



# Guyana



## Significant Achievements 2023

- The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) was honored by the official visit of H.E. Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, who was presented with an award for his Leadership in Food Security and Sustainable Development. The President partnered with IICA to establish a roadmap to build a Situation Room, providing data to support evidence-based decisions in agriculture throughout the Caribbean. IICA will also support the modernization of the Guyana School of Agriculture (GSA), including a Centre of Excellence, for the benefit of young Caribbean agriculture students. Guyana and IICA will build a demonstration farm to allow underprivileged youth to contribute to the agriculture sector's development.
- H.E. Dr. Carla Barnett, CARICOM's first female Secretary-General, made an official visit to IICA to sign a General Technical Contribution Agreement (GTCA) with the Institute that sets out collaborative actions to modernize, build resilience and drive the sustainable development of the agriculture sector in the region. CARICOM agreed to partner with both IICA and CATIE to jointly formulate and implement regional projects related to agricultural education, technology, innovation, climate change and food safety and security.
- The Cost of Production Project, a collaborative effort with the Ministry of Agriculture, with funds provided by the IDB through the Agriculture Sector Development Unit's Sustainable Agricultural Development Project (ASDU-SADP) of the Ministry of Agriculture, will deliver short-term training on the methodology for calculating the cost of production (COP) for agricultural commodities. Among the participants will be extension officers and selected farmers. Ten training sessions were carried out in 2023, for the benefit of 296 farmers from the communities of Craig, Kuru Kuru College, Kuru Kururu, Tapacuma Village, Mainstay Village, East Ban Berbice, Bath Settlement, NAREI (One Guyana Project), and the University of Guyana – UGIRIE Department. Training covered both theoretical and practical aspects, enabling participants to calculate profits or losses in selected value chains based on the cost of inputs and activities.
- The WeLead Caribbean Guyana Chapter, a non-governmental organization, signed a contract with IICA to support businesswomen in Region 6, later extending support to women in Region 10, and 24 women from various locations in Region 9. An intensive week of training involved stakeholders from the National Insurance Scheme, Guyana Revenue Authority, Small Business Bureau, Food and Drug department of the Ministry of Health, Republic Bank Guyana, Guyana Bank for Trade and Industry, and IICA. This venture was called the Academy for Women Entrepreneurs or AWE Dream Builder Program, an inclusive training program and community that equipped women with the practical tools required to create viable and sustainable businesses. The AWE program, funded by the United States Embassy in Georgetown, covered 13 courses from IICA on pricing your product/service, marketing, financial management, product development and more. It had a total of 80 participants from Berbice, Linden and Lethem.

- The Engender Project, aimed at mainstreaming gender into the curriculum of the Guyana School of Agriculture (GSA), is currently underway with the UNDP and involves an online course of 5 units. A sensitization workshop was delivered to approximately 25 participants representing different agencies in the sector. The project provided 32 computers for students to participate in the online training. A total of 140 students and 30 lecturers and staff members will benefit from this project. Funding is being provided by the Canadian and UK governments.
- The Institute purchased a prefabricated greenhouse that will include aeroponic towers and DWC beds to grow plants organically using nutrients from aquaculture tanks, raising tilapia fish. Funded by the Canadian and UK governments, the project is in its early stages of development, but has already set up two fish tanks with the capacity for 3,000 fish. The direct beneficiary of this project, which is the first of its kind in Guyana, will be the Guyana School of Agriculture (GSA).
- The Agriculture Forum and Expo<sup>1</sup> sought to provide an opportunity for agri-businesses and organizations to participate and network with potential investors in business-to-business (B2B) engagements. This forum sought to foster informed discussions and collaboration among key agrifood chain stakeholders, including policymakers, development partners, investors, farmers and distributors. The primary objective of the Agri-Investment Forum and Expo was to identify tangible ways to achieve the 25% by 2025 Vision of reducing the regional food import bill by attracting targeted investments through interaction in business-to-business engagements.
- IICA provided technical guidance and support to the Ministry of Agriculture and its respective agencies for the planning and implementation of specialized surveys to collect data on the industrial demand for agricultural commodities and the production capacity of the agro-processing sector. It also assisted in building the technical capacities of staff in the Ministry of Agriculture's Planning Unit and the relevant agencies so that they can plan and conduct similar surveys in the future. Topics covered included, among other things, the use of advanced technologies for data collection and management, the development of survey methodologies, planning, how to conduct demand and agro-processing surveys, as well as data processing, analysis and dissemination. The survey was conducted in Regions 1,2,3,4,5,6,9 and 10.
- The Ministry of Agriculture, via the Guyana Rice Development Board (GRDB) and IICA, released a new variety of biofortified rice (GRDB IICA 17) for commercial cultivation. This project was initiated during the COVID-19 pandemic, to provide an affordable source of elevated zinc in the human diet, to build immunity. This new rice variety is characterized by greater yields, early emergence, very uniform growth, very little lodging, and its capacity to remain in the field at maturity longer than other varieties, which facilitates harvesting, especially during various climate change scenarios. This GRDB IICA 17 will be marketed as a special rice with a premium price.
- IICA partnered with the Ministry of Health and Agriculture, PAHO/WHO, FAO and Guyana Food and Drugs (FDD) to train 30 food safety inspectors through a workshop and practical implementation of risk-based food inspection. This project was funded by the World Bank in support of sanitary and phytosanitary measures (SPS). The One Health approach was used with a view to increasing collaboration between the ministries of Agriculture, Health and the Environment.

*1. The Planning Committee, chaired by the Minister of Agriculture of Guyana and co-chaired by CARICOM's Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Integration, Innovation and Development, delivered a highly successful forum and expo under the theme "Accelerating Vision 25 by 2025". IICA served as the facilitator in the Business Pavilion at the ACCC.*