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ACRONYMS

AACTI	Alberta Association of Colleges and Technical Institutes	PIOJ	Planning Institute of Jamaica
CARDI	Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute	PMO	Production & Marketing Organizations
CBO	Community Based Organization	RADA	Rural Agricultural Development Authority
CEATA	Centre of Excellence for Advanced Technology in Agriculture	SME	Small to Medium Sized Enterprises
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency	SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary
CMC	Corridor Management Council	STATIN	Statistical Institute of Jamaica
CTA	Technical Centre for Agricultural & Rural Cooperation	STDF	Standards Trade Development Facility
CTYFA	Charles Town Young Farmers Association	UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
EU	European Union	UWI	University of the West Indies
FARM	Financial Access for Responsible Members	WTO	World Trade Organization
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	YABT	Young American Business Trust
IABA	Inter-American Board of Agriculture	YIAB	Youth in Agri-business
IICA	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture		
IJAP	Improving Jamaica's Agricultural Productivity Project		
JAS	Jamaica Agricultural Society		
JGGA	Jamaica Greenhouse Growers Association		
JNRWP	Jamaica Network of Rural Women Producers		
JPFA	Jamaica Pig Farmers Association		
MOAF	Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries		
OAS	Organization of American States		

*Inter-American Institute for
Cooperation on Agriculture Office in Jamaica*

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



IICA Office in Jamaica

ANNUAL REPORT 2009

Kingston, Jamaica | March 2010



INTRODUCTION

The past year was extremely busy for the IICA Office in Jamaica. Our technical agenda was enhanced, thanks in part to the two projects for which we received grant funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the European Union (EU).

We also played a key role in helping to organize and execute the 5th Ministerial Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture from across the Hemisphere and the 15th Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) where Dr. Victor Villalobos of Mexico was elected the new Director General of the Institute for the period 2010-2014. This meeting saw the end of a highly successful eight-year tenure for Dr. Chelston Brathwaite as head of the organization.

Each of these three areas of our focus is fully elaborated on in this annual report and gives a sense of the breadth of our work here in Jamaica.

We also made an effort to remain in the public eye by taking part in the country's largest annual agricultural exhibition, the Denbigh Agricultural and Industrial Show. Our booth was a showcase of our work in Jamaica and we were visited by many of the local and foreign attendees.

Without a doubt, one of the highlights was the visit we arranged for a group of 35 inner-city youth to Denbigh. For the vast majority of the group this was the first visit to the show and they absorbed all that the day had to offer. Many friendships were developed and many of the youth now have contacts with farmers from across the island to help them with their own attempts at urban agriculture. For our part, IICA Jamaica intends to provide some training and planting material to assist the youth. They are eager to learn, eager to work and grateful for whatever assistance can be given.

In late July, IICA Jamaica was also privileged to have a visit from Dr. Chelston Brathwaite, who had spent some years in Jamaica as the IICA Representative.



He used the occasion of his visit to make a presentation on Food Security at a conference on the topic held by the University of the West Indies.

Dr. Brathwaite also paid a courtesy call on the Prime Minister of Jamaica and signed an updated version of the IICA – Government of Jamaica Basic Agreement on Privileges and Immunities.

In all of our work the Office received continued guidance and support from the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, Dr. the Honourable Christopher Tufton, his extremely competent Permanent Secretary, Mr. Donovan Stanberry and his team at the Ministry. We also depended on our relationships with stakeholders - some traditional and others new - to implement our technical agenda. The success of our efforts is also to the credit of the competency and diligence of our very dedicated team.

We are in an exciting time for agriculture in Jamaica and IICA is pleased to contribute to the Ministry's vision for the modernization and strategic advancement of the sector.

Cynthia Currie
IICA Representative in Jamaica

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Jamaica's agricultural sector rebounded in a period characterized by contraction in all other productive sectors in 2009. The continuation of the world economic and financial crises negatively impacted external trade and stymied economic growth for the country, but the downturn in other areas of the economy encouraged greater agricultural domestic production to meet local demand and spurred a reviving of the industry.

Strategic responses by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries to modernize the sector, increase productivity and improve efficiencies were also instrumental in fostering the sector's positive performance in the 2009. Full details of these and other features that characterized the landscape of agricultural and rural life in Jamaica in 2009 are outlined in Chapter 3 of this annual report.

The work programme of the IICA Jamaica office in 2009 complemented the national efforts to advance the sector. The office provided technical cooperation in four thematic areas: Repositioning of agriculture and rural life; Promotion of trade and the competitiveness of agri-business; Strengthening agricultural health and food safety and Strengthening of rural communities based on the territorial approach.

Results of the work programme are summarized below.

Repositioning agriculture and rural life

- The Institute with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MOAF) hosted the 5th Ministerial Meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture and the 15th Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) at the Week of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas in Jamaica. This meeting resulted in the signing of the Jamaica Ministerial Agreement, a 16-point strategic plan towards fulfilling the mandate of the Agro 2015 plan to advance the development of agriculture and enhance food security in the Americas.
- A study to determine the true contribution of agriculture to the Jamaican economy was completed under the guidance of IICA and provided to the MOAF. That study revealed the sector's true contribution to the economy at 9.52 percent or 1.9 times its primary GDP contribution.
- IICA and the Technical Centre for Agriculture & Rural Cooperation (CTA) facilitated the participation of Jamaica in the first Technical Meeting on "Implementing the Caribbean Community Agricultural Policy".

Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusiness

- The Improving Jamaica's Agricultural Productivity Project (IJAP) funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has in its first year of implementation facilitated capacity building activities for 70 greenhouse farmers, 37 extension officers and 504 fisher folk; developed a national standard design of greenhouses suitable to the island's geoclimatic conditions and therefore better enforced to withstand Hurricane force winds; begun construction of the 40 commercial greenhouses that will enhance national capacity for greenhouse production locally, and broke ground for one of two post harvest and packing facilities that will provide a ready market for the produce from the 40 commercial greenhouses and 2000 open field farmers.
- IICA hosted an exploratory mission by representatives from the Alberta Association of Colleges and Technical Institutes (AACTI) to Jamaica to identify and assess areas of technical cooperation and support to the local greenhouse sector.
- The Youth in Agri-business Award, which recognizes entrepreneurship, innovation and employment among youth engaged in agriculture, was this year expanded to four awards.
- The Institute has assisted the Jamaica Greenhouse Growers Association (JGGA) to create technical content for inclusion on its website and with the development of a technical manual on critical subject areas for tropical green house production.
- The Jamaica Pig Farmers Association (JPFA) was assisted in the development of a cost of production survey. This will equip members to better negotiate and derive prices for pork. A survey instrument was also developed to capture relevant data that will inform the local pork industry of the supply levels of pork.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY CONT'D

Promoting agricultural health and food safety

The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries was provided with a detailed report of an assessment of the country's existing compliance with SPS Standards completed under the Standards Trade Development Facility (STDF) project. The report was accompanied by an agenda with recommendations for sustainable strengthening of its institutional capabilities.

Promoting the development of rural communities based on the territorial approach

- Over 150 community members from ten Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in the Buff Bay Valley have benefited from capacity building initiatives coordinated by the EU-funded Agro-tourism project implemented by IICA in their area. The residents have been trained in strategic management, organizational development, financial management, business development, tourism certificate training, agronomic practices required for the production of specific crops and cooperative management.
- The Agro-tourism project has also collaborated with the local communities to build infrastructure that can facilitate the operation of several agriculture, nature and heritage tours, thus creating an alternative base for boosting increased economic activity within the area. Marketing linkages between the local farmers and hotels have been established as a result of a survey of the produce needs of the hospitality sector. Organization of the farmer groups have been formalized with the establishment of a Marketing cooperative.
- IICA continued its support to the Jamaica Network of Rural Women Producers (JNRWP).

- IICA/CARDI projects underway in Jamaica were:
 - i) Two sweet potato projects that cover post harvest practices, value-added potential, chemical profiling of varieties and disease-free planting materials;
 - ii) A review of the agronomic practices of selected herbs and;
 - iii) Exploration of ventilation systems for protected agriculture.

Implementation of activities within the four main thematic areas pursued by the IICA Jamaica Office during the year was accomplished through a multiplicity of public and private sector partnerships and through collaborations within the IICA network as outlined in chapters five and six.

The scope for future areas of technical cooperation from the Jamaica office seems now most imminent in the provision of training and capacity building and expansion of agro-tourism to other rural areas of the country.

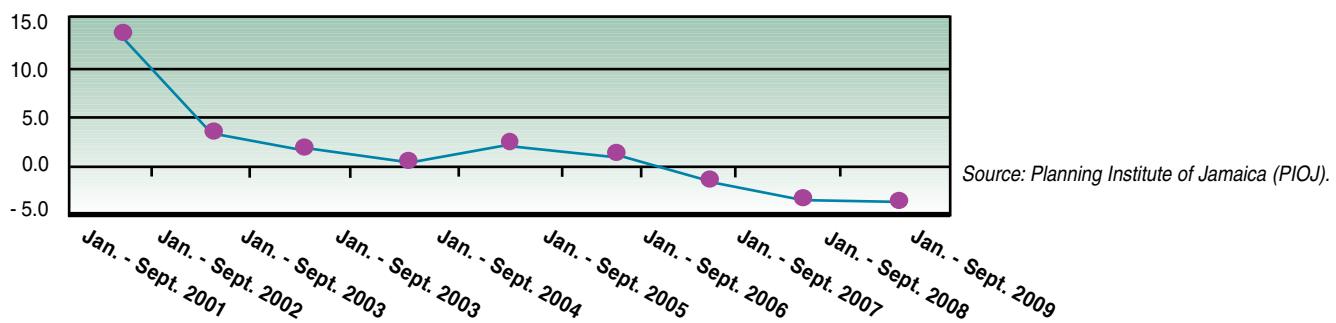
THE STATE OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL LIFE IN JAMAICA IN 2009



a. The Context for Agriculture and Rural Life

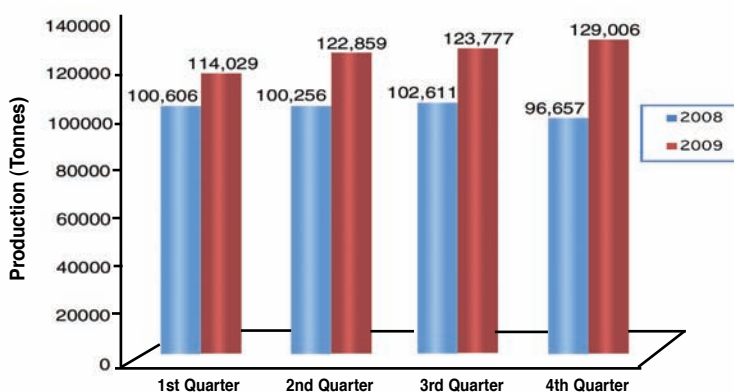
Jamaica's economy like that of many countries was negatively impacted by the continuation of the global economic and financial crises in 2009. Most of the country's productive sectors registered negative growth due to the contraction of demand on the world market and a reduction in consumer spending and investment. The mining and quarrying sector was most hard hit, declining 48.4% between the start of the year and September according to the July to September Economic Update and Outlook of Jamaica (EUOJ) published by the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ). The island also saw significant reduction in remittances, which is the second largest foreign exchange earner. Preliminary results from the PIOJ Third Quarter EUOJ report, estimated that the Jamaican economy declined 3.2 percent between January to September.

Figure 1. Change in Real GDP for the Jamaican Economy



The agriculture sector however rebounded in 2009, registering a 13%¹ growth over the previous year and maintained four consecutive quarters of positive growth. This is to the credit of good weather for the majority of the year, lowering of input costs (primarily fertilizer) and an extensive production and productivity programme championed by the agriculture ministry. The latter encouraged continued domestic production of 14 targeted crops that can be grown competitively to supply local demand and strengthen the country's food security.

Figure 2. Quarterly Comparison of Domestic Crop Production 2008/2009



At the end of the year, preliminary results from the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MOAF) indicated that there was a 70%² reduction in imports of fresh foods for January to September over the corresponding 2008 period.

The downturn in other sectors of the local economy also spurred renewed interest in agriculture and a spike in new entrants and investment mainly from persons who lost their jobs in other sectors. Data published by the Statistical Institute of Jamaica indicate that employment in agriculture outpaced all other sectors between July 2008 and July 2009. At the end of July 2009, the sector directly employed 231,700 persons or 20.5 % of the employed labour force, up from the 18.6 % or the 218,600 persons it employed in July 2008.

¹ Preliminary estimates provided by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries - Sector Performance 2009 4th Quarter Report.

² Article: "Increased Food Production Results in Less Imports of Fresh Produce." Jamaica Information Service, November 16, 2009.

THE STATE OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL LIFE IN JAMAICA IN 2009 CONT'D

	JUL 2008	OCT 2008	JAN 2009	APR 2009	JUL 2009
TOTAL Employed labour force	1,168,200	1,174,500		1,123,200	1,129,600
Total employed labour force in agriculture	218,000	223,600		229,800	231,700
Agriculture as Percentage of Employed labour	18.6%	19.03%		20.19%	20.5%



Traditional agriculture exports also suffered a blow in 2009. Coffee and cocoa showed slow recovery from Hurricane Dean and Tropical storm Gustav damages, while sugar production was hampered by mechanical stoppages at several of the island's sugar factories. Export of bananas was negligible in the year due to discontinuation of exports by the country's major banana producer. The banana industry has been devastated by a series of hurricanes and floods over the past four years.

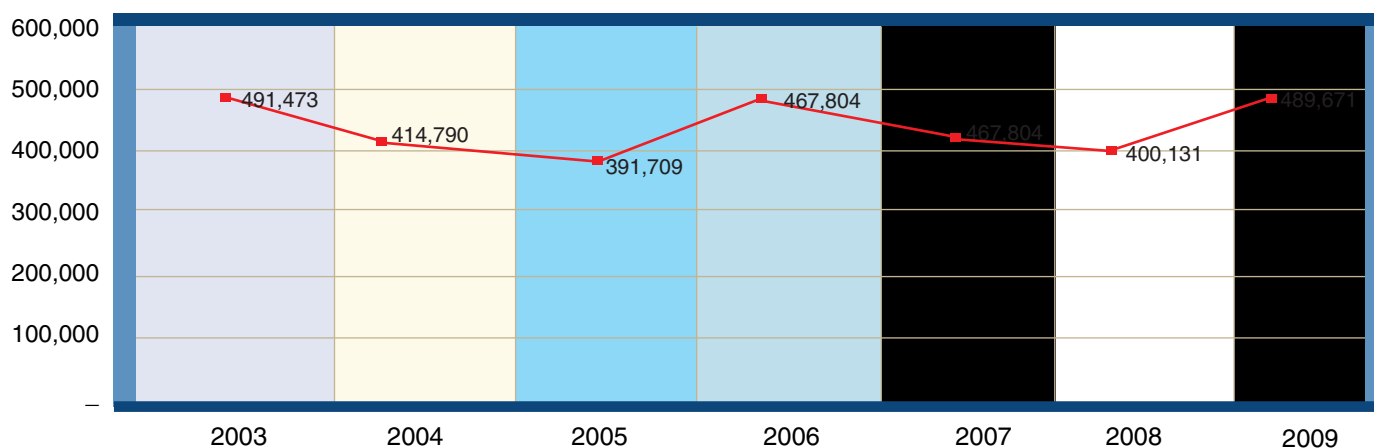
Despite these challenges the agriculture sector showed significant strengthening in 2009. Throughout the year the Agriculture Ministry implemented programmes congruent with its mandate to transform the sector through private sector principles and private sector capital so as to achieve sustainability and food security in the medium to long-term. Continuation of the Production and Productivity programme significantly influenced the increase in domestic crop production. Other initiatives implemented by the MOAF such as the provision of increased technical, productivity and marketing support inspired confidence in agricultural investments. These changes have also aided improvements in productivity levels and have strengthened the contribution of the sector to the Jamaican economy.

b. Changes in Agrifood Production

Increased Domestic Crop Production

During 2009, domestic production was greatly increased over the previous year. This is attributed to good weather for most of the year and several productivity and marketing support initiatives of the MOAF. At end of year, domestic crop production was in excess of 489,000 tonnes or 22.4% increased over 2008. (See Fig 2). Per the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), the increase in the hectares of domestic crops planted facilitated the overall growth in production.

Figure 3 Annual Production of Domestic Crops (tonnes) 2003-2009



Source: Data Bank & Evaluation Division, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries.

One of the most significant impacts on the increased productivity of domestic crops was the continuation of the Ministry's Productivity and Production Programme. The programme promoted the cultivation of fourteen crops that can be competitively grown locally to substitute for supplies from overseas for the retail, tourism and agro-processing industry.

Select farmers were trained in best practices and production was centralized in the areas of the country most suitable for growing the respective crops. The programme has been quite successful resulting in double-digit increase in output for a number of the targeted crops such as carrots, onions, Irish potatoes and ginger among other crops. Production in the traditional crops for the domestic market also did well as shown in Table 1.

Table 2 Comparative Estimates of Domestic Crop Group 4th Quarter 2008\2009

Crop Group	Production (Tonnes)		
	2009	2008	% Change
Legumes		1,326.7	
Vegetables		30,983.2	
Condiments		5,706.4	
Fruits		5,167.2	
Cereals		505.9	
Plantains		3,128.3	
Potatoes		7,962.7	
Yams		32,755.0	
Other Tubers		8,677.6	
Sorrel		420.3	
Total		96,633.2	

Source: Data Bank & Evaluation Division, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Encouraging Efficiencies of Scale

Seventy-six percent of the island's registered farmers are small farmers cultivating one hectare or less. To encourage greater efficiencies of organization and marketing among this group, the MOAF has been promoting the clustering of farmers into production and marketing organizations (PMOs). The Ministry reported that in 2009 there were some 800 PMOs comprising 30,000 farmers. An inaugural PMO expo was hosted in 2009 to bring these groups together with agro-processors, input providers, policy makers, investors and other stakeholders along the value chain.

Increase in Greenhouse Capacity

There was also a marked increase in greenhouse production. At mid 2009 there was a 30%³ increase over the previous year in greenhouse capacity. That resulted in 303 tonnes of tomatoes, sweet pepper, lettuce and cucumbers. The government announced it had plans to increase greenhouse capacity by an additional 25% in the near future.

Re-development of Rice Production

Based on an annual average consumption of 100,000 tonnes of imported rice the Government in its bid to strengthen Jamaica's food security proposed replacing 10% of rice imports with local production. In 2008 the Ministry had collaborated with private sector interests to test nine high yielding varieties of rice for commercial propagation in Jamaica. In mid 2009 the agriculture Minister in his budget presentation announced that one variety had produced six and a half tonnes per hectare, an output equivalent to the average per/hectare yield of the largest regional producer of rice (Guyana). The Ministry said that it would continue production of an additional two varieties that showed promising results. In 2009 another 200 hectares was also committed to rice production and farmers were recruited to commence commercial cultivation of the lead variety. According to the Ministry, to meet the 10% import substitution target, will require cultivation of at least 4000 hectares producing 5 tonnes of paddy per hectare.

c. Changes in Policies that Affect Agriculture and Rural Life

Four main policy⁴ developments were advanced in 2009 to help foster the modernization of the agriculture sector and strengthen the framework for improve efficiency and sustainability. Draft polices were developed for the fisheries, banana export, plant health and food safety sectors respectively. The policy drafts are at varying stages of the approval process.

Fisheries Policy

In response to the contracting of the fisheries industry due to overfishing, loss of habitats and biodiversity and illegal practices, a new policy framework and strategic plan for Sustainable Fisheries Development has been drafted and is to be enacted in 2010. According to the MOAF, the policy aims to “improve the institutional capacity and present management practices in the fisheries industry” . At the end of 2009 the draft policy had been submitted to Cabinet for approval.

Banana Policy

A Banana policy has been crafted to, “provide the platform for the restructuring and re-orientation of Jamaica's Banana industry in light of the decline of the export banana sector. The banana policy is in the final stages of approval.

Plant Health Policy

The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries in collaboration with the Ministries of Health and Industry Investment and Commerce have developed a plant health policy to “establish a coordinated, sustainable and international compliant plant health system that enhances Jamaica's plant health status, thus fostering consumer, plant and environmental health and food safety”.

Food Safety Policy

A food safety policy to implement programmes that promote high standards of food hygiene and maintain systems of surveillance and control to ensure compliance with those standards was also drafted in 2009.

³ Preliminary estimates provided by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries - Sector Performance 2009 4th Quarter Report.

⁴ Ministry of Agriculture Economic Planning Division.

d. Changes in Institutional Framework for Agriculture and Rural Life

The MOAF increased its Marketing facility and employed 19 marketing officers to conduct market research to inform both farmers and end users and to help support a demand production approach to agriculture.

Two Government agencies were also merged (Agricultural Development Corporation and the Agricultural Support Services Limited) to form Agro Invest Corporation. The new entity will address strategies to help encourage an investment approach to agriculture, promote a business culture and contribute to transforming the sector into a viable entity.

A Pest Risk Analysis Unit and Plant Health Surveillance and Pest Response System were also established to monitor the safety of food coming in and going out of the country.



Commitment to Sustainable Development of Marine Fisheries

The Agriculture ministry had a name change to include fisheries and became the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries. The rationale is to give attention to the sustainability of the latter. Over 200,000 Jamaicans rely directly or indirectly on fishing for their livelihood. The industry has suffered from depleting fish stocks as a result of overfishing, poor environmental management of the natural resources and weather challenges. The Government increased the budgetary allocation for the development of Fisheries. Several initiatives to revamp the sector are in train. These include greater enforcement, monitoring of eight fishing sanctuaries and an extensive J\$389.5 million three-year programme for beach rehabilitation of 30 fishing beaches island-wide. A programme to register fishers and their vessels and improve on the 20% already registered was also launched. A number of research projects to improve sustainability of the fish and lobster stock were also scheduled for 2009.

Increase in Post Harvest Management

Emphasis was also placed on increasing post harvest management facilities through public/private sector partnerships for improved access to better post harvest care i.e. grading, packaging and logistics management.

Improved Access to Financing for Farmers

To improve access to financing especially for small to medium farmers, who comprise the majority of Jamaica's farmers, the MOAF collaborated with private and public sector lending agencies to develop specialized financing packages for farmers. The programme is dubbed FARM - Financial Access for Responsible Members and includes the expansion of loan outlets and minimal collateral loan schemes.

4

RESULTS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TECHNICAL COOPERATION AGENDA IN JAMAICA DURING 2009

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

National Accountability Seminar

Stakeholders from the agriculture and other sectors participated in IICA's 2009 National Accountability seminar. The event is hosted annually to report on activities of the previous year's work agenda and to give an account of IICA's contribution to the development of agriculture in Jamaica. During the seminar a survey was conducted among participants to identify future areas for technical assistance required from IICA. Training and Institutional support were the number one needs indicated. The Institute also introduced a partnership award to recognize the agencies that lent support to the implementation of its work programme in 2008. Twelve awards were presented.



Above: Dr. Joan Neil Head of the OAS in Jamaica and (below right) Gresford Bennett of CIDA were presented with Partnership Awards by the IICA Jamaica Representative Mrs. Cynthia Currie. (Below left) – members of the audience discuss scope for future assistance IICA may offer to the sector.



The IICA/OAS Agro-tourism Linkages Project was also culminated in this forum. Presentations were made on the project's final activities, which included a feasibility study for developing an agro-tourism enterprise in the Buff Bay Valley and the development of a new website to promote agro-tourism programmes in the region.

Hosting of the Week of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas

Jamaica hosted the Week of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas during which the 5th Ministerial Meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture and the 15th Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) were convened. An agro-expo and private sector forum were also hosted during the week.

Signing of Ministerial Agreement

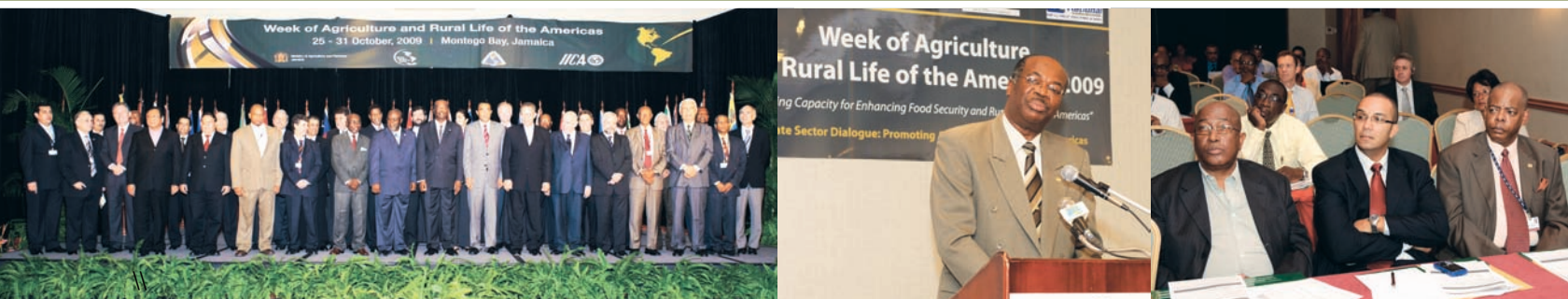
The Ministerial Meeting ended positively with the adoption and signing of the Jamaica 2009-2011 agreement for advancing agriculture and enhancing food security in the Hemisphere. The Ministerial agreements are revised and amended biennially to ensure countries are on a feasible path towards fulfilling the Agro 2015 plan. Among the priority areas the Agriculture Ministers agreed to pursue in the next two years are:

1. Promoting competitive rural enterprises by facilitating the production of more and better food and widening the food basket.
2. Integrating agricultural production trade chains and strengthening their competitiveness with special emphasis on promoting improvements in food storage and food processing.
3. Promoting a harmonized environment conducive to agriculture within the national and international context as it relates to plant and animal health and food safety, soils and water management, land and land tenure as well as risk-management and agricultural emergencies.
4. Participating in building an institutional environmental framework to strengthen the sector's capacity to mitigate and adapt to climate change; and actively encourage a multi-sectoral approach for the development of national strategies in agri-environmental management in rural areas.
5. Creating know-how and opportunities to improve the quality of life in rural communities.
6. Promoting policies to create capabilities and opportunities for rural communities.
7. Strengthening public and private sector participation and coordinated action between them in the territories.
8. Strengthening dialogue and commitments among actors in the agricultural production trade chains.
9. Promoting state policies, regional and hemispheric cooperation for agriculture and rural life.

The respective governments will coordinate implementation of the strategies in tandem with their national priorities and with technical cooperation assistance from IICA and through private/public sector partnerships.

Private Sector Dialogue Introduced to Hemispheric Ministerial Meeting

An inaugural private sector forum was convened as part of the 5th Ministerial Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture. Private sector representatives and farmers from the region were invited to develop and submit a proposal for ministerial action to foster increased private/sector investments in three areas critical to the immediate development of agriculture: finance, credit and risk management; regional trade agreements and marketing; and research and technology.



True Contribution of Agriculture to the Jamaican Economy Study Completed

A study to determine the true contribution of agriculture to the Jamaican economy was completed under the guidance of IICA and provided to the MOAF. That study revealed the sector's true contribution to the economy at 9.52 percent or 1.9 times its primary GDP contribution. The study measures the backward and forward linkages with agro-industry, the services and trade sector and the rest of the economy in addition to the traditional contributors to GDP such as harvest, sales of raw materials, crops and livestock. IICA has conducted this study in other member countries and in most cases the results have shown the contribution of agriculture to the economy was significantly greater than commonly perceived as it illustrated the ripple effect a productive agriculture sector has on the economy.



Caribbean Community Agricultural Policy

IICA and the Technical Centre for Agriculture & Rural Cooperation (CTA) facilitated the participation of Jamaica in the first Technical Meeting on “Implementing the Caribbean Community Agricultural Policy”.

Participation in Agricultural Expo

The Office participated in the 57th staging of the Denbigh Agricultural and Industrial Show - the largest agriculture show in the English speaking Caribbean. IICA hosted a booth showcasing the current projects and activities of the technical agenda for Jamaica. Visiting patrons also had access to IICA's extensive resource of agriculture and related information at the booth.

In keeping with a tradition established some years ago, the announcement and presentation of the IICA Youth in Agri-business Awards was made on the 1st day of the show, which is dedicated to youth engaged in agriculture. Four young agri-entrepreneurs ages 19-31 were awarded the top prizes in the competition's large and small-scale categories.

The Office also partnered with the Organization of American States (OAS) to support the first ever attendance of 35 young men from one of the Capital's inner cities to the agricultural show. The objective was to expose them to what other people from across the country are doing in agriculture and to give them ideas to take back to their communities. The young men used the opportunity to network with rural farmers and subsequently requested IICA's assistance in capacity building to support the expansion and sustainability of their farming enterprises and interests.



Dr. Knlfe (left) of Arnette Gardens makes a case for urban farming to IICA officials at the Denbigh Agricultural and Industrial show.



IICA Jamaica Representative Cynthia Currie explains the Buff Bay Valley Agro-tourism project to two overseas visitors.



IICA Jamaica Agri-business Specialist, Ainsworth Riley (right) identifies target communities in this model of the IJAP project.



BBV Agro-tourism Project Manager Robert Kerr educates this patron about the over 200 ethno-medical herbs grown in the Buff Bay Valley.

Participation of IICA's Director General at UWI Food Security Seminar

Director General of the Institute, Dr. Chelston Brathwaite, made a presentation at the UWI Food Security seminar organized primarily for researchers and policy makers. The presentation highlighted the pervasive impact of agriculture on economies and the priority it must be given in future development models towards achieving economic and social stability. It also outlined steps for the development of a Caribbean food policy programme.



(L-R): Director General of IICA, Dr. Chelston Brathwaite meets with Jamaica's Prime Minister, The Hon. Bruce Golding. Dr. Kenneth Baugh, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade signs the IICA-GOJ Basic Agreement on Privileges and Immunities with Dr. Brathwaite.

During his visit the Director General also made a courtesy call on the Prime Minister of Jamaica. He also signed an updated version of the IICA-Government of Jamaica Basic Agreement on Privileges and Immunities and participated in launch activities for the Week of Agriculture and Rural Life that Jamaica hosted later in the year.

b. Promotion of Trade and the Competitiveness of Agri-business

Implementation of the IJAP Project

The Improving Jamaica's Agricultural Productivity Project (IJAP) developed by IICA in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and funded primarily by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has made tremendous strides in its first year of implementation. The three-year project is designed to expand greenhouse production and promote the sustainable management of marine fisheries by providing infrastructure, research and capacity building. During 2009 the project:

- Facilitated capacity building activities for 70 greenhouse farmers, 37 extension officers and 822 fisher folk. The latter group received training in: food safety and sanitation, health education and family planning practices, good fishing practices, money management, conflict resolution, leadership development, formation of beach management committees/councils and literacy and numeracy training;
- Developed a national standard design of greenhouses suitable to the island's geo-climatic conditions and therefore better enforced to withstand Hurricane force winds;
- Begun construction on 18 of the 40 commercial greenhouses that will enhance national capacity for greenhouse production locally;

- Commenced construction for one of two post harvest and packing facilities that will provide post harvest management and logistical solutions for the produce from the commercial greenhouses and an estimated 2000 open field farmers;
- Through collaboration with the European Union, four mini greenhouses for research purposes were also procured and erected. The IJAP project will underwrite the cost of conducting the research. These will be used to test best growing conditions of traditional and non-traditional greenhouse crops. The research will also facilitate the creation of tech packs to be made available to greenhouse farmers.



The IJAP project initiated several activities in 2009. Pictured left to right: Upgrading of facilities at Calabash Bay fishing beach, ground breaking for the Hounslow Post Harvest and Packing House, construction of greenhouses in first cluster and capacity building activities with beneficiaries.

AACTI Mission to Jamaica

IICA Jamaica with the assistance of the IICA Canada office coordinated an exploratory mission by representatives from the Alberta Association of Colleges and Technical Institutes (AACTI) to Jamaica. The purpose of the mission was to identify and assess areas of technical cooperation and support that AACTI may be able to provide to the local greenhouse sector.

Expansion of Youth Awards

The Youth in Agri-business Award, which recognizes entrepreneurship, innovation and employment among youth engaged in agriculture, was expanded to include a large and small-scale category. The awards were increased to recognize the top two candidates in each category. Junior Ebanks received first place in the large-scale category for investing in a successful vegetable farming operation using good agricultural practices and extensive marketing.

Kadeon Davis received second place in this category for her management of a successful livestock enterprise. Howard Williams, who runs an apiary and marine fishing enterprise and Kevaughn Bonner with his foray into a small ruminant operation were the two top awardees in the small-scale category. The awardees are selected by a panel of judges representing IICA, Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA), Jamaica Agricultural Society (JAS), Jamaica 4-H Club and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The winners each received a trophy and in kind support relevant to their farming enterprises. The gifts included apiary equipment and fishing equipment, pure bred rabbits and hutches, irrigation equipment, and training in meat processing. These gifts will further enhance the operations of these four agri-entrepreneurs.



2009 Youth in Agri-business Awardees (L-R): 1. Junior Ebanks (3rd right) in his field with some of the competition judges. 2. Kadeon Davis with IICA Jamaica Rep Cynthia Currie. 3. Two of the YIAB Awardees - Ke Vaughn Bonner and Howard Williams with IICA officials Mr. Trevor Murray, Dr. Chelston Brathwaite and Mrs. Cynthia Currie. Ebanks is represented here by his wife. 4. Howard Williams collects his prize of apiary equipment from the IICA office.

Institutional Strengthening to Producer Groups

The Institute assisted the Jamaica Greenhouse Growers Association (JGGA) to compile technical content for its website. Assistance was also provided for the development of a technical manual on critical subject areas for tropical green house production.

The Jamaica Pig Farmers Association (JPFA) was assisted in the development of a cost of production survey. This will equip members to better negotiate and derive prices for pork to cover their overall costs. A survey instrument was also developed to capture relevant data that will inform the local pork industry of the supply levels of pork.

Both organizations have benefitted from the technical advice provided by the Agribusiness Specialist in various areas of operation, which have contributed to the further growth and development of these entities.

c. Strengthening Agricultural Health and Food Safety Systems

The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries was in 2009 provided with a detailed report accompanied by an agenda with recommendations for sustainable strengthening of its institutional capabilities as it concerns compliance with World Trade Organization (WTO) SPS (Sanitary & Phytosanitary) standards. Details of the report were informed by an assessment conducted by IICA in 2008 under the Standards Trade Development Facility (STDF) project.

d. Strengthening Rural Communities Based on the Territorial Approach

In 2009 the Institute channeled its resources into the implementation of two extensive development projects, both of which provided significant improvements to the human development and economic outlook of residents in the participating rural communities across Jamaica.

The Buff Bay Valley Agro-tourism project primarily addressed the strengthening of rural communities, while the IJAP project reported on in detail in the section, Promotion of Trade and The Competitiveness of Agri-business - also had overlaps in this area. The extensive capacity building the latter provided to rural populations in the six participating fishing communities to ensure the sustainability and expansion of their livelihood will extend to the growth and development of the surrounding communities.

Buff Bay Valley Agro-tourism Project

Similarly, the Buff Bay Valley Agro-tourism project funded by the Government of Jamaica/European Union Rural Diversification Programme, infused hope in over 20 communities in the rural Buff Bay Valley region of Portland.

By developing infrastructure and providing training to facilitate the establishment of an agro-tourism enterprise in the area, this initiative has introduced localized and alternative economic and employment opportunities that the communities did not previously have.



Among the new infrastructure created for the Buff Bay Valley Agro-tourism destination are from (l-r): (1) Bee demonstration centre. 2. Travel halt - these students identify historic places on the posters at the travel halt. 3. Herb garden with nursery, drying house and the story board featuring several of the local herbs and uses.

In close collaboration with the residents, the project developed five main attractions and several agriculture, nature and heritage tours that will be operated by the residents.

The Charles Town Maroon Museum that displays artifacts and elements of the heritage of Jamaica's first freed slaves was upgraded. A herb garden with demonstration plots, drying house and nursery was established to display local herbs and information on these plants and also to commercially produce seedlings. Over 200 ethno-medicinal herbs are grown in the area. The herb garden will be managed by the Charles Town Young Farmers Association (CTYFA). The local bee farmers association also received a demonstration centre where tours, training and sale of products can be accommodated. A travel halt, which will serve as the administrative hub of the agro-tourism destination was constructed. It includes: Internet café, conference room, booking centre, rest rooms, entertainment pavilion, restaurant and an area for the display and sale of local crafts.

Marketing linkages between the local farmers and hotels was also established as a result of a survey of the produce needs of the hospitality sector. Organization of the farmer groups was formalized with the establishment and legal registration of a Marketing cooperative, the Buff Bay Valley Marketing Cooperative. This group received three refrigerated facilities to improve post harvest management and to centralize storage and distribution of produce.

Over 120 community members from ten Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in the Buff Bay Valley have also benefited from capacity building initiatives coordinated by the project. The residents have been trained in strategic management, organizational development, financial management, business development, tourism certificate training, agronomic practices required for the production of specific crops and cooperative management.



Farmers from the Buff Bay Valley Marketing Coop prepare to plant Honeydew and Cantaloupe for the hospitality market.

The project also commissioned studies to document the natural history and heritage of the Valley to ensure this information is available for future generations.

To ensure continuity beyond the life of the yearlong project, a governing local body - the Corridor Management Council (CMC) – comprising representatives from all the local CBOs was also established. The CMC has responsibility to carry on with general oversight and the future development of the Buff Bay Valley destination. In December IICA received support from the United States Peace Corps with an assigned volunteer to assist the CMC and its constituent CBOs with financial management to strengthen the operationalization of the various sites.

The EU-funded Buff Bay Valley Agro-tourism project culminated in December with the official launch of the Buff Bay Valley Agro-tourism destination as the 'Heritage Corridor of the Blue Mountains'. The destination has its own logo, promotional materials and website www.buffbayvalleyja.com to commence marketing.

Support to Jamaica Network of Rural Women Producers

IICA continued its support to the Jamaica Network of Rural Women Producers (JNRWP). Early in 2009 IICA hosted a follow-up meeting to the December 2008 JNRWP Strategic Planning workshop, with the executive and regional representatives to finalize their Strategic Plan. IICA also hosted a networking meeting of the executive members, regional and parish representatives. The meeting sought to enhance the communication and networking channels amongst the officials of the Network. The Office has also helped to facilitate the execution of a United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) funded project for JNRWP, which focuses on organizational strengthening and Public Relations support.

IICA/Jamaica CARDI Projects

IICA and the Caribbean Agricultural Research & Development Institute (CARDI) continued collaboration on three research projects. The IICA/CARDI projects underway in Jamaica were: i) Two sweet potato projects that cover post harvest practices, value-added potential, chemical profiling of varieties and disease-free planting materials; ii) A review of the agronomic practices of selected herbs and; iii) Exploration of ventilation systems for protected agriculture to determine the most appropriate system for protected agriculture in Jamaica.

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

Expansion of Protected Agriculture Using Greenhouse Technology

A national standard design for greenhouse structures was developed by the IJAP project suitable to Jamaica's geo-climatic conditions. This was necessary to facilitate sustainable expansion of the sector given the island's vulnerability to hurricanes. The new greenhouse design is engineered to withstand hurricane force winds and facilitates easy disassembling of the more fragile elements of the structures.

Members of the Jamaica Greenhouse Growers Association (JGGA) and MOAF/RADA extension officers were trained in good agronomic practices for crops grown under protective agriculture to ensure local capacity for future expansion.



(L-R:) 1. Four mini research greenhouses completed. 2. Representatives of MSC Invernados meet with JGGA members and visit local greenhouses before completing the new standard greenhouse design. 3. The first of the newly designed greenhouses under construction in St. Elizabeth.

Eighteen of the forty 3000sq ft commercial greenhouses using the new design were under construction in 2009 for beneficiaries of the IJAP project. Increasing the island's greenhouse capacity will strengthen the output of domestic crops grown under greenhouse production, help reduce the volume of imported vegetables for the hotel and domestic markets and increase income for farmers.

A market study conducted by the MOAF Marketing Unit provided the basis to determine crop types and production plans for the commercial greenhouses.

An assessment of the greenhouse subsector was also conducted and a comprehensive report of the findings that highlights the strengths and weaknesses in the subsector was completed by a greenhouse specialist commissioned by the IJAP project. A plan of action and corresponding implementation schedule was also developed. The recommendations addressed such issues as climate; crop water requirements; seedlings production; integrated pest management and cultural practices.

Four research greenhouses were also constructed in 2009 to help build capacity in greenhouse production. The research will map best growing conditions of new and existing greenhouse crops, guide the expansion of the crop varieties for commercial production locally, and inform the development of technical packages for farmers.

Re-introduction of Post Harvest & Packing Facility

Jamaica suffers an average 40%⁵ post harvest losses annually. Strengthening post harvest management is among the objectives of the greenhouse component of the IJAP Project. This will be achieved with the construction of two post harvest and packing facilities to serve the two greenhouse clusters and neighbouring open field farmers.

In 2009, construction commenced to expand and retrofit a 6000 sq ft post harvest and packing facility in Hounslow, St. Elizabeth, one of the two greenhouse clusters. When it becomes operational in 2010, farmers will have a central distribution outlet that sorts, grades and purchases produce and provides long-term storage of excesses.

Through the agro-tourism project, refrigerated storage facilities were also provided to the farmers in the Buff Bay Valley project. These will be managed by the marketing cooperative. The facilities allow for isolated storage of specific crops to extend shelf life and meet market demand in and out of season. It will also ensure a central distribution point for produce from the area.

⁵ Information quoted from the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, 2009 Budget Presentation.



Construction in progress at the Hounslow Post Harvest and Packing Facility in St. Elizabeth.

RESULTS OF INTER-AGENCY COOPERATION



Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries

Throughout the year the office worked closely with its main partner - the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, in the development and execution of the Ministry's efforts to reposition and modernize the agriculture sector. Of note are the following:

- Collaboration to Host the Week of Agricultural and Rural Life in the Americas
- Incorporating the Private Sector into the Ministerial Meeting Process
- Completion of the True Contribution of Agriculture to the Economy Study
- Facilitating the participation of MOAF officials in several international fora pertinent to advances in agriculture.
- Execution of the Improving Jamaica's Agricultural Productivity Project
- Implementation of the Buff Bay Valley Agro-tourism project
- Coordination of the Youth In Agri-business Awards
- IICA was also invited to sit on the advisory board of the newly formed Centre of Excellence for Advanced Technology in Agriculture (CEATA). The Centre's primary role is to coordinate the country's agricultural research and training agendas to aid with greater sector efficiencies.



Throughout the year, IICA also partnered with several international and local agencies to implement its technical programme and projects.

CARDI/IICA -Projects

Research activities with the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute continued in 2009 for the enhancement of certain crop varieties, the research of select herbs and development of ventilation systems for protected agriculture.

GOJ/CIDA/IICA Improving Jamaica's Agricultural Productivity Project

The first year of the Improving Jamaica's Agricultural Productivity (IJAP) project was completed with funding from the Canadian International Development Agency and with the support of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries through its Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA) and the Department of Fisheries. Implementation activities of the project were achieved in collaboration with several agencies, government and private entities including:



Fisherfolk participate in Safety at Sea training conducted by the Jamaica Defence Force Coast Guard.

Jamaica Foundation for Lifelong Learning
 Jamaica Red Cross
 Jamaica Defence Force Coast Guard
 Jamaica Constabulary Force
 Ministry of Health
 Dispute Resolution Foundation
 Social Development Commission
 Health Departments (St. Catherine, St. Elizabeth)
 Jamaica Fisherman's Cooperative
 Department of Cooperatives and Friendly Societies
 St. Catherine Parish Council
 Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries Marketing Unit
 Jamaica National Building Society
 National Environmental Planning Agency (NEPA)
 European Union Rural Diversification Programme



EU/IICA Agro-Tourism Project

The European Union/GOJ/IICA Agro tourism project in the Buff Bay Valley ended in December 2009. Funding for the project was provided by the EU through the Banana Support Project - Rural Diversification Programme. The successful implementation of the project was facilitated by technical support from several agencies including:

Forestry Department
 Tourism Product Development Company
 Social Development Commission
 Rural Agricultural Development Authority
 National Meats
 Jamaica Constabulary Force
 Jamaica Fire Brigade
 HEART Trust NTA
 African Caribbean Institute of Jamaica
 Jamaica Business Development Centre
 Public Health Departments
 Department of Cooperatives and Friendly Societies
 Private Sector Development Programme
 Jamaica Red Cross
 US Peace Corps



Jamaica 4-H Club

IICA sponsored the two top awards in the 2009 National Youth Achievement awards organized by the Jamaica 4-H Club to encourage excellence through competition among its members. The office also donated a goat to the Jamaica 4-H Club small ruminants programme.

OAS/Young American Business Trust

IICA provided the Young American Business Trust (YABT) with an integrated goat house for young farmers in one of the communities assisted by the YABT.

US Peace Corps

The office signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the US Peace Corps for the latter to provide a volunteer to assist local CBOS in the Buff Bay Valley with financial and administrative skills critical to the operationalization of the newly developed agro tourism sites.



RESULTS OF HORIZONTAL TECHNICAL COOPERATION



With the assistance of the IICA Canada office a team from the Alberta Association of Colleges and Technical Institute (AACTI) conducted a mission to Jamaica to assess the scope for technical assistance and extension support it may provide to aid the modernization and expansion of the greenhouse subsector. Follow-up will be executed in 2010.

IICA Miami office provided assistance with the coordination of a Private Sector dialogue held simultaneously during the 5th Ministerial Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture in October.

The Project manager for the EU funded Buff Bay Valley Agro-tourism project visited Barbados to share the project model with other agro-tourism interests in the Caribbean region.

Through collaboration with the Hemispheric Specialist on Agro-tourism the IICA Jamaica office's Rural Development Specialist participated in an international course in the business of rural-tourism held at the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Administrative and financial training was provided to the Barbados office during a week-long training at the IICA Jamaica office led by the IICA Jamaica Administrative team.

Communication technology support of the IICA Jamaica office was enhanced by the training of an IICA Jamaica staff member at the Institute's Head Office in Costa Rica.

A study of the true contribution of the agriculture sector to Jamaica's economy was finalized by IICA specialist from the Peru office.

Close collaboration with the IICA head office facilitated the successful staging of the Week of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas in Jamaica in 2009.

Two Jamaican youths, Dean Collins and Richard Solomon participated in the IICA Youth Leadership Forum held in Costa Rica in September 2009. The objective of the one week forum was to promote the development of youth leaders with a global vision and to offer them an opportunity to learn more about global issues.



Members of the AACTI team visit the Christiana Potato Growers Association.



(L-R): Marcia Husbands of the IICA Barbados office receives financial training from Andrea Marquis in the Jamaica office.



NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR TECHNICAL COOPERATION

Expansion of the agro-tourism model developed in the Buff Bay Valley is eminent. Requests have been received from other communities to adopt agro-tourism in their area. The IICA office is collating lessons learned from this project to facilitate its adoption in other parts of the island.

Results from a survey conducted among stakeholders at the 2008 National Accountability Seminar also indicated that training and capacity building are among the most urgent areas that IICA could provide additional technical assistance to support the expansion and modernization of Jamaica's agriculture.

There is also scope for the Institute to assist Small to Medium size Enterprises (SMEs) who are involved in exporting to especially strengthen market linkages with North America to allow them to better establish themselves in the market.



MAIN ACTIVITIES ORGANIZED BY IICA JAMAICA IN 2009

National Accountability Seminar

The Office organized several major activities throughout the year starting with the National Accountability Seminar in the first quarter. This was well attended by partners and other IICA stakeholders. The occasion was used to report on IICA Jamaica activities of the previous year and to host the closing for the IICA/OAS Agro-tourism linkages project which reported on the accomplishments of this initiative in Jamaica and the overall plan for the participating Caribbean countries.

IJAP Groundbreaking Ceremony - Greenhouse Component

In October, a groundbreaking ceremony was hosted by the IJAP project to initiate construction of greenhouses and post harvest facilities. The ceremony was held on the premises for the post harvest and packing facility at Hounslow St. Elizabeth - one of two to be constructed by the project. Over 150 community residents, beneficiaries and other IICA project partners were in attendance.

IJAP - Capacity Building Workshops

Several capacity building workshops were hosted as part of the IJAP project for providing training to greenhouse farmers as well as fisher folk. At year-end 70 greenhouse farmers and 822 fisher folk participated in a range of training exercises to improve ability for sustained management of their respective areas.

Week of Agriculture & Rural Life in the Americas

Jamaica hosted the Week of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas October 25-30 in Montego Bay. The itinerary included the 5th Ministerial Meeting for Ministers of Agriculture of the Hemisphere and the 15th Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture.

Buff Bay Valley Agro-tourism Launch

The year culminated with the launch of the Buff Bay Valley Agro-tourism destination, a model project for the development of agro-tourism in Jamaica.