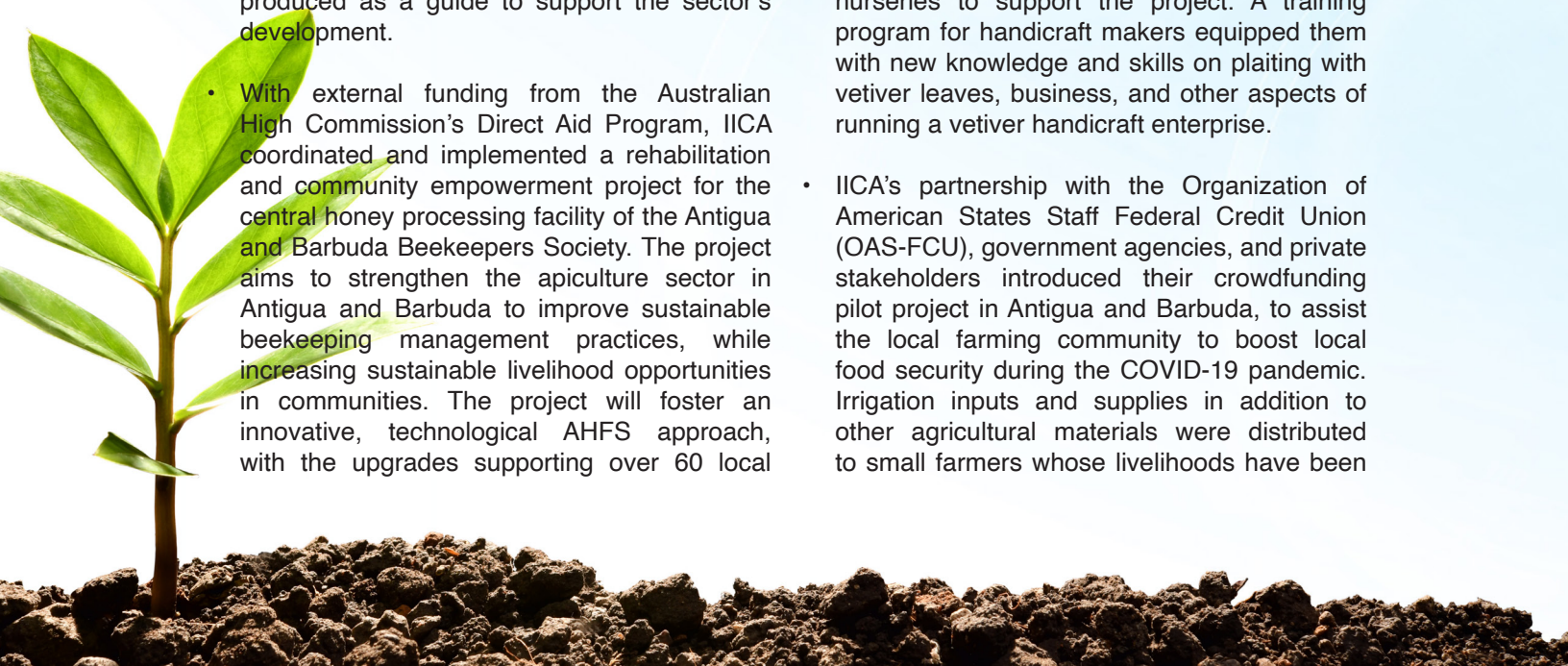




Significant Achievements 2021

Antigua and Barbuda

- The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), through a Letter of Agreement (LoA) with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, executed a project focusing on capacity building for two value chains in Antigua and Barbuda: Barbuda logwood honey and Antigua black pineapple. Through the project activities, 22 new beekeepers were trained and given an apiculture start-up kit. In addition, the project supported the official registration of the new business ventures. The collaboration provided a baseline data profile for existing beekeepers in Antigua and Barbuda, which the Ministry of Agriculture can use to monitor and evaluate the apiculture sector. An upgrading strategy and a beekeeping management manual were produced as a guide to support the sector's development.
- With external funding from the Australian High Commission's Direct Aid Program, IICA coordinated and implemented a rehabilitation and community empowerment project for the central honey processing facility of the Antigua and Barbuda Beekeepers Society. The project aims to strengthen the apiculture sector in Antigua and Barbuda to improve sustainable beekeeping management practices, while increasing sustainable livelihood opportunities in communities. The project will foster an innovative, technological AHFS approach, with the upgrades supporting over 60 local beekeepers, who will utilize the facility to process honey and other honey by-products throughout the value chain.
- Through a regional initiative, funded by the Ecosystem-based Adaptation Facility (EbA) of the Caribbean Biodiversity Fund, in partnership with IAMovement and the local NGO – Gilbert Agricultural and Rural Development Center (GARD), the Institute supported a climate adaptation resilience project to assist vulnerable communities in adopting nature-based solutions to reduce non-climate stressors that contribute to land degradation. In this, the first exportation of vetiver within the Caribbean, 6,500 vetiver grass plantlets were exported from Dominica to Antigua for the establishment of two propagation nurseries to support the project. A training program for handicraft makers equipped them with new knowledge and skills on plaiting with vetiver leaves, business, and other aspects of running a vetiver handicraft enterprise.
- IICA's partnership with the Organization of American States Staff Federal Credit Union (OAS-FCU), government agencies, and private stakeholders introduced their crowdfunding pilot project in Antigua and Barbuda, to assist the local farming community to boost local food security during the COVID-19 pandemic. Irrigation inputs and supplies in addition to other agricultural materials were distributed to small farmers whose livelihoods have been



affected. The project was a strategic response by the Institute to address the weakened socio-economic reality in the Caribbean, due to the pandemic. The project positively impacted the lives of over 60 farm families, including backyard gardeners and provided the capital injection needed to produce over 80,000 lbs of vegetables for the local market, in the absence of regular imports.

- IICA's capacity to support honeybee hive management and queen rearing in Antigua and Barbuda was increased through a training intervention by Richard Matthias – Master Beekeeper from St. Lucia. It was financed by the Global Environmental Fund (GEF) to support the Antigua Beekeepers Cooperative. An assessment was conducted to determine the most suitable location for rearing queen bees and a mobile management app, *Hive Keep in Caribbean*, was introduced, with a view to improving local beekeepers' hive management programs.
- The Institute strengthened the capacities of 12 local compost producers. Participants were taught the steps involved in setting up a basic backyard composting system and the different parameters to consider for proper composting. The training also covered different tools for measuring and collecting data and

emphasized the importance of monitoring for quality compost making. These efforts sought to improve compost standards among local producers, in response to a request by Caribbean ministers of agriculture, through a donors meeting organized by IICA in 2020.

- Through the Agricultural Extension Application developed by the Institute in 2020, IICA continued to strengthen the ability of the Ministry of Agriculture to provide enhanced digital communication services to farmers and other agricultural stakeholders. In 2021, IICA supported the institutionalization of the application by producing useful information for vegetable production, which was then uploaded to the site to complement other information products developed in 2020.
- The Minister of Agriculture participated in several high-level webinars organized and coordinated by IICA, including activities addressing challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic in the region. These events highlighted the need for new approaches in strengthening food production and demonstrated the support that the Institute had provided in the fight against food and nutritional insecurity in 2020 – a year that negatively affected the tourism sector, the engine of Caribbean economies.