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Inter-American Institute for  
Cooperation on Agriculture

Proceedings of the Workshop

**NETWORK OF AGRICULTURAL  
INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTATION  
UNITS IN JAMAICA**

**October 22, 1999  
Kingston, Jamaica**

**IICA OFFICE IN JAMAICA**

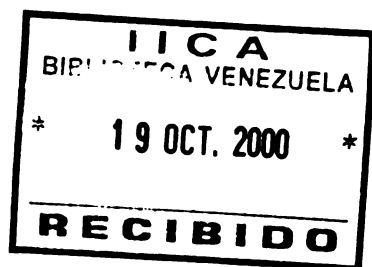


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**NETWORK OF AGRICULTURAL  
INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTATION  
UNITS IN JAMAICA**

IICA  
BIBLIOTECA VENEZUELA

19 OCT. 2000

**October 22, 1999  
Kingston, Jamaica**

*Compiled by Kathryn Duncan*

**IICA OFFICE IN JAMAICA**

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**"The views expressed in signed articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily  
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"Information networking is a collaborative process of information exchange around a central theme, carried out by actively interested parties".

**Nelson and Farrington**

**PROGRAMME**

<p>Chairperson Brenda Smith Librarian Ministry of Agriculture</p>			
<p>A.M. 9:00</p>	<p>National Anthem of Jamaica</p>	<p>10:15-10:30</p>	<p>BREAK</p>
<p>9:10</p>	<p>Welcome <i>IICA's Hemispheric Network on Agricultural Information</i> Dr. Chelston W.D. Brathwaite IICA Representative</p>	<p>10:45-12:30</p>	<p><b><u>WORKSHOP</u></b> Working groups to develop network agenda.</p>
<p>9:25-9:30</p>	<p>Greetings Mr. Gladstone Barrett Food &amp; Agriculture Organization (FAO)</p>		<p>Group I Objectives and Terms of Reference</p>
<p>9:30-9:45</p>	<p><i>CARDI's Role in Agricultural Information (CAIS)</i> Hayden Blades Executive Director CARDI</p>		<p>Group II Mission Statement and Vision</p>
<p>9:45-10:00</p>	<p>Overview <i>The Impending Freedom of Information Act and its Implications for Information Management</i> Patricia Barrett Director of Legislation JARMA*</p>	<p>P.M. 12:30-1:30</p>	<p>Group III Policies for Resource Sharing and Communication</p>
<p>10:00-10:30</p>	<p>Keynote address <i>The Role of Information in Agricultural Development in Jamaica: Rationale for Networking.</i> Dr. The Hon. Fenton Ferguson Minister of State Ministry of Agriculture</p>	<p>2:00 -3:00</p>	<p>LUNCH</p>
		<p>3:00-4:00</p>	<p>Plenary session</p>
		<p>4:00</p>	<p>Final recommendations and conclusions Kathryn Duncan Information Specialist IICA (Coordinator)</p>
			<p>Vote of thanks Claudette Milford Allen Director Information &amp; Documentation Ministry of Agriculture</p>

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\* JARMA - Jamaica Association of Records Managers and Administrators





## Foreword

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAG), recognising the need for greater cooperation among agricultural information and documentation centres in Jamaica, hosted a workshop on the Network of Agricultural Information and Documentation Units in Jamaica aimed at establishing a network of such units and defining draft objectives and policies for the operation of the system.

Jamaica has the capacity to improve in its provision of agricultural information services and products, however integration of the information units in the agricultural sector based on improved networking among those who manage these centres is essential in creating the way forward. Networking provides many opportunities for the use of new technologies, training of personnel, creation and adoption of new information services to suit the growing information needs of clients and elimination of duplication of effort and better use of scarce physical and financial resources.

IICA's contribution to this initiative is being made under the framework of the Agricultural Information and Documentation System for Latin America and the Caribbean (SIDALC) and with cooperation from the Kellogg Foundation to foster a hemispheric network of agricultural information to meet the information needs of Members States of the Institutes.

The Ministry of Agriculture has been appointed as the Focal Point for the Network and the secretariat will be housed at the Information Centre at the IICA Office in Hope Gardens.


The objectives of the workshop were:

1. To establish a network of agricultural information and documentation units in Jamaica.
2. To determine the draft mission and vision of the network.
3. To determine draft objectives and terms of reference of the network.
4. To establish draft policies for resource sharing and communication.

The workshop was attended by 24 persons, including nine Information Professionals from institutions and agencies within the agricultural sector.

These proceedings comprise all papers presented and workshop items discussed at the workshop. It is hoped that this information will prove useful to all who receive it.

The organizers would like to take this opportunity to thank all those persons who participated in the workshop and wish all members of the Network of Agricultural Information and Documentation Units in Jamaica, best wishes in their endeavours.

  
Chelston W.D. Brathwaite  
IICA Representative in Jamaica



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**MORNING  
SESSION**

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## **IICA'S Hemispheric Network on Agricultural Information**

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*Dr. Chelston W.D. Brathwaite  
IICA Representative in Jamaica*

The society of the future is envisioned as being based on information and knowledge. It is estimated that more knowledge has been produced in the developed countries over the last thirty years than in the preceding millennia; it is also said that the amount of information available doubles every five years, and that this time period is shortening all the time.

Globalization has forced us to become more dependent on the world of information and to be more closely linked to it. Companies, industries and service providers have had to join together in large networks in order to communicate with each other and their clients, and even with their workers. As a result of these developments, Information Technology (IT) now plays a major role in public institutions, private organizations and civil society and is recognized as a prerequisite for sustained development.

In order to contribute to improving access to information and the welfare of rural populations and to increasing agricultural productivity in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), the Technical Consortium of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) is developing an Agricultural Information and Documentation System for Latin America and the Caribbean (SIDALC).

IICA has had an extensive experience on information gathering, retrieval and dissemination. In 1943, IICA created a small Documentation Unit in what is today the Tropical Agronomic Centre for Research and Education (CATIE), located in Turrialba, Costa Rica. In 1946, this Centre expanded and improved its collection, changing its name to Orton Commemorative Library. In 1949, the service on scientific exchange was established, and the preparation of agricultural literature compendiums was initiated. This was distributed through the bibliographic supplement of the magazine "Turrialba". This same year, in-service training of Agricultural Librarians for Latin America and the Caribbean was initiated.

In 1950, the production and distribution of specialized bibliographies was initiated. This service was complemented, in 1954, with the preparation of extensive bibliographies on socio-economic issues of interest to the region and their publication in the series "Bibliografias".

In 1953, IICA promoted the creation of the Inter-American Association of Agricultural Librarians and Documentalists (AIDBA), with the objective of improving its members' professional capabilities.

In 1967, the Inter-American Programme for Development of Agricultural Libraries (PIDBA) was formalized and the concept of networking the agricultural information and documentation centres was consolidated.

In 1967, the Inter-American Programme for Development of Agricultural Libraries (PIDBA) was formalized and the concept of networking the agricultural information and documentation centres was consolidated.

In 1970, IICA adopted the policy on action line in: "Documentation and Information for Rural Development," and created the Inter-American Centre for Agricultural Documentation and Information (CIDIA), covering all the member countries of IICA.

The Inter-American System of Agricultural Information (AGRINTER) was established in 1972, with CIDIA acting as the Coordinating and Technical Assistance Centre for the system. At the same time, AGRINTER was coordinating with the worldwide system, AGRIS, which integrated the Regional Agricultural Information to the world system. AGRINTER produced a quarterly index that was distributed to the member libraries throughout the world.

The system operated with a National Coordinator in each member country that was responsible for receiving, processing and submitting to CIDIA in San Jose, Costa Rica, one input form for each agricultural document produced in the country. The information was then digitized at CIDIA, where AGRINTER was produced. CIDIA in turn sent the digitized information to AGRIS at FAO in Rome.

CIDIA used to hold an annual meeting with Representatives of the system from each member country to discuss technical issues and review the system's progress. The annual meeting was hosted in a different country every year, according to the offers made by the member governments.

Publication of AGRINTER, the annual meetings and some of the services were suspended due to lack of funding, even though the need for information increased in the scientific community of Latin America and the Caribbean. With an increased production of scientists, the growth in research institutions and the expansion of agricultural education at universities in the region, created a growing demand for access to information, which unfortunately was diminished.

In 1978, IICA evaluated its action line in: "Documentation and Information for Rural Development," and expanded the scope of CIDIA to incorporate communication. CIDIA was transformed to become the Inter-American Centre for agricultural documentation, information and communication.

IICA started a bibliographic information service on research and training in Agricultural Policy Analysis (ICAPPA) to offer bibliographical updates through a quarterly bulletin for professionals and institutions involved in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

The bibliographic bulletin is drawn from the database on research and training in agricultural policy analysis maintained by the Directorate for Information, Communication, Training and Institutional Affairs (DICCAI).

This database stores pertinent information on the subjects received by DICCAI's Libraries, programme in and other institutions, such as Cab International and ALIDE. It includes

monographs, reports, papers presented at conferences, seminar, courses, articles published in journals and reprints.

In 1995, IICA signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Agricultural Library of the United States, with the following objectives:

- To contribute to promoting and strengthening the development of the agricultural information infrastructure in Latin America and the Caribbean, as effectively as possible, as a means to hasten the improvement of agricultural and rural development.
- To establish a framework and a legal basis for future specific operating agreements or contracts, which arise from shared concerns, or which respond to proposals of cooperation by either party.

IICA's experience in agricultural information has continued, as it decided to invest in a technological platform, upgrading the computer equipment in its Headquarters in San Jose, Costa Rica and in each office in the Member States. It has also adopted standard software and is using lotus notes for processing documents internally.

IICA has set up a home page that links sites on agricultural information from various sources, providing easy access to interested scientists, professionals and producers of relevant information available. Two major sites maintained by IICA and linked to its home page are AGROINFO and AGRIFORO. Both of these sites provide valuable information of interest to agriculturalists in Latin America and the Caribbean.

IICA has developed an Agricultural Information and Analysis System (SIAPA) to provide farmers, traders, and policy makers with high quality, timely agricultural price and trade data. In addition, SIAPA provides up-to-date information on the incidence of animal disease and requirements for and restrictions to trade in livestock and livestock products. SIAPA is being used in several of its member countries, including Costa Rica, El Salvador, Panama, Colombia, Chile and Brazil.

IICA is also providing assistance to several member countries on market information systems, including Costa Rica, Panama, Honduras, El Salvador, Chile, Brazil, Colombia and Venezuela. Additionally, IICA is assisting both Panama and Costa Rica in setting up Rural Information Centers to link rural communities to the markets and to information.

IICA's most recent new service is the "Data Metabase Agri 2000". This is a database on agriculture that links the best bibliographical databases specialized in agriculture and related sciences, produced by national and international institutions that can be accessed in Internet through IICA's home page "Home of Agriculture of the Americas".

This system is being established with a view to satisfying information needs of the scientific community, students, development institutions, and the business and rural communities. This hemispheric network will base its operations on the agricultural information resources and operating capacity of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the

The Kellogg Foundation, IICA and network members fund the system. Phase one is scheduled to last for four years

The system aims to:

- Improve the identification, selection and access to information, especially non-conventional literature produced in the LAC;
- Promote dynamic and timely information services, using technological means appropriate to users' needs;
- Encourage the development of national agricultural information systems; and;
- Provide training to human resources in the use of new technology for accessing and exchanging information.

#### **What is the structure of the system?**

SIDALC is a joint effort among national agricultural information systems. It is coordinated by IICA and has a decentralized structure. Technical coordination is the responsibility of the IICA/CATIE Orton Commemorative Library. With the participation of IICA's Technical Cooperation Agencies, a coordinating center for the national network will be established in each country, made up of agricultural libraries and/or agricultural documentation centers, with the latter serving as cooperating centers.

A regional consortium will be consolidated to promote technical cooperation and assistance in the area of agricultural information, involving agricultural libraries of national and international scope.

#### **Who are our clients?**

Users of the system will include all those persons and institutions of the public and private sectors involved in agricultural and related topics (decision makers, educators, researchers, university students, extensionists, documentary information units, Government entities and private enterprises).

#### **What services will be offered?**

The system will offer the following services:

- Online consultation of catalogues (Agri2000)
- Access to full text documents
- Reproduction and sending of documents by electronic and conventional means
- Training for users and information specialists
- Electronic bulletin of new agricultural and related publications
- Electronic tables of contents of technical and scientific journals published in the LAC and other parts of the world;
- Loaning of documents in the libraries, at home and between libraries (in each country and depending on the conditions of each information service).
- Access to databases in the libraries (in each country and depending on the conditions of each information service).
- Referral to other informational sources.



- Referral to other informational sources.

### **What products will be produced?**

The system will generate the following products:

- Consolidated national agricultural information networks
- Bibliographic databases produced in the LAC, online and on compact disc (Agri2000)
- Electronic library on agriculture and related topics
- E-mail list of system users
- Consortium of agricultural libraries for Latin America and the Caribbean.

### **What benefits will be derived?**

- Rapid and timely access to agricultural information produced in the LAC and in other parts of the world
- Opportunity to obtain agricultural information from one electronic source
- A strengthening of the technical aspects of agricultural information services (library technology and computer sciences), training and professional advancement
- Strong and effective inter-library cooperation at the national and international levels
- Promotion of services and products generated by information units at the national and international levels
- Opportunities for training and/or professional advancement for system users
- Close communication and feedback among agricultural information services

### **IICA Jamaica's role**

IICA Jamaica is currently involved in initiatives which are helping to prepare the Jamaican sector for free trade and market globalization, to provide training in human resources both at professional and farmer levels and to promote technical cooperation between Jamaica, the wider Caribbean and Latin America.

The basis of all activities outlined in IICA's plan to support agricultural development in Jamaica is information and available access to it through the appropriate means. This activity will develop facilities that will provide Necessary access to information that is currently lacking and much needed in the agricultural sector.

Advancement in information and communications technology offers new challenges to the agricultural sector. They provide easy and immediate access to information on markets, trade opportunities, consumer preferences and competitors around the world. They also facilitate advertising, promotion and dissemination of information to current and potentially new clients and customers

The new technologies, together with increased globalization and market integration are influencing changes both in the demand and supply of food in the local market. Individuals and institutions in Jamaica's agriculture need to have access to and exploit the opportunities provided by the new technologies to increase the competitiveness of their products and develop new market opportunities.

In addition, the IICA Office in Jamaica holds a considerable amount of documented information, valuable for research and training. There is an urgent need to make this information available to clients in the agricultural sector.

There is also the need for training of human resources of the sector, both at the professional and farmer level in Jamaica in the new technologies and specific aspects related to participation of Jamaica's agriculture in the global economy.

For these reasons, we have established an Agricultural Information Centre at our new office in Hope Gardens and employed an Information Specialist, Miss Kathryn Duncan, to manage the Centre. We hope that this Centre will become an important part of the national agricultural information network.

We are indeed pleased to be associated with this initiative and I wish you success in your deliberations today which can be the beginning of a new era in the provision of agricultural information services to the agricultural sector in Jamaica.

I thank you.

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## Greetings

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*Gladstone Barrett, FAO*

Madam Chair, Dr. the Honourable Fenton Ferguson, Minister of State in the Ministry of Agriculture, Dr. Chelston Brathwaite, IICA Representative, Mr. Frank McDonald, CARDI Country Team Leader, Miss Patricia Barrett, Director of Legislation, JARMA, ladies and gentlemen, good morning.

It is with great pleasure that I bring you greetings this morning on behalf of the Director-General of the United Nations Food and Agriculture organization (FAO), Dr. Jacques Diouf and the entire staff of our local Representation here in Kingston.

On this occasion, we are extremely pleased to be a part of this inaugural workshop entitled "Network of Agricultural Information and Documentation Units in Jamaica".

At the FAO, information management is indeed a part of our core competence. FAO collects, analyses, interprets and disseminates information relating to nutrition, food agriculture, forestry and fisheries. The Organization serves as a clearing-house, providing farmers, scientists, traders and government planners with the information they need to make rational decisions on planning, investment, marketing, research or training.

The world at large is now experiencing a period of information revolution just like what we went through during the periods of industrial and technological revolution. As we operate in this globalized environment, the timely access to accurate and quality information is becoming extremely important to our very survival. At FAO we are cognizant of the reality and therefore treat information management as priority.

The FAO has established and currently operates a number of global, regional and national information networks. Among the list are the Global Information and early Warning System on Food and Agriculture (GIEWS) and the Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems (FIVIMS). A National FIVIMS is based on national and sub-national information systems related to food insecurity and vulnerability already in existence, responds to the information needs of the different user groups within the country itself and is operated and controlled by the country involved. It is country driven and user focused, designed in response to the needs of national decision-makers rather than imposed from outside.

It is my belief that modified versions or components of the FAO systems might be useful for the framework we are about to embark upon. I therefore, personally, commit to full participation in this very worthwhile endeavor.



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## **The Impending Freedom of Information Act and its Implications for Information Management**

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*Ms. Patricia Barrett  
Director of Legislation, JARMA*

Madam Chairman, Dr. Fenton Ferguson – Minister of State in the Ministry of Agriculture, Mr. Frank McDonald - CARDI, Mr. Gladstone Barrett – FAO, Dr. Chelston W.D. Brathwaite – IICA, other members of the seminar’s organizing committee, fellow Information Professionals, a pleasant morning.

I bring greetings to you on behalf of the 40 members of the Kingston, Jamaica chapter of the Association of Records Managers and Administration (JARMA) International and the 10,000 members of the ARMA International.

### **Introduction**

The development of sophisticated communications technologies has changed the way governments and organizations operate. Operational structures and systems within government and private institutions are being reorganized to suit the needs of an increasingly global economy. Internationally accessible technologies, such as computer networks and the Internet, can provide users with information from around the world, instantly and at low cost. Governments are now forced to improve the speed and efficiency with which they conduct their business and also to recognize the value of information as an economic resource. Information has become a commodity and as such must be protected against unauthorized access and use.

Enactment of appropriate legislation can guard against unauthorized access and use. In Jamaica, currently there are twenty-one laws that affect access to information. These fall into two categories:

1. Programme legislation – such as those establishing records management programmes within public or quasi-public organizations. Examples are the Archives Act and the Public Records Acts.
2. Legislation affect records management and include the Evidence Act, Rules of Court, Limitation Acts, Copyright Acts, Companies and Tax Acts, Pensions and Custom Acts, Employment Acts, Industry specific legislation, the Official Secrets Acts and the pending Freedom of Information Act.

### **What is Freedom of Information?**

FOI requires that government agencies release their records to the public upon request, unless the information sought falls within the exempted categories. The Act provides:-

- for court review of agency’s refusal to furnish identifiable records
- seeks to eliminate unnecessary official secrecy
- gives citizens legal rights to information which affects their lives or which they need to hold accountable

FOI legislation has been in effect in Sweden since 1800s. In recent times, former state representative in the United States Congress, Senator John Moss, now deceased, spent twenty years lobbying for the FOI Act which was eventually passed in 1966. Currently, Australia, Belize, Canada, Denmark, Holland, Hungary, Ireland and Norway also have FOI legislation in place. Britain like Jamaica has been campaigning for similar legislation since 1996.

An FOI Act usually covers nine broad areas: -

- Definition – which clearly states what is meant by the jargon used throughout the legislation.
- Purpose – outlines its objectives
- Scope – gives an overview of the records that fall under the purview of the Act.
- Relationship to other acts
- Obtaining access – defines the procedures for making requests, outlines the prescribed forms to be used, sets time limits and fees, also details procedures which agencies must use when responding to requests.
- Exemptions from disclosure – states which records fall under the exempted categories should include the time frame when these records may be accessed.
- Appeal procedure – covers the activities involved in filing appeals. It also covers the duties of the Ombudsman of the Jamaica scenario the composition of the appeals committee.
- Infrastructure and implementation – this category speaks to system requirements for managing the records in the various government departments. It also addresses the infrastructural and personal requirements among other resources.
- Reporting – in this category, the reporting requirements of the head of the FOI to the public via Parliament.

The proposed Jamaica FOI is currently being reviewed by Parliament. In its recommendations, the committee decided to include all government ministries, central government agencies, local government bodies. Exempted bodies includes all courts, judicial officers, court registries and their staff in addition to the Government General and his staff. Companies wholly owned as well as those which government has majority shares as well as those that enjoy a monopoly position relation to the services that they provide.

### **Exemptions**

There are nine types of documents that are exempted. Documents covering cabinet deliberations, national security, defense and international relations, trade secrets, legal proceedings, documents outlining national environmental heritage such as information on rare or endangered species and anthropological sites.

Unlike other jurisdictions, the Jamaican currently makes no provision for the protection of personal data contained within documents owned by the various entities. This is a grave oversight, however, we hope that this will be remedied in the near future.

### **Implications for Groups and Organizations**

Access to information under the proposed Act is not a right of access to information in the general sense but to the documents in which the information is recorded. This access is intended to complement existing legislative and administrative procedures. The existing procedures are inadequate to say the least. Records within most government departments are not properly kept,

thus accessing documents will prove problematic upon passage of the FOI. Fortunately, the Act has built into it a seven-year period before it becomes operational therefore it is imperative that agencies implement proper records management programme. Under the Act, agencies are required to have a list of all records created/received, to coincide with the end of the grace period. This requires that an inventory be conducted. Records are owned by an organization, not the personal possession of individual officer.

A records management programme is that area of general administrative management concerned with achieving economy and efficiency in the creation, receipt, use, storage and disposal of records during their life cycle and making the information which they contain available in support of the business of the organization.

The quality of any record management programme is directly related to the quality of the staff who operates it. Records management must be seen as a worthwhile career for those who are educated intelligent and industrious, not a posting of last resort for those who are unqualified, incompetent and idle.

Organizations and groups should seek to develop proper records and information programmes during this "grace period" as failure to disclose information which is not exempted could result in Permanent Secretaries being asked to appear before the proposed tribunal during an appeal hearing.

Other implications include storage costs as the suggested retention period for exempted records is set at thirty years. Therefore, these records must be housed under ideal conditions for that time frame. Infrastructural requirements must also be addressed. Additionally, for the Act to be effective, we must depart from the culture of secrecy associated with the Westminster/Whitehall type of governance. Consequently, there will be a repeal of the Official Secrets Act. In it's preparation process, government has developed a two-phase proposal which will allow departments to be ready for FOI implementation. Information on this may be had from the Office of the Prime Minister, which has responsibility for National Information Policy.

In light of the fact that very few trained records managers are employed within the public and private sectors, persons assigned to records units need to avail themselves of the necessary training. This may be had by attending the Certificate in Records Management Course conducted at the University of the West Indies. Membership within professional bodies will ensure that staff is kept up-to-date on developments within the field. Persons may contact Miss Claudette Valentine, secretary of JARMA at 922-5860 or visit the Archives and Records Management website at [www.uwimona.edu.jm](http://www.uwimona.edu.jm).

In closing, let me thank you for the opportunity to have served you and I wish you every success with your seminar.





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## **The Role of Information in Agricultural Development in Jamaica: Rational for Networking**

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*Dr. The Hon. Fenton Ferguson  
Minister of State, Ministry of Agriculture*

I have the distinct pleasure this morning of giving this address at this very important workshop on the networking of agricultural information and documentation units in Jamaica. This collaboration between IICA and the Ministry of Agriculture and I commend the foresight of the organizers in putting on this workshop.

In looking at the topic of the workshop, I am suggesting that the operative word is networking, which implies that there is an interest in garnering and sharing resources. Nelson and Farrington (1994) stated that *"Information networking is a collaborative process of information exchange, around a central theme, carried out by actively interested parties"*.

For networking to succeed, there must be self-interest manifested in a common focus. The common focus is no doubt the benefits derived from the agricultural information and documentation network. These include:

- Technology
- Training personnel
- Improve services to the various users
- Elimination of duplication of scarce financial resources
- Lobbying

The key characteristic of networking is that, it involves a process of exchange. In agricultural development, the process of agricultural information exchange has a strong element of voluntary collaboration, which distinguishes it from networking conducted among commercial enterprises. This Ministry's collaborative relationship with IICA is an example of the type of benefits to be derived from this mutual arrangement between partners.

This is not a competitive process in which those who are able to supply most of the resources such as money, information and cooperation for a network are the ones who receive most information from it. It is a collaborative process working to support those who wish to develop solutions to difficult problems.

Increasing awareness that specific information needs must be met if agricultural development is to progress, has led to the emergence of the international networking groups of the type we are about to embark on.

Over the years, many attempts have been made at establishing an agricultural information and documentation network in Jamaica. However, for various reasons, they were never realized. One such proposal was prepared with the kind assistance of IICA as far back as 1978.

Today, therefore, marks a major milestone in the documentation of agricultural information in Jamaica. The groups gathered here to share a common vision and I dare say, have a common focus. A quick count of the Institutions in Jamaica indicates that the listing includes IICA, University of the West Indies (UWI), Caribbean Agricultural Research & Development Institute (CARDI), Sugar Industry Research Institute (SIRI), Coconut Industry Board, College of Agriculture, Science and Education (CASE) and the Ministry of Agriculture. I am also sure that other institutions, not specifically recognized as agricultural entities also document important information on agriculture.

I must underscore the critical importance of networking among the agricultural information professionals in the core institutions. As you brochure suggested, networking is absolutely important for the improvement of the flow of information to clients. Networking is also necessary for greater efficiency in the delivery of this information in a new age.

This workshop is therefore timely and I urge all the participants to ensure that we achieve this collaboration. The impending freedom of Information Act will demand the timely and efficient flow of information. Agricultural information will not be exempt from this requirement. For the sector to grow, the utilization of information is absolutely necessary and it is therefore incumbent on the agricultural information specialists to expand the range of information and improve the efficiency of delivery.

It is increasingly recognized that information is an indispensable resource for growth and development and that its accessibility and the degree to which it is used in the decision-making processes determines a country's rate of economic and social development. It may well be argued that countries that have invested heavily in Information Technology are higher up on the scale of economic development. Is there a lesson for us in this regard as a developing country.

Users of agricultural information are now more sophisticated. Today, research is not only book based. Users are now requesting colored copies, fax, internet access, e-mail facility and scanning of information. Herein lies the rationale for networking. The fact is that no one institution has the resources to provide all the facilities needed and by collaborating, users will be provided with a much enhanced service.

It is therefore necessary for information and documentation specialists to be familiar with new and improved technologies so as to make the process of storage and dissemination of information easier. In recognition of this fact, the Government of Jamaica has embarked on a number of initiatives to ensure Government's Units are properly staffed and managed.

The proposed equipping of Post Offices with Internet access for use by the general public is a step in the right direction and will also benefit the agricultural sector in the speedy flow of information. One practical collaborative action that I would urge the Agricultural Documentation Units to undertake, is the exploration of ways of providing information via the Internet by the establishment of websites of which may be accessed by clients for a small fee. The collaboration therefore, could be in the form of the joint establishment of these websites.

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The Ministry of Agriculture has embarked on a number of initiatives to improve delivery of information to its various users. The rural agricultural development authority is now in the process of computerizing its parish offices and linking them with the head office here in Kingston. When completed, information on extension programmes, marketing news and other critical areas will be available on-line. Perhaps the challenge here is for networking of the relevant agricultural information units to include this facility as a base for the development of joint website. The rationale here is that maximum use would be made of expensive facilities which would result in greater and more efficient utilization.

As the catalyst to development, information must now be given its proper status. This network will therefore be one of the driving forces behind the provision of information for agricultural development in Jamaica as we desperately struggle with the forces of globalization. IICA, the Kellogg Foundation and the Ministry of Agriculture in partnership with all the other information and documentation units will ensure that our network succeeds.

The country requires it and the sector demands it. I would therefore urge you all to ensure that we succeed this time around. Failure to grasp the opportunities that this information age provides will leave us hopelessly behind.

In closing, let me wish for you a successful workshop. Please be assured of my support and I will be closely following the progress of this network.

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## **CARDI's Role in Agricultural Information (The CAIS)**

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*Mr. Hayden Blades  
Executive Director, CARDI*

The following is the script of a slide presentation presented by Mr. Blades, Executive Director of CARDI, on the Caribbean Agricultural Information Service (CAIS).

## **CARDI MISSION**

**“The integration of science, technology and information with entrepreneurship to create and develop profitable and sustainable business systems and enterprises”**

### **CARDI's role in Agricultural Sector as it relates to information**

- Information is the basis of knowledge
- Knowledge is the key to many of the complex challenges facing the Caribbean agricultural sector
- Hence improved access to information and application of knowledge will support the development of competitive business systems and enterprises ⇒ increased incomes

**CARDICTACAS**

*CARDI's effort to improve access to information of relevance to the agricultural sector is the Caribbean Agricultural Information Service: CAIS*

- Agricultural information needs survey
- Regional meetings
- National consultation

*Confirmed the need for the development of CAIS*

CARDI/CAIS

**CAIS GOAL: To provide improved access to technology and marketing information to support competitiveness and improve incomes in the agricultural sector**

CARDI/CAIS

### **CAIS Objectives:**

- To provide an agricultural information service to the public sector, private sector and NGO's
- To contribute to capacity development at the national levels of Caribbean countries by collecting, organizing, repackaging and disseminating agricultural technology and marketing information.

### **Philosophy:**

- Access to different formats and media based on the needs of various clients.

*CARDICTACAS*

## **Key Client Groups**

- Ministries of Agriculture (Stakeholders)
- Researchers
- Policy makers
- Technicians and professionals
- Extensionists

*CARDICTACAS*



## Key Client Groups (cont'd)

- Network members

- PROCICARIBE } Land and water resources
- CAIS } Rice
- } Plant Genetic Resources
- } Post Harvest
- } Fruit
- } Biosystematics
- } Small Ruminants
- } IPM

CARDUACTACUS

## Key Client Groups (cont'd)

### Trade Correspondents Network (TCN)

- } Marketers
- } Exporters
- } Local wholesalers and retailers
- } Marketing Boards

CARDUACTACUS

## Key Client Groups (cont'd)

- **Producers Groups**
  - **Farmer Associations**
  - **Commodity Associations**

\*(groups overlap to some extent)

Some client groups are also data custodians i.e. suppliers of information.

CARDUCTACUS

## Selected Subjects/Topics in the following fields

- **Local, regional, international agricultural scientific information**
- **Policy matters**
- **Marketing facts and figures**
- **Fruit technology information**
- **IPM (Plant Genetic Resources)**
- **Small ruminants**
- **Land and water resource management**
- **Information and telecommunication technology updates**
- **Post Harvest**

CARDUCTACUS

## **Products and Services**

### **1 Question and Answer Service (QAS) via:**

- ⇒ online
- telephone
- fax
- email
- ⇒ selected coverage based on regional priorities
- ⇒ access to subject selected journals

*CARDICTACAS*

## **Products and Services (cont'd)**

### **2 Referral to Key sources of information (electronic and hard copy)**

- ⇒ Data directories e.g. Web site Directories, location of  
    Agricultural Data sets
- ⇒ Caribbean Information Tools e.g. Acronyms  
    Directory
- ⇒ Referral tools

*CARDICTACAS*

## Products and Services (cont'd)

### 3 Publications

- Electronic and hard copy formats
- Technical publications
- Fact sheets
- Production guides
- Catalogues
- Access to publication support

CARDICTACUS

## Products and Services (cont'd)

### 4 Database development

- Contact
- Skills
- Project list
- Commodity/Thematic

CARDICTACUS

## **Products and Services (cont'd)**

### **5 Facilitate Communication**

- Indirect email access via CARDI offices**
- Distribution of "snail mail" via CARDI offices**

*CARDICTACUS*

## **Products and Services (cont'd)**

### **6 CAIS Web site (under construction)**

- Linkages with regional and international websites**
- Access to publications**
- Access to QAS**
- Electronic discussion fora**

*CARDICTACUS*

# Capacity Building

## 1 Training programmes funding for:

- At least one regional training workshop/seminar in information
- At least two regional research conference/seminar for researchers

CARDICTACAS

## Capacity Building (cont'd)

### 2 Agricultural Data Locator/(Information Inventory)

- investigating information content requirements of key agricultural sector institution compilation of data sets and their content (topics and description of content)

CARDICTACAS

## Capacity Building (cont'd)

**3 Assessment of computer and telecommunication current capacity available to agricultural institutions.**

CARDICTACUS

## Capacity Building (cont'd)

**4 Regional Network Development (logical and physical):**

- collaborate in support of national network development
- development of regional information standards/guidelines/policies
- facilitate electronic network fora
- facilitate exchange of information experience
- regional databases of information and other agricultural professionals

CARDICTACUS

## Capacity Building (cont'd)

### 5 Facilitate linkages between CAIS, PROCICARIBE Trade Correspondents

- agricultural information professionals (CAIS)
- scientists/researchers/producers groups (PROCICARIBE)
- Marketers (TCN)

CARDICTACUS

## 1999/2000 Activities

- QAS Pilot in CARDI Jamaica
- QAS Pilot in St Lucia
- National Network with key T & T institutions
- Information Inventory in 6 countries.
- Access to selected scientific and marketing publications network members.
- 2000 CAIS Regional meeting/workshop

CARDICTACUS



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**AFTERNOON  
SESSION**

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**DECLARATION OF THE  
NETWORK OF AGRICULTURAL INFORMATION  
AND DOCUMENTATION UNITS IN JAMAICA**

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We, at "*The First Meeting of the Network of Agricultural Information and Documentation Units in Jamaica*", in Kingston, Jamaica on Friday October 22, 1999 coming together for the first time to create the Network of Agricultural Information and Documentation Units in Jamaica, hereby sign the following agreement:

1. We the members of agricultural information and documentation units in Jamaica affirm our desire and intention to support and promote cooperative activities to augment and enhance the provision of agricultural information services to our clients in Jamaica and internationally;
2. We agree to establish and institutionalize this group to be known hereafter as the *Network of Agricultural Information and Documentation Units in Jamaica*;
3. We seek formal recognition and support of the Heads of our institutions and agencies to execute the goals of the Network;
4. We support the hemispheric initiative developed by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) entitled the Agricultural Information and Documentation Systems for Latin America and the Caribbean (SIDALC) which aims at encouraging the development of national agricultural information systems within the Latin American and Caribbean region and assisting them to strengthen their operations through training and professional advancement opportunities.
5. We recognise the role of the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) in fostering the Caribbean Agricultural Information System (CAIS).
6. We acknowledge the support of the IICA and the Ministry of Agriculture in reviving this networking effort and facilitating the launching of the Network of Agricultural Information and Documentation Units in Jamaica.
7. We agree that the Secretariat of the Network of Agricultural Information and Documentation Units in Jamaica be the Ministry of Agriculture Library at Hope Gardens, Kingston 6, with support from the IICA Information Centre.
8. We hereby agree to operate in accordance with the objectives and terms of reference established at this the first meeting of the Network.

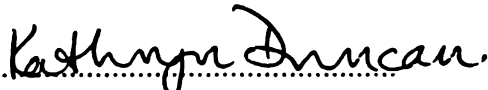
**SIGNING OF DECLARATION**



Claudette Milford-Allen  
Ministry of Agriculture



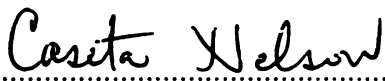
Brenda Smith  
Ministry of Agriculture



Kathryn Duncan  
Inter-American Institute for  
Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)



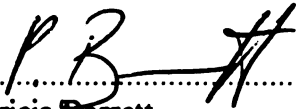
Gladstone Barrett  
Food & Agriculture Organization (FAO)



Caseta Nelson  
College of Agriculture, Science & Education



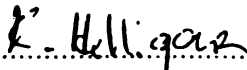
Judith Fagan-Brown  
Science Research Council



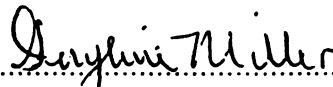
Patricia Barrett  
Jamaica Association of Records  
Managers and Administrators



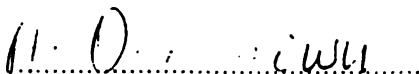
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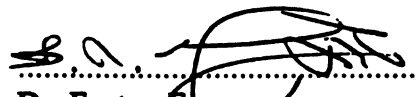
  
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Ebony Park HEART Academy

  
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Cooperation on Agriculture (IIA)

  
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Inter-American Institute for  
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Jeanette Hylton  
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## **Results of the Discussions of the Working Groups**

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The following are the **draft** network agenda items that were developed in the working groups at the seminar. These will be refined at a follow-up meeting.

### **MISSION**

THE NETWORK WILL FACILITATE THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND RESOURCES IN SUPPORT OF AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT, THROUGH COLLABORATION, TRAINING AND THE USE OF APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGIES AND EXPERTISE. IT WILL ALSO PROVIDE A FORUM FOR THE RESOLUTION OF EMERGING TRENDS AND ISSUES IN THE FIELD OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT.

### **VISION**

TO BE THE DYNAMIC FORCE BEHIND THE PROVISION OF CURRENT, RELIABLE, AND EASILY ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION TO MEET THE NEEDS OF OUR CLIENTS, LOCALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY.

(OUR CLIENTS INCLUDE ALL PERSONS OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR INSTITUTIONS RELATED TO AGRICULTURE: DECISIONMAKERS, EDUCATORS, RESEARCHERS, UNIVERSITY STUDENTS, EXTENSION OFFICERS, FARMERS AND INFORMATION UNITS).

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. TO ESTABLISH AN INTEGRATED AGRICULTURAL INFORMATION SYSTEM THAT WILL AUGMENT EXISTING INFORMATION RESOURCES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL.
2. TO COORDINATE THE INFORMATION RESOURCES OF NETWORK MEMBERS IN ORDER TO FACILITATE TIMELY ACCESS.
3. TO ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN CONTACTS IN ORDER TO ENSURE THE AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION REQUIRED FOR THE VARIOUS AGRICULTURAL SUB-SECTORS.
4. TO BE A GLOBAL CHANNEL THROUGH WHICH AGRICULTURAL INFORMATION IS GARNERED AND DISSEMINATED.

5. TO ASSESS THE HUMAN RESOURCE TRAINING NEEDS OF THE NETWORK AND FACILITATE RELEVANT PROGRAMMES TO ADDRESS THOSE NEEDS.
6. TO EMPLOY A STRATEGIC PLANNING APPROACH TO INFORMATION MANAGEMENT TO ENSURE VIABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY.

#### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

1. TO ACT AS THE FOCAL POINT TO CO-ORDINATE ACTIVITIES AMONG NETWORK MEMBERS UNDER THE MANDATES OF THE AGREED GOVERNING BODY AND TO EXECUTE THE ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS OF THE NETWORK.
2. THE FOCAL POINT SHALL ACT AS THE FORUM TO FACILITATE CAPACITY BUILDING AND SUCCESSION PLANNING IN AGRICULTURAL INFORMATION MANAGEMENT.

#### **POLICIES FOR RESOURCE SHARING AND COMMUNICATION**

1. POLICIES OF THE MEMBERS OF THE NETWORK SHOULD BE EXAMINED AND ANALYSED WITH A VIEW TO CREATING POLICIES FOR RESOURCE SHARING AND COMMUNICATION FOR THE NETWORK AS A WHOLE:

##### SHARING OF POLICIES WITH RESPECT TO:

- LENDING
  - PHOTOCOPYING
  - VISITING
  - INTERNSHIP
  - GIFTS AND EXCHANGE
  - ONLINE SEARCHES
2. FOCAL POINT TO BE ESTABLISHED AT THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE. SECRETARIAT TO BE THE INFORMATION CENTRE AT THE LOCAL IICA OFFICE.
  3. THE IICA/KELLOGG FOUNDATION PROJECT WHICH IS FOR FOUR YEARS IN THE FIRST PHASE WILL PROVIDE SEED MONEY FOR BASIC ACTIVITIES OF THE NETWORK. THIS INCLUDES MEETINGS, NEWSLETTER, LOCAL COMMUNICATION (TELEPHONE, FAX, EMAIL) AND SOME TRAINING IN LOCAL INSTITUTIONS.



4. **POLICY FOR THE SHARING OF INFORMATION RESOURCES:**

- I. **BOOKS & JOURNALS:** THE NETWORK WILL SUPPORT INTER-LIBRARY LOANS AS A POLICY OF RESOURCE SHARING FOR BOOKS AND JOURNALS ACCORDING TO EXISTING POLICY GUIDELINES OF THE LENDING ORGANIZATION.
- II. **PHOTOCOPIES:** MEMBERS OF THE NETWORK MAY OBTAIN PHOTOCOPIES OF ARTICLES ON REQUEST. THIS WOULD BE CONDUCTED WITHIN THE POLICIES OF THE MEMBER PROVIDING THE COPIES.

5. **POLICY FOR GIFTS**

THE NETWORK WILL SUPPORT GIFTS & EXCHANGES.

6. **TRAINING POLICY**

THE NETWORK WILL SUPPORT TRAINING INITIATIVES WHICH WILL BENEFIT MEMBERS OF THE NETWORK.

7. **COMMUNICATION POLICY**

- THE NETWORK WILL ENCOURAGE THE USE OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY, e.g. EMAIL AND FAX. MEETINGS WILL BE HELD ON A QUARTERLY BASIS AND THESE WILL BE ROTATED AT DIFFERENT INSTITUTIONS.
- AN ANNUAL NEWSLETTER WILL BE PRODUCED AS A COMMUNICATION ITEM.

8. **EQUIPMENT POLICY**

NETWORK MEMBERS WILL ENDEAVOUR TO SHARE EQUIPMENT BASED ON THE LENDING POLICIES OF THE PARTICIPATING INSTITUTION.

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## Vote of Thanks

*Claudette Milford-Allen*  
*Director, Information & Documentation, Ministry of Agriculture*

I am honoured to have been a part of this memorable occasion. I am sure that all of us have benefited in a positive way from the rich cross multiplication of ideas from all of our presenters.

I would like to thank our speakers:

Dr. Chelston Brathwaite, who gave us great insight into IICA's role in putting information and documentation on the front burner and the provision of his full support.

Mr. Gladstone Barrett of FAO, who pledged his organization's support to our Network emphasizing the importance of accessibility.

Ms. Patricia Barrett, who spoke on the Freedom of Information and the importance of accountability and the modernization of Government departments. Her presentation was informative and instructive: a good learning experience for us all.

Dr. the Honourable Fenton Ferguson, who has pledged his full support to our Network.

Mr. Hayden Blades, who brought us a new perspective, that of seeing information as a business. He has indeed given us food for thought.

Our Chaiperson, who ably carried the programme in an efficient manner.

Thanks to Kathryn Duncan, IICA's Information Specialist, who had the responsibility of coordinating all of today's activities. Kathryn, I am sure, is happy at its success.

To our secretaries, Kim Caesar and Andrea Tucker, who gave their time and expertise to ensure the smooth running of this workshop.

Last by no means least, thank you all for participating. Thank you for remaining and sharing your ideas on the shaping of our Network. Let me assure you that our responsibilities to this Network are just beginning.

We will be sending to you all a draft document of recommendations coming out of today's activities, for your comments. From this will come the basis for our Network functions. We will meet again.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you.



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## ACRONYMS

<b>AGRINTER</b>	Inter-American System of Agricultural Information
<b>AIDBA</b>	Inter-American Association of Agricultural Librarians and Documentalists
<b>ARMA</b>	Association of Records Managers and Administrators
<b>CARDI</b>	Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute
<b>CASE</b>	College of Agriculture, Science and Education
<b>CATIE</b>	Tropical Agronomic Centre for Research and Education
<b>CIDIA</b>	Inter-American Centre for Agricultural Documentation and Information
<b>DICCAI</b>	Directorate for Information, Communication, Training and Institutional Affairs
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
<b>FOI</b>	Freedom of Information
<b>IICA</b>	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
<b>JARMA</b>	Jamaica Association of Records Managers and Administrators
<b>LAC</b>	Latin America and the Caribbean
<b>PIDBA</b>	Inter-American Programme for the Development of Agricultural Libraries
<b>RADA</b>	Rural Agricultural Development Authority
<b>SIAPA</b>	Agricultural Information and Analysis System
<b>SIDALC</b>	Agricultural Information and Documentation System for Latin America and the Caribbean
<b>SIRI</b>	Sugar industry Research Institute
<b>UWI</b>	University of the West Indies

**FECHA DE DEVOLUCION**


ET-A2/JM-99-05

Proceedings of the workshop  
network of agricultural in-  
novation and documentation ...

Nombre del solicitante

