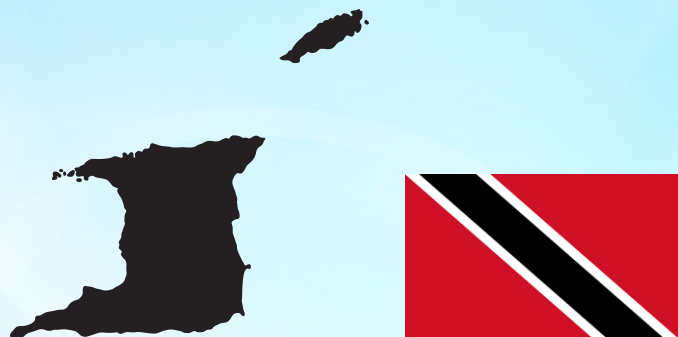




Significant Achievements 2021



Trinidad and Tobago

- The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) is leading a Model Farmers' initiative, funded by The Cropper Foundation (TCF) IDB Lab project, 'Making Agriculture Profitable and Sustainable'. This initiative emerged because of the efforts of the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries to make good farmers better, by putting systems in place to mitigate some of the challenges they face. It is driven by a strong technical team from IICA, TCF, the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries (MALF), the National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation (NAMDEVCO) and the Food and Agriculture Faculty of the University of the West Indies (UWI). Under this initiative, three female and five male farmers will have direct access to this team of experts and will benefit from soil and water analysis, as well as targeted farm investments to enable them to better adopt and practice climate smart farming.
- With funding from a TCF-IDB Lab MAPS project, IICA led the development of the 'FarmVue' application for record keeping and traceability. The app was developed in close collaboration with NAMDEVCO, the Agricultural Development Bank (ADB,) a focus group of farmers and a local web developer. It is free of cost to farmers and is designed as an e-record book to facilitate cost of production, sales and food safety tracing, in keeping with the protocols and requirements of Trinidad and Tobago Good Agricultural Practices (TT-GAP). This support is consistent with the global and national thrust to enhance farmers' capacity to incorporate digital technologies into their activities more quickly, with the aim of improving productivity, market access, competitiveness and income. It will enhance efficiency in farm decision-making, assist in transitioning from manual and paper-based activities to digital operations; and will improve farmers' capacity to meet financing conditions. The app is available in the Google Play and Apple stores.
- The COVID-19 restrictions continued to drive online food marketing and distribution, and participation of an increasing number of micro and small producers. With funding from the IICA-TCF IDB Lab MAPS project, the Alliance for Rural Communities (ARCTT) upgraded its online sales capacity, locally and extra-regionally, through two linked websites: www.arccaribbean.com, serving local consumers, and www.chocolaterebellion.com, serving the US and Canadian wholesale and retail markets. Additional funding under the CTA Legacy Assets, managed by IICA, also enhanced ARCTT's capacity to support its network members in Caura to develop community tourism. Similar support provided to WHYFaebarm strengthened their online marketing of products from the WHYFarmers' collective.
- Support to digital agriculture also included IICA's financing of the MALF Agricultural Services Division Phase 1 - GrowTrinbago online seeds and planting material catalogue.



The purpose of the site is to enhance the public's access to information on planting material that is available for sale from MALF's network of four Plant Propagation Stations and the National Seed Bank Centre. GrowTrinbago will be complemented by the development of 'AgriFindr', an online directory targeting a cross-section of private sector actors in agriculture. Funded under the IICA-TCF partnership, AgriFindr will host AgriMSEs with which IICA has been working closely, as well as farmers participating in the TCF Grow Safe campaign and the Model Farmers initiative. Both platforms are set to be launched in 2022 and promoted to the wider national community.

- The Institute brokered dialogue and connections between private sector interests and plant quarantine units (PQUs) in Trinidad and Tobago and Argentina, to facilitate the importation of apples and pears from Argentina. The facilitation of MALF was instrumental, with the local PQU working with Argentinian authorities to complete the Pest Risk Analysis, a pre-requisite for issuing an import permit. The first refrigerated forty-foot containers of high-quality, fresh apples and pears arrived in Trinidad and Tobago in June 2021, increasing

to four containers by the end of July. There is a high demand in the domestic market for these products, which cannot be competitively produced by local farmers. The local importer noted that this new South-South trade link diversifies the sources of such imports and also has the potential to open doors for limited exports of agricultural products to Argentina.

- Specific areas impacted by and vulnerable to climate hazards in communities in Charlotteville and North-East Tobago are receiving attention through a local partnership between IICA and the NGO, Environment Tobago, under the IICA-Caribbean Biodiversity Fund Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) project. These areas were mapped for ecosystem assessments, using LiDAR technology and GatorEye drones developed by the University of Florida. They will be monitored to assess the benefits of vetiver grass as a green engineering solution to reduce soil erosion and land slippage. IAMovement, an EbA project technical partner, trained a cross-section of women, men and youth in establishing and maintaining vetiver grass nurseries; installing vetiver grass on vulnerable slopes, using safety harnesses; and using harvested leaves to produce handicraft to create green livelihood opportunities.