



Small producer...

Small producers, i.e., both farmers and food processors, are a big business in agriculture in the Caribbean. Their numbers far outweigh their relatively larger counterparts. Despite the difficult conditions under which they operate, including marginal lands, limited access to credit and the virtual non-existence of risk mitigation mechanisms, the contributions of these micro and small entrepreneurs to economic development, social stability and food security are big by comparison to their size. The role of women, who dominate small producer agriculture and food processing, is often not fully appreciated.

...big
business!

a quick view of what's inside AgriView

This AV focuses on a topic that has been of continuing interest in the agriculture community and general public, that of food security, from the farm to the policy level. The opening article provides a synopsis of the recently initiated regional response to ensure that *“all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.”* This initiative, spearheaded by the CARICOM Secretariat with funding from the Government of Italy and implementation support from the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) is complemented by a number of other initiatives as indicated in the article on Advancing Agriculture in CARICOM. The word ‘advancing’ is used repeatedly throughout the newsletter because it is a key action word in the theme selected for the 9th Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA) 2010. This AV also highlights the CWA from its inception in 1999 and promotes the 9th CWA to be held in Grenada in late October. So mark your calendar.

The issue of Food Security is also an integral part of the 9th CWA’s theme and on that score, Ian Ivey feels certain that Food prices will soar as he speaks to an AV contributor on the subject of food prices and the capacity and competitiveness of local food production. AV follows this perspective with two contributions on the role and importance of small producers – farmers and fisherfolk

to food security, with a view to promoting the acceptance of small producers as the ‘backbone of food security’. This view is, however debatable, given the policy of the former Government of Trinidad and Tobago to promote ‘mega farms’ as a major solution to rising food prices and dependence on imported foods. AV contributor Waheeda Abass provides some insights to the small vs mega farm issue from a Trinidad perspective. While not enough time has elapsed to make a judgement on the relative role and impact of mega farms in Trinidad, there is a widely held view that the expectations have been over stated.

AV also took this opportunity to update- for those involved in the network, remind- for those who already knew of its existence and introduce- for those who did not know it existed, the CaRAPN, i.e., Caribbean Regional Agricultural Policy Network, which according to one stakeholder at a 27-30 July Medium Term Strategy meeting, “should contribute to agricultural development in a holistic way, looking at the traditional production and marketing issues, but also adding aspects of the environment, the social dimensions and the global dimensions.”

We invite you to read, ponder and contact us for clarification, more information and any contributions you may wish to make on the topics covered or any other topic of interest to agricultural and rural development in the region.

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On the cover:

Small farmer in Saint Lucia rejoices at her latest harvest.
Photo courtesy: IICA Saint Lucia



Also inside:

“Networking is 2% technology and 98% management of relationships.”

Creech/Willard (2001)

Tackling CARICOM's Food Security Challenge

A regional response to ensure that all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life

CARICOM moves to formulate

regional policy for food and nutrition security by 2010

Earlier this year, the CARICOM Secretariat activated a Technical Working Group (TWG) to formulate a Regional Policy for Food and Nutrition Security (RPFNS) for 2011 to 2050. The TWG comprises representatives of Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), University of the West Indies (UWI), Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute (CFNI) and IICA, nominated by CARICOM Member States and serving under the leadership and guidance of the Agricultural Development Unit of the CARICOM Secretariat with assistance from the FAO and with funding from the Government of Italy.

The formulation of the RPFNS also responds to the mandates of the Heads of Government in the Liliendaal Declaration (July 2009), to develop an integrated, multi-sector and regional approach for the achievement of food and nutrition security. Among the several reasons for pursuing a regional approach is that which relates to the issue of benefits from collective action. An early draft version of the proposed RPFNS explained that *“consideration of paramount importance in support of a regional approach and policy for food and nutrition security is that it will enable Member States to secure for their private and public sectors as well as for households and communities throughout the region, benefits and economic externalities that they would be unable to access acting in isolation, and at a lower cost than they would otherwise face.”*

The draft working document also makes explicit reference to the objectives of the Single Development Vision (SDV) and the opportunities for increased domestic food production on a stable and sustainable basis by operating within the common economic space and enabling environment created by the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME). This is the essence of the Economic Integration pillar, complemented by another important pillar Functional Cooperation, which emphasizes the need for cooperative action, sharing services and undertaking joint activities to reduce costs and achieve synergies in critical areas of domestic and foreign policies. It is in the context of such functional cooperation, that the draft working document acknowledges that the RPFNS ‘provides an opportunity to reassess and refocus Member States’ agricultural development policies, programmes and investments implemented at the national and regional levels, by introducing the aspects of food access, safety, stability of supply, and nutritional security, health and well-being, viewed from the perspective of the consumer rather than that of the producer, as is normally the rule’.

The TWG emphasises the importance of recognising that food and nutrition security (FNS) is a cross-cutting issue and calls for a multi-disciplinary approach and measures that are a composite of

policy, legislative, and institutional realignment actions, enhanced professional and technical capacity, improved processes, infrastructure and client-service orientation, and public-private sector partnership arrangements. The draft policy is expected to be submitted for the consideration of the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) when it meets in October 16-23 as part of the 9th Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA) in Grenada. When completed, the RPFNS is expected to guide the design, implementation and monitoring of specific future periodic action programmes to address the major food and nutrition security challenges in the Caribbean.

IICA defines an institutional technical cooperation strategy to support member states efforts to enhance food security

The new administration of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture is also in the process of defining an IICA Strategy for Technical Cooperation in Food Security (FS), with a focus on Small- and Medium-Scale Agriculture within which emphasis will be placed on Technology, Markets, Policies and Institutions. However, since the November 2001 Bavao Agriculture Ministerial Meeting in the Dominican Republic, Ministers of Agriculture mandated IICA to define clear actions towards food security, that included considerations of an enabling institutional framework, elimination of trade barriers, increasing rural investment and reducing the technological gaps in agriculture.

The AGRO 2003-2015 Plan was subsequently developed as a vehicle to implement mandates that the Heads of State and Government entrusted to the Ministers of Agriculture at the Third Summit of the Americas (Quebec 2001). It promotes food security as a key element in programmes for improving rural life, promoting agribusiness and fostering comprehensive development. IICA’s initiatives in this area were presented, evaluated and endorsed at the Fifth Ministerial (Montego Bay, Jamaica, 26-29 October 2009). Further, the Ministers of Agriculture signed a plan entitled *“Building capacity for enhancing food security and rural life in the Americas”* as a response to the mandate on agriculture, food security and rural life given by the Presidents of the hemisphere’s countries at the Fifth Summit of the Americas (Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 2009).

Under its new FS Strategy, IICA plans to provide support in three strategic areas, namely, (a) Institutional innovation related to R&D and technological change for food production and diversification, (b) Institutional framework to support implementation of FNS policies and integration of small farmers and family farms into value chains and markets; and (c) Monitoring and Information Dissemination for more efficient and equitable policy and decision making. For the Caribbean, these are areas of priority interest for continued and increased support from the new administration in IICA.

‘Advancing’ Agriculture in CARICOM

Ongoing Initiatives

Word power!

The Encarta web dictionary provides a few options for use of the word ‘advancing’ as an action or doing word, that can be applied to context these various initiatives for agriculture in the Caribbean. These are: (a) to **‘move ahead:** to move, or move somebody or something, forward in position’; (b) **rise in status:** to rise, or make or help somebody rise, in rank or position; (c) **bring something forward in time:** to make something happen earlier than originally expected; and (d) **progress:** to further the progress or improvement of something.

For Caribbean countries, ‘advancing’ agriculture thus implies that it needs to be moved ahead, beyond its current situation; that it needs to be elevated in status, to receive equal treatment in national and regional development agendas, public sector budgets and private sector investment as does industry and services, particularly tourism; that the expected albeit elusive returns and benefits from at least three decades worth of donor and concessionary funding for production expansion, diversification and product development, now need to happen; and that there must be meaningful progress in achieving its development targets, in improving livelihoods of those engaged in agricultural businesses and general quality of life.

setting the stage

Interpreted in this manner, advancing agriculture in the region embodies the goals and objectives of all the various ongoing regional policy and strategic decisions and actions have been initiated by CARICOM, as a region taken between 2004 and the first half of 2010 to ‘advance’ agriculture. Those currently being implemented include the:

- CARICOM Agricultural Repositioning Initiative’s Key Binding Constraints (KBCs) -Jagdeo Initiative- to alleviate the key binding constraints to agriculture implemented through Constraint-specific Technical Management Advisory Committees (TMACs) led by a Minister of Agriculture and supported by relevant organisations and professionals;
- OECS Agricultural Policy Framework and Plan, coordinated by the OECS Secretariat and articulated with support from IICA has been updated for enhanced implementation from 2003/2004. The recent Draft New Treaty of the OECS (2010) articulates in paragraph 20.1 Protocol that ‘Member States agree to adopt the Agriculture Policy endorsed by the Ministers of Agriculture and approved by the OECS Authority’;
- Commodity Enterprise Development project funded under the 9th European Development Fund (EDF) led by the CARICOM Secretariat, which seeks to develop a strategic framework for agribusiness in CARICOM using the Value Chain Methodology;

Initiatives under consideration of Member States:

- Caribbean Regional Strategy for Agricultural Research and Development (ARD) which emphasizes the need for a coordinated approach to improving the delivery of agricultural research

and services to guide and direct the generation, adaptation and application of knowledge and innovation for sustainable agricultural development to benefit the Caribbean region;

- Regional Regulatory Framework for Biotechnology, Biosafety and Bioterrorism, mandated by Ministers at the 13th Meeting of COTED (May 2002) to devise a regional strategy and policy incorporating a mechanism, if necessary, for addressing the issues related to Genetically Modified Products.
- Common Fisheries Policy and Regime and Implementing Agency, mandated by Heads in 2003, for the conservation, management, sustainable utilization and development of fisheries resources and related ecosystems and promotion of competitive trade for present and future social and economic benefits.

Initiatives being formulated:

- Strategic Plan for Regional Development (SPRD), mandated by Heads at their 28th Conference to elaborate the specific implementation policies and measures in accordance with the Single Development Vision, with focus on five sectoral economic drivers and the provision of ‘Regional Public Goods’ to facilitate regional production integration, development and economic transformation;
- Regional Strategic Framework for Agri-tourism Development. Since 2004, there have been initiatives aimed at strengthening the regional policy and institutional framework for agri-tourism development;
- Regional Policy for Food and Nutrition Security (RPFNS) in CARICOM for the 2011 to 2050 period to guide the design, implementation and monitoring of specific future periodic action programmes to address the major food and nutrition security challenges in the Caribbean;
- CARICOM Community Agriculture Policy (CCAP) under an EU-funded project, launched in late 2009, to formulate the CCAP and its Implementation Plan, and assist Member States in agricultural policy formulation, planning, implementation and monitoring, of national policy processes;
- Regional Strategy for the Management of the Invasive Alien Species (IAS) Threat in the Caribbean, which started through a 2003 action group and evolved in 2004 into the Caribbean Invasive Species Working Group (CISWG) to focus on the prevention of introduction of IAS, particularly in the agriculture and trade sector;
- Pre-feasibility study on the Establishment of a CARICOM Agriculture Modernisation Fund (CAMF) to determine the need, likely support for, and key issues to be addressed in the establishment of a CAMF.

These policy and strategic regional frameworks complement each other and are expected to create the conditions conducive to competitive and sustainable agriculture and rural development in the Region.

Food prices will Soar!

By Waheeda Abass; Photos: Tyrone Chang



Ian Ivey
Next Corporation

..locally produced food is high cost because of antiquated, low-tech and small scale production

Ian Ivey, an international business consultant and principal of Next Corporation—a firm which provides strategic planning initiatives for the public and private sector said the key to food security is value propositions. Ivey said changing trading relationships and a failure to modernise the sector has now led to a situation where the majority of

Caribbean nations are major importers of food “but locally produced food is high cost because of the antiquated, low-tech and small scale production approach the sector still uses today.”

young farmers will be wooed by a modern operation that generates an optimum amount of returns

Ivey who has had senior management roles in horticulture and corporate investment said one of the problems in small farms was that it was not attracting young people. Most of the farmers today were over 60 years. “Young people will not work in the hot sun today unless they get the same salary as in the oil industry.” Ivey said to woo young farmers, a modern operation that generates an optimum amount of returns must be established. “You need equipment that takes away a lot of the hard work, modern agricultural enterprises use a systems approach which maximises efficiency and market relevance in every area and provides a largely enjoyable working environment. It is the only way agriculture can be viable.” Another troubling issue was that farmers were not getting their share of value for crops. Ivey said he knows of farmers in St Vincent who make US \$150,000 with five acres of land by growing high end fruits and vegetables.

“If the farm was growing dasheen he would have only made US \$20,000. We have to look at opportunities for small farmers.” To illustrate the challenge, Ivey said, the cost of bananas, pineapples and

corn in T&T are all 90 to 100 per cent more expensive than in a highly developed country such as New Zealand, even though the former two products are imported from far off countries such as Ecuador and the Philippines.

The cheapest food is produced in certain countries around the world. Not in the Caribbean!

Ivey said while there is a great deal of talk about national food security, focusing on encouraging greater home production is the answer. “But if the costs of production are higher than those for imported food, how does that help the poorer members in the region’s countries’ improve their economic and social status?” He said while cheaper food is produced on big farms, the mega farms in T&T are not internationally competitive. “The reason why we are getting cheap food from the small farms is one relative term, but it’s still 100 per cent more expensive.” He stressed that there is more than one way of dealing with food security. “It all comes down to valued propositions. You have to understand the most appropriate value propositions for small and big farms.” In the next year, Ivey predicted, higher food prices, stating that the signs are already there.

“The cheapest food is produced in certain countries around the world. Not in the Caribbean. If you look at agriculture on the global scene and where the Caribbean fits in we have a lot of things we can get value out of, which can lift the return per acre.” The challenge for agriculture in the Caribbean, Ivey said, is to find the right spaces where the sector can thrive rather than trying to be everything for everyone and not doing anything particularly well. “If you look at any commercial agricultural business, it produces a range of narrow things.”

Ivey said he studied a number of entrepreneurs in the region who are making good money out of agriculture. But most are exporting to markets outside the region, focusing on special niches, or have become highly specialised. “It is all a matter of doing the right things, not doing things just because that’s the way they have always been done.”

Projections about Food Prices and Food Security

“U.S. food prices will rise a stiff 9 percent a year through 2012, the largest increase since 1979 and the result of record-high crop prices, the head of an economic consulting company said on Thursday. The projections by Bill Lapp of Advanced Economic Solutions are higher than the latest U.S. Agriculture Department forecast of 5 percent for this year. USDA and Lapp have increased their estimates by 1.5 percentage points since February”

(Reuters) By Charles Abbott Washington | Thu May 29, 2008 9:33pm EDT

“..up to 25% of the world’s food production may become lost due to environmental breakdown by 2050 unless action is taken. .., climate change, water stress, invasive pests and land degradation may impact world food security, food prices and life on the planet and how we may be able to feed the world in a more sustainable manner,.., we need to get smart and more creative about recycling food wastes and fish discards into animal feed. While major efforts have gone into increasing efficiency in the traditional energy sector, food energy efficiency has received too little attention”

(UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA) The Environmental Food Crisis - The Environment’s Role in Averting Future Food Crises, 2009

Women, the back bone of small farms

Waheeda Abass; Photos: Tyrone Chang

“Supporting small farmers would not only enhance food security but would make a significant dent in poverty. It seems as though we are being left out of the equation.”



Shaliza Ramlogan stands proudly in the middle of her cauliflower field in Aranguéz.

Shaliza Ramlogan, one of several small farmers in Aranguéz believes that women have been the backbone in the agriculture sector for years. Farming on three acres of land in the country’s food basket, Ramlogan, 50, said female farmers have shown that they can contribute to the country’s economic growth and help feed the nation. “Women are good at managing labour which is self-supervising in effort and diligence. They make better stewards of natural resources, conserving biodiversity and safeguarding the future sustainability of agricultural production.” Ramlogan said there were a number of issues preventing small farms from moving forward, among them high seed prices and inputs, lack of agricultural access roads, subsidies and irrigation on farms. Also praedial larceny often crippled them and the Government was yet to develop a national land use policy for the farming population.



Small farmers Shaliza Ramlogan and her husband know what hard work is all about.

The sole bread winner in her family, Ramlogan said micro farming has educated her three children and paid for her husband’s medical bills. Unable to see in one eye and having undergone several heart operations, Ramlogan’s husband, Deoraj, is her pillar of strength.

Ramlogan’s 29-year-old son, Amar is an economic analyst at Republic Bank, while her only daughter Anita, 24, is into marketing. Her biggest worry is moving out of Aranguéz after learning that Government was eyeing her land to build the billion dollar Rapid Rail project.

If the authorities, Ramlogan said, were truly concerned about food security then they would have preserved and promoted small family farms. Ramlogan noted that recent price volatility on international markets was putting pressure on global food security, which we were still unprepared for. *“The increased food requirements of a growing world population will escalate. The question of who produces this food is critically important.”* She argued that the root of the food security crisis goes back for years when investment in agriculture started to decline because of the growing perception that agriculture was not profitable.

Getting Agriculture Moving

Just over four decades ago, Arthur T. Mosher, in his 1966 writings on “Getting Agriculture Moving – Essentials for Development and Modernization” argued that ‘getting agriculture moving’ boils down to a simple concept, that agricultural production and marketing decisions are made independently by several different individual entrepreneurs. In this context, the experience of Japan is instructive, an experience seen as representing a more valid model for many developing economies in the Caribbean.

The history of Japanese agricultural development illustrates how the agricultural sector of the economy was able to fulfil its traditional role in the strategy of overall development. Japanese agriculture, in the course of its transformation, was able to earn foreign exchange, to provide savings and investment for a developing urban industrial sector, and to supply raw materials and foodstuffs for the rest of the economy. Most significant of all, is that this was achieved within a system of small scale, labour intensive farming made possible by placing greater emphasis upon the “biological revolution” than upon the “mechanical revolution”, underpinned by adoption in 1887 of a new agricultural policy that shifted emphasis away from introducing western farming methods to bolstering traditional farming methods. Source: Agriculture and Economic Development’, (2002) Jules Janick, Reading in Tropical Horticulture, Purdue University

Given that farming in Caribbean countries is dominated by small farmers, this demands that the role of the small producer – farmers, fisherfolk and processors- be revisited and redefined with a view to creating incentives to produce and ensuring that they contribute effectively to agriculture and hence economic development in the region.

Artisanal Fisher-Folk contribute to Food Security

Brent Theophile, MPhil Agricultural Economics Candidate, UWI, St. Augustine

seafood protein ...the 'better' animal-based protein.

The total land area of the Caribbean States is 484,716 km² whereas the total area of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is 2,205,470 km² - approximately 82 percent of the area is maritime space¹. The vast ocean resources of the region estimated at 80 times the land resources represents major resources for addressing food security.



It is the major source of seafood protein for the population, generally promoted as the 'better' animal-based protein. The Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute (CFNI) recommends that food from animals (meat, eggs and dairy products, fish) should comprise about 8% of the daily diet. Fish supply all eight of the essential amino acids. It is also of high biological value and regular consumption of fish is attributed to mitigating cancer, cardiovascular disease, as well as providing omega 3 fatty acids². In addition to these benefits, fish also supplies vitamin A and D, phosphorus, magnesium, selenium, and iodine in the case of marine fish which helps prevent goitre.

The vast ocean resources also provide an acceptable food source and livelihood for more than 130,000 persons, earning over USD 150 million per year from exports, saving the region at least three times as much in foreign exchange, as volume of production is four times the volume of export³. Easy access to the sea makes fishing a relatively low-cost income-earning option for small-scale and resource-limited producers -artisanal fishers- who represent the most significant proportion of the fishing fleet. The term artisanal fishery describes an operation which is generally labour-intensive and relies upon relatively small crafts (or none at all). There is usually little capital and equipment per person on board, with relatively low level technology being employed. Short fishing trips (a few miles off shore and usually within daylight hours) are the norm. They are also commonly referred to multi-species multi-fleet fisheries or mixed

fisheries, characterized by a combination of multiple target species, vessel-types, gear, and fishing location at a given time of the year⁴. This implies that for any given fishing trip, more than one gear type may be employed at one or more fishing locations where catch is not limited to any one particular species and different vessel types or modes of transport are used.

A notable feature of the industry is a relatively high proportion of female workers at value-adding stations



The potential benefits of fisheries to the Region as a food source, labour pool, income earner and weather stabilizer, is unquestionable! The sector contributes to the strengthening of the food security status of most countries, directly through inputs to the food supply and employment, and indirectly through earnings from export and tourism associated activities. A notable feature of the industry is its high proportion of female workers who are engaged in key aspects of seafood operations including but not limited to processing, distribution and retailing in the local market⁵. Development at these stages of the value chain is important to maintaining the supply and distribution of seafood

Given the predominance of small-scale/artisanal operations as is the situation with crop agriculture, the need to enhance the effective contribution of fisheries to the emerging opportunities in food and nutrition security, in a sustainable manner, is critical. In this regard, positioning fisheries and more specifically, artisanal fishers to contribute to food security should be defined based on the state of food security and the unique nature of the fishing community and country's resource endowment. For example, fishing as an activity contributing to food supply may be more prominent for persons in impoverished countries and communities, with limited resources and/or few or no alternative options, or avenues for trade, whereas for another, fishing might contribute best by providing higher earning options in extra-national markets because it is posed to gain more from trade.

Photos: Fisheries Division Dominica, 2009

1 CTA, 2007. *ACP Fisheries Policy Brief, Safeguarding the ACP Fisheries Resources – Role of Science, Technology & Innovation. Policy Brief No 4/2008*, ISSN: 1876-0953. by: Sloans Chimatiro, Milton Houghton, Mariama Barry, Martha Byanyima, Augustine Mubiha, Francis Nunoo, edited by J.A. Francis.

2 http://www.medindia.net/Patients/patientinfo/fishfood_health.htm

3 CRFM Strategic Plan

4 Pelletier, D., and Ferraris, J. 2000. A Multivariate Approach for Defining Fishing Tactics from Commercial Catch and Effort Data. *Canadian Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Science*. Issue 57. pp 51 – 65.

5 http://www.sfp-acp.eu/FR/Download/2006/TdR_36-03-06-CAR.pdf



Noel Garcia
Past Chairman of
NAMDEVCO

Small farms have a crucial role to play, the same way large enterprises do.

For years the issue of food security has reared its ugly head. While many believe that Government mega farms are the solutions to helping Trinidad and Tobago reach food sovereignty, others think that the future of food lies in the hands of small farms, which are worth preserving and protecting. Noel Garcia who previously chaired three State agencies, the Agricultural

Development Bank (ADB), the Estate Management Business (EMBDC) Development Corporation and the National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation (NAMDEVCO) at a recent function stated that food security, which is making food accessible for all revolves around both small and large farms.

Garcia believes that the country ought to have an overall strategy with both micro and macro farms in terms of production to avoid under or over production in crops. *“We have to sit down and work out the mechanisms as to who produces what.”* Garcia said while farms have been having quite a lot of production in sweet potatoes and cassava, T&T experienced a shortfall in some vegetables. *“What we really need to do is carefully plan a production strategy.”* The large farms, Garcia said, are geared towards food processing, while the role of the small farms is to satisfy the local markets with vegetables and root crops. The small farms, Garcia said, have a crucial role to play, the same way large enterprises do.

However, former Agriculture Minister Arnold Piggott, in 2008, stated that large farm programme was pivotal to stimulating a significant expansion in local food production, contributing to the attainment of our goal of food and nutrition security and containing food price inflation. He stressed that *“Government policy envisages large farms would co-exist with small farms in a symbiotic relationship.”* Piggott said Government was spending \$98 million on commercial farms.

small farms were far more productive and efficient today than sprawling farms

President of the Cunupia Farmers Association, Anil Ramnarine, begged to disagree that large farms are the way forward in obtaining food security. He said small farms were far more productive and efficient today than sprawling farms. History, Ramnarine said, has shown that Caroni 1970 Ltd, the country’s largest mega farm had turned out to be a failure, resulting in its closure a few years



Anil Ramnarine
President, Cunupia Farmers
Association

ago. Having visited Government’s 200 acre Tucker Valley Mega Farm (TVMF) in Chaguaramas late last year, Ramnarine said he observed there was a lack of integrated farming system, where the empty spaces between crops were occupied for higher yields undertaken by farmers. The TVMF and PCS Nitrogen in Couva are the most advanced in technology.

The land, he said, was sparse and looked unproductive. *“It was a far cry from what I expected. I have seen them produce crops that were of poor*

quality.” Ramnarine said the only area that the Tucker Valley mega farm had excelled in, were their green houses. In Cunupia, Ramnarine boasted that his farmers produce far more per acre because of his inter-cropping system, utilising every square inch of land. With agriculture being a global priority, Ramnarine said small farmers have been finding themselves in the front-line of the world’s most pressing issues among them globalization, climate change, high food prices, the global economic downturn, and food security. *“We have seen that mega farms have not been successful due to the cost of production, poor yields and lack of expertise,”* Ramnarine stated. The large farms, Ramnarine said, focused primarily on bringing technology to the farms. *“Their cost of production is irrelevant. What is relevant to them is that they are technology driven.”*



Scenes from Tucker Valley Mega Farm, Chaguaramas

a Trinidad Perspective

Photos: Tyrone Chang

Progress at what cost?



A lush and healthy vegetable crop on Anil Ramnarine's 'small' farm

Against a backdrop of rows of lush vegetables, Ramnarine's method of planting is in inter-cropping, dabbling in new ideas and techniques to get high production, the best results and cheaper food for citizens. So much so, Ramnarine won the vegetable and food crop categories and even captured the Young Agricultural Entrepreneur Award at the National Agricultural Entrepreneur Awards ceremony last October. He attributed several agricultural agencies such as Ministry of Agriculture, the ADB, CARDI and IICA for his resounding success.

Approximately 1500 small farmers cultivate lands in Cunupia with at least 6000 people in the rural community depending on the sector to survive. A few weeks ago, the association was thrown into a state of panic on learning that Government had intended to use their arable lands for the Rapid Rail project. Unsure of what the future holds, Ramnarine stated that farmers all over the country were being displaced to make way for housing, commerce, industries and infrastructure, which can run into social problems.

Small farmers are unsure of their next move

"I am not against progress but at what cost? Just now we will have money but no food to buy." The same environment the Government wanted to create for the mega farms, Ramnarine said, this should be done for the small farmers. *"They will reap 100 times more the benefits."* Ramnarine said small farmers should come together to pursue large farms, *"But there is always a divide and rule situation."* Another setback was that the agriculture sector was not stimulated. *"A nation without sufficient agricultural resource is more vulnerable than a nation without sufficient energy resources. The long run security of any nation depends on its willingness and ability to ensure sustainability of its food and farming systems,"* Ramnarine pointed out. Ramnarine also said that while farmers have a vested interest in their livelihood, they were unsure of their next move. *"The farming styles at Tucker Valley are totally different from the small farms."* He explained that small farmers utilise a broad array of resources and have a vested interest in their sustainability.

Mega farms lack practical aspect of agriculture

Wallerfield farmer Selwyn Ramsaroop expressed similar views to Ramnarine, stating that the mega farms have been virtually unproductive and a waste of time and taxpayers' money. Ramsaroop, who cultivates over 25 acres of land in East Trinidad said operations at the mega farms have shown that those who are managing are versed in theoretical knowledge, but lacked the practical aspect of farming which is key to a bountiful and healthy harvest. *"Small farming systems are diverse, incorporating and preserving significant functional bio diversity within the farm,"* Ramsaroop pointed out. He observed that those working at mega farms needed hands on training in all aspects of agriculture. He firmly believed that the TVMF idea cannot foster a food security plan because of inadequate operational skills. *"To me, it's better to micro manage a small parcel of land than look after a large acreage half-heartedly. Besides, when you have to work for a salary you would seek after your interest as oppose to a farm that is fully mechanised."* Ramsaroop noted that if Government had offered the mega farms to a group of productive small farmers, this country would have already obtained food security.



One of several types of pumpkin under cultivation in Ramsaroop's farm

Balancing both Vassel Stewart CEO of the Trinidad Agri-Business Association (TTABA), however, stated both large and small farms have a key role to play in seeking food security. *"One type of farming system is not going to be adequate in obtaining food security. I would not say that food security lies in the hand of small farmers because there are areas of national production that the larger farms will be needed for, in terms of efficiency and also to be competitive. You have to balance both."* Stewart said the country's international trade agreements don't allow us to keep out imports.

At least 80 per cent of T&T's food import bill is still imported. *"If you don't become competitive, imports will eventually displace local production. For the vegetables and so on, these are the things the small farmers can produce and can do so efficiently and in small acreage, especially where it requires high labour inputs."* He said T&T has to mechanise, the way other developing countries are doing.

On February 5, 2010 Secretary General of the United Nations Ban Ki-Moon said that small farmers and rural producers have a vital role to play in overcoming global hunger and poverty at a time when more than one billion people suffer from hunger, the highest in human history.



Norris Deonarine
National Food Crop Farmers' Association

T&T must become self sufficient
Norris Deonarine education and research officer of the National Food Crop Farmers' Association (NFFA), argued that *"small farmers have been successful for decades and will continue to chart a new way forward. All their techniques and methods were handed down from their forefathers, which is why they flourish today. To me, the mega farms have not been driving food prices down. Probably they don't have the know-how and required techniques."* With food

imports crossing \$1 billion annually, Deonarine said, our country must become self sufficient rather than accessing food from the outside.

Deonarine said studies have shown that small farms are more productive and look after their fields better when they work as a unit. *"We are not talking about the yields of large scale monocultures, but a diversity of crops. Small farmers do innovate, invest and conserve, given the right conditions."*

The NFFA represents close to 19,000 small farmers. Deonarine said while micro farms face diseconomies of scale when dealing with the outside world, accessing credit and inputs, getting technical assistance and information on markets and in selling produce are sometimes challenging. In spite of labouring in the fields, Deonarine said, one major setback was that farmers do not have bargaining power and holding capacity *"and are therefore compelled to do distress sale which sometimes lead to exploitation by traders and middle men."* Another issue that has been hampering farmers was trade liberalization, which is supposed to increase food production, efficiency and production and improve the economic situation of farmers and patterns of food consumption.

History of Mega Farms

Established under a technical co-operation agreement between the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and Cuba, the TVMF is expected to turn out some 4,000 tonnes of agricultural produce annually. Cuba was selected because of its tremendous success in establishing and operating of similar projects and whose technical know-how was of great importance. The farm uses a combination of grow box technologies, greenhouse, conventional and semi-protected technology using organic matter as the main fertiliser. The TVMF, which focuses on integrated farming is one of 15 large scale farms. Government intended to set up to significantly reduce food prices and increase food production, with the contribution of private sector farmers. Among the mega farms that were granted licences last January by the Government to operate are Two Brothers Corporation, Supermix Feeds Caribbean, Chemical Limited and Technology Farms Limited. PCS Nitrogen spanning 75 acres was formally opened last year. A considerable degree of planning went into the setting up of these farms, including decisions on which crops were best suited for individual farms and the training of personnel.

That this was necessary, including the selection of Tucker Valley, is an indication that with the right mixes of technical expertise and commitment that all of the State mega farms can be productive. Mega farms with lands provided by the State are proposed to be located at Jerningham (108 acres for vegetable crops); Edinburgh (354 acres for vegetable crops); Orange Grove (100 acres for vegetable crops); Caroni (100 acres for root crops and rice); La Gloria (364 acres for mixed farming and livestock); Mon Jaloux (417 acres for integrated farming, livestock and aquaculture); Picton Estate (1,201 acres for livestock, tree crops and root crops.) The investors were responsible for all infrastructural works such as roads, irrigation and other works. Government expected the firms to operate at a high level of efficiency, producing output at a consistently high quality and at an affordable price to consumers.



Workers tending rows of vegetables at Tucker Valley Mega Farm (l); Pumpkin field in 'small' farm of Selwyn Ramsaroop (r)

Advancing Agriculture in Regional Integration experiences from Africa

*make agriculture
the lever of regional integration*

The 'new international context created by rising prices represents a historic opportunity to re-establish the bases of agricultural development in the region, that can only be taken forward through a regional approach that allows the various countries concerned to rise above their differing short-term interests'. This was among the several reasons justifying the need for a Regional Agricultural Policy for West Africa: ECOWAS. The tag line on the cover of the document says it all- "make agriculture the lever of regional integration".⁶ The Regional Agricultural Policy adopted by ECOWAS sets out a vision of "a modern and sustainable agriculture based on effective and efficient family farms and the promotion of agricultural enterprises through the involvement of the private sector. Once productivity and competitiveness on the intra-community and international markets are achieved, the policy should be able to guarantee food security and secure decent incomes for agricultural workers".



...ECOWAS describes agriculture as having 'major constraints ... but a highly adaptable sector.'

Among the other reasons for the regional agriculture policy are the fact that West Africa is in the process of 'building a space where people and goods can circulate freely, and is developing a single foreign trade policy through the common external tariff (CET)', with recognition and acknowledgement that 'certain problems can be addressed more effectively at the regional level than by individual governments – such as regulating supply and demand for agricultural produce by opening up markets (developing market infrastructures, managing supply chains on a regional basis, etc.), and formulating an effective cross-border trade policy to promote the agricultural sector'.

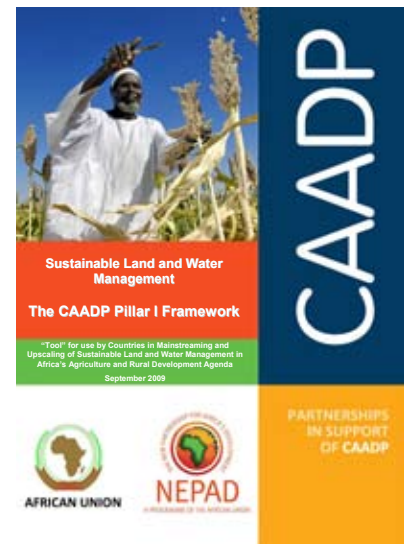
⁶ Economic Community of West African States, 17/12/2008, document produced for the Paris conference on the Regional Agricultural Policy for West Africa, held on 9th December 2008, http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/IMG/pdf/01_ANG-Com-CEDEAO.pdf.

*'Africa-owned, Africa-led initiative
working to boost agriculture productivity'*

A similar process is being managed in the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), where in 2000 agriculture was recognised as the mainstay and key driver of economic growth, food and nutrition security and poverty alleviation in Africa. In 2003, African Heads of State and Government ratified the Mobutu Declaration and committed to effecting policy changes that will improve agricultural and rural development in Africa, including African Governments' commitments in the allocation of at least 10% of national budgetary resources for agriculture and rural development.

Ministers of Agriculture of the 19 member States of COMESA are spearheading a regional approach to expanding opportunities for agricultural production, enhancing food security and increasing trade and market access through research, value addition and trade facilitation. This is to be achieved through the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). The COMESA region is aggressively pursuing the CAADP agenda as a holistic framework for agricultural-led growth and development in Africa.

CAADP's work falls under 4 pillars, each dealing with key issues. Pillar 1: Sustainable Land & water management; Pillar 2: Strengthening Trade Capacity and Market access; Pillar 3: Food and nutrition security; Pillar 4: Agricultural research. The CAADP regional compact will concentrate on strategic regional investments that individual countries, acting alone, cannot achieve, but which serve to accelerate individual country agricultural growth by enabling them to benefit from regional spillovers and economies of scale in technology development, trade and investment. The CAADP is comprehensive in its treatment of its four pillars, including well defined strategies to streamline and strengthen current regional programmes.



⁷ COMESA Regional CAADP Compact, Draft Version 19 April 2010, circulated for stakeholders' inputs and comments by FANRAPN Regional Secretariat.

Networking Agricultural Policy in the Region Advancing the CaRAPN Network

Strong policy is a prerequisite for sustainable agriculture development, including the resolution of agricultural-induced crises.

The right policy mix, based on balancing economic, social and ecological imperatives, is as, or even more critical to the success/failure of the sector than is technology. Getting the right policy mix is not static. It will depend on the conditioning environment and the particular circumstances of the countries, singly and as a region in a given period. Full engagement and involvement of stakeholders, whether they are public or private sector institutions, non-governmental organizations or individuals is essential to an equitable and effective policy process.



Participants at the recently held CaRAPN meeting

In the region, the CARICOM Secretariat is tasked with the mandate for policy leadership and guidance, in partnership with Community Institutions and groups, toward the attainment of a viable, internationally competitive and sustainable Community, with improved quality of life for all. CARICOM is currently leading a number of regional policy frameworks aimed at creating the conditions for the emergence of an internationally competitive and sustainable agribusiness and rural area.

Networking in agriculture is expanding!

Informal networking has taken on sense of purpose and has incorporated elements of the formal networking sector into their operations, as seen in the several small groups that are ‘organising’ for the purposes of accessing their required grant funding and technical assistance needs. Promoting networking in agriculture must be understood from two perspectives, networking related to:

1. content, i.e., information exchange for effective decision making, whether it is through face-to-face dialogue, or sharing of documentation;
2. resource sharing, i.e., the active sharing or exchange of expertise within the region for problem solving and policy implementation
3. The new networking must also foster the integration of non-traditional actors, whether they are other government

departments, non-governmental organisations, groups of individuals, or individuals engaged in community activities. The latter category is becoming appreciably more important. Increasingly also, is the growing number of individuals with information and expertise, who could potentially be important resource persons but are either not linked to any established organisation or network system or reluctant to ‘join’ formal associations and institutions.

The current agricultural and rural development environment in the Caribbean offers real opportunities for and tangible benefits from policy networking. The information and experiences from other developing regions of the world show that the wheel need not be reinvented and lessons can be learned from similar and successful agricultural policy networks, such as the Pacific Agricultural and Forestry Policy Network (PAFPN) which makes a clear statement on its website that “effective policies rely on good information. Policy makers from the region identified weak communication, poor engagement of stakeholders, and lack of timely information as constraints to the development of effective Pacific agricultural and forestry policies and the enforcement and implementation of existing ones. A robust regional information exchange was identified as a valuable tool to strengthen communication in the area of agricultural and forestry policy.”

CaRAPN is positioning itself to be the ‘grand central station’ for agricultural policy networking in the Caribbean

The Caribbean Regional Agricultural Policy Network (CaRAPN) is a platform and an opportunity established in 2003, for stakeholders in the agricultural community in CARICOM/ CARIFORUM to freely network, generate and share a range of information products, expertise and communicate in order to improve awareness of and participation in the agricultural policy process at national and regional levels. CaRAPN met recently with stakeholders of varying representations and interest in the agriculture community in the region to define its focus for the Medium Term Strategy 2011-2015 that will give effect to its Vision to serve as the premier regional agricultural policy network that strengthens the agricultural and rural development policy process by building capacity, fostering strategic partnerships and creating a platform for advocacy, sharing knowledge, experiences and expertise. In fulfilling its vision, CaRAPN will operate within the policy frameworks and processes led by the CARICOM Secretariat, with the positions and interests advocated by the private sector, and for the benefits of the general public and ordinary citizens who are often called upon to support activities that promote agriculture and rural wellbeing.

Stakeholders' opinions on networking via CaRAPN

Since it started as a CTA-IICA project in 2003, the Caribbean Regional Agricultural Policy Network (CaRAPN) has been building a platform for information dissemination and dialogue through generating products such as the AgriView newsletter, In a Nutshell and a number of other publications and promoting and facilitating connections and communication among policy-makers, youth, agripreneurs (small farmers and processors), University agribusiness students, scientists, journalists and other media in an effort to open up the playing field and involve a wider cross-section of stakeholders in the policy dialogue process. The 2004 Jagdeo Initiative was initiated and supported under the CaRAPN project. CaRAPN is also continuously upgrading a website that aims to become the premier agricultural web-based information resource and dialogue platform in the Caribbean. But one outstanding area needed to be developed –networking, which explains the general lack of awareness in the regional agriculture community about CaRAPN as a network. Here are some comments from stakeholders who participated in a recent meeting (27-30 July, 2010) to develop a 2011-2015 Medium Term Strategic Plan to move CaRAPN from project to a sustainable network. Stakeholders will be notified by mid-September of availability of the full report of the meeting as well as the CaRAPN medium Term Strategy 2011-2015 on www.carapn.net.



Barton Clarke Ministry of Agriculture, Barbados:

“A sustainable CaRAPN means that we will have to receive benefits from CaRAPN; as basic as that. So CaRAPN has to be a mechanism that contributes to agricultural development. And we want it to contribute to agricultural development in a holistic way, looking at the traditional production and marketing issues, but also adding aspects of the environment, the social dimensions and the global dimensions. CaRAPN has an important role to deal with commonality of purpose; deal with commonality of vision in order to provide value to in particular to member states, individuals and organisations for the benefit of all of us.”



Neil Gomez, Farmer/Producer, Antigua & Barbuda and member, Caribbean Farmers Network (CaFAN)

“Farmers can benefit from such a network providing that the network realises and appreciates what farmers need. I believe that it can help, it can help to the degree that that we have an input, we have a say, we have knowledge. Because if it is policy, it should be straight across the board, the playing field should be level, it should be accessible it should be all this which CaRAPN says it’s going to do. But I think time will tell.”



Kimberly Thomas: Agricultural Policy Planner, Grenada:

“A tremendous opportunity for networking was presented whilst the decision to institutionalize CaRAPN holds prospects for great success in the near future to the benefit of agricultural planners and the region’s agricultural sector.”



Onika Campbell: Communications Consultant, Ministry of Agriculture, Antigua & Barbuda:

“We are the network! From this meeting, the mission and vision for CaRAPN has been revived; we are moving forward with a new vision and mission; moving towards the CSME single development vision.”



Jedidiah Maxime: Agricultural Policy Planner, Antigua & Barbuda:

“I think that the idea of CaRAPN – the policy networking mechanism is a very good one, of course I think that one of the shortcomings of policy formulation both at the national and regional level, is that the involvement of stakeholders have always proven to be a shortcoming and as such I believe that this level of networking among all stakeholders with regards to the issue of policy will bring to the table the various concerns and issues which need to be discussed in order to properly address policy in the Caribbean. So I think it is a vital mechanism; I think it is long overdue and I hope that the participation in the networking will be one which will definitely have an impact in changing agriculture in the Caribbean.”



Keith Amiel, Caribbean Agribusiness Association (CABA):

“CaRAPN is extremely important; we are countries separated by water and long distances, therefore we need to have an efficient communication network that communicates by all the means available. What our physical isolation make difficult for us to achieve, we look forward to CaRAPN filling the gaps to perhaps recognise that what we are trying to do has been done already and therefore we don’t have to reinvent the wheel. CaRAPN has a tremendous role to play in bringing everything forward in an objective manner to show how we relate to each other, where the shortcomings are, where the successes are, where the failures are, where the needs for development are so that we can bring our thought process on it so that we can access funding.”

The Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA) in perspective from 1999 to 2009

In July 1999 in Trinidad and Tobago, IICA facilitated a CARICOM Ministers of Agriculture Forum in response to the need to provide a forum for discussing emerging issues critical to the development of agriculture in the region. This marked the beginning of The Alliance for Sustainable Development of Agriculture and the Rural Milieu.

The need for an Alliance was self-evident, given the commonality of problems and issues facing agriculture in the region. The concept of a Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA), introduced by IICA as a major annual event of the Alliance, also represented a collaborative response to the 1996 CARICOM Conference of Heads of Government's call for innovative strategies to improve and sustain the competitiveness of agriculture's industries.

CWA was described as a facility to place agriculture and rural life in a prominent position in order for key public and private sector decision-makers to better acknowledge the strategic importance to the economic, social and environmental stability as well as afford stakeholders an opportunity to forge a common vision for the repositioning of agriculture. The core elements of the CWA have been Annual General Meetings of Alliance Constituent members, namely the Caribbean AgriBusiness Association (CABA), the Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers (CANROP) and Caribbean Agricultural Forum for Youth (CAFY), Council for Higher

Education on Agriculture (CACHE), the Ministers Forum/Alliance Workshop, CARDI Board of Governors meeting and an agriculture trade show/fair/exhibition. The convening of the Agriculture COTED from 2007, and from 2008, the Agriculture Round Table (ART) have added to the 'flavour' of the CWA. As it has evolved, CWA has become the premier event for agriculture, with several regional and international organisations expressing interest in hosting seminars or other activity as part of the week.

From its inception, IICA has continued to support the Alliance and the CWA, in collaboration with the CARICOM Secretariat, the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), in partnership and constituting the Alliance Secretariat. The Alliance and its flagship CWA, rotates from country to country, based on expressions of interest by the respective Minister of Agriculture. Since 2003, the Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation (CTA) has been an important and constant international partner in the CWA, through direct partnerships with both IICA and CARDI in areas relating to policy and youth development, emerging research and development, agricultural information systems development and recently, climate change.

The following is a brief chronology of the CWA from Trinidad in 1999 to St. Vincent in 2008.

CWA #1-1999, Trinidad and Tobago was the beginning of this event under the Alliance. It was fairly small and sought to promote agriculture in the Region generally and particularly set the framework to stimulate agribusiness through an AgriBusiness Conference and Mini Trade Show under the theme "High-Value Exotic Caribbean Foods". It also included a Forum of Ministers meeting and general meetings of a few constituent networks of the Alliance.

CWA #2-2000, Kingston, Jamaica from 5-6 October, was also a fairly small event which featured the official launch and First official meeting of the Alliance. In addressing this First Meeting of the Alliance, then Minister of Agriculture, Jamaica, the Hon. Roger Clarke, then Chairman of the Alliance, noted that agriculture in the Region was at a cross-roads, grappling with which road to take!

CWA #3-2001, Punta Cana, Dominican Republic 26-29 November, was extended into the First Inter-American Week of Agriculture and Rural Life organized by IICA and provided an extended platform to foster alliances with Latin American agribusiness counterparts. It also marked the occasion of the election of the first CARICOM Director General of IICA.

CWA #4-2003, Georgetown, Guyana 5-12 October, was held under the theme "Facilitating Economic Development through the Promotion of Competitive Agriculture in the Caribbean". The CWA #4-2003 marked two historic occasions; (that being the official launch of the Caribbean Agricultural Policy Network (CaRAPN), which signaled a new era in cooperation for agricultural policy making in the Region; and the signing of the Agreement to further co-operation within the Alliance by the Chairman of the Alliance, the Director-General of IICA and the Deputy Secretary-General of the CARICOM Secretariat.

*Promoting Greater Caribbean Competitiveness
in National, Regional and International
Agri-Food Markets*

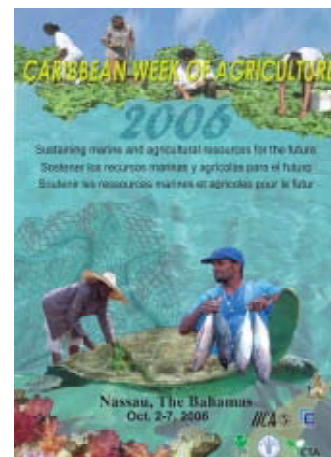


The Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and the Rural Milieu in the Caribbean

CWA #5-2005, St. Kitts & Nevis, 3-8 October, promoted the concept of ‘Exploring and Enhancing Opportunities for a New Agriculture’. It featured an agro-tourism workshop, a leadership development workshop for the Caribbean Agricultural Forum for Youth (CAFY) and the usual Alliance workshop, among other events. The Trade Show was also planned to coincide with a national expo on agriculture. The CWA 2004, originally scheduled for 31 October to 6 November in Grenada, was cancelled due to Hurricane Ivan. The theme which was favoured by the Grenada authorities was “Fostering Regional Sustainable Development through Agro-tourism Linkages”.



CWA #6-2006 the Bahamas, 2-7 October, was held by the Secretariat of the Alliance, Chaired by IICA in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources. It was the most successful CWA to date, under the theme “Sustaining Marine and Agriculture Resources into the Future”. Widened sectoral and country participation, including North and Central America and Europe, solidified the growing popularity of this event as one that sets the stage for agri-initiatives and fora in the Caribbean. The events included workshops on Agri- Tourism, Agriculture-in-the-Media and Biotechnology workshops, a special IICA meeting of Ministers of Agriculture and high-level agriculture officials, including the CARICOM Secretariat, the usual Alliance workshop which provided a comprehensive briefing on options for agro-energy in the Caribbean and an Agriculture Exhibition which included a wide variety of crop, fish and processed foods from the Bahamas and other Caribbean countries, including Haiti, Jamaica and St. Vincent. An IICA-CARDI Agreement was also signed at the CWA#6.



CWA #7-2007, Jamaica, 7-13 October, was celebrated under the theme, “Agriculture – Harvesting Wealth through Tourism” and recognised the ‘symbiotic relationship between the tourism and agricultural sectors, the burgeoning expansion in hotel accommodation and visitor arrivals throughout the Region, and the potential to open up lucrative market opportunities



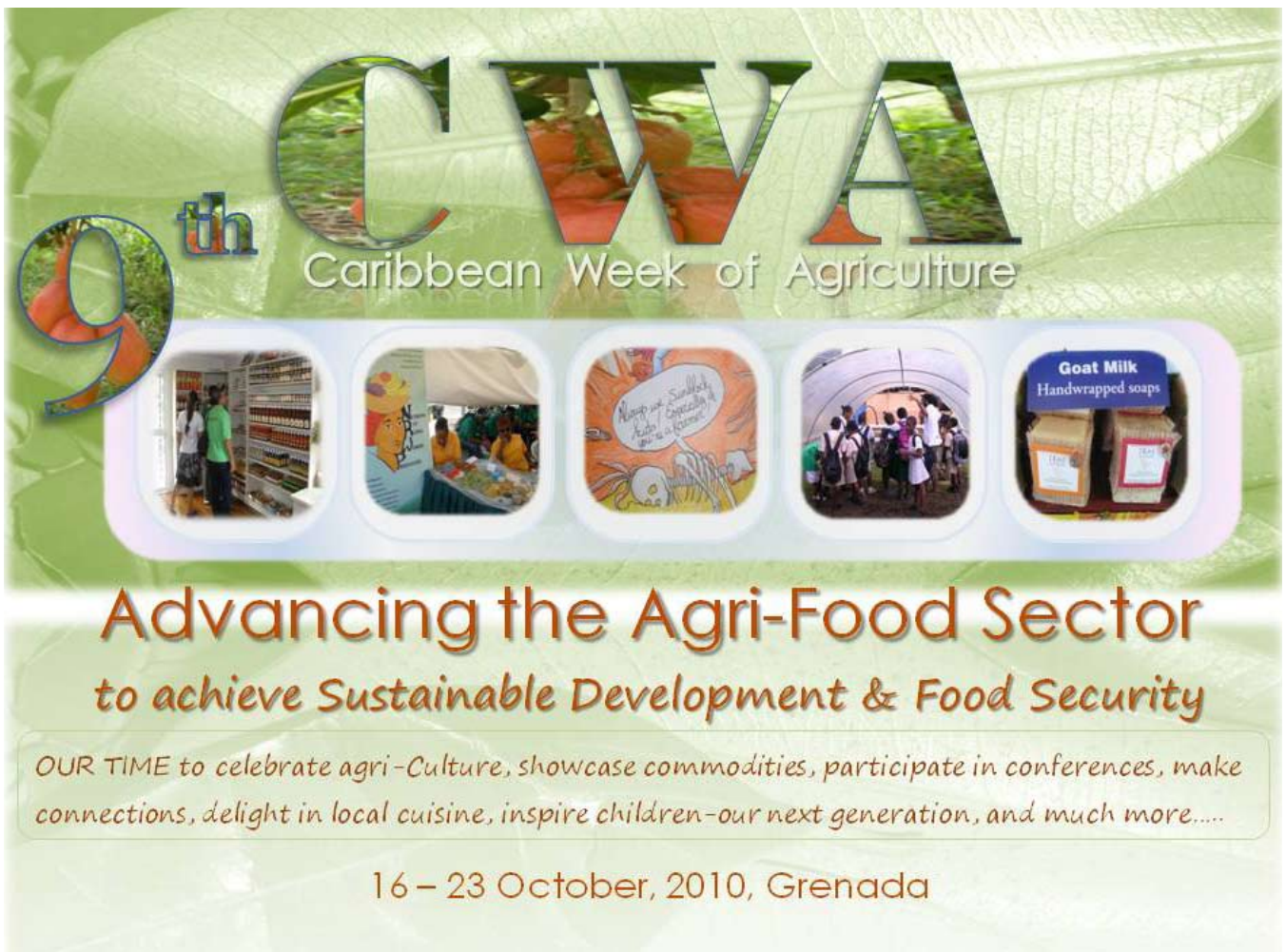
for primary producers.’ CWA #7 also featured the Twenty- Third Special Meeting of the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) on Agriculture with progress towards the Jagdeo Initiative (JI): ‘Strengthening Agriculture for Sustainable Growth and Development’ and ‘Bio-Energy’ were key topics on the agenda. The week also included a School Art Competition on Climate Change as part of the Trade Show.

CWA #8-2008, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, 6-11 October emphasized the theme ‘Innovative Agriculture and Agri-Industries’ featured the usual core activities of the Alliance and its constituents’ meetings, COTED and introduced the Agriculture Round Table (ART), OECS Agriculture Ministers Meeting and a Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) Council of Ministers Meeting. Other events included a CTA Information Policy workshop, a Walkathon in commemoration of the FAO World Food Day and a Trade Show held in collaboration with the St. Vincent National Agri-/Agro-Industrial Exhibition.



Due to a heavy 2009 calendar, which included two high level conferences in which IICA was involved, namely the Fifth Summit of the Americas (April) and Fifth Agriculture Ministerial and Week of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas (October) including the election of a new Director General of IICA, IICA could not host a CWA in 2009. The next CWA will be held in 2010, in Grenada from 16-23 October, 2010, under the theme “Advancing the Agri-Food Sector to achieve Sustainable Development and Food Security.”

CWA 2010...mark your calendar!



The banner features a large green leaf background. At the top, the letters 'CWA' are rendered in a large, 3D, orange and green font. To the left, a large '9th' is written in a blue and orange font. Below the 'CWA' text, the words 'Caribbean Week of Agriculture' are written in a white, sans-serif font. A horizontal row of five circular images shows various agricultural activities: a person in a green shirt in a market, people at a table, a hand holding a sign that says 'Always use Sustainable Practices in Agriculture', a group of people in a field, and two packages of 'Goat Milk Handwrapped soaps'. Below the images, the text 'Advancing the Agri-Food Sector to achieve Sustainable Development & Food Security' is written in a large, orange, serif font. Underneath, a quote in a smaller, orange, serif font reads: 'OUR TIME to celebrate agri-Culture, showcase commodities, participate in conferences, make connections, delight in local cuisine, inspire children-our next generation, and much more....'. At the bottom, the dates '16 - 23 October, 2010, Grenada' are written in a large, orange, serif font.

CWA

9th Caribbean Week of Agriculture

Goat Milk Handwrapped soaps

Advancing the Agri-Food Sector to achieve Sustainable Development & Food Security

OUR TIME to celebrate agri-Culture, showcase commodities, participate in conferences, make connections, delight in local cuisine, inspire children-our next generation, and much more....

16 - 23 October, 2010, Grenada

AgriView is published every trimester by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA). It provides a forum for researchers, policy makers and agri-entrepreneurs, including small farmer, to share ideas and successful experiences that will contribute to the repositioning of the agri-food system in the Caribbean to one that is economically efficient, socially responsible and environmentally sound. It also provides information to enhance knowledge critical to agribusiness.

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The responsibility for opinions expressed in this publication and errors and omissions rest solely with the editors.

Any and all contributions and comments are most welcome.

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