used to guide the redesigning and refocusing of the Agriculture policy framework for Saint Lucia.
- Through an expanded National Accountability Seminar convened with the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Forestry and Fisheries (MALFF), a forum was created for discussion and feedback on the draft National Agriculture Policy 2009-2015.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

- In continued support of the MALFF initiative to streamline the marketing of agriculture produce, efforts were directed at re-producing a comprehensive business plan that will provide the blueprint for a feasible framework for the development and operation of an efficient, effective, financially viable and sustainable marketing infrastructure for non-banana produce.
- Three industries were identified and targeted for

specific support and development assistance under the EU-funded SFA 2005 Programme. In partnership with the Banana Industry Trust (BIT), the Office commissioned and completed rapid assessments on the cocoa, pineapple and horticulture industries.

- The promotion of agriculture as a viable business option for young people, as well as the demonstration of opportunities for growth in the sector through the establishment of linkages with tourism, continued during the year. These efforts were strengthened with the launching of the project “*Helping Out Our Primary and Secondary Schools*” (HOOPSS), which is funded jointly by the United Kingdom Travel Foundation and IICA, and supported by five government ministries and the Saint Lucia Hotel and Tourism Association. Three secondary schools and five primary schools are participating in the first phase of the project.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- Saint Lucia’s capacity to maintain the availability of safer food to consumers and protect the environment was enhanced through IICA’s leadership and participation on the Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Control Board and the countries participation in the fourteenth meeting of the Coordinating Group of Pesticides Control Boards of the Caribbean.

Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment

- The capacity of the members of the Latanye Broom Producers Association was strengthened with the implementation of a service contract, *Institutional Support for Latanye/Mauby Producers in Saint Lucia*, funded under the European Union Special Framework of Assistance 2005. A plant nursery with capacity to produce 10,000 seedlings was constructed and twenty members of the group benefited from training in entrepreneurial and business skills, as well as nursery and farm management.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on a territorial approach

- In commemoration of International Day of Rural Women 2009, IICA joined its partners, the UNDP and the AGIL Project, as well as private sector donors in hosting a major exhibition to highlight the contribution that rural women are making to the development of Saint Lucia. The exhibition provided a platform for rural women engaged in a wide array of income-generating activities to promote their enterprises and to engage in social networking.
- To better understand the challenges facing the SLNRWP, a needs assessment was conducted with the aim of tailoring future actions and setting priorities for more effective delivery of services towards the sustained growth and development of the group and its membership.
- The capacity of forty-five members of the St. Lucia Network of Rural Women Producers (SLNRWP) was strengthened through the hosting of two training workshops. One was entitled *Social and Networking Skills* and held in partnership with the AGIL Project, a European Union Special Framework of Assistance 2004 funded project; and the other, *Food Hygiene and Safety*, hosted in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).



Repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- The integration of St. Vincent and the Grenadines into the decision-making processes for sustainable agricultural and rural development was further enhanced through the participation of the ministers within the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in the Fifth Hemispheric Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture in Jamaica, the SACMI meetings and the Executive Committee meeting.
- The technical capacities of senior management of

the Ministry of Agriculture were further enhanced through the participation of a senior technical officer of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in a CARICOM Common Agricultural Policy Meeting in Trinidad and Tobago.

- Leadership skills of two young leaders from St. Vincent and the Grenadines were strengthened through their participation in the Young Leaders of the 21st Century Workshop in Costa Rica.

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

Stakeholders in the livestock industry are better informed of developments in the livestock industry and proposals for industry takeoff following the execution of the first agribusiness conference on livestock industry development, which was hosted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, IICA and FAO.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

- The technical capabilities of the Plant Protection and Quarantine Unit in the Ministry of Agriculture were further strengthened through the participation of their representative in a regional workshop on the identification of coleopteran pests in Grenada.
- The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries is now better placed to make decisions on agricultural health and food safety issues after the submission of a report on the application of the PVS, under the IICA-STDF project in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and the country agenda containing the recommendation from the Common Vision Session.
- The VEP project has been sustained through the provision of support from the IICA Office to personnel at the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries with responsibility for the project.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on a territorial approach

- The Ministries of Agriculture and Tourism are better

positioned to undertake agro-tourism initiatives in 2010 through their participation in workshops and consultative meetings hosted by IICA with consultants from the Ministry of Tourism working on agro-tourism development.

- The Network of Rural Women Producers (NRWP) was strengthened through the provision of technical and material support from the IICA Office, hosting of meetings of the executive and provision of secretariat facilities and the establishment of linkages with collaborating agencies such as Mission Taiwan and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.
- St. Vincent and the Grenadines' Agricultural Forum for Youth (SVGAFY) is now better placed to successfully implement its 2010 Work Plan through support provided to the executive to strengthen the internal structures of the organization and the continued provision of secretarial facilities.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural life

Decision makers within CARICOM are better positioned to network and develop a common regional agenda as a result of an IICA-hosted workshop promoting biotechnology and biosafety issues.



SURINAME

Repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- The Institute facilitated and supported the participation of Suriname's delegation to the Fifth Ministerial Meeting "Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas" and the Fifteenth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture.
- The Office co-sponsored a national discussion forum

on the state of agriculture in Suriname.

- IICA initiated and supported the participation of two Surinamese youths in the Second Hemispheric Forum for Young Leaders of Agriculture in the Americas.
- The Office published two issues of the internal bulletin “Partnership” and an article in COMUNIICA to keep the milieu informed of IICA/Suriname activities and to highlight important agricultural and rural development issues.
- IICA participated in and shared information at two major national activities - the Chamber of Commerce and Industry “Agro/made in Suriname/ICT Fair” and the Rainforest Art Festival, whose theme was “Global Warming.”

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusiness

- IICA coordinated and facilitated market linkages for members of the Foundation of Agricultural Women (SAV), for the sale of vegetable produce.
- The Institute supported the Ministry of Agriculture (LVV) in providing postharvest training and marketing information to producers and exporters at the monthly postharvest management seminars.
- The Office signed a contract and initialed a consultancy assignment for the formulation of a pragmatic handbook for the management of agricultural exports through Surinamese international airports under the umbrella of the Trade Support Programme of the Ministry of Trade and Industry.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety systems

- IICA facilitated and supported the participation of Suriname technicians in a regional pest identification workshop in Grenada.
- The Institute supported the ongoing disease and pest surveillance program, including CFF surveillance in the Guyana and Suriname border region.

- The Office participated in committees and supported the Suriname Bureau of Standards in the development of standards for selected agricultural commodities.

Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment

- The Institute organized and co-sponsored a workshop on permaculture as an alternative means of production and environmental management for hinterland communities in Suriname.
- The Office conducted awareness seminars for two hundred students on the effects of global warming on agriculture.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on a territorial approach

- Under an agreement signed in 2008 with the Suriname Red Cross (SRC), farm rehabilitation and food and nutrition security activities were implemented in hinterland communities in Eastern and Southern Suriname.
- The Office finalized and presented at a stakeholder seminar a proposal for agricultural diversification activities in the Coronie District. Implementation of specific components of the proposal was initiated.
- IICA provided coordinating support to the Foundation of Agricultural Women (SAV) in the design and execution of capacity-building workshops for the organizations’ membership funded by the Government of Japan.
- The Institute executed programmed activities under the IICA/OAS regional agro-tourism linkages project.
- The Office provided ongoing support to the Ministry of Regional Development in the organization of the Department of Agriculture for the hinterland.

Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural life

- IICA conducted tests of improved rice varieties in two hinterland locations.
- Under food security initiatives, the Institute introduced improved production technologies in communities in the hinterland.
- The Office facilitated a producer study visit to Guyana to observe integrated farm management and other production systems.
- IICA supported and facilitated the participation of Suriname's representative in a party that visited Murcia, Spain to observe agricultural technologies.
- As part of its efforts to improve food security by fostering more interaction between the agriculture sector and the media, IICA, in collaboration with the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI), launched an agricultural journalism award competition.
- The Institute launched two promotional food security products: a notebook for schoolchildren and a poster, designed to help the general public in Trinidad and Tobago gain an understanding and appreciation of food security.

Promotion of trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses

The Institute facilitated and supported a visit by Ministry of Agriculture technicians to the Caribbean to study livestock development practices.



Repositioning of agriculture and rural life

- IICA entered into a technical cooperation program with the National Agricultural Marketing and Development Company (NAMDEVCO) to build its capacity in developing export and domestic food chains. Based on the analytical work undertaken, NAMDEVCO was able to develop more defined and participatory export programs for hot pepper and pumpkin.
- With NAMDEVCO, the Office developed an application and validation of an electronic cost of production system. This program allows transparent determination of commodity production costs and equitable producer/buyer prices. The cost of production model was also introduced to all extension staff of the MALMR, the Department of Agriculture of the Tobago House of Assembly and the Trinidad and Tobago Agribusiness Association (TTABA).
- The Institute supported the development of the small ruminant industry in Trinidad and Tobago with technical and marketing support to the Trinidad and Tobago Goat and Sheep Society (TTGSS) in the development of databases and cost of production work, as well as in product development, marketing and promotion.
- The Office also convened a workshop involving major stakeholders in the organic agricultural industry to chart a way forward for the industry.
- The Office collaborated with the MALMR and FAO in delivering a weeklong training course in excellence in extension service delivery that benefitted over 150 MALMR extension officers. This was the first step in a process towards their being able to deliver more integrated and coordinated services to agribusiness entrepreneurs.
- The Institute assisted the MALMR in its preparations for the Fifth Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Life of the Americas, held in Montego Bay, Jamaica in October 2009.
- Two young nationals were selected to participate in the second annual Forum for Young Leaders in Costa Rica and subsequently engaged by IICA to perform further activities in this area.

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

Several agencies, including IICA, USDA/APHIS, CIRAD and the French Ministry of Food and Agriculture, collaborated to assist the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources in holding a training workshop for veterinary epidemiologists from the Caribbean. The workshop strengthened animal health surveillance systems in the region in the Global Positioning System (GPS) and Incident Command System, as well as the execution of a major field simulation exercise of an avian influenza outbreak.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on the territorial approach

- In collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism, IICA supported activities to further develop the agro-tourism ventures of the Tourism Action Committee (TAC) of Brasso Seco. The Office supported an exploratory mission and briefing session in Brasso Seco Paria, as well as a training and sensitization mission to Grenada for members of the TAC, the Ministry of Tourism and IICA.
- IICA's technical support in project preparation and resource mobilization was responsible for the successful acquisition of a new tractor by the Fishing Pond farming community. The Institute also prepared project proposals for accessing funding for the Network of Rural Women Producers and a rural community group from Rio Claro.



Woman reaping organic pineapples at Mainstay in Guyana

7.0 Horizontal Technical Cooperation

Under the **CARICOM/OAS/Chile SPST Technical Cooperation Project**, Officials working in Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary regimes in six CARICOM countries (Belize, Barbados, Dominica, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines), participated in the first Study Tour organized by the CARICOM Secretariat under the Chilean financed Project, **“Strengthening the Official Sanitary System of Agricultural Goods for Export Markets in CARICOM Member States,”** which took place on 19 – 23 January, 2009.

In Guyana, Agricultural development benefited from the signing of four new technical co-operation agreements between the Governments of Guyana and Brazil. These new areas of cooperation cover areas related to upland rice production, corn production, aquaculture and forestry. The investment in corn production, in particular, is expected to provide a major boost to the livestock industry through the utilization of corn as a source of food for animals, especially poultry, small ruminants and swine.

In **Haiti**, IICA in coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture the implementation of the project entitled “Pro-Huerta”, with financing from the Argentina International Cooperation continues. The project is small farmers’ vegetable production, with the objective of improving the dietary regime of the beneficiaries. The project has been extended for an additional five (5) years, with financial support from CIDA valued at US \$4.8 million.

With support from Argentina, the Office helped execute and expand the PRO-HUERTA programme. Some 59 communities received assistance and improved seeds of 21 species were distributed.

The Pro-Huerta programme implemented in Haiti is based on the experience gained in Argentina, over a number of years, in affording the poor access to fresh food. Given Haiti’s food security problems, the program has been implemented with great success through various grassroots organizations. To carry out the cooperation activities, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Argentine Embassy in Haiti, assisted by the IICA Office, signed an agreement to identify the areas and the respective users.

In support of the Government of Dominica, IICA facilitated a subregional mission for a group of five people from Dominica to study organic production in Costa Rica. This farmer-to-farmer exchange visit strengthened the technical capacity and knowledge base of local organic producers and allowed them to gain practical input for a common vision and strategy for the sustainable development of the organic industry based on the development of an alternative farm input production model.

IICA assisted the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) in exploring possibilities for developing an agricultural risk management strategy for the country by facilitating specialist missions to Guyana, including an IICA Technical Specialist Mission: La Financière Agricole Du Québec - Développement International (FADQDI of Canada).

A three-year cooperation agreement between IICA and Canada’s Trade Facilitation Office (TFO) was launched in Guyana, to facilitate exposure of Guyanese exporters of fresh and processed produce to Canadian market opportunities and requirements for international competitiveness. A total of 46 exporters were trained.

The Institute collaborated with the network of the Caribbean Council for Higher Education in Agriculture (CACHE) to enable representatives of the network to carry out a mission to the EARTH University in Costa Rica and review its study plans (with emphasis on agricultural entrepreneurship) and take part in a series of talks.

IICA hosted an exploratory mission by representatives of the Alberta Association of Colleges and Technical Institutes (AACTI) to Jamaica to identify and assess

areas of technical cooperation and support to the local greenhouse sector.

The Office assisted the St. Kitts Farmers' Cooperative in participating in the Annual Agricultural Exhibition held in St. Croix, United States Virgin Islands. Consequently, members were able to increase their sales and promote their products.

A delegation of four Mexican agricultural experts conducted a diagnostic assessment of the agricultural sector in Saint Lucia. IICA and the Embassy of Mexico to Saint Lucia facilitated this mission, which was designed to strengthen collaboration between the two countries in an effort to continue developing the institutional capacity of the MALFF and to build sustainability in the agricultural sector. Following on from the assessment, a collaboration agreement to provide technical support to the MALFF and the agricultural sector in Saint Lucia was subsequently signed between the Government of Saint Lucia and the Government of Mexico.

Efforts continued to build capacity and transfer adaptable technology into the agriculture and rural sectors with the ongoing training in Costa Rica of six farmers and technicians from the MALFF in the construction and installation of low cost biogas digesters.

IICA supported the implementation of the transformation plan of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources (MALMR) in Trinidad, with the renewed focus on agriculture to agribusiness. The work included an exploratory and training visit by ministry officials and other key stakeholders to Costa Rica, where they visited centers of excellence in the areas of agribusiness and extension services in particular, as part of the efforts to strengthen the institutional capacity of the MALMR in the area of extension delivery.

Model organic farms were set up on three sites at the demonstration stations of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources (MALMR). The aim of the project was to stimulate interest in organic agriculture (vegetables, other food crops and tree crops) and demonstrate the opportunities available for this activity. MALMR extension staff is on hand to give demonstrations.



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