

IICA

IN TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

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EDITOR'S NOTE

This is the first publication of *IICA in Trinidad and Tobago*. It represents the collective ideas and efforts of ALL of the staff of this office. The publication, which will initially be issued every two months, aims to bring the activities of the office to the attention of colleagues inside and outside of IICA, but particularly our clients in Trinidad and Tobago and the Region. Naturally, the information provided would be brief. However, we trust that it will sufficiently excite your attention/interest, so that you will feel obliged to write for the details.

IMPROVING AGRICULTURAL POLICY ANALYSIS AND PLANNING

Through the national project, Improving the Agricultural Policy Analysis and Planning Infrastructure in Trinidad and Tobago, our office is supporting the enhancement of the policy analysis and planning process of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources (MALMR). Implementation activities began in October 1993 with two basic elements.

The first is to introduce a number of key policy analysis and planning tools, such as the Information System for Policy Analysis and Planning (SIAPA), developed by IICA, and the Agricultural Budget Generation and Simulation System (AGSYS), developed by the University of Florida.

The second element is to enhance the planning process through the institution-

alization of an Annual Planning Process in the Ministry. To this end, the project has already developed a specialized computerized work-planning system for coordinating all the Ministry's activities on an annual basis. This system is now being evaluated by the Ministry.

So far, project implementation has proceeded satisfactorily and the Ministry and other related agencies have been very appreciative of, and committed to, this effort.



DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION OF TROPICAL FRUIT CROPS

Over the past five years, the project "Supporting the development of Tropical Fruit Crops in the Caribbean" has responded to the needs of the following 13 CARICOM countries: Antigua and Barbuda, St. Kitts and Nevis, Montserrat, Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Barbados, Grenada, St. Vincent, Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Jamaica and Belize in addition, Suriname and Haiti were supported. The project, which obtains funds from the French Government to complement IICA's, gives advice, trains personnel and facilitates the conduct of some research in tree crop development, ranging from nursery management, through field production to processing.

To date, the project has organized three highly successful regional workshops on all aspects of minor tropical fruits, one regional workshop on fruit crop diversification, one on citrus and another on pineapples. In addition, several national

workshops, such as, the Mango Processing Workshop (January 18-21, 1994, Trinidad and Tobago) have been conducted in different countries covering aspects ranging from production to post-harvest and processing.

The project collaborates with CARDI, CARIRI, CIRAD/FLHOR, CRITT, INRA and National Ministries in areas, such as, attachment of professionals and students from the Caribbean and Europe, germplasm supply, laboratory analysis and support to regional and national events and surveys. The second phase of the project will be expanded in scope to include fruit processing and other countries, the Dominican Republic, Cuba and Haiti.

SUPPORTING THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

A project, "Enhancing the Participation of Women in the Rural Development Process through Institutional Strengthening" was initiated in 1992. It is scheduled for completion in 1995. The main focus is on improving the contribution of women to agricultural development and rural welfare. This is being achieved by strengthening the organizational structure of a number of selected groups of women and supporting the development of a gender sensitive program for the Extension Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources (MALMR).



Project activities include:

- baseline survey of 100 small scale rural women to identify their capacities and vulnerabilities.
- development of a gender-sensitive extension methodology.
- training in small business management, agronomy, post-harvest handling of vegetables and trellis crops (barbadine, caraille and scim) food preservation and gender awareness.
- preparation of feasibility studies for the development of income-generating investment projects.

The project beneficiaries are the staff of the Extension Division of the MALMR, some social support agencies and selected groups of rural women, namely:

- Paramin Women's Group;
- San Francique Sports, Educational and Cultural Council Women's Group
- Shiva Harijan Women's Group;
- St. Mary's Creative Women's Group;
- St. Helena's/Matlot Women's Group.

It is hoped that the pilot project will contribute towards the development of a ministerial policy and national programs that will optimize the use of the significant female resource.

FACILITATING AGRICULTURAL TRADE THROUGH SOUND AGRICULTURAL HEALTH

Over the past year, the CARAPHIN Project, "Survey and Monitoring of Animal and Plant Pests and Diseases to Facilitate Trade and Production in the Caribbean" has focused on enhancing its primary role as an information exchange network. After a review, the network's previous database program was replaced by a new system developed by CARAPHIN with assistance from a consultant with the Canadian Executive Services Organization (CESO).

This new program called CORRAL has modules for monitoring animal health, plant health and meat inspection. Additional mod-

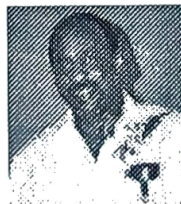
ules, e.g. for Amblyoma, can be developed as needed. CORRAL compiles information from field investigations, special surveys and import and export inspections to produce a synopsis of the agricultural health of the country/region.

The CORRAL program has been distributed to more than twenty countries throughout the Caribbean. CORRAL has several features that would appear to make it well suited to many developing countries. Among these are the fact that only very basic computer hardware is needed to run the program. The program is simple to use and inexpensive. The system could potentially be compatible as a front-end tool with proposed future and global information systems of the OIE (Office International des Epizooties) and IPPC (International Plant Protection Convention).

STAFF PROFILE

Dr. H. Arlington D. Chesney, a Guyanese national, assumed the duties of Representative of this office on March 7, 1994. His academic excellence is reflected in the degrees attained at UWI. While actively engaged in sports and voluntary organizations, he graduated with honors in 1963 with a general BSc. Degree in Agriculture. In 1967 and 1979, he obtained a MSc. and PhD. in Soil Chemistry and Fertility, respectively.

The studies led to a greater understanding and sound recommendations for managing selected soils in the Interior of Guyana. His formal training was rounded off by several short courses, both regional and international, relating to project analysis, private sector investment, financial management, financial planning and human resource management. He brings to the IICA Office in Trinidad and Tobago a wealth of expe-



rience spanning over 30 years in the planning and implementation of agricultural development at both micro and macro levels in the Caribbean. He had personally executed research in the development of new "crops" in Guyana and, as Head of Research, directed Guyana's Agricultural Research Program. Later, as Chief Agricultural Officer, he was responsible for the interpreting and implementing the country's agricultural policy and programs. This included the use of research findings and the transfer of technology to both small and large scale farm operations. From 1979-1994, he was a dynamic force at the Caribbean Food Corporation (CFC) in the identification, development, appraisal, promotion and implementation of the corporation projects. In the last nine of those years, he functioned as Chief Executive Officer. Over the years, he acquired considerable experience in negotiating on behalf of national and regional organizations and government agencies with international and regional technical assistance and funding agencies also with the private sector at individual, project, and organizational levels. His experiences as a lecturer at the University of Guyana and the Guyana School of agriculture have served to produce an effective communicator.

His career is punctuated with numerous awards and medals and he has served, at the highest levels, on professional societies, service organizations and commercial companies. He has authored and co-authored numerous refereed and unrefereed publications dealing with agronomy, soil science, agricultural and rural development and policy analysis and planning.

His vision for the office encompasses the development of closely knit office team whose operations (i) are facilitated by the introduction and maintenance of efficient and "user friendly" systems and processes; and (ii) in collaboration and coordination with appropriate sister regional and national institutions, will contribute significantly at both the policy and production levels to the enhancement of rural development in Trinidad and Tobago.

IICA IN Trinidad and Tobago is published once every two months with updates on the activities undertaken by the two National and two Regional Projects managed by this office. The aim is to encourage, promote and support the efforts of Trinidad and Tobago to achieve its agricultural development and rural well-being.

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