



Annual Report **2008**

Barbados

IICA's Contribution to
the Development of Agriculture
and Rural Communities



**IICA's contribution to the development of agriculture
and rural communities in Barbados**

ANNUAL REPORT 2008

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1. INTRODUCTION

The IICA Barbados Office (the Office) is honored to present its 2008 Annual Report. 2008 was a year of transition for us at the Office with the appointment of a new Representative, Joseph Peltier, and several staff movements within the office. The appointment of a new Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development in February also provided an opportunity to review and revise our annual action plan to reflect the priorities of the new government, which was agreed with the the Ministry at a joint meeting.

One of the initiatives we pursued has been impacted by challenges which households in Barbados faced when the price of food threatened to put basic nutritional requirements out of the reach of the average person. This provided an incentive to focus on increasing food availability and access using land available to many a household in the urban and rural communities of Barbados.

These initiatives are still ongoing and would not have been possible without partnering with agencies such as the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and of course the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MAR).

We look forward to building on these partnerships, for the more we do so, the more focussed and impactful we all will be, so that the resources, both human and financial, that are allocated to support the development of the agricultural sector can provide the right environment to enable the average man and woman in Barbados to meet their daily food requirements.



IICA Barbados Representative, Mr. Joseph Peltier

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 The state of agriculture and rural life in Barbados in 2008

The development of agriculture in Barbados continues to be the principal focus with particular emphasis on the sustainable development of rural communities. The energy crisis of 2008 resulted in an increase in production and distribution costs that forced consumers to pay much higher prices than accustomed. This situation has resulted in the general contraction of the sector with only a few segments actually recording growth for the year. In addition to the negative effects of the energy crisis, Barbados' agriculture continues to be influenced on the one hand by high labour costs, inadequate supplies of irrigation water, competition for residential and commercial land as well as more intense and unpredictable weather systems. On the other hand the introduction of technology and Barbados' compliance with several regional and international trade protocols have increased the opportunities for agribusiness on the island.

Though there was a change of government and a new minister for agriculture installed, the agenda for sector both in the medium and long terms remained the same. The government's budget for the sector increased by 14% over 2007 and included increases in the subventions for the 4H Fopundation of Barbados and the Barbados Agricultural Society (BAS), while the Barbados Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation (BADMC) received a subvention for the first time. Given the evolving situation of rising food prices, the MAR placed alot of emphasis on providing producers of chicken and pork with short term subsidies to alleviate the negative impact on consumers . To this end, MAR hosted a national consultation in May to devise a strategy to enahnce the island's food sovereignty. Additionally, the MAR has launched a market initiative in Bridgetown to allow unlicensed vendors to sell their produce without the usual encumbracnes and advanced a programme to establish model greenhouse farms, designed to attract youth to the sector.

A cabinet reshuffle towards the end of 2008 resulted in the removal of the Rural Development Commission (RDC) from the MAR to the Ministry of Social Care, Constituency Empowerment and Urban and Rural Development. Like the MOA, the RDC is a critical partner of IICA and it is expected that the partnership will not be affected despite the change.

2.2 Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusiness

One of the major activities in this area was IICA's support to the MAR and the Ministry of Tourism (MoT) in the formulation of a draft cabinet paper for Agro-Tourism. This cabinet paper is currently under peer review by the MAR and members of the committee assigned to oversee its completion.

The Office completed its final year of implementing a 3 year, Organisation of American States (OAS) funded Agro-Tourism project. Under this project, for which IICA Barbados was the implementing entity, we hosted a regional investment forum at which 2 projects from each of the 7 participating countries were presented and accepted for presentation the the regional investment forum, conducted a community engagement strategy project in Rock Halland prepared terms of reference and hired consultants to design a Caribbean Agro-Tourism website.

The Office also facilitated a workshop under a Commonwealth Secretariat (ComSec) funded project, based on the findings of AGRICO, who conducted a study on the trade linkages between the agricultural and hospitality sectors. Critical to the execution of this workshop was training in Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and the options available for establishing a buyer/seller network for the benefit of farmers, hoteliers and purchasing managers.

The Office continued its support for AgroFest through representation on the planning committee of this national agricultural exhibition. As in previous years, the office participated in the event by staging what is now the very popular *Plantation Breakfast*; hosted a *Healthy Snack Seminar* for the benefit of primary school children; and a *Saturday Pickle Lime* with healthy preparation being the feature. We also provided support to the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association's (BHATA) annual Taste of Barbados event by sourcing local produce and facilitating partnerships linking farmers and buyers in the tourism sector through the former's participation in the Best Big Bajan Bar-B-Que and culinary competitions. The Office also facilitated a Farmers' Market at Pelican Village for the event.

Support was provided to the Association of Women in Agriculture (AWIA) for the preparation of a strategic plan with the assistance of Caribbean Development Bank's (CDB's) Caribbean Technical Consultancy Services (CTCS) Network. Two members of the Office's technical team attended a "Training of Trainers Workshop on Costing and Pricing Techniques for Competitive Marketing and Computer Applications in Costing and Pricing" for Medium, Small and Micro Enterprises (MSME) in an effort to strengthen the technical capacity of the Office.

2.3 Strengthening agricultural health and food safety systems

Our support in Agricultural Health and Food Safety (AHFS) was led by the resident Regional AHFS Specialist, Ms. Carol Thomas who coordinated the implementation of the Regional Veterinary Epidemiology Surveillance Project (VEP) in Barbados. A Veterinary Officer at the Ministry of Agriculture was identified to execute the project.

Ms. Thomas also conducted an information gathering exercise under the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) project to assess the mechanisms in place for Barbados to comply with the current Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) agreement. In addition the AHFS programme facilitated the staging of two separate regional, virtually delivered courses on CODEX Alimentarius and World Organisation for Animal Health(OIE) standards and also hosted officials from the French Ministry of Agriculture on a mission to evaluate the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs Priority Solidarity Fund (FSP).

2.4 Contribution to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life

Arguably, one of the most significant results for the year was the development of a model urban/peri-urban system designed for small scale (backyard) producers. This model was established at the St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church with the support of the MAR, church parishioners and Hydro Grow Farms. The project has attracted the attention of the Kiwanis Club, the Heart and Stroke Foundation, the Barbados Nurses Association and the Diabetic Association of Barbados to see how their respective member could be involved.

The Office provided information on the "Status and Outlook for Agriculture in Barbados 2008" under the Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation (CTA) information gathering project managed by IICA's Regional Specialist on Trade and Policy, Ms. Diane Francis. This information was submitted in the form of the Agru-Matrix which was subsequently used by Ms. Francis to deliver a workshop to officials of the Ministry of Agriculture on the design and implementation of the Agru-Matrix, a tool for which she received a Director General award for excellence.

For the benefit of youth involved in agriculture, both at the production and technical levels, the Office delivered a presentation on the "*New Agriculture Paradigm*" with emphasis on the leadership required to ensure the transformation to this model is successful.

The Office participated, with support of the Director General, in a national consultation on food sovereignty and contributed to the development of a draft food sovereignty plan for the island.

2.5 Strengthening rural communities based on the territorial approach

Through the Community Engagement Strategy Project under the OAS funded Agro-tourism project, consultants facilitated a town hall meeting with the Rock Hall community with the aim of identifying the social and economic challenges of the community and to ascertain what interventions could be undertaken to provide opportunities for community residents to increase their incomes and social well being. As a result, a community engagement strategy report has been prepared to help guide the conceptualization and preparation of a programme which is owned and directed by the community. So far small scale (back yard) gardening as well as rainwater harvesting projects have been identified as interventions that can boost family agriculture and the participation of the Rock Hall community in worthy projects which can be implemented in 2009. The Martin's Bay and the Airy Hill communities (locations of the Agro-tourism projects) have been targeted as possibilities for the application of the Territorial Approach.

2.6 Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment

The model used in the urban/peri-urban food security project, promoting the production of commonly consumed fruits and vegetables at the household level, is based on strict organic farming practices. Additionally, the model employs two 1000 gal. water tanks, provided by the FAO that collects rain water channeled from the roof of a school to irrigate the crops.

The Office supported the United Nations Development Programme – Global Environmental Facility (UNDP-GEF) funded Youth Development Services (YDS) in implementing its Environmental/Natural Heritage project as well as participated in the National Conservation Commission's (NCC) Arbour Day tree planting ceremony.

2.7 Introducing technology and innovation for the modernisation of agriculture and rural life

The urban-peri-urban project model utilized a small greenhouse (15'X15') equipped with drip irrigation and overhead sprinklers. Additionally, the model features a 20' X 4' Grow-Box system that demonstrates the simple process of creating an enclosure filled with soil for use as a garden.

Through the Office, one of the island's more renowned secondary schools, Harrison's College imported a commercial size greenhouse which was erected on its premises.

Support was also provided to the Barbados 4H Foundation in establishing a training greenhouse for its members.

The Office through its AHFS programme, for the first time conducted training via video conference and webcast undertaken in collaboration with IICA's Distance Learning Centre (CECADI) which provided the video linkages from San Jose, Costa Rica. Two training sessions were delivered to public and private sector partners utilizing this technology.

3. THE STATE OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL LIFE IN BARBADOS IN 2008

3.1 The context of agriculture and rural life

On 15 January 2008, a new government was sworn in, with the appointment of Senator the Honorable Haynesley Benn as Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. Though there was a change of government, the agenda for agriculture remained driven by the strategy defined in the National Strategic Plan for Barbados 2005 – 2025 and a revised MAR 2003 – 2013 Medium Term Plan. The major priority for the new Minister was reversing the trend of rising food prices and the need to provide relief to Barbadians who watched the food bills increase almost on a weekly basis, a problem compounded by the fact that Barbados imports approximately 80% of its food.

In a direct response to the increasing food prices, the MAR hosted a national consultation involving key stakeholders, including IICA, to devise a strategy for ensuring the island's food sovereignty where a draft food sovereignty plan has been devised. Feed subsidies for poultry and pork producers to reduce the impacts of the high production costs faced by these subsectors were introduced.

3.2 Changes in agrifood production

Sugarcane continues to be the most dominant agricultural commodity on the island with 31.7 thousand tonnes of cane harvested from the estimated 5.9 thousand hectares planted for the 2007/08 season. This represented a decline in both tonnes harvested and area planted by 12% and 6% respectively when compared to the 2006/2007 season. Barbados however benefited from the appreciating value of the Euro, in relation to the US dollar. The earnings from raw bulk sugar was therefore recorded at approximately BDS \$45.1 million. Despite the appreciating value of the Euro, the decline in exported volume of raw sugar resulted in the total export earnings of the commodity declining by an estimated 3 % from the BDS\$ 46.2 million from the previous season. In recent years, the government allocated millions of dollars to transform the sugar industry into a sugar cane industry with emphasis on the production of high value sugar and the production of ethanol.

The production of protein foods in 2008, i.e. veal, mutton, dairy and fish registered increases of 52%, 15%, 15% and 38% respectively when compared to the previous year. However, of special concern to the MAR were the estimated production levels of pork, chicken, turkey and eggs, which registered declines of 5%, 4%, 10% and 29%

correspondingly. These figures are particularly disconcerting, with domestic production of these commodities being identified as having the potential to satisfy the island's local and transient populations.

Over 2007/2008, high level investments in the use of state-of-the-art technology, particularly in poultry, pig and vegetable production have been evident. Chickmont Foods (Barbados' largest chicken processor) now owns and contracts growers who use wind-tunnel systems that are precisely controlled intensive systems for broiler production. Pig production is also directly linked to the processing and distributive sectors with high quality meat being produced by both small and large-scale farmers.

Private estates and plantations have also become increasingly involved in diversification out of sugar cane, into fruit and vegetable production. A multi-million greenhouse project was established in 2007 at Strong Hope, St. Thomas, specialising in the production of tomatoes and sweet peppers. This farm has enabled Barbados to become less reliant on imported tomatoes and sweet peppers. Additionally a Barbados Black Belly Sheep (BBB) production feedlot lot established in 2006 has now expanded with over 800 sheep at the end of 2008. The BBB has long been identified as a high quality meat indigenous to the island.

3.3 Changes in policies that affect agriculture and rural life

The most significant changes during the year were spurred by the impact of rising food prices.. Government articulated new policies in support of agriculture, particularly in the areas of incentives for food production. These incentives provide increased rebates to farmers and agripreneurs in the areas of technology adaptation (greenhouses, irrigation, etc.) and agro-processing. The MAR reported increased requests from its incentives scheme, as it continued to improve its service to the farming community. The Scheme paid out almost BDS \$2,000,000 over the period 2007 – 2008, with the most popular incentives sought being land cultivation and irrigation technology, procurement of spraying equipment, livestock, cotton and orchard development and farm security. Rebates for new crop technology, specifically with regard to greenhouses and hydroponics made up the largest payout of just over BDS \$365,000 followed by BDS \$170,000 for irrigation services.

Incentives packages for well-cleaning and rodent control were also introduced while technical assistance and incentives for households interested in becoming involved in front and backyard gardening were also included. Fans for poultry houses were to be included on the list of equipment for which farmers can access rebates.

The MAR also reintroduced the field ploughing service as a significant step since one of the greatest challenges for the farming community is the availability of a timely ploughing service.

Other changes in policies have been geared to addressing the dwindling participation among youth in agriculture. Here, the government has doubled the subvention to the 4H Foundation from B\$100,000 to B\$200,000, while it seeks to establish greenhouse farms to be leased primarily to young graduates of agricultural studies. During the year, the Foundation's membership has grown from less than 300 in 11 clubs to over 1000 members belonging to some 30 clubs.

Additionally, principals of secondary schools, not traditionally known for an agricultural curriculum, are being encouraged to have their students exposed to greenhouse technology. In this case, one of the leading academic schools on the island, Harrison College has already set up a commercial sized training greenhouse to augment its science programme.

In 2008, the MAR in collaboration with IICA and the Barbados Egg and Poultry Association explored the possibility of utilising manure from the approximately 10,000,000 chickens (broilers) produced annually on the island to produce organic fertiliser for use in fruit and vegetable subsectors. This policy could result in Barbados significantly reducing its dependence on imported, chemical fertilizers while at the same time addressing the serious waste management problem developing on the island.

In this new dynamic and in order to align the planning process at the Ministry with the Agru-Matrix, a training workshop on the Agru-Matrix was held for the benefit of MAR planners. The objective of the training was to present the Agru-Matrix as a planning and diagnostic tool that can be used by the Ministry.

3.4 Changes in the institutional framework for agriculture and rural life

The new government has now reallocated the RDC to the Ministry of Social Care, Constituency Empowerment and Urban and Rural Development, while the BADMC and the BAS have been given greater responsibility.

The overall government budget for agriculture has increased steadily over the past 3 years with BDS \$66,943,266 allocated in 2006-2007, BDS \$71,271,716 in 2007/2008 and BDS \$81,090,335 in 2008-2009. The latest increase, 14% over 2007-2008, includes for the first time, a grant to the BADMC, which in recent times has been

plagued with financial problems that prohibited any meaningful action on their part. This statutory organisation has been given the mandate to deepen its involvement in the sector by taking on a more developmental role. In this regard, the BADMC is expected to focus on the following: providing affordable inputs to the agricultural chain, mainly at the farmer end (e.g. fertilisers, pesticides); improved water usages and supply to the farming population; developing programmes to assist beef and sheep farmers; support the growth of the local onion industry; support the MAR in meeting its mandate of increased local food production – through cultivation on lands leased by the BADMC; encourage increased utilisation of cassava through the production of cassava flour; and encourage the utilisation of other local foods through the outreach programmes of the Food Promotion Unit.

The government has also increased the annual subvention to the Barbados Agricultural Society (BAS) by about 170% to BDS\$100,000 in an effort to reinvigorate their commercial activities.

3.5 Major Developments in the thematic areas that affected the performance of agriculture and rural life

IICA's technical intervention in this area focussed on a workshop led by IICA's Regional Policy Specialist which contributed to the consideration by the MAR to use the use Agru-Matrix as the tool for developing and evaluating its national plan for agricultural development. A follow-up workshop is planned for the Regional Policy Specialist to return to assist the MAR in inputting and managing the information in the matrix. The Office was also represented on a technical inter-agency committee responsible for assisting the government and other stakeholders in the planning and execution of projects aimed at promoting rural prosperity.

In the area of introducing technology and innovation for the modernisation of agriculture and rural life, the Office's demonstration of the use of technology in a peri-urban model attracted much interest from associations and individuals seeking to become more food independent. This demonstration was also central to IICA's exhibition at the Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA) in St. Vincent and the Grenadines in 2008.

IICA also supported the 4H foundation through the provision of seed capital towards establishing a training centre at the Pine Basin.

4. RESULTS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL TECHNICAL COOPERATION AGENDA IN BARBADOS DURING 2008

The Office's National Agenda was implemented along the strategic areas highlighted in IICA's 2006 – 2010 Medium Term Plan. The summary of the results is categorised in the following areas:

- IICA's contribution to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life
- Promotion of trade and the competitiveness of agribusiness
- Strengthening rural communities based on the territorial approach
- Strengthening agricultural health and food safety systems
- Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment
- Introducing technology and innovation for the modernisation of agriculture and rural life

4.1 IICA's contribution to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life

In May 2008, the Office hosted the annual Accountability Seminar. This event represents IICA's commitment to accountability and transparency and gives our partners and stakeholders an opportunity to reflect with us on our achievements and to share their views of our programmes and plans for the upcoming year. This year's

event took place at the Savannah Hotel and involved approximately 40 persons from across-section of interests in the agricultural sector. At the Accountability Seminar the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Senator, the Honourable Haynesley Benn was presented with a copy of the 2007 Annual Report. The Minister congratulated IICA for the work it had done and pledged the support of his Ministry to work closely with IICA in pursuing the goal of increasing food production in Barbados. The seminar



Mr. Peltier presenting the 2007 IICA Annual Report to Minister Benn at the IICA Accountability Seminar



Participants listen attentively during the IICA Accountability Seminar

featured presentations by the former Representative, Mrs. Ena Harvey on the activities and achievements of the Office for 2007 and Mr. Joseph Peltier, the current Representative who presented the IICA programme for 2008. Mr. Barton Clarke, the Chief Agricultural Officer gave a presentation on the programmes of the Ministry and recommended key areas of collaboration with various partners.

During 2008, the office hosted two major seminars that focused on the promotion of the New Agriculture. The first was a seminar on the Agru-Matrix delivered by IICA's Regional Specialist for Policy and Trade Ms. Diane Francis. The seminar targeted the technical staff of the MAR and dealt with how the matrix was conceptualized and how it could be used by the MAR as a planning and diagnostic tool to assess the performance of the sector. There are plans to follow this up with another seminar in 2009 to assist the MAR in applying the Matrix to manage information generated on the sector. This will also enable the MAR to assess on a continuous basis what changes are taking place in the sector and how to track the linkages among the various projects and programmes planned and implemented.

The second major seminar organized by the Office on the New Agriculture targeted youth interested in agriculture. The seminar featured a presentation on Leadership in Agriculture by the National Programme Officer, Damien Hinds who along with Carol Thompson participated in IICA's



Dr. Brathwaite (r) among participants at a Leadership Forum for Youth



Coordinator of the 4H Foundation, Mr. Hamilton Blackman addresses the Leadership Forum for Youth

inaugural Youth Leadership Forum held at IICA headquarters, San Jose, Costa Rica in April 2008. Seminar participants, including young entrepreneurs, MAR personnel, students and the media benefitted from the presence of the IICA Director General, Dr. Chelston Brathwaite who shared his thoughts on the outlook of agriculture in the region with a cross section of young Barbadians. The coordinator of the 4H Movement, Mr. Hamilton Blackman, also presented plans to re-invigorate the 4-H movement in Barbados and to grow the membership.

Additionally, IICA participated as a member of an integrated inter-agency working group in Barbados, including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the British High Commission, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), CDB and FAO to develop guidelines for the operation of a network of bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors, focusing on civil society organization in Barbados and the Organisation of

Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). The objective is to enable the partner agencies to include the principles of *transparency*: in decision making, *accountability*: in use and sharing of resources, *intergenerational equity* (benefits to present and future generations), *equality*: in access to resources, opportunities and benefits for all, *sustainability*: of all funded projects and *trust*: among network participants, between network members and groups and between the network as an entity and groups, in their work with targeted community organisations. The areas of focus of the network are environmental management, poverty reduction and sustainable livelihoods.

During the year, IICA also continued to raise awareness of the Agro-Tourism potential of Barbados through its Agro-tourism programme. As the executing agency for the OAS Agro-tourism project, the Office supported Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, St. Kitts and Nevis, Dominica, Guyana and Suriname in the preparation of investment profiles for two potential agro-tourism initiatives in each of the countries. These projects were submitted as part of a portfolio of projects to the Agriculture Investment Forum held in Trinidad in June.

Additionally, IICA supported the MAR and the MoT in the development of a draft cabinet paper for Agro-Tourism. It has been agreed that the MoT and MAR will take the initiative to finalize the paper for presentation to cabinet.

4.2 Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusiness

Within this thematic area, IICA provided support to stakeholders in Barbados by promoting trade and competitiveness of agribusiness within the sector.

Within the rubric of the agro-tourism programme, the Office facilitated a workshop funded by the Commonwealth Secretariat on trade linkages between the agriculture and hospitality sectors.

The consultancy firm AGRICO presented their findings of the study on the state of linkages between agriculture and tourism and the potential for strengthening them.

Approximately 30 participants including farmers, hoteliers, and purchasing managers attended the workshop. A field trip to SuperCentre Supermarket chain aimed



AGRICO Consultant, Mr. Eustace Vitalis making a presentation during the workshop



Participants listen to the purchasing manager at SuperCentre during the workshop

at getting an insight into the process of receiving and selecting produce and to raise awareness of the standards required by the markets formed an integral part of the workshop.

The Office completed the final year of implementing a 3 year, OAS funded Agro-Tourism project – the project officially ends in March 2009. In this regard, the project realized three major results in 2008; the hosting of the Caribbean Regional Investment Forum; a study to identify the agro-tourism potential of a target community in Barbados and the appointment of consultants to develop a regional Agro-tourism website. These projects, along with proposals developed for the investment forum have set the basis for IICA to provide further support to farmers and site operators for initiating bankable projects.

The Regional Investment Forum which was held on February 18 – 19 and comprised consultants and two entrepreneurs from the seven participating countries, as well as representatives of commercial banks, and other local and regional investment agencies. At the forum the consultants presented proposals for each of the projects including expected budgets and cash flows. These proposals served to generate support for agribusiness opportunities that promote viable linkages between the agriculture and tourism sectors. The key agencies and stakeholders were able to identify opportunities and



(l-r); Roxanne Waithe (IICA), Damien Hinds (IICA) and Mr. Peter Watson examine plans for an Agro-Tourism site in Martin's Bay



Participants attending the Regional Agro-tourism Investment Forum

pledged assistance in the areas of partnership, funding marketing and technical support. In the case of Barbados, the two projects submitted featured a 7 acre banana farm with a water course in Newcastle, St. John, and a 30 acre fruit, vegetable and animal farm in St. Joseph with a mature gully and ideal for hiking.



Mr. Jose Holligan (I) in discussion with Mr. Earlin Shuffler about an agro-tourism site in Airy Hill, St. Joseph. Looking on are Marcia Husbands and Roxanne Waithe from IICA

Though the Rock Hall Community Engagement Project is a part of the OAS Agro-tourism project, it is intended that a wider Territorial Approach be adopted for the sustainable development of the community. The purpose of the project is to

identify, through a participatory process the expectations and ideas of the community for their own development and how they plan to pursue them. Leaders, individuals and groups were consulted independently and then collectively at a town hall meeting, which enabled a consultant to prepare a Community Engagement Strategy Report for Rock Hall.



Clockwise from top left; Road sign directing to Rock Hall; the Freedom Monument; participants at the town hall meeting



Consultants were engaged in November to develop a regional Agro-tourism website, that would:

- (a) Provide a **virtual tool** for exchange of information and mutual knowledge among researchers, policy makers and developmental agencies on Caribbean Agrotourism Initiatives
- (b) Establish a **forum for discussion** on priority activities and issues surrounding agrotourism development in the participating countries
- (c) Gather **relevant information** from experts, research publications and events thereby fostering the creation of a regional research and development network.

To date, the website prototype has been developed with information currently being uploaded into the system.



Draft home page for the Agro-tourism Website

The Office once again played a role on the organising committee for AgroFest (March 7-9), which, with an attendance approaching 50,000 for the weekend, is now easily the most popular and anticipated family event on Barbados' calendar.



The Organising committee for Healthy Eating the Caribbean Way



Primary school boys enjoying their healthy snacks

A food exhibit themed “*Healthy Eating the Caribbean Way*” provided healthy alternatives to the public given the high incidence of diet related diseases among Barbadians and the increasing levels of inflection among our youth. AgroFest, therefore, with its large audience remain an excellent opportunity to sensitise the population on the benefits of eating healthily and to demonstrate how to prepare healthy food. Under this theme, the Office organized a Healthy Snack for the benefit of approximately 200 school children and teachers, a Pickle Lime, and the popular Plantation Breakfast.



CEO of the BAS, Mr. James Paul (r) savouring his breakfast with a friend

The Office also facilitated the participation of several farmers with the collaboration of the BAS in a farmers market organized by the BHTA for their annual Taste of Barbados event. Apart from providing the produce for the chefs from participating hotels and restaurants the farmers were also able to make a brisk trade.

Support was provided to AWIA in preparing a strategic plan with the assistance of the the CTCS Network of the CDB.

4.3 Strengthening agricultural health and food safety systems

During the year IICA, in conjunction with the United States Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services (USDA/APHIS) launched the VEP Project in several countries in the Caribbean, including Barbados, in August 2008. The project is designed to strengthen the animal disease epidemiological surveillance capabilities of the participating countries.

In order to facilitate the implementation of the project in Barbados, a Veterinary Officer at the Ministry of Agriculture was selected to manage the actions and provide guidance and support to the MAR and IICA. The veterinarian, Dr. Vicky Aimey was briefed on the key components of the VEP Project, the main activities, the expected outputs and the participation of Barbados as a key element in a regional approach to epidemiology surveillance. IICA is providing oversight and administrative support in the delivery of the project.

IICA facilitated the attendance of representatives of the MAR in attending all three SPS Committee meetings in Geneva, Switzerland under the Initiative of the Americas Programme. The Office facilitated their attendance by ensuring that meeting documents and papers were available to the delegates, and by making the necessary arrangements for travel.

Two web-based training sessions, one on Codex Alimentarius and the other on the OIE were held in conjunction with the AHFS Directorate at Headquarters and CECADI.

The CODEX course in partnership with the FAO, was conducted utilizing Video Conference facilities at the United Nations (UN) House. Fourteen persons from both the private and



Participants attending the CODEX course

public sectors participated in the two-day training. The course was interactive and participants were able to



Ms. Renate Sealy from the BNSI receiving her certificate from Dr. Barbara Graham, Representative of the FAO while Mr. Peltier looks on

follow the presentations from the CECADI Office at IICA Headquarters in Costa Rica and dialogue and share experiences with counterparts from other participating countries. Ms. Renate Sealy, the participant from the Barbados National Standards Institute (BNSI) – the focal point for CODEX in Barbados – gave a brief account of the status of the CODEX committees in Barbados. Participants were issued with certificates of participation by the IICA Barbados Representative Mr. Joseph Peltier and the Sub-Regional Representative for the FAO, Dr. Barbara Graham.

The OIE course attracted representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture Veterinary and Market Divisions, the Barbados National Standards Institute and Chickmont Foods Ltd. This one-day course was taken place via webcast at the conference room of the IICA Office. Dr. Rosina Maitland of the Veterinary Division gave a brief update of veterinary activities in Barbados.

The Office also welcomed representatives of the Government of France who were in Barbados as part of their evaluation of the FSP, which since 2006 has funded the activities of the Caribbean Animal Health Network (CaribVET). CaribVET is supported by IICA along with other agencies such as FAO, the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO) and USDA, with Barbados' Senior Veterinary Officer, Dr. Mark Trotman serving as the current chairman. FSP funding will end in 2009 and one of the objectives of the evaluation team was to evaluate the effectiveness and usefulness of CaribVET and to explore ways in which its activities can be sustained.

The evaluators learned that CaribVET was extremely successful, particularly in relation to providing a forum for the regional veterinary officers to meet and discuss issues of concern and to elaborate strategies for addressing these. Of note was the establishment of a veterinary epidemiology working group and the development of a surveillance assessment tool.

4.4 Strengthening rural communities based on the territorial approach

The Rock Hall Freedom Village (first land to be occupied by freed slaves in Barbados) was chosen as the pilot for applying the territorial approach to the sustainable development in Barbados. A consultant was hired to develop a community engagement strategy. This included a participatory research exercise to examine the



A Google Earth Map of the Rock Hall Community

situation in the community as well as town hall meetings to introduce the idea and to discuss a possible strategy for the economic, social and spiritual development of the residents. To date a Community Engagement Strategy Report has been submitted. Some of the consultant's findings of this community of approximately 1,000, indicated that the area lacked business opportunity, vibrant social organisations and sports clubs or associations that would help to foster community spirit and togetherness. Additionally, the lack of agricultural activities, except for a large pig producer, leaves the

community vulnerable to increased food prices as experienced with the food price hikes of 2008.

Rock Hall is geographically at a higher elevation than Holetown on the west coast of the island, and is therefore very susceptible to flooding. One of the activities identified for Rock Hall is a Rain Water Harvesting (RWH) project to provide irrigation for growing food, improve sanitation at the commercial piggery and mitigate against flooding in one of Barbados' most flood prone areas. This project, while supervised by IICA Barbados will be conducted by interns attached to the office through the Bel Airs Research Institute.

Other recommendations for advancing the community's development include: supporting the development of the high technology pig farm with huge agro-tourism potential; the development of an educational centre focusing on the history of Rock Hall as well as providing training for community members in entrepreneurship, agricultural management, craft and vocational skills and promoting the concept of the freedom village so as to make it more attractive to locals and visitors alike.

Additionally, the Agro-Tourism Project Profiles developed for Barbados in the Martin's Bay and Airy Hill communities have been targeted as possibilities for the application of the Territorial Approach with the entrepreneurs willing to draw on the traditional knowledge and expertise of members of the community, and to mainstream their projects into the area.

4.5 Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment

The peri-urban, back yard gardening project at the St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church was designed as part of our efforts to encourage the sustainable management of



Mr. Peltier applying NeemX to the Organic Produce at the St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church



Water harvesting tanks at the St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church

our natural resources as well as our environment. The model utilises only organic fertilizers (filter press mud, and manure mixed with soil) and pesticides (NeemX) in its production of fruits and vegetables both in

the greenhouse as well as the grow-box. Rainwater is used to irrigate the greenhouse.

The water is channeled from the roofs of the neighbouring school and collected in two 1,000 gallon water tanks. From there, the crops are irrigated by gravity either via drip emitters or through overhead micro-sprinklers.

The Office also facilitated, in collaboration with CDB and FAO, Chinese consultants visiting Barbados on a mission to determine possible rain water harvesting strategies to aid agricultural management. A field trip was organized to several farms and agricultural districts on the island in order to determine the potential for the application of this technology. Some of the areas visited during this trip included; River Plantation, Gibbons Bogs, Redland Farms, Chicken Stop and Barnwell Farms in Rock Hall.

Support was given to the UNDP-GEF funded NGO, Youth Development Services (YDS) in their Environment and Heritage project. IICA has provided YDS with a list of once popular Barbadian fruit trees, such as dunks, guava and gooseberry, for planting in the project.

The Office continued its support for the National Conservation Commission (NCC) Arbour Day committee and attended the official tree planting ceremony in Greens, St. George to celebrate the event.

4.6 Introducing technology and innovation for the modernisation of agriculture and rural life

During 2008 the Office has focused on the utilization of greenhouse technology to enable farmers to increase yields in the production of fruits and vegetables. The peri-urban



Mr. Peltier and Mr. Damien Hinds planting seedlings in the greenhouse at the St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church



The greenhouse and Grow Box systems with their thriving production

project at the St. Patrick's Church consists of a small greenhouse (15'X15') fully loaded with drip irrigation and

micro-overhead sprinklers. The project also features a 16' X 4' Grow-Box system using concrete blocks to create an enclosure which is filled with soil and other organic matter. Both of these technologies have been widely requested and adopted by a number of organisations and individuals and many more households belonging to the network supporting this project are expected to absorb the concept in 2009.

Through the Office, one of the island's more renowned secondary schools, Harrison College installed a commercial size greenhouse on its premises. This greenhouse, an extension of the school's biology laboratory, is geared toward training students in modern agricultural production techniques as well as to demonstrate various scientific principles using agricultural applications.



Greenhouse at Harrison College



Mr. Peltier sharing some greenhouse tips with students of Harrison College

In both cases, it is expected that the greenhouse technology will play a significant role in changing the negative perception of agriculture that currently exists among the youth and effect changes to the agricultural curriculae at all levels of education. For the students, this greenhouse is the realization of a plan conceptualized in 2005.

In 2008 the Office, through its AHFS programme, for the first time conducted training via video conference and webcast undertaken in collaboration with CECADI which provided the video linkages from San Jose, Costa Rica. Two training sessions, on CODEX and OIE standards were delivered to public and private sector partners utilizing this technology.



CODEX Training Course delivered via tele-conference at the UN House

5. RESULTS OF INTER-AGENCY COOPERATION

During the year under review, IICA Barbados was a founding member of a network of bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors to assist civil society organizations in Barbados and the OECS to build the capacity for environmental and sustainable livelihoods projects. This network originally consisting of; IICA, CDB, UNDP, United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), OAS, CIDA and the University of the West Indies (UWI) has been expanded to include PAHO, the Department for International Development (DFID) and the Caribbean Policy Development Centre (CPDC). To date, the committee met on four occasions and a “network of multi-lateral donors” focusing on civil society organisations in Barbados and the OECS have been established.

The Office supported the CDB in facilitating a training of trainers course on “Costing and Pricing” for micro, small and medium sized enterprises. IICA supported the participation of the trainees from other member countries and for the first time, the participation of agro-processors from Haiti. The Office also facilitated the participation of one of the finalists of the SuperCentre/IICA/Barbados Manufacturing Association (BMA) entrée competition at the course. IICA’s participants in the course have been designated to coordinate similar training programmes that would be beneficial to its stakeholders, principally the farming community and agro-processors.



*Mr. Damien Hinds and Ms. Roxanne Waithe among Barbadian participants at the CDB CTCS **Client Training***

Support was also provided to projects funded by the UNDP/GEF Small Grants Programme including the provision of technical guidance to the Youth Development Service in the implementation of their environmental/heritage project.



Mr. Peltier making a point prior to presenting the 4H Foundation with a donation on behalf of IICA

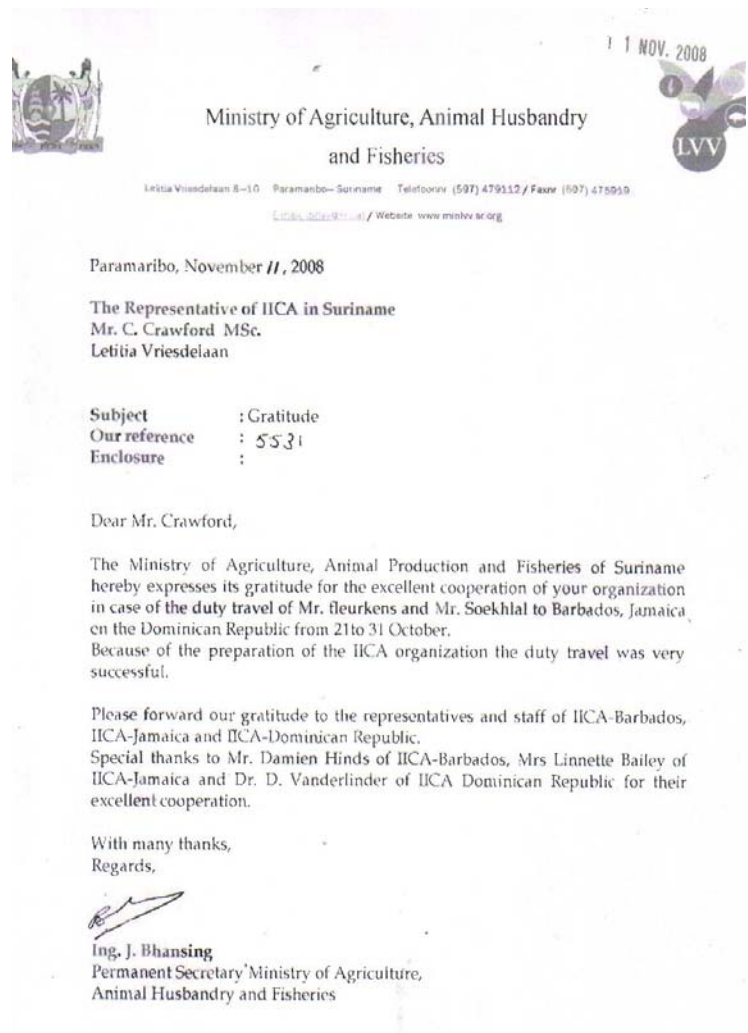
IICA has entered into discussions with the 4H Foundation to explore ways in which support can be given to that organization. Resulting from the discussions, the Westbury Primary school 4H Club and the Holders Hill Community 4H Club were identified for possible IICA support and mentorship. In addition, IICA has provided direct support for the establishment and implementation of a training greenhouse on the plot of the 4H Foundation at the Pine Basin in the form of seed capital of Bds \$3000.00 to assist

in the procurement of the greenhouse which is due to be established in 2009. This greenhouse will form part of a larger training facility to expose 4H members to the modern skills necessary to manage a farming operation in the 21 century. IICA will also assist in providing technical guidance for the Poverty Eradication Unit's newly developed programme in support of youth in agriculture, given that the lands operated by the 4H are contiguous to their lands at the Pine Basin.

6. RESULTS OF HORIZONTAL TECHNICAL COOPERATION

The IICA Barbados Office supported the IICA Suriname Office by hosting a mission throughout the region to evaluate the possibility of purchasing sheep and goats for a breeding station in Suriname. Mr. M. Fleurkens and Mr. R. Soekhlal from the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries, in Suriname, visited Kendal Farm and Wilcox Farm and met with the Barbados Agricultural Society. The IICA Barbados Office also provided support to Suriname, by assisting two consultants research the possibility for the penetration of the Barbados market by Surinamese agricultural produce.

Discussions between the Hemispheric Specialist for Agro-tourism and the Thematic Director for Agribusiness regarding the countries to be involved and the key elements of the research to be undertaken to identify the procurement patterns of the tourism and food service sectors, have given new impetus to intra-Caribbean trade. These initiatives represent excellent opportunities for deepening horizontal technical cooperation to boost agricultural production and trade between CARICOM countries.



A gratification letter from the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal husbandry and Fisheries in Suriname following support from the IICA Barbados Office

7. NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR TECHNICAL COOPERATION

The onset of the global food crisis in 2008 provided opportunities to foster stakeholder participation in addressing the delivery of technical support to boost food production at the community level. In this regard, the Peri-urban project which has as its objective improving self sufficiency in some foods at the household level, has attracted the attention and support of many new potential partners including the Diabetic Association, the Kiwanis Club, the National Association of Disabled Persons, the GEMS of Barbados Hotel Chain, the Barbados Association of Retired Persons (BARP) and a number of private individuals interested in home gardening.

Additionally, the fact that IICA is a member of a technical, interdisciplinary committee of Regional and Hemispheric Organisations, we are now in a position to offer technical guidance to projects that are presented to the committee for their consideration. One such project that IICA is supporting is the YDS Environmental and Heritage Project that is being funded by the UNDP GEF Programme.

With respect to the Office's role in AgroFest, it is expected that in addition to our numerous existing corporate sponsors, the Barbados Tourism Authority (BTA) will also be on board as a sponsor of the Plantation Breakfast from 2009.

8. MAIN ACTIVITIES ORGANISED BY IICA

The office organised a number of major activities this year. These activities in chronological order include:

- a buyer/seller network for agrotourism linkages workshop;
- a Regional Agro-tourism Investment Forum;
- an Emotional Intelligence session;
- a Healthy Snack Seminar, Pickle Lime and Plantation Breakfast at AgroFest;
- the annual Accountability Seminar;
- a presentation on the New Agriculture to youth in agriculture;
- the launch of the Peri-urban project at the St. Patrick's Church;
- the IICA Regional Planning Meeting;
- a workshop introducing the Agru-Matrix and its utilisation to MAR officers;
- facilitation of a farmers market at the annual Taste of Barbados event;
- organisation a community engagement meeting for the Rock Hall community.
- the distance-training courses on CODEX Alimentarius and the OIE.

9. LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

The office prepared reports on all of its activities as well as published its Annual Report 2007. Additional reports submitted by staff members include:

- Community Engagement Strategy Report: Rock Hall, St. Thomas;
- Agrotourism as a Business Opportunity: Using What we Have;

10. LIST OF ACRONYMS

AHFS	Agricultural Health and Food Safety
AWIA	Association of Women in Agriculture
BADMC	Barbados Agricultural Development & Marketing Corporation
BAFY	Barbados Association of Retired Persons
BAS	Barbados Agricultural Society
BHTA	Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association
BMA	Barbados Manufacturers Association
BNSI	Barbados National Standards Institute
BTA	Barbados Tourism Authority
CARIB VET	Caribbean Animal Health Network
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CECADI	IICA Distance Learning Centre
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
ComSec	Commonwealth Secretariat
CPA	Caribbean Poultry Association
CPDC	Caribbean Policy Development Centre
CTA	Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation
CTCS	Caribbean Technological Consultancy Services
CWA	Caribbean Week of Agriculture
DFID	Department for International Development
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FSP	French Ministry of Foreign Affairs Priority Solidarity Fund
GAPs	Good Agricultural Practices
IICA	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
MAR	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MoT	Ministry of Tourism
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NCC	National Conservation Commission
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OAS	Organisation of American States
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
OIE	World Organisation for Animal Health
PAHO	Pan American Health Organisation
RDC	Rural Development Commission
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary
STDF	Standards and Trade Development Facility
UNDP-GEF	United Nations Development Programme – Global Environmental Facility
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Fund for Women
USDA/APHIS	United States Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services
UWI	University of the West Indies
VEP	Veterinary Epidemiology Project
YDS	Youth Development Services

IICA MEMORIES 2008



NPTO, Damien Hinds (l), with member of the Barbados Team during the CTCS Training



Team building – IICA Barbados Team solving a puzzle during an Emotional Intelligence Session



Dr. Brathwaite closely inspects the Greenhouse at St. Patrick's Church



Minister of Agriculture, Sen., Hon., Haynesley Benn (r) with Dr. Brathwaite and Mr. Murray during their visit to Barbados



The customary IICA Barbados Office Lunch



IICA Barbados Orchestra (l-r); Carol Thomas, Nathan Husbands and Damien Hinds



IICA Driver/Messenger Rudolph Hippolyte and guest at the IICA Staff dinner



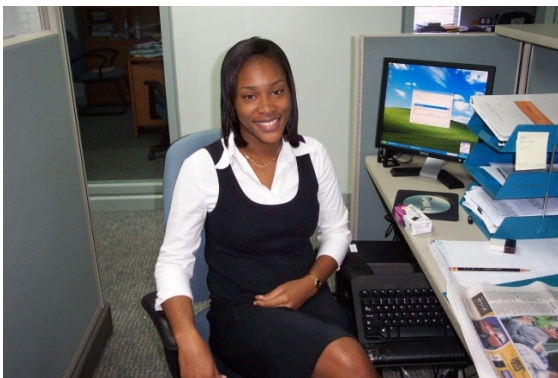
Representative Secretary, Lana Spooner having a laugh at AgroFest



Mr. And Mrs. Peltier at the Plantation Breakfast



Kaiya Waithe showing off her plate at the Best Big Bajan Bar-B-Que



All smiles!! IICA Intern, Jalisa Corbin during her stint with the Office



Lake IICA? NPTO, Damien Hinds negotiating flood waters outside the Office