

ANNUAL REPORT *2009*

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

Dominica



IICA



Inter-American Institute for
Cooperation on Agriculture
Office in Dominica

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



IICA Office in Dominica

ANNUAL REPORT 2009
Roseau, Commonwealth of Dominica

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ACRONYMS

CARDI	Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CTV	Citrus Tristeza Virus
DHBA	Dominica Herbal Business Association
DNFTO	Dominica National Fair Trade Organization
DSIF	Dominica Social and Investment Fund
FADE	Framework for Agri-business Development Enterprise
FAVACA	Florida Association for Volunteer Action in the Caribbean
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IICA	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
ITC	International Trade Centre
NAHFS	National Agricultural Health and Food Safety
NAYA	National Association of Youth in Agriculture
NES	National Export Strategy
OAS	Organization of American States
OECS/EDU	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States/Economic Development Unit
OIE	World Organization for Animal Health
SFA	Special Framework of Assistance
SNAT	Surveillance Network Assessment Tool
SPS	Sanitary Phytosanitary
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
TBT	Tropical Bont Tick
UK	United Kingdom
VEP	Veterinary Epidemiology /Para-Epidemiologist
WTO	World Trade Organization

Introduction



This Report captures the areas of support that IICA provided to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry and its wider clientele during 2009. The Institute's contribution during that period can be categorized within six strategic areas which include:

- Repositioning of agriculture and rural life;
- Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusiness
- Strengthening agricultural health and food safety systems
- Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment
- Strengthening rural communities
- Introducing technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural life

A large part of IICA's technical support was towards capacity building both in the public and private sectors.

The Institute celebrated 25th Years of Service to Dominica and has recognized one of its staff members, Ms Maureen Dominique, Assistant Executive Secretary who served within the organization over the past 25 years .

During the last Quarter of 2009, two unrelated elections took place. Dr Victor Villalobos, a Mexican National, was elected as IICA's new Director General. In Dominica, the Dominica Labour Party was re-elected as the Government under the stewardship of Honourable Roosevelt Skerrit,

We would like to express gratitude to all the partners both in the public and private sectors who have contributed towards the implementation of IICA's National Technical Cooperation Agenda. On behalf of the ECS Representative, we take this opportunity to congratulate the Prime Minister and his prospective Cabinet.

We look forward to 2010 to undertake new programmes and to strengthen and expand existing ones. We trust that IICA technical services continue to contribute to the development of agriculture and the well-being of the citizenry of Dominica.

Kent E. Coipel
Technical Specialist/ Dominica

Executive Summary

IICA's Contribution to the Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life

On the recommendation of the Cabinet of Ministers, IICA worked closely with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry through the Division of Agriculture to amend the draft policy framework entitled "Invest in Dominica – Secure Agriculture – National Policy for the Agriculture Environment (Agri-Eco) System, 2007–2025". The original policy framework was delivered by IICA to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry in April 2008.

The knowledge capacity of Extension Officers to be better able to provide services to farmers and other clients was enhanced and strengthened through the technical support provided by IICA to the Division of Agriculture.

Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusiness

Project proposals which placed emphasis on strengthening capacities of the membership of agribusiness groups in production technologies, quality and food safety, and business management were developed and submitted by IICA to various programmes for funding. The Agribusiness groups targeted and which received funding included the Dominica Herbal Business Association (DHBA), the National Bee Keepers Cooperative and the Hilltop Fruit Plus.

In support of a direct request made by the Government of Dominica, IICA facilitated a sub regional mission for a group of five personnel from Dominica to understudy organic production in Costa Rica. The key objective of this farmer-to-farmer exchange visit was to strengthen the technical capacity and knowledge-base of local organic producers as well as to further gain practical input for a common vision and strategy for the sustainable development of the organic industry based on the development of an alternative farm input production model.

IICA provided technical support to the Dominica National Fair Trade Organization (DNFTO), through a review and examination of its current structure and operations and the capacity of the organization to deliver on its current mandate. DNFTO has been faced with several challenges, given the rapid changes in the banana industry and the continuous threat to the financial viability of the organization. Dr. Dowlat Budhram spearheaded the review process and he presented a detailed report on the recommendations towards the restructuring of the organization to enhance their competitiveness and survival.

The Office continued the partnership with OAS in successfully implementing the OAS/IICA project "*Strengthening of the Tourism Sector through the Development of Linkages with the Agriculture Sector in the Caribbean*" with support from the Agro-Tourism Linkages Centre at the IICA Office in Barbados. The draft strategy paper for Agro-tourism was completed and findings presented in the National Accountability Seminar.

Executive Summary con't.

IICA in collaboration with Dominica Social Investment Fund and NAYA hosted a three day workshop on Entrepreneurship and Business Management for members of NAYA and the Greenhouse Association.

Strengthening Agricultural Health and Food Safety Systems

An assessment of the level of performance of the plant health, animal health and food safety systems using the PVS Instruments was completed by IICA. The findings were documented and recommendations made to improve the agricultural health and food safety services in Dominica.

The capacity of the Plant Quarantine Unit to undertake diagnostic and inspection activities was enhanced through the inspection kits provided by IICA.

Strengthening Rural Communities

IICA facilitated training sessions to enhance the capacity of bee producers in food safety and labelling and packaging. Further, the DHBA received technical assistance to undertake a profiling of persons engaged in the production of herbal products and services as well as to initiate discussion among these businesses as to the way forward for the herbal sub-sector. A young female entrepreneur group, Hilltop Fruit Plus, was assisted in securing financial assistance to facilitate their business start up.

Introducing Technology and Innovation for the Modernization of Agriculture and Rural Life

IICA continued in the management of IICA/ CARDI Greenhouse project and the DSIF funded project both of which intends to enhance the capacities of greenhouse producers as well as to introduce new technologies for greenhouse production. So far, two of the three greenhouse structures have been erected and materials for nursery establishment and agronomic practices procured. Resource persons were recruited to deliver on the training.

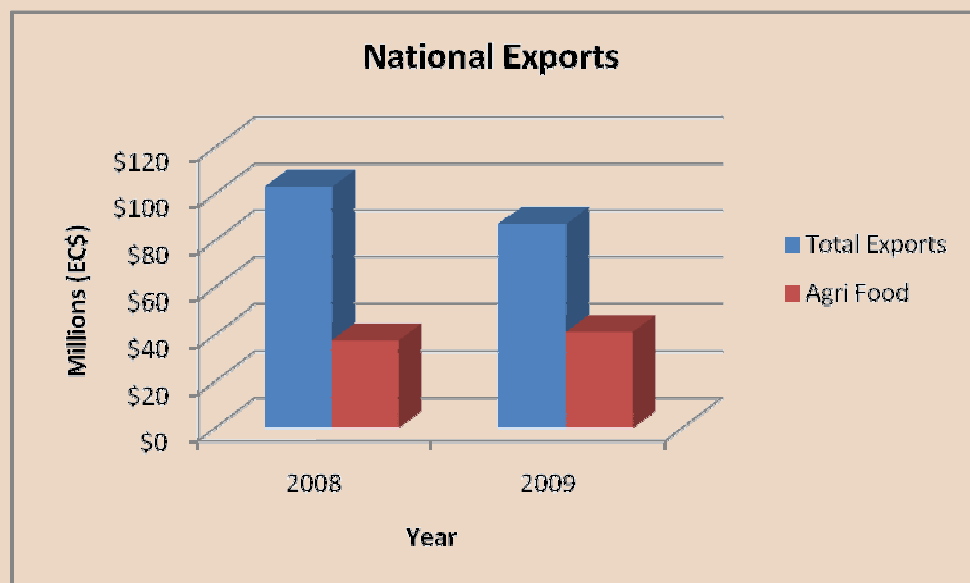
Report on the State and Outlook for Agriculture and Rural Life

3.1 *The Context of Agriculture and Rural Life*

Dominica's economy has reportedly grown by 0.88% in real terms. This was attributed to the strong growth in the agricultural sector which recorded a 10.8% increase. The major growth area for the agricultural sector was crop subsector increasing from 113.71 in 2008 to 123.92 in 2009. There were also marginal increases in the fishing (0.32%), livestock (0.25%) and forestry (0.01%) subsectors. The island also saw increases in electricity & water, communication, banking & insurance and government services.

There was an increase of 0.04 % in the Consumer Price Index. Though an increase, this is a drastic reduction from the previous year where the increase was 6.3%. The food sub-index rose by 6% while the non-food sub-index decreased by 3%.

Generally, there were mixed reviews for the value of exports and imports for Dominica. For 2009, there was an 18% decrease in the value of total exports in Dominica. Total exports decreased from EC\$103 million in 2008 to EC\$87 million in 2009. However, there was an 8% increase in the value of the agrifoods trade from EC\$37.5 million in 2008 to EC\$41.1 million in 2009.



Overall, total imports into Dominica decreased from EC\$667 millions in 2008 to EC\$631 million in 2009 which represents a 5.7% decrease. There was also a 6.2% decrease in agrifood exports from EC\$45.5 million in 2008 to EC\$39 million in 2009. In spite of the decrease in total agrifood imports, there was 6.75% increase in the import of animal and animal products from EC\$202.9 million in 2008 to EC\$217.6 million in 2009.

3.2 Changes in Agrifood Production

For two consecutive years Dominica was affected by two major hurricanes; Dean in 2007 and Omar in 2008. As a result of these, 2009 was considered as a year of recovery for Dominica. Public sector developments were focused on capital projects which amounted to approximately EC\$16.8 million. Some of the major areas which received this public investment were:

- i. Livestock industry which included the construction of a bull pen, dairy unit and a 20 sow unit. These projects will continue in 2010 with the construction of a calf rearing pen and the procurement of a F1 generation piglets for distribution to farmers.
- ii. Citrus Industry with special focus on seedling production.
- iii. Banana Industry- Approximately EC\$1.6 million was spent.

After the passage of Hurricane Omar, a number of public sector initiatives were undertaken in the area of fisheries. Approximately, EC\$3.6 million was spent in the sector. This assistance went in the area of procurement of boats and engines for fisher folks. The fisheries sector also saw the signing of an agreement with Japan for the construction of the Portsmouth Fisheries Facility.

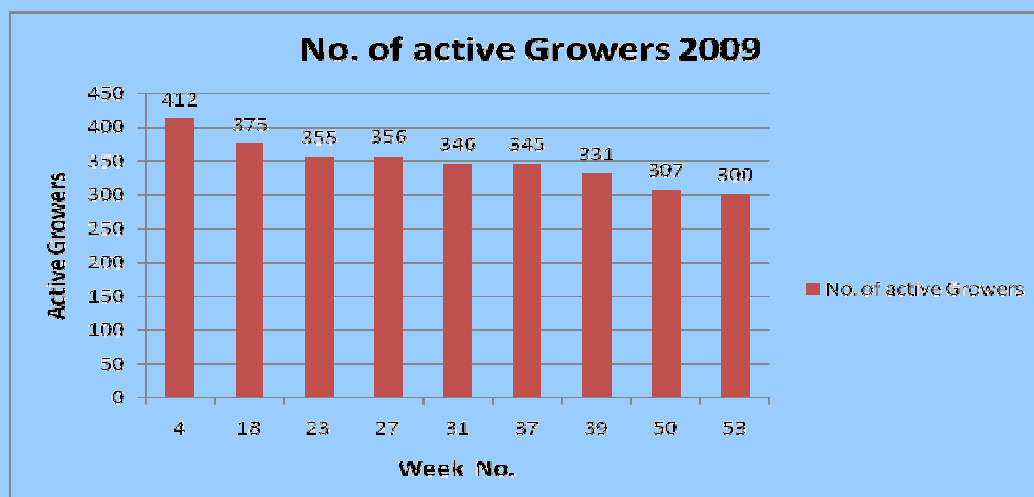
Another public sector initiative was the establishment of the Support to Horticulture programme. This programme provided assistance in the area of inputs (fertilizer), planting material, training, and small machinery for production to farmers. The Programme's objective was to increase production of root crops (tannia, yams and dasheen), hot peppers, passion fruit, and pineapples.

The crop which was most negatively affected during the period under review was bananas. There was a further decline in banana production in 2009 as changes in market prices and market requirements forced some farmers to abandon their farms while others diversified out of the sector.

Table 1: Trends of Production, Grower Population and Acreage 2005 to 2009

Year	No. of growers	Acreage	Production M. Tonnes
2005	880	2403.61	10894.84
2006	809	2418.61	11960.67
2007	728	2544.59	7580.8
2008	728 - 412	1744	
2009	412-300	1200 estimate	

The number of farmers involved in this sector towards the end of 2009 reduced by approximately half of the previous year.



3.3 *Changes in Policies that Affect Agriculture and Rural Life*

The Government of Dominica enacted the Fresh Produce Export Act. The Purpose of the Act was to enhance the competitiveness of the fresh produce trade through promoting the sustainable development of the agricultural fresh produce sector by fostering trade of consistent quality, safe and wholesome fresh produce at all times and supporting the food safety and quality management infrastructure for fresh produce agricultural commodities. The new Act will be administered by the Dominica Bureau of Standards.

3.4 *Changes in the Institutional Framework for Agriculture and Rural Life*

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry with funding from the European Union under the Special Framework of Assistance 2000 launched and commenced the implementation of the Framework for Agribusiness Development and Enterprise (FADE) programme. The major activities of this programme are Capacity Building/Institutional Strengthening, Investment in Agro-Enterprise and Agro-Processing, On-Farm Investment in Production of Banana and Non-Banana Agriculture, and other areas such as environmental management and public awareness.

The Government of Dominica has seen the need to focus on the agricultural sector. In an effort to commercialize the sector, a number of initiatives were implemented during the 2008/2009 period. One such initiative is the establishment of the Agriculture Investment Unit. This Unit both provides financial and technical assistance to farmers. The Unit which is staffed by four officers provides loans (EC\$10,000 – \$50,000) to farmers at a zero percent interest rate. The loans, which target all aspects of agriculture, are administered by the Unit and disturbed through the AID Bank. The technical assistance provided is in the area of training in various areas of production and business management.

A major area of change which occurred in Dominica during 2009 was the holding of General Elections in December 2009. This saw the re-election of the Dominica Labour Party and Honourable Roosevelt Skerit as Prime Minister of the Island. The Party won 18 of the 21 seats in the House of Assembly.

3.5 Major Developments in the Thematic Areas that Affected the Performance of Agriculture and the Rural Life

Promotion of trade and the competitiveness of agri-business

The Ministry of Trade, Industry, Employment and Diaspora Affairs through the Dominica Export Import Agency in collaboration with the International Trade Center (ITC) and with funding from the European Union, a National Export Strategy (NES) was developed for Dominica. The development of the NES which took approximately one year provides a comprehensive strategy to move Dominica's export sector. The areas of focus for development under the strategy are agriculture (various crops to include hot peppers and root crops), agro processed product (such as jams/preserve), tourism (to include hiking) cultural industrial (such as music), professional services (such as building industries) and natural resources (to include pumice and water). A programme for implementing this National Export Strategy (NES) for Dominica is currently being formulated for implementation during 2010.

With financial assistance under the European Union Special Framework of Assistance (SFA), the island undertook construction of banana inland reception and distribution centers, construction of two packing houses, construction of a National Center of Testing Excellence and rehabilitation of feeders and farm access roads.

In mid 2009, Dominica received a donation of a Coffee Processing Plant from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry is currently in the process of developing plans for the rehabilitation and expansion of coffee production on the island.

Major developments in agricultural health and food safety systems

The programme of the Plant Protection and Quarantine Unit was centered on close surveillance of a number of pests and diseases including Avocado Lace Bug; Giant African Snail, Red Palm Mite, Rust on bay leaf and Black Sigatoka. Parallel to monitoring closely the population dynamics of Avocado Lace Bug and Red Palm Mite, the Unit identified natural enemies as part of their control measures against the pests.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, with the assistance of IICA, completed an assessment of the Agricultural Health and Food Safety System in Dominica. Mr. Everton Ambrose, Plant Protection Specialist with the IICA ECS Office, led the study and using the Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS) Instruments for plant health, animal health and food safety, analysed the private and public sectors.

Under the Veterinary Epidemiologist/ Para-Epidemiologist (VEP) Project, the Division of Agriculture strengthened their surveillance activities particularly regarding Avian Influenza, and Tropical Bont Tick (TBT). Protocol for Avian Influenza, Newcastle Disease, and Brucellosis were developed which included an Animal Disease Emergency Plan.

RESULTS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL TECHNICAL COOPERATION AGENDA IN 2009

4.1 IICA'S Contribution to the Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life

Agricultural Policy

IICA Office assisted the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry in amending the draft Agricultural Policy document, following a review by Cabinet Ministers. The original document, which was formulated by IICA, consisted of policy statements and their rationale together with an implementation plan. It was advised by the Permanent Secretary to remove the sections that outlined an implementation plan and to allow the Policy to be a stand-alone document. Subsequently, Cabinet sanctioned the review of the amended draft policy document by a two-man team.

Youth in Agriculture

In September of 2009, IICA sponsored a forum for Young Leaders in the Hemisphere, which was held at IICA Headquarters in Costa Rica. The programme was intended to develop leadership skills among young people in the Americas especially in agricultural development initiatives. Two persons from Dominica, Mr Roland Royer, a member of NAYA, and Ms Miranda Laurent, an Agricultural Officer, participated in the five (5) day forum. Mr Royer subsequently took up a new position as a project officer under the FADE Project.



Ms Miranda Laurent
Youth Leader's Forum



Mr Roland Royer
Youth Leader's Forum

Extension Training Workshop

The capacity of the Extension Services of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the Dominica National Fair Trade Organization in the area of work programme preparation, planning, and report writing was addressed through a 2-Day training workshop facilitated by IICA. Over thirty-five (35) extension and agricultural officers attended the workshop.

Dr Dowlat Budhram, IICA Director of Performance Management and Evaluation, was the lead facilitator. His intervention strengthened the capacities of these extension officers as he provided useful tips for the development of their work programme using performance indicators and result based activities/task; methods of programme monitoring and evaluation; and effective time management practices.



Extension Training Session facilitated by Dr Dowlat Budhram, IICA Director of Performance Management and Evaluation



Opening ceremony of the Extension Training Workshop: Dr Dowlat Budhram, Ms Claudia Bellot Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry; Mr Davidson Lloyd, Manager of the Business Unit of DNFTO, Mr Kent Coipel, IICA

Additionally, the capacity of senior staff of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry was enhanced through a one-day session on Project Conceptualization, Management, and Strategic Planning. Over twenty (20) senior members of staff of both the Division of Agriculture and DNFTO attended.

The knowledge and skills gained through the training provided will assist the officers in the ability in preparing projects, implementing and monitoring projects and ensuring that key objectives such as sustainable rural development and food security are addressed.

National Accountability Seminar

IICA Dominica hosted its National Accountability Seminar on April 29. The day's proceeding was well attended, and there was a fair representation from central Government. In attendance were officials of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry; the Ministry of Legal Affairs and Tourism; public sector departments; private sector representatives, NGO Representatives; representation from the local farming – agricultural – agro processing communities and strategic partners including CARDI, OAS, OECS/Economic Development Unit (EDU), and Dominica Social Investment Fund (DSIF).



Accountability Seminar: At the podium: the Permanent Secretary, to her left is the ECS Representative, followed by the Minister responsible for Agriculture, the OAS Representative, the Minister responsible for Tourism, and IICA Technical Specialist



ECS Representative handing over the Country's Annual Report to the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

The Seminar commenced with a formal opening ceremony chaired by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. Remarks were presented by the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry; the Honourable Minister of Tourism; the OAS Representative, and IICA ECS Representative. The IICA Technical Specialist presented the achievements of IICA in Dominica for the period 2008 as well as the outline of the 2009 work programme for Dominica.

The ECS Representative officially handed over a copy of the Annual Report to the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, who took the opportunity to endorse the work of IICA and expressed the gratitude of the Ministry in the contribution of IICA to agricultural development and rural prosperity. The feedback and comments stemming from the seminar assisted IICA in the preparation of its National Cooperation agenda and the 2010 Annual Action Plan.

4.2 Promotion of Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusiness

IICA Office responded to an urgent request from the Dominica National Fair Trade Organization (DNFTO) to evaluate the operations and structure of the DNFTO to determine its effectiveness in meeting its current mandate and to assess its capacity to diversify its portfolio into alternative crops, agro-tourism and agro-processing. DNFTO was established as a non-profit organization under the Companies Act 1994 in 2004, however in 2008 it established a Business Unit principally to handle the exports of Fair Trade bananas from Dominica to the UK market. DNFTO remains the largest farmer organization in Dominica, with a membership of over 600 farmers and currently manage an industry that is still the single highest foreign exchange earner in the agricultural sector, providing direct and indirect employment for approximately 2500 persons.

The global financial crisis as well as the escalating prices for production inputs and the devaluation of the British Pound against the Dollar compounded the difficulties faced by the ailing Banana industry. Production declined rapidly and the acreage of abandoned farm land increased. The DNFTO recognized that as a relatively new entity the business unit needed to be dynamic enough to handle the ongoing changes within the industry. Therefore DNFTO sought technical assistance from IICA to guide it with its transformation process to a diversified entity that can readily capitalize on opportunities for production and marketing of alternative crops, agro-tourism and agro-processing. Dr Dowlat Budhram, IICA Director of Performance Management and Evaluation, undertook an assessment of DNFTO, in particular, a SWOT Analysis of the organization and provided a number of recommendations as it pertained to restructuring and repositioning of the Organization. A detailed report was presented to the Organization through Mr Davidson Lloyd, Manager of the Business Unit.

IICA sponsored and facilitated an organic group to visit some model organic operations in Costa Rica. This provided the opportunity for a group of five persons (three farmers and two technicians) from Dominica to participate in a farmer-to-farmer exchange program that enabled the strengthening of their capacities and knowledge-base. During the four day visit, the participants gained practical knowledge on alternative farm input production, organic livestock production, biogas technology and organic vegetable production.

Subsequent to the organic field mission, the Division of Agriculture together with IICA outlined a draft program towards the development of the organic sub sector.

4.3 *Strengthening Agricultural Health and Food Safety Systems*

IICA Dominica provided technical support to the Ministry of Agriculture by undertaking an assessment of the National Agricultural Health and Food Safety (NAHFS) system. The assessment included the review of the status of current institutional arrangements to satisfy the requirements of the international agreements and arrangements on SPS, food safety issues and agricultural health issues and their relevance to the domestic economy with a view to designing an appropriate system based on need, and operational efficiency. Mr. Everton Ambrose, Plant Protection Specialist with the ECS Office, led the study and using the Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS) Instruments for plant health, animal health and food safety, analysed the private and public sectors.

In the undertaking, IICA hosted two National consultations with critical stakeholders including participants from the Ministries of Agriculture, Health, Trade, and Tourism; Customs & Excise; Port; and the private sector. Focus group interviews were performed by the Plant Protection Specialist with the respective groups. The results were presented in a report together with recommendations of models that Dominica should adopt.



Day 1 & 2 of the National Consultations hosted by IICA to undertake the National Assessment of the National Agricultural Health and Food Safety System

In an effort to strengthen the ability of frontline plant quarantine inspectors to effectively perform their duties at the Ports of Entry, IICA Office in Dominica provided the Plant Quarantine Unit within the Division of Agriculture with twenty (20) inspection kits valued at \$16,600.00. The contents of the kits included scissors, magnifying lens, forceps, utility knives, flashlights, brushes, reagents and media.

NAYA

IICA in collaboration with Dominica Social Investment Fund and NAYA hosted a two day workshop for a group of Seventeen (17) persons from NAYA and the Greenhouse Association on Entrepreneurship and Business Management. The overall objective of the training was to enhance farmers' capacity to increase efficiencies and levels of productivity in greenhouse agriculture as well as to meet the demands of the market place. The workshop specifically targeted young farmers who are presently involved or interested in green house farming but lack the appropriate skills and resources.



Mr Delroy Williams, President of NAYA, delivering comments at the Entrepreneurship and Business Management Workshop

4.4 *Strengthening Rural Communities Based on the Territorial Approach*

Boetica Group

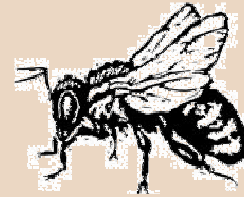
Under DSIF, assistance was provided to vulnerable agribusiness groups. A group from the South-East Coast of Dominica that is involved in cassava and tolima processing was awarded assistance under the DSIF program. IICA Office assisted the Dominica Bureau of Standards in the delivery of training to that group on labelling and packaging of agro products as well as food safety requirements. During the one day training workshop, sixteen (16) agro-processers improved their knowledge on the national as well as market standards for labelling and packaging.



Participants at the Boetica Training Workshop

Beekeepers

IICA contributed to the success of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) programme that targeted honey producers. In July 2009, GEF undertook six training sessions over a three-week period to strengthen the capacities of both existing and new honey producers. The workshop sessions were organized in consultation with the Dominica Bee Keepers Cooperative Society Ltd and Pure Honey Blossom Hives. The majority of the training sessions were facilitated by Mr. Douglas Corbin and Mr. David Westerfield of Florida Association for Volunteer Action in the Caribbean (FAVACA). The sessions were on Queen Rearing, Introduction to Beekeeping, Pest and Disease Control, Pollen and Royal Jelly Production. IICA part sponsored a number of these workshops and facilitated sessions on Food Safety, and Labeling and Packaging. A total of 104 persons were exposed to the training.



Official Launching of the Bee Keeping training programme: Head Table (left to right) Mr Albert "Panman" Bellot, Coordinator of Global Environment Facility (GEF); and Messrs. Douglas Corbin and David Westerfield of Florida International Volunteer Corps (FAVACA). At the podiums, Mr Kent Coipel-Technical Specialist IICA; Mr Delroy Williams, President of NAYA

Hilltop Fruit Plus

IICA Office together with the Produce Chemist Laboratory of the Division of Agriculture organized a session on food processing technology for a business group of eight ladies from Paix Bouche. The group was recently registered as a business entity and was a recipient of drying and processing equipment for drying fruits and herbs.

Dominica Herbal Business Association (DHBA)

Twenty-one (21) persons in the herbal subsector met during a one day symposium sponsored and organized by IICA to brainstorm and discuss the development of the herbal subsector in Dominica. Included in the symposium were presentations from guest facilitators. Dr. Fabienne Cazalis of Ross School of Medicine made a presentation on the Potential of Essential Oils, while Dr. Sonia Peters of Barbados Community College outlined a Guide to Organic Body Care Industry. An Overview of the Access & Benefit Sharing Legislation currently being drafted for Dominica was being presented to the group by the consultant developing the Legislation.



In addition, an inventory of the products/services offered in Dominica were documented and a profile of the businesses involved in manufacturing of herbal products undertaken.

IICA further assisted the DHBA in securing financial assistance under the FADE Programme to establish an herbal shop at the Old Market site. The proposed shop will be located at the front of the cruise-ship berth and will serve to display herbal products manufactured in Dominica.

A group from the south-east coast of Dominica was awarded assistance under IICA's hemispheric agro-tourism programme which is managed by the Barbados Office, towards the development of a new agro-tourism attraction site at Riviere Cyrique. The site includes a walk through the forest, observation of traditional processing of tolima, castor, and cocoa; and culminates with a bath at a secluded beach. IICA will support the development of flyers and promotional tee shirts, packaging of products and the development of a training manual/information booklet.

4.5 Introducing Technology and Innovation for the Modernization of Agriculture and Rural Life

IICA continued to be part of the Management Team in the execution of the IICA/ CARDI Greenhouse Project and the DSIF funded project both of which intends to enhance the capacities of greenhouse producers as well as to introduce new technologies for greenhouse production. The DSIF funded project made available three greenhouses to NAYA to serve as demonstration models. The choice of greenhouse was based on an assessment undertaken by Dr. Mirza in an assignment under the IICA/ CARDI Greenhouse Project. Two of the three greenhouse structures have been erected at the Portsmouth Agricultural Station. The structures will not only serve to demonstrate good agronomic practices but will be used to evaluate different shade material and agronomic practices that will improve productivity of vegetable crops under greenhouse conditions.



Two of the three greenhouse structures erected under the DSIF funded project

RESULTS OF INTER-AGENCY COOPERATION

Agro Tourism

The Office continued the partnership with OAS in successfully implementing the OAS/IICA project “*Strengthening of the Tourism Sector through the Development of Linkages with the Agriculture Sector in the Caribbean*” with support from the Agro-Tourism Linkages Centre at the IICA Office in Barbados. The specific tasks were to complete the draft strategy paper for Agro-tourism and the National Accountability Seminar to present the findings. The strategic paper was supported in principle by the Ministry of Tourism as well as the Ministry responsible for Agriculture. IICA Office is working closely with the Ministry of Tourism in formalizing an advisory committee to guide the further development and implementation of a strategic plan to pursue some of the recommendations coming out of the community engagement strategic paper and agrotourism strategic plan.

Mrs. Maureen Dominique of the Dominica Office attended the website launch and OAS Accountability Seminar which was held in Barbados on March 24. A presentation was made on Dominica’s experiences over the 3 years of the OAS/IICA Project. The 3-year Project concluded with the launch of a website on Caribbean Agro-tourism which is expected to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and information among other organizations/institutions/people involved in agro-tourism in the Caribbean Region.



Ms Maureen Dominique delivering a presentation at the Agro-tourism Accountability Seminar held in Barbados

VEP

Under the Veterinary Epidemiologist/Para-Epidemiologist (VEP) Project, the priority diseases for surveillance for 2009 in Dominica were Avian Influenza, New Castle Disease and Brucellosis. Also there was continued surveillance of Tropical Bont Tick (TBT).

The main activities performed under the programme during the year were:

- Development of Protocol for chosen diseases (Avian Influenza, Newcastle Disease, Brucellosis)
- Development of Animal Disease Emergency Plan, particularly for Avian Influenza in partnership with the Ministry of Health.
- Sampling of ruminant population for tick borne diseases particularly *Babesiosis* and *Anaplasmosis*.

- Inventory of Livestock farmers
- Geo-referencing of poultry and pig farms.
- Amblyomma Surveillance in hot spots (Castle Bruce, Grand Bay, Concord).
- Implementation of The Surveillance Network Assessment Tool (SNAT)
- Development of Veterinary Epidemiology Project. Project entitled “Analysis of migratory bird landing sites in relation to the introduction of Avian Influenza to Dominica”.

An important aspect of the Project was the receipt of laboratory supplies and equipment which included the following:

- Laptop computer
- Biotek Elx 800 Microplate reader
- Laboratory supplies (vacutainer, blood collection needles, diagnostic shipper, specimen bags)
- Avian Influenza virus antibody test kit
- Newcastle Disease antibody test kit



Laptop computer handed over to Ms Claudia Bellot, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry



Training of National VEP Coordinators at Ft Collins

The National VEP Coordinator attended three training workshops which included:

- Training workshop in ICS and GIS, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago
- Live Bird Marketing System Continuing Education Training, Athens, Georgia
- VEP Epidemiology Project Workshop on Epidemiological Study design, Ft Collins

The VEP Project will continue with its activities in 2010. Along with the completion of some of the programmes this year, some major activities that will be undertaken include: sampling of poultry population for Avian Influenza and New Castle Disease, testing of ruminant population for Brucellosis, and completion of research project.

New Opportunities for Technical Cooperation

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry has broadened its agricultural diversification efforts. Greater emphasis has been placed on issues of food security, agribusiness development, agro policy and agricultural health and food safety. The rising food import bill has forged the need to increase in production particularly vegetables and meat. A number of programmes and initiatives have been undertaken by Government to stimulate the increase in production of meat particularly small stocks and poultry, and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry has proposed a developmental plan for the poultry subsector.

In the area of agribusiness development, the Office will continue to develop its programme of work in the area of product development, food safety, and quality assurance. The Office will take advantage of existing programmes such as the FADE and Business Gateway through strategic alliances and partnership.

The draft agro-eco policy is at its final stages of review. IICA Office will assist the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry to edit and finalize the policy as well as to develop a strategic plan for its implementation.

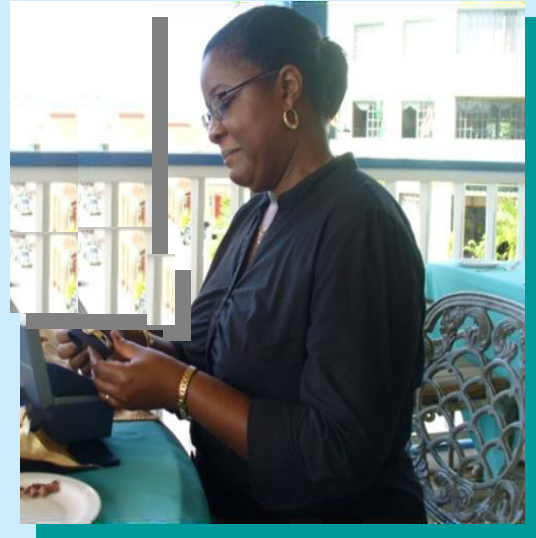
Building on work that commenced on strengthening of the National Agricultural Health and Food Safety, the Office will assist in the establishment of a National Committee that will oversee the implementation of recommendations emanating from the national assessment undertaken by IICA.

The Office will collaborate with CARDI and the Ministry of Agriculture in the transfer of technology as well as introducing new technology to enhance vegetable production. These technologies may apply to alternative input production, protected agriculture, and organic agriculture.

MAIN ACTIVITIES ORGANIZED BY IICA

Official name of the event	Date held	Site of the event	Number of participants
National Annual Accountability Seminar IICA/OAS Agro-tourism Accountability Seminar	April 29	Fort Young Hotel, Roseau	40
Assessment of the Agricultural Health and Food Safety Services	August 3-6	Public Service Training Centre, Roseau	35
Agricultural Extension Training Workshop / Dominica National Fair Trade Organization Extension Workshop	September 7-11	Public Service Training Centre, Roseau	25
Organic Farm Tour	September 17-20	“Finca La Esperanza”, Costa Rica	5
Training Workshop for Youth on Entrepreneurship and Business Management	October 14-15	Prevo Cinemall, Roseau	15

Mrs. Maureen Dominique celebrates



Mrs Maureen Dominique, Assistant Executive Secretary joined the Institute on *August 13, 1984*.

On a recent visit to Dominica, IICA ECS Representative, Ms. Una May Gordon, presented on behalf of the Director General, tokens of appreciation to Ms Dominique for her contribution to the Institute over the past 25 years.