

SAINT LUCIA ANNUAL REPORT – 2004

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Situation in Agriculture and Rural Life

The situation in agriculture and rural life in Saint Lucia was dominated by the changes in the structure of the economy brought about by the serious challenges to trading in the main export markets for bananas. As a result, the economy continued to transition into services, mainly tourism and to a lesser extent finance. Nevertheless agriculture by virtue of its contribution to employment and its multi-functionality remained important in the development process. Accordingly, in spite of the significant loss in revenues earned from banana exports, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries estimated agriculture's true contribution to GDP to be in the region of 25% when expanded agriculture was taken into account and not the reported 6.5% (2002) observed using traditional economic indicators. This conclusion clearly underscores the integral role of agricultural communities in economic activities and the persistence of agriculture in the sustainable development of the economy as a whole. Provisional data provided by the Planning Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries indicate that volumes and value of local produce increased during the report period. Volumes and value of fish landed remained steady compared to the previous year. On the other hand, the country continued to experience a growing trade deficit in its food bill, fuelled by the increase in tourism activity.

In light of the above, the government along with the private sector and allied agencies redoubled efforts to support commercialisation of selected export commodities and increase diversification in domestic food production. The recently concluded National Agricultural Policy and Strategic Plan, is now supported by an Agricultural Incentives Regime. A newly established Agricultural Diversification Agency is in place, a National Export Strategy, which includes agriculture, was discussed in a public forum and there were deliberate measures by relevant public sector bodies to develop processes and action to link the benefits of a growing tourism sector to poverty alleviation in rural communities.

On the other hand, Saint Lucia experienced social and economic challenges in small pockets of some of the farming communities which traditionally depend on incomes from primary commodities. Many farm families have turned to home-based agro-processing activities to sustain their livelihoods. This could auger well for value-added in agriculture if properly managed. Poverty assessments scheduled by the Caribbean Development Bank in the near future will reveal the full extent of the impact of changes in the agriculture sector, and in the structure of economic activities of farming communities.

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda for 2004 included activities to: facilitate the agribusiness sector to improve understanding of the changes in the trading environment and to

respond to opportunities in the domestic market; enhance measures toward an adequate national agriculture health and food safety system; strengthen targeted agri-food groups in rural communities to improve efficiencies in the delivery of products and services; create better awareness among selected farmers, technicians and policy makers of the requirements for positioning commodities in agri-food markets, including the value of new technology; support to the economic linkages between agriculture and tourism; and support in project identification, formulation and implementation. The Agenda also accommodated actions to position the IICA Office as well as those of targeted units in the Ministry of Agriculture to introduce quality management practices.

Results of Technical Cooperation for 2004

Facilitating Competitiveness and Global Trade: Technical cooperation activities in this area targeted the members of the National Chapter of the Caribbean AgriBusiness Association and partners. As a result of business forums and national seminars organized, members of this community examined industry linkages for selected commodities and established a Small Industry Group. National consultations were held on the new trading environment and there is now increased awareness of the challenges, requirements and opportunities for agri-products positioning in domestic and export markets. Special consideration was given to measures to be adopted in order for agribusinesses to benefit from the unique opportunities, which will emerge with the creation of the CSME. Agri-business persons also participated in regional agribusiness events, in overseas training in managing small-scale value-added facilities, and in hemispheric initiatives to inform on the Bio-terrorism Act, all of which served to strengthen national capacities for smoother integration with global markets. In addition CABA documented some of its main achievements as interventions in the area of agriculture and tourism linkages, refocusing two industry groups and active involvement in the discussions towards the finalization of the OECS Agriculture Policy Framework and Strategy. In addition to the work carried out with CABA, members of the Local Chapter of the Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers also benefited from participation in regional initiatives and increased knowledge on requirements for expanding market shares in value-added goods and services.

Promoting Food Safety and Agricultural Health: Saint Lucia was among the countries that pursued measures to establish a National Health and Food Safety system. In this regard an instrument to evaluate the NAHFS status was reviewed and is now available to the country. The supporting draft policy framework document is also available. Furthermore, Saint Lucia will benefit from a project to strengthen agricultural health and food safety systems prepared in support of the OECS Agricultural Policy Framework and Strategy. National capabilities and capacities were strengthened to respond to emerging situations with focus on the spread and impact of invasive species, and an emergency response action plan for black sigatoka finalized and adopted. Saint Lucia also benefited from IICA's technical secretariat support to the Coordinating Group of Pesticides Control Boards of the Caribbean, which is now working on a Policy and Management Strategy document for management of agro-chemicals and for improved public and environmental health in the Caribbean. There were significant advances in the measures to promote quality assurance including GAPs, with the circulation of Codes of Practices for Packaging and a National Certification Process for GAPs.

Strengthening Rural Communities: Actions carried out strengthened the inter-institutional framework at the national level that supported linkages between tourism and agricultural communities. As a result, the Saint Lucia Bureau of Standards, supermarkets, hotels and the Ministry of Agriculture are working much more closely to identify and improve those requirements for farmers to better satisfy the fresh food demand of the growing tourism industry. In collaboration with the Ministry of Social Transformation, technical and organizational support was also provided to actors and beneficiaries in farming communities, in this regard members of the local CANROP were the main beneficiaries primarily in the area of cottage type industries.

Hemispheric Integration: The public and private sectors in agriculture responded positively to the promotion of The Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Life. As a result a National Framework to define the central role of The Alliance and the relations with relevant regional mechanisms was explored and agreed to in a National Consultation. This paved the way for stronger hemispheric integration of national policies and strategies through the vehicle of The Alliance. In this regard, a strategic linkage was forged between the national initiatives, the Jadgeo Initiative for Repositioning Agriculture in the Caribbean and the AGRO Plan of Action, 2003-2015.

Developing Human Capital: There was significant capacity building in the areas of agriculture health and food safety, agribusiness management, project development and management, information and communication skills, including technical writing skills for agricultural extension officers and in new technologies, such as, organic farming. Technicians also benefited from overseas training in several areas including capacity building among SPS technicians. In addition, all of these actions were organized in a manner that resulted in improved coordination among many of the institutions that impact on the quality of human resource required to position agriculture in the national agenda of the country.

Institutional Modernization: The focus was on improving quality management practices of the IICA Office with the objective of achieving results-based management. Quality statement and objectives were defined. The products and services that the Office would deliver were identified based on the technical and financial resources that could be accessed within IICA, financing from extra budgetary sources, the capacities of the partners and the needs of the country. The impact of these actions is expected to be multiplied since the extension arm of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries is partnering IICA in this process.

Inter-Agency Cooperation: Activities carried out in cooperation with other agencies included support to projects or programs with Canadian Local Initiative Fund, FAVA/CA and Caribbean Environment Health Institute.

Support provided in the development of national plans and strategies: The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries was assisted to prepare for a two-day consultation to integrate the AGRO Plan 2003-2015 and the Jadgeo Initiative into its National Agricultural Policy. Further support was also provided to the on-going discussions towards the operationalization of the OECS Agricultural Policy, in the form of project formulation.

Future opportunities for cooperation: Opportunities for cooperation will emerge from the projects of the newly created EU Funded Agricultural Diversification Unit, the projects of the OECS Agricultural Policy, the projects from the CGPC Regional Strategy and the growing recognition given to the potential for improved well being in farming communities through linkages with value-added domestic markets.

OVERVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR IN THE ECONOMY

The state of agriculture in Saint Lucia was dominated by the increasing changes in the profile of the economic activities in the major farming communities brought about by the challenges in the main export markets for bananas. This is being manifested in the application of modern production technology in the main traditional export banana, as well as a stronger focus on regional and extra-regional markets for non-traditional exports. Other changes observed were the new attitudes of actors in farming communities towards a more businesslike, diversified and market led approach to the management of farm and agri-enterprises.

During the report period, the Government adopted the stance of the other banana growing countries of the Eastern Caribbean States and reaffirmed its position that the banana industry was of extreme importance in the economy and the welfare of rural communities. As such the industry would continue to be seen as critical in the development issues of Saint Lucia. Accordingly the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the Banana Emergency Recovery Unit continued to implement measures to enhance the viability of the industry. Provisional data indicate that 2004 was a good year for banana. The application of modern technology and good weather contributed to significantly higher yields over 2003. Saint Lucia now provides in excess of 54% of Windward Islands' share of bananas to the UK market, despite increase in exports from the other three countries.

In the non-traditional sector provisional data indicate inconsistent performance. Non-traditional exports fell in 2004, when compared to 2003. However the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries reported good prospects for exports of hot peppers, breadfruit, mango and avocado in the United States EU and Canadian markets, as well as regional markets for bananas. On the other hand sales of locally produced fresh food for selected hotels and supermarkets continued the steady growth observed in recent years. There was a marginal reduction in the performance in the fisheries sector, which up to now had shown steady growth over recent years. The production of poultry continued to grow and there are good prospects for pig and small ruminants.

Despite the above the performance of non-traditional agriculture is still a long way off from bridging the gap created by the 50% loss in revenues within the banana industry. In many ways the sector is a mix of challenges and opportunities and remained an important development issue for Saint Lucia. Based on its own assessment the Ministry of Agriculture estimates that even at current level of performance the sector's true contribution to GDP to be in the region of 25%, when expanded agriculture was taken into account and not the reported 6.5% (2002), observed using the traditional economic indicators. There is also the growing trade deficit in the food bill, fuelled by the increase in tourism activity as well as from increasingly new demands from local consumers. All of these together, present challenges for the sustained welfare in rural communities, and simultaneously tremendous opportunities for modernization, diversification and growth in the agriculture sector.

The policy response was underpinned by a number of important measures aimed at improving the institutional framework for agriculture. A Strategic Plan for Agriculture was the subject of wide ranging consultations. The critical elements of the Plan are expected to sustain a diversified national agricultural income base and enhance the integrity of rural livelihoods systems, by generating the capacity for efficiency and the competitive production and marketing of agricultural goods and services¹. The ten-year strategy is supported by a proposed set of agricultural incentives, intended to impact on crops including forestry products, livestock and fisheries. Agricultural bio-diversity is a vital subset of the strategy. Furthermore, an Agriculture Diversification Agency was

¹ Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Agriculture Incentives Document.

established and discussions were undertaken towards establishment of a Chamber of Agriculture. The sector is also expected to benefit from a National Export Strategy, implemented in 2004.

Other actions by the Ministry of Agriculture included strengthening its relations with the Saint Lucia Bureau of Standards and with the Saint Lucia Hotel and Tourism Association. These actions have resulted in the establishment of a National Certification Process for Farmers. The program includes a number of training modules towards full certification, promotes capacity building for improved quality standards for fresh produce, good agricultural practices as well as the application of incentives to encourage farmers to participate.

The steady increase in sales in the domestic market was not enough to avoid marginal disruptions among small-scale producers especially women. As a result there was a proliferation of home-based activities in agro-processing. These groups quickly sought to organize themselves and achieved various levels of registration thereby increasing their eligibility to access funding and other forms of technical assistance, as well as capacity to market goods and services. This could auger well for the development of value added enterprises in Saint Lucia, if properly managed.

The active participation of the private sector largely represented by the National Chapter of the Caribbean AgriBusiness Association was noted. The local Chapter advanced on its efforts to strengthen a national framework to facilitate dynamic and responsive actions in the increasingly business oriented environment for agri-enterprises continued. In this regard local CABA continued to pursue a development path for the sector that impacted positively on growth, sustainability and profitability of agri-enterprises. The group focused on enhancing understanding of the relevant trade agreements and negotiating positions, their impact on businesses and the requirements for response. Strategic relations were established with key players in the agri-food and trade business with special emphasis on the agri-food supply chain, business forums were held to identify constraints and opportunities and to integrate activities along the commodity chain. Short to medium-term developmental programs agreed to for 2005 include market development, funding/financing support for agribusiness, agribusiness development program, education and promotion of trade related issues and interfacing with the regional body.

Summary of the National Technical Cooperation Agenda for 2004: The actions carried out by IICA in 2004 were guided by the National Technical Cooperation Agenda for 2002-2006. This Agenda developed in consultation with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the relevant public and private sector stakeholders also identified the strategic partners and agencies with whom IICA would work to deliver technical cooperation services. For this report period the National Technical Cooperation Agenda focused on:

- a) Further support for the OECS Policy Framework and Plan of Action developed by the Secretariat in 2003;
- b) Advancing the process towards a functional national agricultural health and food safety system;
- c) Support to private and public sector initiatives to strengthen economic linkages between agriculture, tourism and value added;

- d) Support to capacity building to understand the challenges, requirements and opportunities for agri-products positioning in domestic and regional markets;
- e) Support education and training initiatives to build capacities to manage change in agriculture and rural life;
- f) Support coordination among national institutions engaged in agriculture and rural life, and their integration into the regional and hemispheric processes; and
- g) Measures to position the IICA Office to improve the quality of technical cooperation services.

Results of IICA's Technical Cooperation Actions: The actions of the IICA Office were guided by the comments received from stakeholders on the cooperation activities carried out in 2003 and a review of the National Technical Cooperation Agenda 2002-2006, with the CABA membership and technicians of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. The specific interventions which were agreed to are in line with the support areas indicated above and were realized in achievements as follows:

- a) Enhanced competitiveness in global trade with emphasis on the domestic market and the CARICOM Single Market and Economy facilitated;
- b) Improvements in food safety and agricultural health systems promoted;
- c) Rural communities strengthened with emphasis on the space occupied by farming communities;
- d) Integration and hemispheric integration of agricultural issues [promoted];
- e) Human capital to manage change in the agriculture sector supported; and
- f) Institutional modernization for improved delivery of technical cooperation services and enhanced benefits of partnerships introduced.

Facilitating Competitiveness and Global Trade

Technical cooperation activities in this area were carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the National Chapter of CABA. In this regard two types of technical cooperation services were delivered:

- Cooperation services which targeted the local membership of CABA, and focused heavily on agribusiness issues; and

- Cooperation services which focused on the local Chapter of the Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Rural Life (The Alliance) and benefited agriculture stakeholders in general and the partners in country.

The Agri-business community received technical support to host several meetings of ideas to strengthen a national responses to changes in agri- its 2004 Annual General Meeting

The Agri-business community received technical the local Chapter, where members developed framework to facilitate appropriate and dynamic product markets. As a result the local CABA, at announced its development priorities as:

- Information exchange for trade information;
- Technical assistance for capacity building
- Building capital investment for expanded reduced cost of borrowing; and
- Access to resources for the application of modern technology.



opportunities and timely business in trade policy and food safety; coverage of financial services and

Two business fora were organized to examine potential and requirements for successful industry linkages using the passion fruit as a pilot commodity. The IICA supported study on *in Saint Lucia*, completed in 2003 provided the to stimulate wider discussions on the larger and for fruit tree crop development, based on the passion fruit industry within the broader prices for fresh juice in the global market and the products from fruit juices. The possibilities for local and regional markets by



Agri-business persons discuss their own need for change

foods favoured by selected hospitality consumers, were Fruit was established and CABA

linkages using the passion fruit as a *The Status of the Passion Industry* basis for the discussions and served possibilities for the juice industry global trends. The forum examined context of the increasingly lower emerging markets for value added Saint Lucia to expand its share in

applying relatively simple technologies to process consumer groups such as school children, considered. A Small industry Group for Passion Executive has been charged to develop a proposal to carry out the necessary market study and to access funds to conduct the study. This initiative will establish protocols for preparing industry profiles and market studies to target other fruit crops for development, using an industry approach.

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Executive members of CABA were provided the regional agribusiness meetings, where they gained negotiations spearheaded by the Regional shared this with the general membership. Froosty, using better food safety management practices, as received in Jamaica and the United States, and increased understanding on the United States terrorism Preparedness and Response Act 2002, hemispheric initiative. In addition, the technical CABA facilitated their successful intervention in related to stronger linkages between fresh produce farmers and local hotels with focus on the Sandals Chain, support to refocus two small farmer groups and active involvement in the discussions towards the finalization of the OECS Agricultural Policy Framework and Strategy.



IICA Regional Specialist (Consultant) on Policy and Trade



opportunity to participate in three a better understanding of the Negotiating Machinery and later a small agro-processing facility is a result of overseas training within the company there is Public Health Security and Bio-through participation in one support provided to the local areas such as advocacy on issues



Through the vehicle of the local Chapter of The Alliance, a broad cross section of agricultural stakeholders and their partners were facilitated to engage in discussions on competitiveness in global markets and the implications for the regional and domestic markets with the creation of the CSME. In this regard IICA Office with the strong support of the Regional Policy and Trade Consultant, collaborated with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries to complement the initiatives of other agencies in the country engaged in public education on the CSME. The IICA/MAFF initiative served to increase the awareness of small producers, value-added enterprises, women and youth in agriculture and technicians on the implications of a larger unified economic space, for increasing exports and the imperatives for effectively integrating

into this space. Public officials from sectors other than agriculture were able to improve on their grasp of some of the real issues challenging farmers as markets change and the kinds of change management that farmers must adopt. The expectation was that broad public policy formulation will reflect a higher level of responsiveness in the design of strategies that can effectively increase Saint Lucia's participation in agri-food markets.

Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

IICA's actions in the areas of Agricultural Health and Food Safety in Saint Lucia continued to provide support to advance progress towards the establishment of an effectively functioning national agricultural health and food system. The results of the actions carried out are shown below:

- The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries now has appropriate guidelines and criteria in the form of Draft Terms of Reference to evaluate the status of the national agriculture health and food safety system. These Terms of Reference were tested in

Members of The Alliance at the Green Parrot Hotel

Grenada and the results suggested weak human resources capabilities due not only to inadequate experiences, but also to a need for improved education and training. It is reasonable to believe that this could be the general situation in all the countries in the ECS, including Saint Lucia. A Draft policy framework is also available.

- Technical advisory services received by the Technical Committee on NAHFS established to manage the process of putting in place the measures to satisfy the Terms of Reference for an effectively functioning system. The Committee's role includes overseeing Sub-Committees on Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures, the GAPs Technical Committee, and the local discussions on the proposed Caribbean Health and Food Safety Agency.

- Technical support provided to the National Certification Process to encourage and promote good agricultural practices, including fresh produce quality control and record keeping. This process includes GAP protocols and training started in 2002 under a Project funded by CIDA/CPEC, Caribbean Human Resources Development Centre and implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture. The National Certification Process achieved the Saint Lucia Bureau of Standards. New standards for 2004 included the circulation of the Codes of Practices for Packaging and Transportation and bring to twenty (20) the number of documented guidelines including standards for GAPs and for Fresh Produce Quality Control made available with IICA technical support. All of these have been integrated in the training program for farmers, on which the National Certification Process is based.

- Improved public awareness among private sector and increased knowledge among technicians on SPS through national seminars and through facilitation of training for technicians accessed under an IICA/USAID Agreement, which facilitated

participation of technicians in the SPS Committee Meetings in Geneva. Saint Lucia, through a process of evaluation and subsequent recommendations resulting from

the Geneva meetings, through their reports demonstrated improved preparedness to meet commitments for compliance with the SPS Agreement. The protocol developed by IICA in collaboration with CARDI in 2000 and adopted by OECS to maintain extra/intra regional trade in the OECS following the incidence of pests and disease is being reviewed to include food safety and is ready for promotion. The draft quarantine pest list is now available.



- Capacity to identify and respond to emergencies and emerging issues improved through participation in a Regional Workshop on *Black Sigatoka* workshop held in Trinidad. The technicians now have a better understanding of the kind of information required on pests and the disease as well as of the requirements for development and application of emergency plans for effective management. As a result Saint Lucia is to finalize its emergency action plan for *Black Sigatoka*. In addition technical support was provided for Banana Leafspot Disease Control Applicators Certification where over 60

persons received certification and over 40 persons from the public and private sectors increased knowledge in matters related to quarantine.

In addition to the above Saint Lucia stands to benefit from IICA supported activities under three actions under ECS sub-region activities.

- A Project to Strengthen Agricultural Health and Food Safety Systems prepared by the IICA Technical Specialist is among the many projects submitted by agencies and other partners supporting the OECS Agriculture Policy and Strategic Plan prepared by the Secretariat. The project prepared by the IICA Specialist makes provision for activities to human and financial capacity, private sector participation, upgraded technical capacities, and improved trade facilitation.
- Under the CIDA/CPEC Project for Institutionalization of GAPs in the ECS countries, CEHI received assistance to complete the process towards laboratory certification in 2003. This November, CEHI held an event to celebrate its achievement of the ISO/IEC 17025 Accreditation for its Laboratory. IICA shares the distinction of

being among the four-technical/financing agencies that provided



agencies that provided support to CEHI in this significant achievement. Such laboratory services are now available not only to Saint Lucia’s agriculture, but to all other agencies and individuals with needs for laboratory services in environmental health.

- IICA Saint Lucia provides Technical Secretariat services to the Coordinating
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major agri-chemical companies as IICA, UWI, FAO, CARICOM, and OECS addition Saint Lucia is benefiting form the Plan of Action for the CGPC to implement a *chemical use and management for the wider*

The strategy is based on a 3-year research implemented



Agriculture Health Specialist from IICA and FAO participated in 9th^h Annual Meeting of the CGPC

Group of Pesticides Control Boards of the Caribbean. The role and sustainability of the CGPC was strengthened in 2004 with the incorporation of three of the Associate members (CEHI, already have observer status). In implementation of A *Regional Strategy for improved Agro-Caribbean.*

project, funded by MRAG and

by other Caribbean partners such as CEHI. The Plan was endorsed by the CGPC at its 8th Annual Meeting held in June 2003. The Plan includes six project areas ranked as follows: GAPs, sustainable financing,

institutional arrangements, a regional database, change management/ communications and research/monitoring strategy for MRL, Public health monitoring and environmental monitoring.



Strengthening Rural Communities

The actions carried by IICA focused on the on-going activities in the country to strengthen the inter-institutional framework to foster economic linkages between agriculture and tourism and to promote value-added income generated activities at the community level, especially among rural women. The Black Bay Vegetable Farmers were also provided technical support to facilitate access to irrigation equipment.

Minister Ignatius Jean provided the Feature Address at a National Consultation held at the Fox Grove Inn under the theme *Promoting Agriculture Tourism Linkages in Saint Lucia*. The occasion brought together other strategic partners of IICA, including FAVA/CA and the Ministry of Tourism in the ongoing efforts to strengthen

institutional linkages at national regional levels for stronger economic linkages between agriculture and tourism. The partnership served to identify key areas to be addressed in the efforts to integrate farming communities into agri-tourism product markets. The measures adopted included visits to agro-tourism enterprises and presentations on the fresh food supply chain in agriculture/tourism, farm tourism/nature tourism and how to value natural resources for farm tourism, training for agri-tourism products and services, food preservation mechanisms and quality control for fresh and solar dried foods.

The stakeholders agreed that the Consultation provided adequate information towards achieving the following:

- a) an enhanced framework for systematic development of an agri-tourism project;
- b) elements for improved marketing information to support the development of agri-tourism;
- c) identification of gaps in a process to develop a comprehensive operations manual in support of agri-tourism;
- d) incorporating farm tourism into nature tourism;
- e) the benefits of a cooperative approach to the small-scale rural agri-enterprises;
- f) the role of the domestic market in the development of agri-tourism;
- g) simple modifications/modernization of solar drying and cassava processing practices/technology in Saint Lucia;

h) feasibility of adapting technology for vegetables in off season (solar drying or initial

Agro-tourism Group discussing their 2005 Plan of Action with FAVA/CA Volunteers from University of Florida

reducing scarcity of fruits and processing).

A follow-up three-day mission by FAVA/CA Volunteer Dr. Taylor Stein of the Florida State University provided



further support to develop the critical elements for a market study to determine the potential for agro-tourism/farm tourism in Saint Lucia, as a first step towards formulating a strategy for agri-tourism in Saint Lucia. The outcomes of this activity should complement actions already being undertaken by the Ministry of Tourism, hotels and supermarkets, to strengthen linkages in the food supply chain.

Technical and organizational support was also given to the Agro-tourism group, which now has a set of objectives and a Plan of



Action for 2005. The Plan of Action has been incorporated in the work-plan of the national agricultural extension service.

Technical and organizational support was processors in the area of project Farmers. As a result both groups were Canadian Local Initiative Fund, the former and HACCP upgrade and the latter for Praslin Seamoss Group increased their through technical support provided to

also provided to the Milla-Raye Agro-development as well as the Black Bay successful in accessing funds from the for training in agro-processing, equipment irrigation equipment. A second group the organizational and managerial capacities develop a business plan.



Developing Human Capital

IICA's work impacted on capacity building in the agriculture sector in five key areas, the application of new agriculture practices, project identification and formulation, preparation of educational leaflets for farmers, agriculture extension and communication methodologies, and in identifying training and education needs to improve professionalism in small farmer practices.

New Agriculture Practices

Under an agreement with the Ministry of Agriculture, the Institute facilitated training in organic farming, e-commerce and in the use of computers to cost production. As a result farmers and technicians increased knowledge in organic farming and have demonstrated capacities to develop business plans for an organic enterprise. Another set of farmers and technicians used the computer as a tool for generating reports that included information on cost of production, level of profitability, ability to repay loans as interest rates or inflation changes, as well as to identify the efficiencies of each operation within the production chain. The software called *COSTPRO* was developed under an earlier IICA/MAFF Agreement and is now available in all the ECS countries.

Lisa Louis, Ministry of Commerce, Investment and Consumer Affairs facilitates discussion on the CSME in the Distance Learning Centre

IICA Regional Specialist, Dr Vincent Little provides hands on assistance to Praslin Seamos Group

In collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and under the USAID funded Caribbean Regional Intern/Scholarship Program small-scale producers increased their knowledge in a wide range of topics on agri-business management as well as in areas related to the new trading environment for agri-food products. Public sector agencies such as the St Lucia Bureau of Standards, the Ministry of Commerce, the St. Lucia Agriculturist Association as well as private individuals with an interest in agriculture supported the initiative. The Care Center in Anse-la-Raye made its computer laboratory available and provided a good example of community-based collaboration to enhance IICA's own capacity to provide distance-learning services that reach the community level.



Project identification and technical writing for information dissemination
Forty-three (43) agricultural extension officers increased capacities to identify and formulate projects and to prepare technical reports, information sheets and business plans. The IICA Regional Specialist in Projects provided the technical support.

Training for extension technicians
Training was provided to nine (9) extension officers using the Caribbean Connection Course developed by IICA for use in its Distance Learning Programme. These extension officers have since demonstrated increased knowledge on areas such as human resource development specifically staff appraisal and evaluation, planning and developing programmes, and presentation and training techniques.

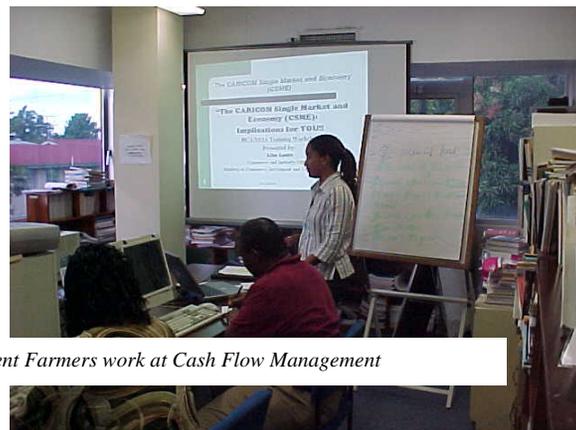
Identification of

farmer and technician training and education needs

As a result of a pilot study conducted in Saint Lucia, Dominica and Grenada, the extension services in these countries now have access to new information on the training needs of farmers, agri-entrepreneurs and technicians. The information available characterizes farmers according to level of education, interest in participating in training programs, willingness to leave their productive activities to participate in training and



Dr George (MAFF) provides training in the use of COSTPRO in the Distance Learning Centre



Student Farmers work at Cash Flow Management

their own perceptions of the economic benefits of training. Priority areas for training identified by farmers include organic agriculture, GAPs, marketing, business management, and vegetable production. Agri-entrepreneurs identified marketing, project management, computers, GMP, HACCP and agri-business management. Technicians' priorities were marketing, computer programs, business management rural development issues and organic agriculture. The extension system in Saint Lucia has expressed interest in adopting some of the recommendations of the study. The study that was organized by the IICA Regional Specialist in Education and Training and implemented by the Ministries of Agriculture, seeks to build capacities to introduce a professional approach by agri-food producers. The ultimate objective is to develop a continuing education program to meet the needs of farmers in the Eastern Caribbean States.

Hemispheric Integration

Support to hemispheric integration was provided through the promotion of the local Chapter of the Caribbean Alliance for



Hon Ignatius Jean, Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and Vice Chairman of the Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Life

Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Life. The focus was on understanding its role in enhancing the sector's participation in the undertakings at regional level that impact on national agriculture. In this regard a national framework was proposed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries to incorporate all the regional and national mechanism that impact on agriculture under the umbrella of the local Chapter. Furthermore a task force to establish Terms of Reference for a Technical Advisory Committee to support the work of the Chapter as well the criteria for selecting membership was agreed to. This development paved the way for stronger integration of national policies and strategies in regional and hemispheric agendas. In this regard Saint Lucia had a most desirable national framework in which to dialogue on the Jagdeo Initiative as well as the AGRO Plan 2003-2015.

Institutional Modernization

The focus was on improving the management practices of the IICA Office with the objective of achieving results-based a management. In collaboration with the St Lucia Bureau of Standards the Office embarked on a process achieve to ISO 2001 Certification. Quality Statement and a set of objectives were defined as were the products of the Office. In this regard it was agreed that the products to be offered were programs and project management, information and training and education. These products and services were based on the technical and financial resources, which could be accessed within IICA. Financing from extra-budgetary resources, and the capacities of the counterparts and the needs of the country. The Extension Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries was invited to partner the Institute in the process and they also agreed on a Quality Statement and a set of quality objects. The products of extension were identified as education and training, programme management, information and advisory and technical services. It is expected that when this process is complete the quality of products and services delivered by IICA in partnership with the Ministry will be significantly improved in terms of appropriateness, impact and cost- effectiveness.

Inter-Agency Cooperation

Activities carried out with other Agencies included support to small projects funded by the Canadian Local Initiative Fund (CLIF), activities supported by FAVA/CA and in one regional activity organized by Caribbean Environmental Health Institute (CEHI).

Support Provided in the Development of National Plans and Strategies

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries was assisted to prepare for a two-day consultation to integrate the AGRO Plan 2003-2015 and the Jagdeo Initiative to reposition Caribbean agriculture into the National Agricultural Policy. Further support was also provided to facilitate participation of members of the Task Force for the OECS Agricultural Policy to meet in Saint Lucia as well as through project formulation support provided by the Regional Project Specialist and the Plant Protection Specialist.

Future Opportunities for Cooperation

Opportunities for cooperation will emerge from the projects of the newly created EU Funded Agriculture Diversification Unit, the projects of the OECS Agricultural Policy, the projects from the CGPC Regional Strategy and the growing recognition given to the potential for improved well being in farming communities through linkages with value-added in domestic markets.

ACRONYMS

BERU	Banana Emergency Recovery Unit
CABA	Caribbean AgriBusiness Association
CAHFSA	Caribbean Health and Food Safety Agency
CANROP	Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CARDI	Caribbean Agricultural and Research Development Institute
CEHI	Caribbean Environmental Health Institute
CGPC	Coordinating Group of Pesticides Control Boards of the Caribbean
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CLIF	Canadian Local Initiative Fund
CPEC	Caribbean Regional HRD Program for Economic Competitiveness
CRISP	Caribbean Regional Intern/Scholarship Program
CSME	CARICOM Single Market and Economy

ECS	Eastern Caribbean States
EU	European Union
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
FAVA/CA	Florida Association of Voluntary Agencies for Caribbean Action
GAPs	Good Agricultural Practices
GDP	Gross Development Product
GMP	Good Management Practice
HACCP	Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point
IICA	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
IEC	International Electro technical Commission
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
MRAG	Marine Resources Assessment Group Limited
MRL	Maximum Residue Levels
NAHFS	National Agricultural Health and Food System
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
RNM	Regional Negotiating Machinery
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary
UK	United Kingdom
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UWI	University of the West Indies

EVENTS ORGANISED BY THE IICA OFFICE IN SAINT LUCIA IN 2004

Official Name of Event	Date Held	Site of the Event	Outcomes
1: OECS Secretariat Technical Committee Meeting on the Implementation of the Agriculture Policy Framework and Plan of Action	January 15-16	Glencastle Resort, Gros Islet	
2: CIDA Round Table Discussion with Development Partners	January 27	Windjammer Landing Hotel	
3: Strategic Visioning Exercise	February 12-13	Bay Gardens Hotel	
4: Presentation of 2003 Annual Report to Hon Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs	February 20	Hon Minister's Office	Revised NTC Agenda
5: Meeting of Inter-American Awards Committee	March 10	IICA Office	Brochure prepared
8: National Consultation of The Alliance	May 17	Green Parrot Hotel, Castries	Proposed national framework for integrating national and regional support mechanism under the umbrella of the Alliance
9: Course on <i>Commodity Cost System Programme</i>	May 20-28	Distance Learning Centre, Saint Lucia	
10: Meeting of the Agro-tourism Group	May 25	IICA Office	Work Plan for 2005
13: Course on <i>Caribbean Connection (E-Commerce)</i>	June 14-17	Distance Learning Centre, Saint Lucia	
13: Course on <i>Organic Farming for Entrepreneurs</i>	June 16-August 18	Distance Learning Centre, Saint Lucia	
14: National on Agro-tourism Consultation	June 23	Fox Grove Inn, Mon Repos	Recommendations for Market Study and Draft Strategy for Linkages between Agriculture and Tourism in Saint Lucia
15: 9 th Meeting of the Coordinating Group of Pesticides Control Boards of the Caribbean	July 6-8	St Kitts	Draft project proposals to support the Strategy for <i>Improved Agro-chemical Use and Management for the Wider Caribbean</i>
16: Agriculture Repositioning Forum	July 26	Green Parrot Hotel, Castries	Options for satisfying requirements for participating in the CSME
17: CRISP Training	October 11-14	Distance Learning Centre and the Care Centre, Saint Lucia	CRIPS Training Manual
18: Meeting with officials of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries to discuss the Jagdeo Initiative and AGRO 2003-2015	October 23	IICA Office	MOAs report for submission to the Jagdeo Initiative and the AGRO 2003-2005
19: SPS Workshop	November 26	Indies Conference Room	Sensitisation of public and private sector and the need for involvement of the private sector in AHFS the decision making process
20: Regional Conference on <i>Information Strategies for the Repositioning of Agriculture in the Caribbean</i>	November 29-30	Bay Gardens Inn	Draft Report of the meeting
21: CANROP Regional Workshop on <i>Strategic Planning</i>	December 01-03	Bay Gardens Inn	Draft report of the meeting