

Agriculture Policy Programme Caribbean Action



Antigua and Barbuda



Country Update



APP/PMU
The Intra-ACP APP is funded under the 10th European Development Fund (EDF)



APP Country Update: Antigua and Barbuda

The Update highlights contributions of the APP from actions under the Scale Down Work Plan, that were grounded in-country with direct benefits to local stakeholders.



3 local youth provided with opportunity to promote their enterprises and expand their business networks

- Twini Payne, Johnson Southwell and Shem Wilson were fully funded under the APP to participate the Youth in Agriculture (YiA) Business Forum as part of the D4D in Grenada [18th – 22nd January 2016]. The Forum targeted youth who own and operate agribusinesses and/or manage and play a vital role in a family-owned agricultural enterprise. Through the YiA Forum, the Youth from Antigua and Barbuda were exposed to other business youth from the rest of the Caribbean, and they are now part of a post-forum youth-driven vibrant ‘network’.

The Grenada YiA Forum also provided opportunities to inform of and to promote their business among their peers and agri-stakeholders in the Region and to be the start of a YiA database designed to ensure that they are targeted for subsequent opportunities for further training under the APP and other development initiatives. The young agripreneurs who participated in the YiA Business Forum have established a social network using the WhatsApp platform, through which they have maintained contact, continue to share valuable information and are pursuing options for commercial ventures. This networking platform has expanded as they have added other young agripreneurs to the group. Their open and genuine commitment to pass on the knowledge gained by providing training and mentoring to other youth at the national and regional level, the post-forum continuity achieved through the networking platform provides a good basis for continuity and sharing of the knowledge and benefits started in Grenada.

- Johnson Southwell was given yet another opportunity to engage with regional planners to propose solutions to hindrances experienced by agripreneurs at the Component 1 (CCS) 9th Regional Planners Forum (RPF) on Agriculture, held in Trinidad and Tobago from June 7 – 10, 2016. As part of the RPF, a hybrid programme of the Creativity for Employment and Business Opportunities (CEBO) tailored to youth agripreneurs, was introduced and tested. This effort is a follow up to the APP-supported YiA Business Forum held in January 2016, and provided participants with tools for improving business operation and competitiveness. It is anticipated that building institutional capacity and fostering policy dialogue with youth farmers will assist in the development and implementation of policies and other initiatives to support young farmers in Antigua and Barbuda and the wider Caribbean region.

Support provided under. . .

Component 1 – CCS: ‘Support Involvement of Women and Youth in Dialogue on the Region’s Agriculture Issues’

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Component 2 – CARDI:

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Component 3: ‘Strengthen and link existing fora for multi-stakeholder dialogue to widen regional exposure and networking opportunities for small producers/ entrepreneurs’

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Local Herbs & Spices producers get an opportunity to chart a future for the industry in the region

Ms. Rosemarie McMaster of the famed 'Suzie's Hot Sauce', participated in a technical meeting convened by the CARICOM Secretariat [9th – 10th May 2016] in Trinidad and Tobago. The meeting provided a forum to consult with and exchanging information with other herbs and spices entrepreneurs and a consultant Dr. André Gordon, on the development needs for the sector as part of an initiative to develop a Regional policy and strategy for the sector and a mechanism to facilitate industry collaboration, commercial activities and their interface with the public sector on matters of policy. The process taken for the development of this industry will also inform the process for and be incorporated into the new policy framework for agriculture.

- This activity commenced in December 2015, and will conclude in August 2016.

Support provided under. . .

Component 1 – CCS: 'Develop a Regional policy framework for the Herbs and Spices Industry'

Agriculture Planners get more opportunities for regional and international policy networking

- Jedidiah Maxime, a representative of the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Fisheries and Barbuda in Antigua and Barbuda participated in the 8th Regional Planners Forum on agriculture in Grenada, [18th – 22nd January 2016]. Mr. Maxime had the opportunity to network and dialogue with planners from the rest of the region as well as heads and senior professionals from the key regional and international agricultural development institutions on topics of direct significance to agricultural development in Antigua and Barbuda, including approaches for developing commodity-based industries, facilitation of intra-regional trade and critical areas for national and regional policy response.
- Mr. Astley Joseph was afforded an opportunity, along with eight other planners from the Region, to participate in the 2016 United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Outlook Forum in Arlington Virginia [25th – 26th February 2016]. Participants reported that the experience and exposure to the level of research, technical information, dialogue and networking was worth it and despite the economic differences between the US and other developed countries, and the Caribbean, there is need for a much greater level of investment and technical infusion into the development of agriculture.
- Ms. Ermine Edwards-Gikonyo attended the 9th Regional Planners Forum on Agriculture from 7th to 9th June 2016, which provided her with an opportunity to engage and network with peers in the Region and dialogue and exchange information of critical topics for agricultural policy response. The 9th RPF also provided the opportunity for MOAF officials to be introduced to a hybrid programme of the Creativity for Employment and Business Opportunities (CEBO) tailored to youth agripreneurs.

Support provided under. . .

Component 1 – CCS: 'Support for policy capacity building and networking through a Regional Planners Forum (RPF)'

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Root crop farmers' access to and capacity to manage improved, climate-ready planting material enhanced

Four (4) validation plots for sweet potato of a ¼ acre each was established on the CARDI field station in March 2016. Four (4) varieties (hurricane, Mandela, King Kong and catchme) are being validated/evaluated for adaptability to extreme weather conditions. Two other ¼ acre plots were established in April of 2016 on farmers' holdings in Belvedere and Burks using the same varieties. Harvesting will take place in 4 months after planting. This trial is of particular significance under the APP since CARDI is expected to support CAFAN producers directly, with improved (resilient) sweet potato varieties as well as build their members' capacity to produce their own improved planting material to eventually phase into this variety to enhance their capacity and success in implementing their Roots & Tubers Export Initiative.

- This activity is ongoing and will continue to the end of the APP in December 2016.

Support provided under. . .

Component 2, CARDI : 'Establish crop validation & evaluation trials for commercial & food value and adaptability to extreme weather conditions'

Sweet potato germplasm maintained on ex-situ conservation plot

Established ex-situ plots for sweet potato continues to be maintained during 2016 by component 2 of the APP. This includes implementation of agronomic and cultural practices (weeding, fertilizing, irrigation and pest and disease control). These plots will continue to be maintained to supply planting material to farmers in Antigua and Barbuda and as a gene bank for sweet potato material for the Region.

Support provided under. . .

Component 2, CARDI : 'Establish ex-situ conservation plot for selected crops of commercial and food value'

Farmers trained in multiplying and managing improved germplasm

Fifty One (51) farmers (including members of CAFAN) were trained in sweet potato germplasm production and multiplication during the 4-8 April, 2016. CARDI anticipates that the trained farmers will share the information with others within the local farming community and in so doing address the current lack of proper planting material at the local level and reduce the dependence on CARDI and the MoA as a source of germplasm. The results of all the validation trial works, including those undertaken in Antigua will be disseminated to other regional CARIFORUM countries through a regional workshop.

Support provided under. . .

Component 2, CARDI :
'Develop capacity of selected institutions and small producers/ entrepreneurs for multiplying and managing improved germplasm'
&
'National and Regional Workshops; Farmer Field Visit for training in management of improved germplasm and animal breeds (agencies & producers)'

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Small farmers exposed to the benefits of appropriate small-scale equipment and improved practices

Small farmers of Antigua and Barbuda will be exposed to the benefits of appropriate small-scale equipment and improved practices for Sweet potato production. During the period July – August 2016 one (1) walk-behind tractor and implements will be made available through CARDI, to demonstrate to farmers the impact of cost-time efficiency of land preparation. The training will also be extended to include staff of the Ministry of Agriculture and other relevant private sectors stakeholders. The tractor will be managed by CARDI.

Support provided under. . .

Component 2, CARDI : ‘Procure and demonstrate use of small scale equipment, tools and machinery for training demonstrations ‘

Small-scale food processor MSMEs exposed to enterprise building and product development training

Eight (8) bakers attended a training session on composite bread making using cassava and sweet potato during 7-8 April, 2016. The training was a collaborative effort between CARDI and the Caribbean Agribusiness Association (CABA).

Support provided under. . .

Component 2, CARDI : ‘Regional and National Level Training Workshops in value-added processes and product development’

MSME's trained in product development

Two local MSMEs, Sharon Van Longe – ANBNROP and Jerome Henry – Bee Cooperative were given the opportunity to attend a Regional training Workshop on Product Development, Marketing, Food Safety and GMP's for SME's [21st – 23rd March 2016, Trinidad and Tobago]. Both participants agreed that required and benefited from the exposure and training in improved packaging and labelling design, use of appropriate semi-industrial equipment and infrastructure to improve good manufacturing practices in their enterprises. Hence continued and targeted interventions by development partners in this area will of great benefit to them in enhancing their operation.

Support provided under. . .

Component 3, IICA: ‘Improve design of packaging and labelling for select agri-food processing MSMEs (producer groups)’

SME's receive technical assistance and equipment to support product development

Local sweet potato producer groups will receive direct technical assistance form a local National Value Chain Facilitator (NVCFs) contracted through a CAFAN Letter of Agreement (LoA) with the APP Components 2 and 3, as well as from provision of small scale packaging equipment (crates) and labelling, including training in use of same, to improve the marketability and presentation of their products. In the 3rd quarter of 2016 field crates will be delivered to dasheen/sweet potato producer groups to support the CaFAN export programme.

Support provided under. . .

Component 3, IICA: ‘Purchase and distribute small-scale processing and packaging equipment to support improved product handling, presentation and quality for select agri-food processing MSMEs’

July 2016 ~ 4 ~ APP/PMU



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Producer groups and networks capacity for governance and value chain development supported

CAFAN, concluded a LoA with the APP (Component 2 and 3) which makes provision for the contracting of the services of one (1) National Value Chain Facilitator (NVCF), Ms. Pamella Romemary Thomas assigned to directly to the local CaFAN membership for a period of six months, to support dasheen and sweet potato producer group enterprises in areas related to production, export marketing, group development and access to finance. Ms Thomas has participated in initial consultations on the CAFAN Execution plan and C2, C3 training activity at the recently concluded APP Regional Producer Group/Enterprise Governance and Group Dynamics training workshop [April 25-27, 2016] in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. At that workshop NVCFs received expert orientation on producer group governance, dynamics, financial assessment tools, and Good Agricultural Practices, and contributed to the development of subsequent training modules in Producer Group Organizational Development/ Dynamics - all to support their delivery of technical assistance to commodity-based producer groups.

- **The NVCF will be in-place until September 2016.**

Support provided under. . .

Component 3, IICA: 'Direct technical assistance to selected producer groups and commodity-based enterprises for value chain development through National Value Chain Facilitators'

MSMEs trained in producer group governance and producer-buyer networks highlighted

- Samuel Brazier of the Antigua and Barbuda Agriculture Forum for Youth received expert training at a Regional training Workshop in Producer Group Governance hosted jointly by C2 and C3 in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, [April 25-28, 2016]. The local NVCF will continue to support these groups, with a focus on members of the Sweet Potato Producer clusters, within defined areas of activity covered by the CaFAN-IICA-CARDI LoA/CaFAN Execution Plan – including Producer Group Governance building activities and Buyer Networking.
- Ms. Pamella Rosemary Thomas (NVCF) participated in the Strengthening Producer-Buyer Relationships: Networking Platform Experiences and Strategy Meeting held in St. Lucia during the period 27-28 June, 2016. It was designed to facilitate joint planning and sharing of information so as to improve the organizational capacity of producer, women and youth through their insertion into value chains. The aim of the dialogue platform is the removal of obstacles to the production, marketing and distribution of commodities and to build capacity and institutional frameworks and systems for value chain development. The meeting in St. Lucia benefited from the already established buyer/producer relationship which exists between Massy Stores Saint Lucia and several local producers and was the focus of discussions. Producer-buyer relationship in Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana was also highlighted.

Support provided under. . .

Component 3, IICA: 'Support National Producer-Buyer Networking and Group Governance Building activities'

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SME's receive support to conduct financial investment profiles

Sweet potato producer enterprises will be assessed in terms of credit-readiness and qualifying enterprises will undergo an investment profiling. The local NVCF has already provided with initial training/orientation by FAST expert in enterprise credit-readiness assessment and investment profiling tools at the C2-C3 April 25-27, 2016 workshop in Saint. Vincent and the Grenadines. NVCF application of tools and final assessments of selected local qualifying Sweet potato producer enterprises will be completed by end of June 2016, in preparation for engagement with Financial Institutions (FIs) during the C3 Regional agri-Value Chain Finance Forum to be held in Jamaica in September 2016. This is being undertaken within framework of C3 FAST-IICA and CaFAN-IICA-CARDI LoAs

Support provided under. . .

Component 3, IICA: 'Prepare Financial /Investment profiles for selected commodity based Industries to strengthen information baselines and stakeholders engagement on value chain financing in CARIFORUM'

Directory of major enterprises in the hot pepper and sweet potato value chains published

Twenty (20) organizations within the hot pepper value chain and eighteen (18) organizations within the sweet potato value chain were featured in an APP Directory of major CARIFORUM producer groups, buyers and service providers. The Directory includes the contact information for key producer groups, supermarkets, restaurants, traders, exporters, agro-processors, and input suppliers involved in these commodity-specific chains. Forty (40) copies have been made available for distribution to stakeholders in Antigua and Barbuda and the Directory will also be made available online in APP partner and Ministry of Agriculture websites.

Support provided under. . .

Component 3, IICA: 'APP Directory of major CARIFORUM producer groups, buyers and service providers'

Regional APP Actions with Benefits at Country Level

Action/Component	Brief Description
<p>[C1 - CCS - ongoing]</p> <p>Upgrade the Regional Agribusiness Platform (Carib-Agri Website www.agricarib.org) and support capacity of producers to use same for business and trade-related information</p>	<p>An upgraded website has been delivered to the CARICOM Secretariat. Website content uploads are being done, and a presentation will be made to Planners in the 9th Regional Planners Forum in June 2016, in Trinidad & Tobago</p> <p>Local stakeholders are encouraged to contribute to the content for the website.</p>
<p>[C1 - CCS - ongoing]</p> <p>Upgrade/expand the existing web-based Institutional Directory and Activity Integration Map developed under a previous IICA-CTA project</p>	<p>The consultancy is advanced and a presentation will be made to Planners in the 9th Regional Planners Forum in June 2016, in Trinidad & Tobago. The Platform targets key agricultural development agencies which are part of the umbrella Agriculture Food and Nutrition Cluster (AFNC) and that provide development support to the sector. The information already gathered/provided by these agencies on their activities and initiatives will be coded and included in the database to enhance stakeholder knowledge on what's happening and foster greater institutional coordination.</p> <p>Local stakeholders are encouraged to contribute information on projects to enhance the database.</p>
<p>[C1 - CCS - ongoing]</p> <p>Support AFNC (one F2F), virtual coordination meetings, logistics, communications</p>	<p>CARDI as Chair of the AFNC has been leading the process to manage monthly virtual meetings addressing a number of areas that are supported directly under the APP as well as complementary actions by other institutions. Since the start of 2014, a smaller core of agencies, comprising CARICOM Secretariat, IICA, FAO, CDB, UWI, OECS Secretariat, CRFM, CARPHA, CaFAN and CABA have been holding monthly coordination meetings, of which four have been face-2-face. With support from the APP, in its short life the AFNC has managed to establish itself as a credible mechanism to foster collaboration on agency work activities to minimize overlaps and accelerate consensus on solutions to tackle common issues. Given that these key institutions provide direct support to agriculture in the countries, these meetings facilitate open dialogue and information sharing which could impact on delivery of support in country or could be based on sharing of successful experiences in country that could be replicated. Under the AFNC, teams have been created to champion the development process of priority commodities. These priority commodities and the lead agency are (a) Small Ruminants (CARDI), (b) Roots & Tubers (FAO), (c) Herbs & Spices (CABA)</p> <p>Local stakeholders are encouraged to make input through the CARICOM Secretariat and their local IICA and/or CARDI office, or directly through any of the key AFNC members.</p>

Regional APP Actions with Benefits at Country Level

Action/Component	Brief Description
<p>[C1 - CCS - ongoing]</p> <p>Strengthen Coordination meetings, logistics, communications of the 4 Thematic Groups (TGs)</p>	<p>The 4 TGs meet virtually and F2F on matters relating to their portfolio. As part of their functions, these TGs would need to liaise at the country level to determine the status of activities/initiatives being undertaken by Ministries of Agriculture, and other national, regional and international agencies, relating their specific portfolio. Countries have an important role in this information gathering process. The TGs and their lead agencies are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Agricultural Health and Food Safety Systems (CCS) 2 Business Development (IICA) 3 Climate Change & Natural Resource Management (FAO) 4 Human Resource, Research & Development (CARDI) <p>Local stakeholders are encouraged to make input directly to the lead agencies identified.</p>
<p>[C1 - CCS - completed]</p> <p>Examine the adequacy of market infrastructure with focus on small producers</p>	<p>This study was grounded in five (5) countries - Barbados, Grenada, Guyana, St. Kitts and Nevis and Trinidad and Tobago. It sought to determine whether existing 'physical facility or tangible facilitating arrangements' are adequate to permit the flow of agricultural products from farm-gate to consumer. 'Adequacy' was measured from the supplier (farmer, retailer and/or vendor) and the buyer (individual consumers, retailers/wholesalers) perspectives, as well as any intermediary, for example packing houses. Based on the findings of the country assessments, several recommendations were offered for improving market infrastructure that will simultaneously improve the outcomes for vendors, including small producers and experiences for consumers.</p> <p>The recommendations should be reviewed in the context of the recently completed national agriculture policy and plan.</p>
<p>[C1 - CCS - close to completion]</p> <p>Develop a Regional Policy framework for the Cassava-Based Industry</p>	<p>Initially, the ToR identified five (5) countries - Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Suriname, to be 'case studied'. While these are generally representative of the difference in the agricultural sector in CARICOM, there is recognition by the Consultant that this would not provide a sufficient basis for making policy for the entire Region. The new proposal would allow for the capture of salient aspects of the industry development in a wider regional sample, by grouping the countries in Haiti, Mainland countries (Belize, Guyana, Suriname) and other CARICOM countries (including the OECS and Barbados). Hence the role of IICA and CARDI offices in facilitating the Consultant with the information and experiences gathering process will be an important factor in ensuring success of this activity.</p> <p>The recommendations and approach to commodity-based industry development should be reviewed in the context of the recently initiated support to development of a national agriculture policy and plan.</p>

Regional APP Actions with Benefits at Country Level

Action/Component	Brief Description
<p>[C1 - CCS - ongoing]</p> <p>Assess business facilitation mechanisms with a focus on trade limiting policy measures and transportation services systems</p>	<p>Given the longstanding priority placed on ‘alleviating’ these trade and logistical constraints, it is expected that the results of consultations will have direct application to countries’ efforts at systematically strengthening business and trade facilitation mechanisms for intra-regional trade in agricultural products.</p> <p><i>This activity was launched in March 2016 and will conclude in October. Local officials will be consulted during the process of country-visits and will have an opportunity to input into the recommendations.</i></p>
<p>[C1 - CCS - ongoing]</p> <p>Build capacity of policy planners to integrate Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and Climate Change (CC) Adaptation into national agricultural development policies & programs</p>	<p>While only a limited number of countries will receive direct support in this area, in the form of development of Drought Hazard Annex to existing National Disaster Risk Management Plans, the process, experiences and information generated from the support will be shared and transferred to other countries in the Region. This can be done through regional training activities, including the Agri-Planners Forum, as well as incorporated into the planned national level support for developing policy frameworks and plans at the national (country) and industry levels (cassava, herbs & spices).</p> <p><i>This activity was launched in March 2016 and will conclude in October. Local officials will be afforded an opportunity to review the findings and recommendations, including the Drought Hazard Annexes to Disaster Risk Management Plans, being developed for Saint Lucia and Grenada.</i></p>
<p>[C1 - CCS - ongoing]</p> <p>Support Policy Networking and Knowledge Transfer through a Regional Agricultural Planners Forum</p>	<p>More structured opportunities will be provided for planners in Ministries of Agriculture to network and dialogue on a continuous basis as the main tool to strengthen their capacity to undertake routine planning functions, foster consensus for decision making on critical issues on the regional agenda and as a vehicle for transferring knowledge on specific policy-related topics through virtual and F2F training activities</p> <p>Activities continue in 2016.</p>

Regional APP Actions with Benefits at Country Level

Action/Component	Brief Description
[C2 – CARDI; close to completion] Study/validation meetings on harmonization of trade standards for movement of select crop & animal livestock germplasm in the region	Through two separate, but complementary studies under C2, both completed in July 2015, CARDI is contributing to efforts at modernizing existing rules and regulations concerning trade in plant and animal material for easier movement while, at the same time, maintaining the lowest level of risk with respect to the transfer of pests and diseases within CARIFORUM. A F2F technical review meeting on plant germplasm trade protocols (to be convened on 7 December 2015) will explore the pest status and the risk of transmission for six priority crops, and a range of suitable options were selected and presented through six crop-specific “Protocols for the Transport of Disease-Free Planting Material in CARIFORUM”. The outcomes of this meeting and action on an agreed way forward will have far reaching implications for countries which have expressed an interest in obtaining improved germplasm for roots and tubers from both countries within and outside the region. A similar technical review will be undertaken for animal germplasm and given the current concerns with the spread of AI disease in poultry, the findings and recommendations of the protocols for moving animal germplasm across the region become even more relevant. The recommendations and protocols should be reviewed as part of the current process for developing a national agriculture policy.
[C3 – IICA; close to completion] Experience capitalization on successful CARIFORUM-based financing schemes involving small producers/ entrepreneurs in value chains’	CARIFORUM countries will benefit from specific case studies and short videos of the successful value chain financing mechanisms. These experiences will be documented and used for knowledge transfer and promotion to other countries in the region. Among these are the financing mechanisms and experiences in the white potato and onion industry in Jamaica and the production input loan and marketing scheme spearheaded by MASSY STORES in Saint Lucia. The two consultancies are intended to contribute to the enhancing of understanding of innovative agri-value chain financing schemes for MSMEs, the pivotal role of supportive government policy and engagement and successful collaboration with financial institutions, in order to catalyse changes in practice, help others not to repeat errors and facilitate the design of new interventions that are evidence-based.
[C3 – IICA; planning in progress] ‘Regional Agri-Value Chain Financing Forum to strengthen stakeholders engagement on Value Chain financing in CARIFORUM countries’	The outcome of the Credit Readiness exercise will determine those MSMEs and Development Finance Institutions from Antigua and Barbuda that will attend the Regional Agri Value Chain Financing Forum to be held in Jamaica in September 2016. The forum will be hosted in collaboration with the CTA, and will include representatives from national and regional financial institutions, representatives of commodity producer, women and youth organizations and technical professionals from CARIFORUM countries. Enterprises selected to attend will include those that have undergone credit-readiness assessment and subsequently investment profiling (by BDOs using FAST Tools).

Regional APP Actions with Benefits at Country Level

Action/Component	Brief Description
<p>[C3 – IICA; plans ongoing for focus group meeting]</p> <p>Working Capital Fund study for selected commodity based Industries</p>	<p>A two-day regional workshop, involving representatives of selected producer groups and enterprises involved in Roots and Tuber production, transformation and marketing initiatives (spearheaded by APP Beneficiary organizations along with selected NVCFs, BDOs and IICA National Specialists who are supporting producer groups and value-adding enterprises) is earmarked for Barbados in August. This workshop is linked closely with the work on credit worthiness assessments being undertaken under the APP-FAST LoA. Enterprises being cleared as credit worthy' is an essential step in being deemed eligible for the financing.</p>