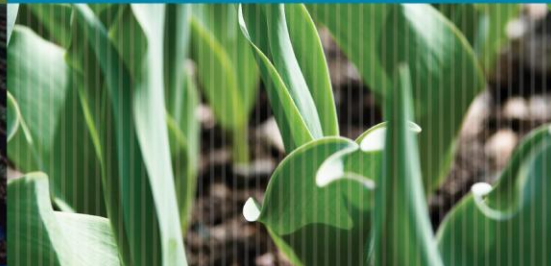
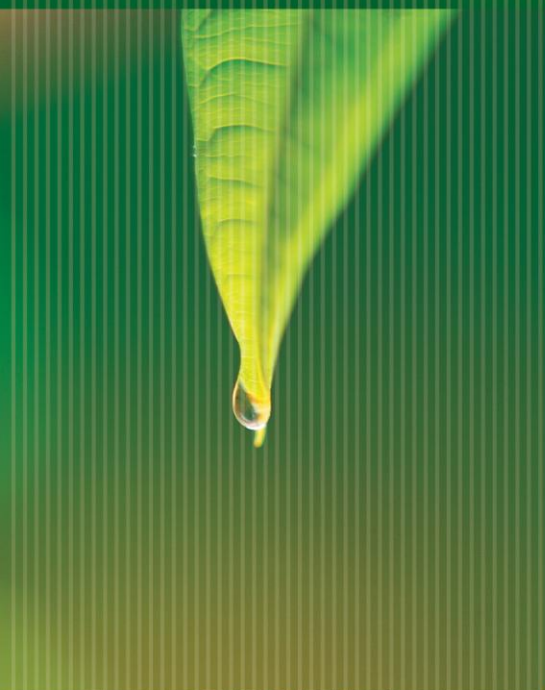




2007

A n n u a l R e p o r t

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



Inter-American Institute for
Cooperation on Agriculture

65th
ANNIVERSARY
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ANNUAL REPORT 2007

**IICA's CONTRIBUTION TO AGRICULTURE AND
THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RURAL
COMMUNITIES IN SAINT LUCIA**

**OFFICE IN SAINT LUCIA
MARCH 2008**

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Foreward



- Feedback from you, is an important part of learning to do things better. Our small but committed staff, within our capacities, will continue to work assiduously to respond to your needs in 2008.



IICA remains committed to its principle of accountability and transparency to its stake-holders.

This report details the results of our actions to assist the Government and other stake-holders in agriculture and related sectors respond to the various challenges.

This year, in presenting our report, the collaboration of all our partners and stakeholders both internally and externally, is hereby acknowledged. We trust that the report will provide sufficient clarity on the work in which the Institute was engaged throughout the year.

In 2007, IICA celebrated its 65th anniversary as a hemispheric institution and moving into 2008, IICA Saint Lucia will celebrate 25 years of service to the Government and People of Saint Lucia.

We are aware that over the years, there have been changes in the demands from the sector and our various stakeholders. So, as we progress to another phase of our own development, we remain at your service. However, we need your help as stakeholders to assist us in making IICA Saint Lucia more informative, more relevant and more vigorous to meet the demands of the sector and you, our valued stakeholders.

Feedback from you is an important part of learning to do things better. Our small but committed staff, within our capacities, will continue to work assiduously to respond to your need in 2008.

Send your views by post,
e-mail or fax to:

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1. Introduction



There is no question whether Saint Lucia agriculture will survive. It is imperative that the sector survives. However, real challenges exist to its growth and development. Creative solutions, joint action, cooperation and collaboration, discussion, dialogue and agreement of all stakeholders will be required if the sector is to overcome the challenges and take its rightful place in the economic development of the country.

The year 2007 was a most challenging one for agriculture development and assistance programmes in Saint Lucia. Meeting food needs and demands required the importation of increasing amounts of foodstuff, and with petroleum fuels rising, continued high global oil prices adversely affected efforts at sustainable economic expansion.



In addition, the prospects of loss of preferential trade for bananas continued to foster severe uncertainty in the industry and there was a newly elected Government with a newly appointed Minister of Agriculture at the helm in the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Forestry and Fisheries (MALFF).

Notwithstanding the challenges, friendly governments, national, regional and international organizations including IICA continued to lend support to the Government to refocus, redirect and reposition the sector and set it on a focused growth and development path.

Following the launch of the Leadership in Agriculture Programme, the Director General of IICA, Dr Chelston W D Brathwaite, and the new Minister of MALFF signed a new Cooperation Agreement for targeted support to the new Government. In this regard the IICA Office continued to provide technical cooperation services to Saint Lucia, focusing its efforts on assisting the Government to orient its priorities in line with national, regional and hemispheric concerns and activities.

In 2007 also, the Office continued to employ diverse channels and courses of action to strengthen the Institutional capacity of the MALFF, its staff, rural groups, women and youth and, in particular, those affected by Hurricane Dean.

Notwithstanding the efforts of all and given the prevailing and impending developments at the global, hemispheric, CARICOM and domestic levels, the thrust for the development of a sustainable agriculture sector will have to be based on increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of agricultural production, processing and marketing systems.

2. Executive Summary



Agriculture continues to be a key sector in the economic development of Saint Lucia and although its relative contribution to GDP has been steadily declining over the last six (6) years, it continues to play a significant role in the country's socio-economic development. The sector plays a multi-functional role in earning foreign exchange, generating employment, social stability and contributing towards economic growth, health and food security.

Throughout 2007, IICA continued to provide technical cooperation services to Saint Lucia focusing its efforts on assisting the New Government to orient its priorities in line with national, regional and hemispheric concerns and activities, and to guarantee the Institute's continued contribution to the development of agriculture and rural life in Saint Lucia.

Early in the year, through participation in the "Forum for Leaders in Agriculture" created by the Director General, the new Minister of Agriculture's grasp on up-to-date information on agriculture and rural life throughout the hemisphere was improved. Additional priority actions were also agreed upon that paved the way for modernization and institutional reforms targeting the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Forestry and Fisheries (MALFF).

The Office continued its support to the Hemispheric Ministerial process and the Ministerial Delegate and facilitated national dialogue and the completion of questionnaires to capture the expectation of leaders in the sector. It also increased their understanding of the Agro Matrix as a tool and its use in national development planning.

In August, Hurricane Dean impacted Saint Lucia and inflicted significant damage to the agriculture sector. As a basis for the determination of the interventions needed to rehabilitate and reconstruct the sector, the Office facilitated the conduct of a comprehensive and credible assessment of the damage sustained by the agriculture sector.

Recognizing that development of enterprises is inextricably linked with participation in the decision making process, the Office in Saint Lucia enhanced the knowledge capacity of the MALFF and the leaders of the cooperative sector through training. A draft framework for the Development of Agribusiness to include rural business development, access to credit and the amalgamation of farmers' organization was drafted for discussion with stakeholders. The Office also supported the efforts of MALFF to consult with industry leaders in agriculture and related sectors to reach agreement towards the development of a marketing infrastructure targeting non banana farmers.

The capacity and capability of pig farmers in the livestock sub-sector to adhere to food safety practices during production and slaughter was significantly improved through the conduct of a workshop on Good Production Practices for

Figs. This was implemented jointly with the assistance of the Florida Association of Volunteer Action in the Caribbean and the Americas (FAVA/CA).

The capacity of the banana industry stakeholders to manage Sigatoka leaf spot disease was enhanced through the training of farmers and spray operators. A draft Simulation Plan for Black Sigatoka was prepared and distributed among industry stakeholders for discussion.

Saint Lucia has been put on alert against Moko disease. As a result, there are increased activities for early detection. Assessments by banana industry officials to farms where disease symptoms on banana were reported were supported and technical input in the development of a training video on Moko disease given towards the implementation of a public awareness exercise.

Staff of the Forestry Department strengthened their capacity and developed mechanisms to effectively transfer their knowledge, on the use value of forest and forest products, to the wider population through technical and financial support provided by the Institute.

The Office continued to employ diverse channels and courses of actions to strengthen the capacity of rural groups mainly Women and Youth and, in particular, those affected by Hurricane Dean.

The Saint Lucia Network of Rural Women Producers (SLNRWP) was empowered to initiate actions to chart its own development path and was supported in the conduct of a needs assessment among its members. IICA also solicited the support of its partner agencies and received complementary funding from the Canadian Local Initiative Fund (CLIF) to rehabilitate and expand fruits and vegetable production in four (4) vulnerable communities, targeting women and youth.

Governance within the Saint Lucia Agriculture Forum for Youth (SLAFY) was strengthened when the group hosted the Executive Meeting of the Caribbean Agriculture Forum for Youth (CAFY).

Stakeholders in the agriculture and related sectors understanding of the cost, benefit and operations of production using low cost hydroponics systems were enhanced through the conduct of two (2) training workshops, one in the North and the other in the South of the island. The technology will be further used to encourage greater youth participation in agriculture and efforts were advanced with the introduction and construction of the first school based system at the Marigot Secondary School.

Further advances were made by the Office for the implementation of a broad based inter-agency agenda to be developed within the OECS.

3. The State of Agriculture and Rural Life in Saint Lucia



3.1 Factors in the National Context

Three (3) major events had significant impact on the growth and development of the agriculture sector of Saint Lucia.

- i. The change to a new administration at the end of 2006;
- ii. The sudden illness and subsequent death of former Prime Minister, Sir John G M Compton;
- iii. Hurricane Dean which hit the island on August 16th and severely impacted the agriculture sector.

Notwithstanding the challenges the sector played a multi-functional role in earning foreign exchange, generating employment, social stability and contributing towards economic growth, health and food security.

It must however be recognized that the continuing downward trend in economic performance of the agriculture sector, can only be reversed if specific policy interventions for the sector’s modernization and sustained growth are deliberately taken.



Higher sector growth targets will only be achieved if there is a substantial shift from part-time farming to commercial agriculture, the adoption of innovative techniques and modern technologies, and the growth of agri-business enterprises.

The transformation must be catalyzed by Government but private sector-led, in an improved enabling environment that enhances productivity and profitability, removes constraints to private sector involvement and promotes stronger public-private partnerships.

Higher budgetary allocations, more tactical incentives and tangible policy support from the public sector are vital to render agriculture more attractive and financially profitable, thus minimizing the economy’s evolution to another monoculture, this time based on tourism.

Finally, agricultural policies alone will be insufficient to develop and transform Saint Lucia's agricultural sector on a sustainable basis. These policies will need to be integrally linked with macroeconomic, trade, investment, social development and environmental policies, in sync with the new regional and international trade agreements and imperatives.

Given the prevailing and impending developments at the global, hemispheric, CARICOM and domestic levels, the thrust for the development of a sustainable agricultural sector will have to be based on increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of agricultural production, processing and marketing systems.

3.2 Changes in Legislation and Policies on Agriculture and Rural Life

The Government placed renewed emphasis on the agriculture sector. In addition to committing to the implementation of a number of policy measures as was stated in the Draft National Policy and Strategic Plan, the Government has continued the process of consultation and dialogue among stakeholders.

The increasing price of oil has resulted in a significant increase in the price of inputs such as animal feed and fertilizer. In response, Government has revised the incentive regime and removed all customs duties and service charges, in an effort to address issues in the fisheries sector and has mandated the following:

- The removals of the St Lucia Fish Marketing Corporation (SLFMC) from under the auspices of the National Development Corporation and its reassignment to the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Forestry and Fisheries.
- The recommitment of the SLFMC to the fisheries sub-sector by guaranteeing the purchase of all the fish landed and the timely payment of dues to the fisher folk.
- For 2008, the Government has committed to the construction of an additional 10 Fish Aggregating Devices (FADS) and a Fish landing Facility in Anse La Raye.

3.3 Institutional Reforms in Agriculture and Rural Life

The Government has committed to the development of a new marketing infrastructure for agriculture. This new arrangement will replace the existing Marketing Board which has been the subject of numerous efficiency evaluation and reviews in recent past.



The new structure is being developed through extensive consultation with stakeholders and related Ministries and is aimed at making the marketing and distribution of agricultural produce more efficient and effective in responding to the demands of the sector.

The MALFF with the assistance of IICA has continued its effort to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the MALFF. This exercise when completed will inform decision making and result in a possible re-alignment of the Ministry, to meet current demands from the sector. This institutional review conducted by IICA will be presented to the Cabinet of Ministers for review and endorsement in the first quarter of 2008.

3.4 Agri-food Trade and the Development of Agribusiness

Despite Government’s continued effort to streamline agricultural commodity chains and to foster stronger market awareness, trade in fresh agri-food product remain a somewhat uncoordinated activity with many actors and mechanisms driving local production and trade.

To capture backward and forward linkages and equity being lost in the sector, a dynamic agri-business enabling environment and an entrepreneurial perspective is being streamlined through organizational structures and procedures. Notwithstanding the various initiatives the need for coordinated efforts to upgrade capacity and encourage an agribusiness culture towards development of the sector and to drive production remains crucial.

The need also for accurate data collection to detect surges, both peaks and troughs, and to support decision making is a necessary catalyst which must be ignited with urgency.

Domestic trade in fresh produce and processed goods must be expanded by developing hotel demand, production capacity and excellent relations, so that product, production and financing strategies become markets-led. Substantial increases in farm productivity and efficiencies (e.g. reduced costs of production) are critical to sector competitiveness in local and export markets, higher food security levels, reduced food imports and deeper inter-sectoral linkages.



Productivity increases are necessary to boost profitability in the sector and to fuel increases in farm incomes. If farming remains unprofitable, agriculture will not attract entrepreneurship investment or technology, thus guaranteeing continued decline.

3.5 Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Current obligations under the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Measures have made it necessary for Saint Lucia to review its national approach to Agricultural Health and Food Safety (AHFS) System in order to survive the pressures of globalization and trade liberalization. Besides the SPS standards, other multi-national agreements and mechanisms to harmonize regulations have been recognized as being important to facilitate trade.

In the country, consumers are assuming an active role to influence Government policies and actions taken by the private sector. They sway public attitude and get Government to do more in order to enhance food safety and quality, protect the environment and reduce risk to human health from pests and diseases. There are increased investments in quality control and sanitation. Fresh commodities are increasingly being subjected to scrutiny and regulations, however, consumers buying products remain unaware of the cost associated with improved food safety.

There is increased attention to the environmental impact from agricultural production practices including the examination of animal and plant pest and disease control methods. As a result, methods of environmentally compatible pest and disease control technologies are being introduced. Organic farming is

gaining prominence and the Fairtrade criteria for bananas where sustainable practices that restricts the use of agro chemicals is being promoted.

There is increased cooperation between Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministries of Health, Consumer Affairs and External Affairs. Programmes of food safety are being considered for implementation beyond the farm level through to the entire agri-food chain. This follows pilot projects and short term activities undertaken in previous years. The country continues to participate actively in regional and international discussions on plant health, animal health and food safety and standards. Decisions are taken based on elements contained in the SPS Agreement and other international agreements related to agricultural health and food safety.

Despite these, and given all the challenges, there is need for a complete assessment of the situation with recommendations for the way forward for a sustainable AHFS system.

3.6 Sustainable Rural Development

The recent poverty survey revealed that there are literally hundreds of person living below the poverty line in Saint Lucia. It is evident therefore that without growth and dynamism in agriculture, rural communities will continue to suffer from increased vulnerability, underdevelopment, stagnation and social instability.

Only a more dynamic agriculture sector can provide for greater diversification and transformation of the rural economy. However, governance and development need to be grounded at the community level so that the process of government and economic growth is fueled by the concerns and needs of the community.

Existing institutional structures address some or all aspects and features of the rural sector to the point where streamlining might be necessary. Overall there is no overarching rural development focus or strategy from which institutions would have a specific role and operational function.

Ministries are responsible for policies in their respective areas. For example, the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Fisheries and Forestry has responsibility for Rural Agricultural Development while the Ministry for Social Transformation, Human Services, Family Affairs, Youth and Sports has responsibility for Rural Employment and Poverty Mitigation Programmes. This scenario lends itself to situations of fragmentation, overlaps and redundancies.

For sustainable rural development to occur in Saint Lucia there is need for a holistic approach in which economic, social and environmental cost and benefit of all proposed actions are considered simultaneously. The appropriate institutional and organizational structures and arrangements to support and implement such approach are also to be put in place.

IICA SAINT LUCIA PROFESSIONAL DESIGNATED TO PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE



In 2007 Everton Ambrose, professional in the IICA Office in Saint Lucia was designated to the Steering Committee of the Project “*Reducing Pesticide Runoff to the Caribbean Sea*”. The Project is being implemented in Columbia, Costa Rica and Nicaragua and will demonstrate reduced pesticide runoff to the Caribbean Sea through improved pesticide management throughout the life cycle of pesticides.

Other membership of the Project Steering Committee consists of the persons from the participating countries, the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), FAO, Croplife LA, Earth University and two non-Governmental Organisations one representing the agricultural producers and the other representing the environmental sector.

The Project Steering Committee provides overall direction to the project to give guidance to the Project Manager and National Project Managers. It will review and approve the work plan and budget for the project. It develops and approves terms of reference for the National Coordination Committees and oversees their functioning to ensure inter-ministry involvement and the active involvement of all stakeholders. It develops criteria and guidelines for the demonstration projects, review and approve work plans for the demonstration projects and oversees their execution. It coordinates with the Project Manager to ensure the project stays on schedule and that project outputs are being completed on time and within budget. It coordinates the work of advisory panels or ad hoc committees that may be established.

Everton is also Technical Secretary of the Coordinating Group of Pesticides Control Boards of the Caribbean (CGPC).



In recognition of the 65th anniversary of the IICA's contribution to Agriculture and Rural Life in the hemisphere and in response to the need to address and highlight global concerns, we invited Youth across the Caribbean Region to express through art, the influence of global warming on the Agricultural Sector.

Following are the Art Brut of students of the Gros Islet, Ciceron and Sir Ira Simmons Secondary Schools.









4. Implementation of National Technical Cooperation Agenda



In an Open Forum and through the administration of a questionnaire we asked members of the community of agriculture and rural life if they are aware of IICA's work and how they thought IICA Saint Lucia was fulfilling its mission to the agriculture sector.

4.1 Listening to the Voice of Our Stakeholders

IICA's actions strengthen development in agriculture ensuring good policy decisions.

IICA's focus has covered in one way or another most of the crucial issues of rural agriculture.

IICA is assisting Saint Lucia's agriculture sector to position itself to take advantage of opportunities presented by new markets to develop rural areas.



"It could only have happened through teamwork and because we realized after the 1st crop that all elements of production and the application of business principles needed to be considered and applied early for effective results."

IICA supports linkages with other sectors particularly tourism and agro-processing.



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

Forum of Leaders: Repositioning and commercializing agriculture in Saint Lucia requires an institutional framework that generates effective leadership, vision and direction for the implementation of the Government's policies and strategy.



Through participation in the “*Forum for Leaders in Agriculture*” created by the Director General, the new Minister of Agriculture grasp on up-to-date information on agriculture and rural life throughout the hemisphere was improved. Additional priority actions were also agreed that paved the way for modernizing and institutional reforms targeting the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Forestry and Fisheries (MALFF).

Agro Matrix: The Office continued its support to the Hemispheric Ministerial process and the Ministerial Delegate. It facilitated national dialogue and the completion of questionnaires to capture the expectation of leaders. It increased understanding of the Agro Matrix and its use in national development planning.

Hurricane Dean Assessment: In August, Hurricane Dean impacted Saint Lucia as a category one hurricane and inflicted significant damage to the population as a whole and the agriculture sector in particular. In this regard there was need for quick action on the part of government and its support agencies to address the severe impact on the sector.

The Cabinet of Ministers agreed that IICA having the necessary experience and leadership should be charged with the responsibility to direct and lead the effort to provide Government with a credible assessment of the damage sustained by the sector.





IICA having being charged with the responsibility solicited the support of UN/ECLAC with the understanding that the agriculture assessment would form part of the wider macro assessment. As a basis for the determination of the interventions needed to rehabilitate and reconstruct the sector, the Office facilitated the conduct of a comprehensive and credible assessment of the damage sustained by the agriculture sector. The assessment was conducted by a joint MALFF/IICA team with technical support provided by WIBDECO and oversight from the UN/ECLAC.

Determining True Contribution of Agriculture: Throughout the year, efforts continued to determine the contribution of agriculture to the economic development in Saint Lucia. Two (2) Officers from the Statistics Department continued to work with the MALFF and IICA to complete this work. It is expected that the full determination will be available by mid 2008.

Accountability Seminar 2007: Fifty-three (53) persons were present at the NIC Conference Centre to acknowledge the presentation of the report, from the Representative and staff on IICA's Contribution to Agriculture and the Development of Rural Communities in Saint Lucia in 2006, and the acceptance of the report by the Minister of Agriculture, the Hon Ezechiel Joseph.



***National Accountability
Seminar and
Consultation 2007 on
Agriculture and Rural
Life in Saint Lucia***

***Wednesday
May 23, 2007
9.30 am - 1.30 pm***

***NIC Conference Room
5th Floor,
Francis Compton
Building, Waterfront,
Castries***



4.3 Promoting Trade and Competitiveness of Agribusiness

Assessment and Training:

Recognizing that the development of enterprises is inextricably linked with participation in the decision making process, the Office partnered with the Department of Cooperatives to enhance the knowledge capacity of the MALFF and the leaders of the cooperative sector. This was achieved through a series of training



workshops, which enabled participants to have a better understanding of the needs of both sectors and facilitate improved access to finance, through the rural credit unions. Four (4) training sessions were conducted by experts from the OASSFCU and the WOCCU.

Project Development: The office supported the preparation of a project to access finance for development of agri-business and community organizations in the southwestern region of Saint Lucia. This project includes the communities of Piaye, Saltibus, Laborie, Augier, Vieux Fort and is being funded by the OAS Staff Federal Credit Union (OASSFCU), IICA and the World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU), the Laborie, Saltibus and National Farmers and General Credit Unions and the Government of Saint Lucia.



Under the new agreement signed by the Director General and the MALFF the Regional Agribusiness Specialist developed a draft framework for “the development of agribusiness, access to credit and the amalgamation of farmer’s organization” for discussion with stakeholders.

Marketing Infrastructure: The Office supported the efforts of MALFF to consult with industry leaders in the agriculture and related sectors to reach agreement towards the development of a new marketing infrastructure targeting non banana farmers.

Industry Development: Ongoing support was provided by the Office to strengthen various industries as they continued to strive towards competitiveness. Throughout the year work continued with the newly formed livestock Development Committee and more specific actions were undertaken targeting the Pork and Poultry producers.

Pig and Pork: Following up on the assessment of the pork industry which was completed in 2006, the Regional Project Specialist assisted the industry stakeholders to begin the preparation of their strategic plan for the sustainable development of the pig and pork industry.



Poultry: Both technical and financial support was provided to facilitate the visit of four (4) industry stakeholders from Saint Lucia to participate in a fact finding/observatory mission to Jamaica, to view firsthand the development and advances made in the Jamaican industry.

This mission paved the way for a reciprocal visit of the industry players from Jamaica to visit Saint Lucia and the possibility of investment and trade links being built between the two countries.

4.4 Strengthening Agricultural Health and Food Safety

The capacity and capability of over fifty (50) pig farmers in the livestock sub-sector to adhere to food safety practices during production and slaughter was significantly improved through the conduct of a workshop on Good Production Practices for pigs. This was implemented jointly with the assistance of the Florida Association of Voluntary Action for the Caribbean and the Americas (FAVA/CA). The volunteer also visited pig farms and held discussions with farmers in all the agricultural regions in the country.

The capacity of the banana industry to manage Sigatoka leaf spot disease was enhanced through the training of farmers and spray operators.

Saint Lucia has been put on alert against Moko disease. As a result, there are increased activities for early detection. Assessments by banana industry officials to farms where what appeared to be disease symptoms on banana were reported were supported. Technical input was provided in the development of a training video on Moko disease.



Technical support continued to the Banana Pest and Disease Technical Committee, which monitors the pest and disease situation in bananas. The Plant Protection Specialist prepared and distributed draft Simulation Plan for Black Sigatoka for discussion with stakeholders.

The Plant Protection Specialist held a training session with technicians of the MALFF on the status of Witches Broom Disease of Cocoa and a subsequent survey conducted revealed that the disease is present in most of the agricultural regions.

Throughout the year, the Office continued to provide support to the Pesticides Control Board (PCB) and participated in its monthly meetings. IICA also acted as Chair of the Technical Committee.

The Office provided support to the implementation of a National Consultation on the project *“Mitigating the Threats of Invasive Alien Species in the Insular Caribbean”*.

The Office provided support and facilitated the attendance of the country’s delegate to the WTO/SPS Meetings in Geneva. National meetings were convened before and after attendance at the Meetings to discuss the proposed agenda items and agree on the country’s position to ensure they were well represented and that stakeholders remain informed.

The issue of the lack of private sector participation at these national meetings remains of concern to the Committee.

4.5 Management of Natural Resources

Forestry Retreat: Forestry is an important biological asset and plays a key role in maintaining the environmental balance of Saint Lucia. The Forestry Department in a very proactive mode realized that administrative policies and institutional support structures needed to be revisited from time to time to meet prevailing challenges and requirements and to improve the management, conservation and sustainable development of Saint Lucia’s Natural Forest.

In this regard the Office provided technical and financial support and sponsored a retreat for all staff of the Department which allowed for review, introspection, open dialogue and discussion and a charting of the way forward on the Department’s future roles and implementation modalities.



Through this event the staff of the Forestry Department have strengthened their capacity and developed mechanisms to effectively transfer their knowledge, on the use value of forest and the forest products, to the wider population.



4.6 Strengthening Rural Communities

The Office continued to employ diverse channels and courses of actions to strengthen the capacity of rural groups mainly women and youth and in particular, those affected by Hurricane Dean.

Support to Women: The Saint Lucia Network of Rural Women Producers (SLNRWP) was empowered to initiate actions to chart their own development path and was supported in the conduct of a needs assessment among its members. This assessment has paved the way for IICA and other institutions to provide targeted and focused assistance to the network and its members.

IICA also solicited the support of its partner agencies and received complementary funding from the Canadian Fund for Local Initiative (CFLI) to rehabilitate and expand fruits and vegetable production in four (4) vulnerable communities, targeting women and youth.

In March in celebration of International Women's Day the Office gave recognition to the contribution of rural women in the development of their communities and to highlight the work of the Saint Lucia CANROP with the hosting of two official events

- A luncheon for thirty (30) members of the Network on March 08; and
- On March 11, a discussion and open forum under the theme **Women Empowerment: Daring to Dream** for sixty (60) women Dennergy Centre.



The president of the St Lucia Network of Rural Women Producers, Ms Christine Wilson was assisted to access support to attend the Sixth Commonwealth India Small Business Competitiveness Development Programme in Kochi, India, during the period March 25-31, 2007. Ms Wilson's attendance was sponsored by the Commonwealth Secretariat Special Advisory Board and the Government of India Export Import Bank of India.

Support to Youth: The St Lucia Agriculture Forum for Youth (SLAFY) continued throughout 2007 on an encouraging path of development engaging their members in a number of national and regional activities. The year ended with SLAFY membership at eighty-five (85).

Governance within SLAFY was strengthened when the group hosted the Executive Meeting of the Caribbean Agriculture Forum for Youth (CAFY) during the period February 24-25, 2007. Executive Members of CAFY are from

Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Guyana, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago.



The Executive Secretariat of CAFY maintained through the Office in Saint Lucia assisted the CAFY Executive Council to successfully implement their annual development workshop during the CWA in Jamaica in October. The workshop held under the theme **Youth, Agriculture and the 21st Century** was attended by over forty (40) youth from across the region and saw the final output of a

promotion video on CAFY. This video will be available for distribution to the various media in CAFY member countries.

4.7 Introducing Technology

In order to ensure that the Institute continues to play a strategic role in assisting Saint Lucia in its search for progress and prosperity through modernization of the agricultural and rural sectors, the Office among other activities, promoted the incorporation of new technologies in support of new production system to improve the productivity and profitability in the agricultural sector.

Hydroponics: In February, the Minister of Agriculture, Lands, Forestry and Fisheries, Hon Ezechiele Joseph while visiting IICA Headquarters requested the Institute's assistance in providing the necessary support for the introduction of low cost hydroponics systems to Saint Lucia.



In May, Dr Hector Muñoz, a Consultant with IICA visited Saint Lucia to lay the foundation and conducted a pre-training to introduce to a small group of Extension Officers from the MALFF the proposed Hydroponics System and the IICA-Guyana Experience with Vegetable Production using same.

In June, Dr Muñoz returned to Saint Lucia and this time conducted two full training workshops for participants in the north and south of the island. Participants in the training included farmers, agricultural science teachers and personnel of the MALFF.

They received hands-on training in the construction of the hydroponics boxes and preparation of the substrate and other material for planning of the seedlings and maintaining production.

The boxes used in the demonstration were donated by IICA to the schools whose teachers participated in the course. It is hoped that these efforts will lead to the development of semi-commercial hydroponics systems being set up in Saint Lucia.



To renew interest of youth in agriculture and to ensure continuity of action, IICA has invested heavily and established a structure with ten hydroponics boxes at the Marigot Secondary School. Training for the students under this project will begin in the first quarter of 2008. This unit which will be used to continuously demonstrate the hydroponics techniques will serve as a training tool for Marigot and other schools and the wider youth population.

Greenhouses: Seven hundred and fifty pounds (750 lbs) of tomatoes were reaped from SLAFY greenhouse at the Fond Assau Primary School. The greenhouse was erected in 2006 to function as a training tool for both the young minds at the school and as an income earning activity for SLAFY members.

While this is the second crop being produced and reaped from the greenhouse, SLAFY members were elated at the success of this present crop.



5. Results of Interagency Cooperation

IICA Saint Lucia remained committed to its partnership approach to development and in 2007 leveraged its presence on the ground to partner with a number of regional and international organizations and implement programmes for the benefit of the stakeholders in the sector.

Strengthened Interagency Agenda:

The interagency agenda being promoted by IICA for the ECS was advanced at a follow up meeting among the agencies and agreement being reached on the formation of a Consortium for collaboration. This Consortium would work in developing programmes and exchanges in the field of agribusiness, agriculture science and technology and partners have express their intention to explore joint activities which will lead to a broadening of cooperation among member countries in the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).



Interested partners of the Consortium include the OECS Secretariat, the French Embassy to the OECS Member States, International Centre for Cooperation in Agriculture Research and Development (CIRAD), the CARDI, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the University of the West Indies (UWI), the University of Antilles Guyanne (UAG) and IICA.

The Canadian Fund for Local Initiative (CFLI) is a programme of the Canadian International Development Agency which provides support to socio-economic and development projects in member countries.

IICA once again partnered with the CFLI to assist the programme of support targeting women and youth in four vulnerable communities of Saint Lucia namely Babonneau, Dennery, Micoud/Mon Repos and Anse La Raye/Canaries.

CFLI/IICA Project Beneficiary: Luther Alexander is a graduate of the Division of Agriculture, Sir Arthur Lewis Community College and a member of the St Lucia Agriculture Forum for Youth. He has been involved in vegetable production for five years and produces lettuce, Chinese cabbage, celery, parsley, thyme, chives, seasoning peppers, sweet peppers, cucumbers, salad beans, spinach and tomatoes on a plot size measuring 32,600 sq ft of land. His produce was being sold at a number of whole-sale and retail outlets including the Castries Market.

The passing of Hurricane Dean cause some major damage to his property and he was faced with the financial hardship of restoring things back to normal. The project provided Luther with the inputs to restart his production. He is one of the first beneficiaries of the programme.



Consultative Committee of the Common Fund for Commodities:

The Common Fund for Commodities (CFC) is an intergovernmental financial institution established within the framework of the United Nations. The Consultative Committee (CC) is composed of thirteen independent experts, on technical

and economic aspects of project submitted to the fund and serves as an advisory body of the Executive Board. The Committee is appointed for a period of two years.

Una May Gordon – IICA’s Representative to Saint Lucia and the ECS has been serving on the CFC-CC for the past four years. During that time she has ensured the Fund is more known and better understood by stakeholders in both member countries and non-member countries. She initiated the dialogue and assisted the CARICOM Secretariat to gain institutional membership in the CFC and spearhead the drafting and subsequent signing of the MOU for

cooperation between IICA and the CFC during the meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture in Guatemala in 2007.

In April, the Office in Saint Lucia and the Directorate of Operations and Regional Integration, collaborated with the CFC to implement a joint workshop for the Caribbean and Latin American agribusiness associations.



This workshop was aimed at identifying the priority intervention areas that both regions were interested in receiving financial assistance from the Fund, and which would give the Fund the opportunity to include the views of the industry stakeholders in the finalization of their Five Year Action Plan which is scheduled to begin implementation in January 2008.

Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute: IICA and CARDI continued the joint implementation of the project to revitalize the coconut water industry project for Saint Lucia. The project has entered its second phase with the production of coconut seedlings for distribution to selected farmers.

United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization: Following the successful implementation of the LOA which was signed between IICA and the FAO in 2006, a second and more substantial agreement was signed between the Office in Saint Lucia and the FAO Sub-regional Office in Barbados. This agreement will:

- support the cost of identifying opportunities for viable business for small scale operators in the rural/urban agriculture/tourism food and non-food chain;
- provide technical, managerial and input support to selected entrepreneurs.

Bio-energy Seminar: More recently, tackling climate change, ensuring energy security and food security through a coordinated approach between institutions and agencies has seen some progress at national and regional levels. Increasingly also policy makers are being called upon to be part of this process.

In 2007 following up on work done in 2006, the Office in Saint Lucia through funding from the CTA commissioned the development of a regional strategy for the development of bio-fuels industry in the Caribbean Region.

In October also, through funding from the CTA the Office supported the partnership of the Government of Guyana, the IADB, and the OAS in the hosting of a high level seminar on bio-fuels.

The seminar brought together over two days, one hundred and twenty (120) industry professionals from Government and private sector, to discuss the status of the bio-energy industry and receive the Draft Strategy for the Caribbean Region. The Strategy was also tabled at the COTED Meeting in October, during the Caribbean Week of Agriculture.

6. Results of Horizontal Technical Cooperation

The Jamaica Office supported the IICA Office in Saint Lucia for the visit of four (4) stakeholders from the poultry industry to participate in a fact finding/observatory mission to Jamaica, to view firsthand the development and advances made in the Jamaican industry.

This mission paved the way for a reciprocal visit to the industry players from Jamaica to Saint Lucia and the possibility of investment and trade links being built between the two countries.

7. New Opportunities for Technical Cooperation

A greater sense of cooperation and dialogue was evident among agencies whose work impact on agriculture and rural life in Saint Lucia and the ECS. This development coupled with the proposed formation of the Consortium for collaboration presents real opportunities to boost cooperation among agencies.

The Office in Saint Lucia being the management unit for IICA's actions in the ECS will continue to leverage its position to seek out the new opportunities that these partnerships will allow.

8. Main Activities Organized by the Saint Lucia Office

| Official Name of Event | Date Held | Number of Participants |
|---|--|-------------------------------|
| 1: Leadership in Agriculture: Visit to IICA Headquarters of the Hon Ezechiel Joseph, Minister for Agriculture, Lands, Fisheries and Forestry | January 31 to February 04 IICA Headquarters | 3 |
| 2: IICA/CIRAD Follow-up Meeting to Sub-Regional Dialogue on Agriculture and Rural Life | February 06-07 Bay Gardens Inn | 12 |
| 3: CAFY Executive Meeting | February 23 IICA Office | 15 |
| 4: Department of Forestry Staff Retreat | March 05 Fond D'or Estate | 69 |
| 5: a. International Women's Day Luncheon b. Open Forum | March 07 March 11 | 40 60 |
| 6: Accountability Seminar and Consultation | May 23, NIC Conference Centre | 53 |
| 7: Hydroponics Workshop | June 11 | 40 |
| 8: Assessment of Impact of Hurricane Dean on Agri-sector in Saint Lucia | August 20-24 IICA Office | 10 |
| 9: Poultry Meeting and Visit of Farmers/Processors/Investors to Jamaica | Jamaica | 4 |
| 10: Institutional Review to the MALFF | April to October 2007 | All MALFF Staff |

9. Catalogue of Pictures

PHOTO CREDITS: *IICA Saint Lucia*

- 1: Support Staff of the Saint Lucia Office
- 2: IICA Representative discusses Result of XQ Survey with Mr Stephen Covey
- 3 & 35: SLAFY Member, Luther Alexander on his farm in Babonneau
- 4: Minister Ezechiel Joseph and IICA Director General Signing New Cooperation Agreement for Saint Lucia
- 5 & 7: Damage caused by Hurricane Dean to Banana Plantation
- 6: Agriculture Products Being Prepared for Market
- 8: Dr Dowlat Budhram Interviewing Staff of MALFF
- 9: Stakeholders Listening to Presentation on New Marketing Infrastructure
- 10: Value Added Agri Produce Being Displayed by Entrepreneur
- 11: Everton Ambrose, Specialist in Plant Protection
- 12: CAFY Executive Meeting in Progress
- 13-15: Participants at the IICA Saint Lucia 2007 Evaluation and Open Forum
- 16: Hon Ezechiel Joseph Viewing Saint Lucia's Display at IICA Headquarters
- 17-18: Presentation of Hurricane Dean Damage Assessment Report to the Prime Minister, the Hon Stephenson King and the Hon Ezechiel Joseph, Minister/MALFF and other Stakeholders
- 19-22: Presentation of the 2006 Annual Report at the Accountability Seminar
- 23-24: Carolos Calderone of the Organization of American States Staff Federal Credit Union meets with Farmers and other Stakeholders to discuss IICA/OASSFCU/WOCCU Partnership

- 25: IICA Representative Discusses Poultry Industry Development with Stakeholders
- 26: Meeting of the Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Control Board
- 27: Staff of the Forestry Department in Retreat
- 28: SLNRWP Member Sharing Project Experience with other Members
- 29: Ms Christine Wilson among Participants at the Sixth Commonwealth India Small Business Competitiveness Development Programme
- 30: Participants Testing Video Equipment in CAFY Development Workshop during CWA 2006
- 31: Dr Hector Munoz Demonstrating Use of Styrofoam Material in Low Cost Hydroponics System
- 32: Participants Constructing Hydroponics Boxes
- 33: Tomatoes Reaped from SLAFY Greenhouse
- 34: Inter-Agency Meeting held at the Bay Gardens Inn
- 36: Members of the CFC-CC
- 37: Participants from the Central America Region Discussing Project Intervention Areas during CFC/IICA Workshop
- 38: Participants from the Caribbean Region Discussing Project Intervention Areas during CFC/IICA Workshop

Acronyms and Abbreviations

| | |
|---------|--|
| AHFS | Agricultural Health and Food Safety |
| CAFY | Caribbean Agriculture Forum for Youth |
| CANROP | Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers |
| CARDI | Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute |
| CC | Consultative Committee |
| CFC | Common Fund for Commodities |
| CFLI | Canadian Funds for Local Initiatives |
| CGPC | Coordinating Group of Pesticides Control Boards |
| CIRAD | International Centre for Cooperation in Agriculture Research and Development |
| COTED | Council for Trade and Economic Development |
| CTA | Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation |
| CWA | Caribbean Week of Agriculture |
| ECS | Eastern Caribbean States |
| FADs | Fish Aggregating Devices |
| FAO | United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization |
| FAVA/CA | Florida Association for Voluntary Action in the Caribbean and the Americas |
| IADB | Inter-American Development Bank |
| IICA | Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture |
| LOA | Letter of Agreement |
| MALFF | Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Fisheries and Forestry |
| MOU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| NIC | National Insurance Corporation |
| OAS | Organization of American States |
| OASSFCU | Organization of American States Staff Federal Credit Union |

| | |
|----------|---|
| OECS | Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States |
| PCB | Pesticides Control Board |
| SLAFY | St Lucia Agriculture Forum for Youth |
| SLFMC | St Lucia Fish Marketing Corporation |
| SLNRWP | St Lucia Network of Rural Women Producers |
| SPS | Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary Systems |
| UAG | University of Antilles Guyanne |
| UNEP | United Nations Environment Program |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Program |
| UN/ECLAC | United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean |
| UWI | University of the West Indies |
| WIBDECO | Windward Islands Banana Development and Exporting Company Limited |
| WOCCU | World Council of Credit Unions |
| WTO | World Trade Organization |