



Agriculture

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- The institutional capacity of Jamaica's sweet potato chain was strengthened as a result of joint efforts with the Research and Development (R&D) Division of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries (MICAFA) for integrated pest management of the sweet potato weevil by testing the efficacy of a fungal biocontrol agent, and the training program from MICAFA and the College of Agriculture, Science and Education (CASE) on sweet potato clean seed production, allowing for rapid multiplication of virus indexed materials developed by the former to improve the availability of clean sweet potato slips for sale to farmers. These activities were executed through continued collaboration with Louisiana State University (LSU) and LSU AgCenter.
- Institutional capacity for managing Coffee Leaf Rust (CLR) using the recently developed early warning system, jointly funded by the International Research and Applications Project (IRAP) of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and IICA, commenced with a Train-the-Trainers workshop for 30 extension officers and lead farmers from 9 Blue Mountain Coffee communities, the prime coffee growing region of Jamaica, in the use of climate tools to aid decision making in the management of CLR disease. IICA has been partnering with the Coffee Industry Board (CIB), the International Research Institute for Climate and Society (IRI) at Columbia University, the Meteorological Services at the University of the West Indies, Mona in Jamaica, Met Services and the University of Arizona, in the execution of this Early Warning System for the CLR project in Jamaica. Further collaboration included the design and printing of posters to aid farmers in the identification of key aspects of the CLR disease cycle and appropriate management actions based on the coffee crop cycle depicted in a coffee production calendar.
- Institutional capacity was strengthened for management of Frosty Pod Rot (FPR) of Cocoa in Jamaica and funded by MICAFA, through collaboration with the *Servicio Nacional de Sanidad y Calidad Agroalimentaria* (SENASA) and the *Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza* (CATIE) to share experiences in managing FPR in Peru and Costa Rica, respectively. Technical staff and decision makers from the Research & Development and Plant Quarantine Divisions of the MICAFA, Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA) and Agricultural Land Management Division (ALMD), as well as the Cocoa Industry Board were trained and received technical guidance from the Technical Oversight Committee established to investigate and control the spread of the disease.
- IICA collaborated with the Research and Development Division of the MICAFA, UC RUSAL-WINDALCO Bauxite company, Jamaica Bauxite Institute and the International Centre for Environmental and Nuclear Sciences to enhance capacity in public and private sector stakeholders by evaluating the effect of four different types of composts on lands that were mined for bauxite ore to restore them to productive use. The results of the demonstration plots showed that the compost from cattle litter produced the greatest plant root proliferation. In an effort to further build capacity in good soil management practices, 70 stakeholders, comprised of farmers and agricultural technicians, participated in two technical IICA supported workshops on good soil management practices and on services provided by MICAFA. In addition, the AgriNett Soils Smartphone App developed in Trinidad and Tobago was introduced to provide instantaneous description of soil type and capability for any location in Jamaica.
- Competitive capacity of the local livestock sector is being strengthened with funding provided by the Jamaica Dairy Development Board (JDDDB) for improved nutrition and diversification of farm income in the livestock sector. This initiative, now in its third year, established more than 3,000 plants,

including shrubs for animal grazing, timber and fruit trees. Eight demonstration plots were established across six parishes in Jamaica. IICA collaborated with the Livestock Unit of the Bodles Research Division of MICAF to monitor the progress of the demonstration plots. This initiative is being implemented to promote silvo-pastoral/agro-forestry systems as a more efficient and sustainable animal production system. The institutional and associative capacities of three dairy farmer clusters were also improved through strengthening of governance structures and technical capabilities to achieve more self-sufficient and sustainable livestock farmer cooperatives.

- IICA in collaboration with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), strengthened the capacities of public and private sector stakeholders in agricultural health and food safety by hosting a regional training workshop on the United States (US) Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule. 44 trainees from Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, USA and Costa Rica were trained in the regulations that apply to fresh produce exports into the USA.
- IICA facilitated the attendance of local technicians at meetings of the *Codex Alimentarius*, thus strengthening the country's capacity for consensus and participation in international forums. In addition, the National *Codex* Committee (NCC) benefited from a regional Chile-IICA Technical Cooperation Project to build the capacities of selected Caribbean countries to adequately engage in the *Codex* process. Under the project, funded by the Chilean Government with coordination support from IICA, representatives from the NCC attended an internship in Chile, which involved visits to institutions dealing with *Codex* issues in Chile and participation in workshops to develop procedural manuals and strategies for the NCC. As a result of the Chile-IICA project, the NCC has completed its procedural manual and strategic plan.
- As part of an IICA Family Farming project, the Institute undertook an Associative Internship Programme that facilitated exchanges between strong and weak farmer associations. IICA funded and organised a workshop in which two of the country's stronger farmer organisations – St. Mary Multi-Purpose Cooperative and the All Island Banana Growers Association (AIBGA) – shared best practices and business management experiences with the following farmer groups: the Serge Island Dairy Benevolent Society, Jamaica Network of Rural Women Producers, Rhymesfield Co-operative Development Ltd, Yallahs Specially Authorised Irrigation Society, and St. Thomas Young Farmers group. These efforts were aimed at improving the financial sustainability of the participating groups (including cooperative-owned enterprises, income and profits), so that each group could develop improvement plans.
- Technical capacities were also strengthened through the training of analysts from the Pesticides Research Laboratory to operate high performance equipment, which enhanced the ability of lab personnel to determine pesticide residues in samples. The Pesticides Research Lab is the only accredited laboratory for pesticide analysis in the Caribbean, and assists exporters to achieve certification of agricultural exports to the United States.
- IICA continued its collaboration with the MICAF, Jamaica Agricultural Society (JAS), Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA) and the Jamaica 4-H Clubs to present the annual IICA Youth in Agribusiness Awards, which recognizes innovation and achievement among youth in agri-business. The awards, which are executed and funded by IICA, were presented to a banana farmer, a pig farmer and a greenhouse farmer (Youth Agro-Tourism).
- A Master of Science (MSc) Degree program on Integrated Rural Development was developed under a five year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the University of Technology, Jamaica (UTech).



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