

More than a symbol of *thanks*

Chelston W.D. Brathwaite



Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture



A Tribute to the Staff of IICA

As we come to the end of Representatives' Week 2009, I am pleased to report that during the past 8 years, we have made significant positive changes in our Institute which have contributed to it achieving a leadership position in international technical cooperation in Agriculture in the Americas.

We have strengthened our technical programs and the financial base of the Institute, we have promoted administrative efficiency, we have strengthened our strategic partnerships and have repositioned our Institute to face the challenges of the 21st Century.

These objectives have been achieved in spite of a frozen quota budget-since 1995 and a reduced number of international professional staff.

Anytime an institution achieves its objectives, four important qualities of its staff come into play –loyalty, dedication, commitment and teamwork.

As we come to the end of this administration, I wish to thank each and everyone of you, personally, for your loyalty, dedication, commitment and teamwork which have contributed to our success.

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I thank you for observing the values of flexibility, accountability, commitment, efficiency, tolerance and financial prudence which we have promoted in this administration.

We have renewed and modernized our Institute so that it can continue to promote sustainable agricultural development, food security and prosperity in the rural communities of the Americas now and in the future.

I am convinced that we have made a significant contribution in the pursuit of our mission.

Our success can only be explained on the basis of sustained superior performance from a team of dedicated and loyal employees who are committed to the noble mission of this Organization.

We are gathered here today to inaugurate this fountain and this garden as a tribute and a symbol of thanks to you, the staff of this Institute, who over the last 8 years have contributed to the renewal of IICA.

This renewal was possible because of your commitment, your hard work, your loyalty and your faith in a dream that yes, IICA can be a better institution.

This symbol however is more than a symbol of thanks; it is also a symbol of hope that just as the water flows from this fountain, in similar manner, there will be a continuous flow of knowledge, information and ideas from this Institute that will contribute to the development and modernization of the rural sector of the Americas.

But this fountain and this garden is also a symbol of responsibility. This fountain and the garden will not maintain their beauty if we do not take care of them. There may be a tendency to believe that our relative success over the last 8 years is our natural state – that it will persist in spite of ourselves.

The history of our world indicates that without constant effort, without perseverance and without discipline, success can easily return to failure: Each generation in IICA must seek to uphold the noble ideals of Henry Wallace and those who went before, to leave a legacy of accomplishment in this institution. Each generation has the obligation to advance the process of institutional modernization in order to cope with the challenges of an evolving world.

This fountain and this garden will not grow or survive if we abandon the care and attention that is necessary for the growth of the plants and the flow of the water.

In a similar vein, IICA will not grow or survive unless we nurture and preserve the elements necessary for its growth and development. The most important element for that growth and development is you.

It is your energy, your wisdom, your commitment, your loyalty and hard work that will take this institution to the next level of its development.

The future is yours, if you grasp it with both hands and commit to pursue the goal of taking care of IICA for generations to come. It is this hope, it is this vision, it is in this spirit that we inaugurate today with this garden and this fountain of thanks.

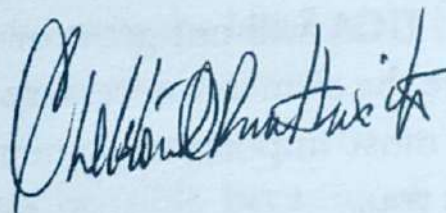
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Finally, when the history of this Institute is written in the future, it must be recorded that in the period 2002 to 2010, there was a generation of employees who through dedication, loyalty, commitment and team work renewed and modernized this institution.

I hope that the beauty which is this garden and its fountain will find its way into the hearts and minds of each of you, so that harmony and peace will prevail in your lives and that of your families.

Please convey to all staff who are not presented here today my sincere thanks for their support and cooperation. I wish you success in your future endeavours and may each day of your life be a good day.

Thank you.



Chelston W.D. Brathwaite
Director General

IICA Headquarters, August 21, 2009