

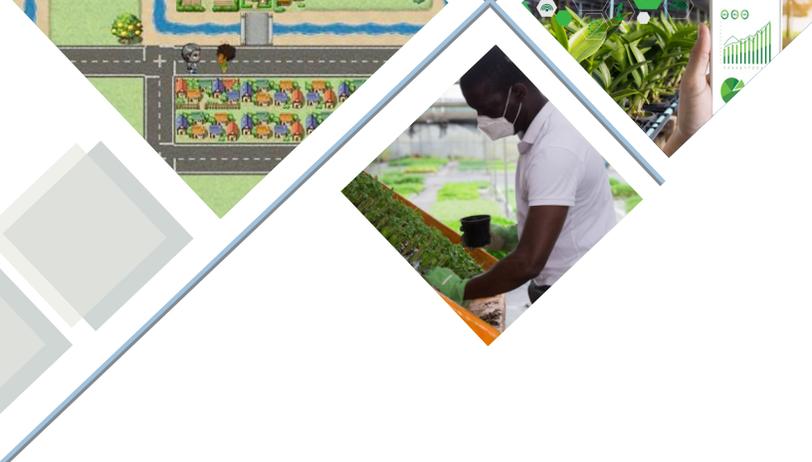


Jamaica



Significant Achievements 2020

- The introduction and development of biofortified crop varieties for production and consumption, as part of the CARICOM regional strategy to address non-communicable diseases, commenced with observation field trials of 25 zinc biofortified rice advanced breeding lines and 37 iron biofortified bean (large red bean and small black bean) advanced breeding lines in Guyana and Belize, respectively. The trials were executed by the CARICOM Biofortification Network (CBN), led by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and comprising the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute, the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture, the Latin American Irrigation Rice Fund, Guyana Rice Development Board, Harvest Plus LAC, the Pan American Health Organisation, the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Immigration of Belize and Penn State University.
- IICA launched a gamified course called Bio-Economy World to introduce players/learners to the bioeconomy – a knowledge-based approach to harnessing economic benefits from the sustainable and environmentally-friendly use of renewable resources. The course is targeted at youth from 12 – 21 years of age across the English-speaking Caribbean and incorporates game design elements to deliver a fun and interactive learning experience. Bio-economy World teaches the principles of sustainable natural resource management, climate smart agriculture, and science and technology application, while taking players/learners on a quest in a fantasy world, where they must assist characters to employ bio-economy principles and techniques to solve problems on a farm ravaged by the effects of climate change.
- Under the General Agreement for Technical Cooperation signed in 2017 between IICA and the University of Technology, Jamaica (UTECH Jamaica), IICA delivered a face-to-face and distance learning Rural Tourism course to final year candidate students at the University pursuing a Master of Science degree in Integrated Rural Development. The course was delivered over 15 three-hour sessions and the content was drawn largely from the IICA/OAS Agroecotourism virtual course, which was translated into English. Six of the inaugural cohort of seven students completed the Rural Tourism course as an elective in the Rural Entrepreneurship stream of the program.
- Under IICA's Special COVID-19 Fund for the Caribbean Region and in collaboration with the Veterinary Services Division of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MOAF), the development of a surveillance programme was initiated to monitor the manifestation of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in the livestock sector, with a particular focus on foodborne pathogens. During 2020, IICA and the MOAF conducted stakeholder sensitization sessions, convened the working group and inter-ministerial sub-committee, and commenced the collection, collation and analysis of data needed for the development of the AMR pre-emptive surveillance programme. This exercise included the hosting of 5 livestock species meetings (covering 7 production systems), attended by 78 individuals. The overall objective of the AMR surveillance programme is to keep Jamaica's food supply safe.
- Capacity building of government officials in agricultural health and food safety (AHFS) continued. The sessions covered Adoption of Electronic Phytosanitary Certificate Systems; Diagnostics and Surveillance for Tomato Leaf Miner; Locust Management and Pesticide-related Dietary Risk Management. IICA Jamaica also facilitated participation in meetings of the Codex Alimentarius and the World Organisation of Animal Health (OIE), as well as a Hemispheric Technical Forum on challenges and opportunities for AHFS services during COVID-19. These activities were undertaken in collaboration with partners, including the USDA Greater Caribbean Safeguarding Initiative, University of Florida, the Ministry of Foreign Relations and Worship of Argentina, Inter-American Coordination Group on Plant Health, and the Plant Health Committee of the Southern Cone.
- IICA worked with small and medium enterprises to structure a local sustainable mushroom value chain, which harnesses the synergy between utilization of



renewal indigenous raw materials and rural human capital. The Institute partnered with a local and Canada-based company to develop an industry plan for the Jamaican gourmet mushroom industry. The industry plan proposes an optimized supply chain, with an investment plan that was developed from an assessment of the nascent local mushroom production system and international manufacturing best practices for this industry. Additionally, IICA is promoting the potential of the industry to funding and market prospects, aiming to create opportunities for the economic independence of the 300 women and youth who are establishing the Jamaican gourmet mushroom industry.

- As part of a regional initiative to tackle the universal problem of agricultural organic waste management, the Institute convened a two-day workshop and an online webinar, highlighting the principles of integrated organic waste management, waste stream analysis from the comparison of national and regional data, and composting, as a profitable organic waste management strategy. Some 43 persons, comprising farmers, solid waste managers, agricultural technicians, and academia, participated in the training workshop. IICA also worked with the national botanical gardens to examine the feasibility of converting the agricultural organic waste that it produces into a revenue generating composting enterprise.