



Annual Report **2008**

Dominica



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

IICA's Contribution to Agriculture and the Development of the Rural Communities in the
Commonwealth of Dominica

2008 Annual Report



Commonwealth of Dominica

IICA Office in Dominica

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IICA'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL COMMUNITIES IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA

1.0 INTRODUCTION



Mr Kent Coipel, IICA Technical Specialist

The IICA Office in Dominica is pleased to present its 24th Annual Report to Mr. Mathew Walters, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and to its valued clients and stakeholders who continue to be supportive to the office.

In 2008, the period under review, the Office underwent a change in management. In May, Mr Kent Coipel replaced Mr. Kervin Stephenson, as IICA Technical Specialist. Mr. Kervin Stephenson took up a new position in St. Lucia as IICA's Regional Technical Specialist for Projects in the Caribbean. His invaluable contribution to Dominica's agriculture is highly appreciated and the office looks forward to continued support from him in his new capacity.

Despite the change, the past year was rewarding and in many areas successful. The 2008 report documents the achievements according to the National Technical Cooperation Agenda in the Commonwealth of Dominica under the following strategic areas:

- IICA's contribution to repositioning of agriculture and rural life
- Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusiness
- Strengthening agricultural health and food safety systems
- Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment
- Strengthening rural communities
- Introducing technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural life

The Office would like to take this opportunity to thank all the partners both in the public and private sectors who have contributed towards the implementation of its National Technical Cooperation Agenda.

The Office also looks forward to 2009, a special year, as IICA celebrates 25 years of service to the Commonwealth of Dominica.

Kent E. Coipel

Technical Specialist/ Dominica

2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Repositioning Agriculture and Rural Life

- IICA worked closely with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (MAFF) to place on the agenda of the Cabinet of Ministers for endorsement the draft policy framework entitled “*Invest in Dominica – Secure Agriculture – National Policy for the Agriculture Environment (Agri-Eco) System, 2007–2025*”.
- The Minister of the MAFF and the Permanent Secretary were assisted in their preparation for the IABA Meeting and the Forum for Leaders in Agriculture held in Costa Rica on July 21. Whilst in Costa Rica the Minister signed an agreement with IICA identifying the priority areas for further IICA’s assistance, including: a strategic plan for the implementation of the policy, establishment of a Business Unit, strengthening the agricultural health and food safety system, an agricultural insurance scheme, among others.

Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusiness

- IICA in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), under a project entitled “**Strengthening and Expanding Rural Income Streams**”, identified the needs of a potentially viable enterprise, Nelly Chips, to have greater access to the agro-tourism market.
- IICA continued the partnership with OAS in successfully implementing

the OAS/IICA project “*Strengthening of the Tourism Sector through the Development of Linkages with the Agriculture Sector in the Caribbean*”.

- IICA coordinated and facilitated through that OAS-sponsored project, the attendance of a delegation to a Regional Investment Forum on Agribusiness Opportunities in Barbados. This provided the opportunity for two businesses to attract investors and financiers to support their business proposals.

Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

- As a result of the MAFF participation at the 43rd WTO/SPS Committee Meetings in Geneva, stakeholders in the agriculture and related sectors were kept abreast with what was happening on SPS development and international SPS issues.
- The capacity of quarantine inspectors and public health officers were enhanced through a training workshop on improved diagnostic and inspection services.

Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on the Territorial Approach

IICA provided technical support to the Dominica National Council of Women (DNCW) by conducting a preliminary needs assessment to better serve their members as well as to initiate efforts towards the establishment of the National chapter of the Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers (CANROP) in 2009.

Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation for the Modernization of Agriculture and Rural Development

IICA has secured a total of US\$95,000.00 under the IICA-CARDI Programme funds and the Dominica Social Investment Fund (DSIF) to pursue the development and adoption of appropriate undercover system technologies by the National Association of Youth in Agriculture (NAYA) and Greenhouse Association members.

3.0 THE STATE OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL LIFE IN DOMINICA IN 2008

3.1 The Context for Agriculture and Rural Life (*Macroeconomic analysis*)

The economy of Dominica was estimated to have grown by 2.1% in 2008 in real terms. This growth was driven by continued expansion in the construction and the tourism sectors and the recovery of the agricultural sector following the aftermath of Hurricane Dean (2007). Activity in construction grew over the last six years, registering a 10% growth rate. The mining and quarrying sector expanded by 7.9% following growth of 12% in 2007 and 8.4% in 2006. In the agricultural sector, modest growth was recorded for livestock (1.5%) and fishing (3%); however, the important subsector of crop production recorded negative growth (of 0.8%).

The overall performance of the agricultural sector remained unchanged from last year, reflecting the extent of the damage of Hurricane Dean on the sector. The Hurricane, which passed in the second half of 2007, wiped out almost 100% of the main export crop of bananas. However, the sector has recovered significantly during 2008. The manufacturing sector further declined by an estimated 20% — a performance affected by the closure of a major production plant in the third quarter of 2007.

Rising imports and a poor export performance further widened the visible trade deficit. At the end of 2008, the deficit stood at approximately EC\$421.3M. This represents a 16.2% increase over the balance recorded at the

end of 2007. On the other hand, construction activity remains strong as many projects continue to be implemented both in the public and private sector. The energy sector seems very promising with the recent signing of an agreement and the subsequent issuance of a license for the exploration of Geothermal energy on the island. This, if successful, will help to address the energy crisis which continues to hamper the development of the productive sectors of the economy. Imports continue to rise to fill the vacuum left behind by the inadequacy of local production. Total imports in the first 9 months of 2008 were valued at \$464.0M compared to \$383.4M for the same period of 2007. Rising food prices pose an acute challenge to Dominica given the high incidence of poverty. Almost 40% of the population falls in the category of poor or very poor and half of the total expenditure in the lowest two quintiles of the population is devoted to food. The significant rise in prices has created tremendous hardship among the most vulnerable groups in society.

Inflationary pressures intensified on account of increasing energy and food import prices and a (hurricane-related) shortage of fresh agricultural produce. The Consumer Price Index is provisionally estimated to have risen by 6.3% in 2008 on the heels of a rate of increase of 3.2% in 2007. The food and energy sub-indices rose more sharply at 11.7% and 10%, respectively.

To cushion the effects of rising prices, the Dominican authorities have increased spending on public assistance, revised upwards the minimum wage for selected categories of labour, reduced the excise tax rate on fuel for electricity generation

and have implemented the first phase of income tax reform which involves the reduction of the marginal tax rates and the increase of the tax-exempt income threshold. A broad-based committee was established to further advise Government on measures to alleviate the adverse impact of rising food prices.

3.2 Changes in Agrifood Production and Trade (*energy crisis and natural disasters*)

Domestic exports rose from EC\$21.66M to EC\$27.27M registering a 25.92% rise, with increases mainly in the exports of agricultural products. Total agricultural exports recorded an 81.68% rise moving from EC\$6.60M to EC\$11.99M primarily due to increases in total banana export and other agricultural exports. Total banana exports moved from EC\$2.44M to EC\$5.67M registering a significant 132.25% rise, with other agricultural exports recording a 52% rise. The sharp increases in production and revenue resulted from the recovery of Hurricane Dean.

Hurricane Omar impacted the West Coast of Dominica to the extent that significant losses were suffered by the Fisheries Sector. The assessed damage to the sector in terms of loss of boats, engines and fishing tackle approached EC\$4.3M. EC\$2.5M represents losses suffered from damaged boats and engines while 277 fishers have been directly impacted by the storm to the extent that their livelihood earnings have been temporarily lost.

During the second half of 2008, the crop sub-sector was severely impacted due to a shortage of inputs, specifically fertilizers which greatly negatively impacted production. The increases in fuel prices and increased demand for fertilizer brought on by responses to the food crisis

led to a sharp increase in the price of fertilizers rendering it extremely expensive for input distributors to import. To cushion the impact of Hurricane Omar, Government committed US\$1,641,791.00 towards facilitating the rehabilitation of the fisheries sector through the construction and procurement of boats, engines and other equipment damaged/lost during the Hurricane. An amount of US\$83,955.23 has since been spent to support the livelihoods of 156 fishers. Furthermore, in an effort to boost rural income and food security, the Government is subsidising the price of fertilizers and the FAO supported the objective of food security with financial assistance for the purchase of inputs for subsistence farmers and fishers.

3.3 Changes in Policies (*Legislation*) that Affect Agriculture and Rural Life

The Division of Agriculture through its Plant Protection Unit submitted the Approved CARICOM Model Plant Protection Bill to the local Attorneys General Office for consideration and enactment. The purpose for submission of the Bill was to update existing plant protection legislation to address SPS Agreement and affiliated international plant protection protocols. Similarly, the Veterinary Unit proposed the CARICOM Model Bill entitled “Animals (National and International Movement & Disease Prevention Act” for consideration and enactment. The intention of the Bill is to address concerns associated with animal movement and to prevent the entry and spread of animal diseases.

The Government of Dominica gave consideration to enact of the Fresh Produce Export Bill. The Bill underwent the first hearing by Parliament. The Purpose of the Bill was to enhance the

competitiveness of the fresh produce trade through promoting the sustainable development of the agricultural fresh produce sector by fostering trade of consistent quality, safe and wholesome fresh produce at all times and supporting the food safety and quality management infrastructure for fresh produce agricultural commodities.

3.4 Changes in the Institutional Framework for Agriculture and Rural Life

The Government has established an Investment Unit within the Ministry of Agriculture to spearhead the public sector investments in agriculture.

3.5 Major Developments in Agricultural Health and Food Safety

The Programme of the Plant Protection Unit was centered on the close surveillance for exotic pest and disease including the Black Sigatoka and Moko Disease of banana and plantain respectively, bacterial canker and citrus blight. The Unit also placed major emphasis on the eradication of pests such as the Giant African Snail, the Red Palm Mite, the Avocado Lace Bug, the Papaya Mealy Bug and the West Indian Fruit Fly. The Ministry further appointed a coordinator for the citrus rehabilitation programme. The programme was geared at the introduction of new and certified citrus planting material to address the ailment of the citrus industry caused by the Citrus Tristeza Virus (CTV). The Ministry invested over US\$654,552.00 towards the rehabilitation of citrus in Dominica and this include the establishment of a citrus rehabilitation nursery that has commenced production of root stock material. Additionally, much effort was placed on monitoring the activities (population) of *L. testaceipes* and *L.*

oregmae for the effective control of Brown Citrus Aphids. Monthly surveys were undertaken to determine spread and distribution of the different strains of CTV island-wide as well as the implementation of a Citrus Certification Programme, citrus pest diagnosis, sampling and testing for CTV and other citrus pest to facilitate the restoration and to improve the long-term competitiveness, the long-term growth and viability of citrus.



Ministry of Agriculture Citrus Nursery

In keeping with its mission to protect animal production systems and prevention of exotic diseases from entering our country, the Livestock Development Unit established new protocols for meat imports, launched the Veterinary Epidemiologist/ Para-epidemiologist programme (VEP) and strengthened the surveillance for exotic pests and diseases such as Avian Influenza, New Castle Disease and Brucellosis and Tropical Bont Tick (TBT).

The Unit also developed Protocol for chosen diseases (Avian Influenza, Newcastle Disease, Brucellosis) and established an improved emergency plan for Avian Influenza.

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL TECHNICAL COOPERATION AGENDA IN DOMINICA IN 2008

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

Agricultural Policy

The IICA Office worked closely with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry to place on the agenda of the Cabinet of Ministers for endorsement, the draft policy framework entitled “*Invest in Dominica – Secure Agriculture- National Policy for the Agriculture Environment (Agri-Eco) System, 2007–2025*”. The policy framework was delivered by IICA to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry in April 2008. In further support to the Ministry, IICA's Regional Specialist in Policies and Trade Negotiations prepared a summary of the policy document for ease of reference for Cabinet members.

The National Policy is based on three policy pillars: Ecological Sustainability; Competitive Agro-Eco Businesses, and Food and Nutrition Security. The importance of the policy framework is to guide the restructuring of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry to foster modernization of the Ministry to meet the demands of the globalized world.

IABA Meeting and Forum for Leaders

The IICA Office assisted the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the Permanent Secretary in their preparation for the IABA Meeting and the Forum for Leaders in Agriculture held in Costa Rica. Preparation included developing a position paper on the status of agriculture in Dominica as well as to



Workshop for New Leaders in Agriculture held in Costa Rica in July 2008

identify priority areas requiring assistance from IICA.

Whilst in Costa Rica the Minister signed an agreement with IICA identifying the priority areas for further assistance from IICA in 2009. The areas identified included a strategic plan for the implementation of the policy; assistance in the establishment of a Business Unit; strengthening the agricultural health and food safety system; an agricultural insurance scheme; and assistance in facilitating a group of organic farmers to understudy organic farms within the region.



Mr. Matthew Walter, Hon. Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (r.) signs the Agreement on IICA's Technical Cooperation to Dominica with Dr. Chelston W.D. Brathwaite, Director General of IICA, (2nd left)

Both the Minister of Agriculture and the Permanent Secretary got the opportunity to visit farms and agribusiness enterprises in Costa Rica.



From right, Ms Una May Gordon, IICA Representative in the ECS, Mr. Matthew Walter, Hon. Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Ms Claudia Bellot, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and Ms Joanne Massiah, Hon. Minister of Agriculture, Land Marine Resource and Agro-industry(Antigua)

Investment Unit

IICA assisted the Ministry of Agriculture in developing the Terms of Reference for the establishment of an Investment Unit within its Ministry. The Unit will address the first constraints identified in the Jagdeo Initiative: *Limited Financing and Inadequate New Investments* in a manner which embodies Dominica's agri-food system in a comprehensive and holistic approach, which seeks to create an enabling economic and business environment for competitive and sustainable agriculture and rural development.

National Exhibition

IICA participated in the National Exhibition under the theme "New Realities for the Journey Ahead" during the 30th Independence Anniversary celebration from October 28-November 1. This was a major event for Dominica as it showcased Dominica's products and services as part of the Reunion Celebration.



Hon. Prime Minister of Dominica, Mr. Roosevelt Skerrit, visiting IICA's Booth at the National Exhibition

4.2 Promotion of Trade and Competitiveness in Agriculture

Agrotourism Development

The IICA Office recruited a local consultant to develop a business development profile for Shillingford Estate Ltd. with the scope of developing the Macoucherie Experience and agro-heritage tourism opportunities in Dominica. The intention of the exercise was to increase the viability of the Macoucherie Estate's tour operation through product upgrading and certification for the (cruise) tourism industry. Additionally, ongoing efforts would be enhanced to depict and re-live aspects of the Macoucherie agro-heritage that would allow the visitor to experience and be a part of the traditional estate life and rum making. This would entail upgrading the physical site and providing support in areas of marketing, administration, and product development – all of which would enhance the viability of the presentation. It would also see a beach entertainment component being added to the tour – providing a more enriching experience - more in line with industry standards and expectations.



Macoucherie Estate- Rum Factory

Through an OAS-sponsored project, IICA coordinated and facilitated the attendance of a delegation of four persons to a Regional Investment Forum held in Barbados in February 2008. This



Recreational grounds developed at Macoucherie Shillingford Estate

provided the opportunity for two businesses to attract investors and financiers to support their business proposals. Macoucherie Estate Ltd presented a project proposal at the forum. The Project was well received at the seminar and a number of recommendations were made to upgrade and market the Macoucherie experience to make it cruise certified, and to allow it to match the standard of similar offerings elsewhere in the region.

In support of the need to upgrade the facilities of the Estate, IICA assisted Shillingford Estates Ltd. to procure a small used Holland Rubber Wheel Skid Steer Machine (tractor) to help maintain the Estate as a heritage centre.

A national consultation was hosted by IICA to foster linkages between the supermarkets and farmers with regard to sale of fresh produce with special focus on the hospitality sector. Special efforts were made to initiate discussions among the key supermarkets where hoteliers and restaurant owners purchased their fresh produce and farmers supplying the fresh produce. The target farmers were members of NAYA and members of the Greenhouse Association.

Agribusiness Development

Nelly's Chips

The IICA Office in Dominica assisted an entrepreneur to take full advantage of assistance provided under an FAO-funded project entitled "***Strengthening and Expanding Rural Income Streams***". The Project focused on developing agribusiness stakeholders from IICA/FAO/OECS Member States through the facilitation of activities aimed at reducing vulnerability to food security and livelihood security in rural and farming communities. Ms. Nelva Magloire, owner of Nelly's Chips, was awarded assistance under the Project. IICA ensured that the assistance provided would benefit the entrepreneur, as well as other similar businesses, by using the entity as a model for demonstration purposes. Additionally, IICA took the responsibility to order the appropriate equipment from reliable sources as well as to coordinate the technical support provided to the entrepreneur.

The IICA Office organized training for Ms. Magloire in the area of processing, food safety, and labeling and packaging. The training was done in collaboration with the Produce Chemist Laboratory (PCL) of the Division of Agriculture. Technical assistance was provided in label design with the assistance of the Dominica Bureau of Standards (DBOS). The initial proposed site for installation of the equipment failed to provide adequate space to house the equipment as well as to meet all food safety requirements. The IICA Office collaborated with NAYA and the Division of Agriculture to secure over US\$10,000.00 in additional funds and materials to assist the entrepreneur in establishing a new processing site. IICA provided the technical assistance in the design and layout.



Newly established building site for the processing of Nelly's plantain chips

Hilltop Fruit Plus

IICA sponsored and jointly facilitated a training workshop for a group of nine women from the village of Paix Bouche on agro-processing, food safety and packaging of a range of fruits. The youth group expressed an interest in the agro-processing of fruits available within their community. IICA assisted the group in accessing an oven dryer and provided the necessary technical support in conceptualizing an agro-business enterprise. The group established an

informal business named “Hilltop Fruit Plus” and developed a business plan to pursue their venture.



Training Workshop on agro-processing, labeling & packaging and food safety for Hilltop Plus Group in Paix Bouche

IICA together with the Produce Chemist Laboratory provided hands-on training in the drying of fruits including pineapple, carambola, sorrel and golden apple. Additionally training was provided in Good Hygiene Practices, labeling and packaging.

Standards

The DBOS was assigned by CROSQ under the Inter-American Development Bank SME Project, as the secretariat for the Regional Technical Committee (RTC) responsible for developing fresh produce standards. The project focus was to enhance small and medium enterprises through standardization. The priority crops identified for standards development were grapefruit, oranges, cabbage, tomatoes, pumpkin, mangoes, bananas, hot peppers, sweet peppers, and pineapples. IICA participated in nine technical committee meetings held to develop the draft standards of the above crops mentioned.

4.3 Strengthening Agricultural Health and Food Safety Systems

IICA Office in Dominica in close collaboration with IICA's Regional

Agricultural Health and Food Safety Specialist for the Caribbean Region and working jointly with the Plant Protection and Quarantine Unit of the Division of Agriculture sponsored and organized a Plant Quarantine Inspectors' training workshop from December 3-5, 2008. A total of 22 persons were trained. Participants were drawn from the Ministry of Agriculture (Plant Quarantine and Plant Protection Division, the Veterinary Division and the Extension Services), the Environmental Health Division of the Ministry of Health, the



Inspectors' Training Workshop

Customs & Excise Department, the Port Authority and the Aviation Security Department.

The training was to strengthen and improve the skills of plant quarantine officers, environmental health inspectors, and customs officials in detecting and identifying quarantine pests and diseases of concern. The lead facilitator, Ms. Carol Thomas, focused on sensitizing the participants on International Trade Agreements and Standard Setting Bodies to include:

- The World Trade Organization/ Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agreement (WTO/SPS Agreement)

- The International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)
- Codex Alimentarius
- The World Animal Health Organization (OIE)
- The Convention for International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES)
- The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- The CARICOM Regional Organization for Standards and Quality (CROSQ)

Additionally, the Regional Specialist delivered sessions on Inspection Techniques, Post-Inspection Procedures, Vessel Inspection Passenger Clearance and Mitigation Practices. The delivery methodology consisted of Power Point presentations, discussions, case studies, inspection simulations and a field trip. An interactive approach was adopted and the facilitators encouraged the participants to contribute by sharing their experiences, make recommendations as well as ask questions and make comments.

IICA worked closely with the Division of Agriculture in hosting a one-day sensitization workshop for stakeholders and the SPS Committee on Enquiry point activities and other SPS related matters. The workshop was part of the WTO/SPS Mentoring programme in which USDA/FAS was identified to provide technical assistance to Dominica. The USDA/FAS Official facilitated the workshop and focused on addressing the function of the Enquiry Point and preparation of National positions on SPS issues.



SPS Mentoring Workshop

IICA sponsored the participation of the Ministry of Agriculture official to the World Trade Organization's 43rd meeting on Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures held in Geneva from October 6-9, 2008.

4.4 Strengthening Rural Communities Based on the Territorial Approach

IICA provided technical support to the Dominica National Council of Women (DNCW) through conducting a preliminary needs assessment to better serve their members as well as to guide their efforts in formally establishing the National chapter of CANROP in 2009.

4.5 Introducing Technology and Innovation for the Modernization of Agriculture and Rural Life

The IICA Office in Dominica secured approximately US\$40,000.00 under the IICA-CARDI Technical Cooperation Agreement to undertake research and validation of greenhouse technology for vegetable production as well as to build farmer and extension officers' capacity in greenhouse management through the project entitled "Assessing Vegetable Production Systems - The Use of Appropriate Greenhouse Technology in Dominica". Implementation of the project commenced in the last quarter of 2008 with the establishment of a

management committee as well as purchase of materials and equipment to undertake the research activities. CARDI was identified to lead on the research component of the project.

Additionally, IICA Office assisted NAYA in preparing and submitting a proposal for assistance under the Dominica Social Investment Fund (DSIF) to pursue the adoption of appropriate undercover system technologies by NAYA and Greenhouse Association members. A sum of US\$53,222.59 was secured under the DSIF.

5. RESULTS OF INTER-AGENCY COOPERATION

OAS Agro-tourism Project

National Workshop and Consultation

As part of a 3-year Regional project entitled “Strengthening of the Tourism Sector through the Development of Linkages with the Agricultural Sector in the Caribbean”, the IICA Office in Dominica, in collaboration with the Organization of American States, hosted a three-day agro-tourism workshop. The main facilitator was Mr. Eustace “Chinie” Vitalis from Sandals St. Lucia. The objective of the session was to emphasize the importance of building farmer-hotel partnerships and at the same time develop culinary products and services that build excitement and create a competitive advantage for the Commonwealth of Dominica.

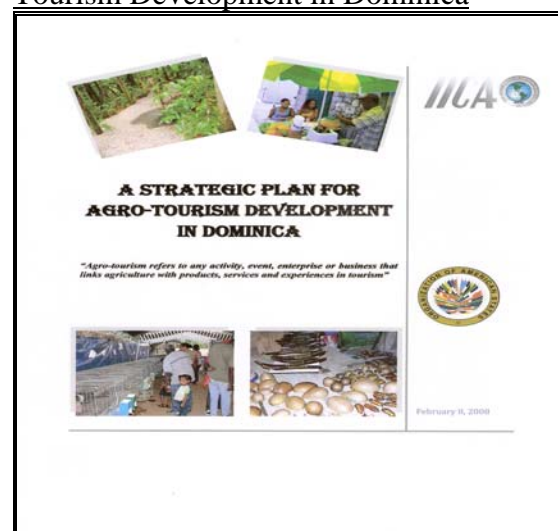
IICA invited seventeen (17) participants ranging from farmers, exporters of fresh produce, hucksters, supermarket purchasing personnel, suppliers to the cruise ships, representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture Extension Department the Dominica Export Import Agency (DEXIA), the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) and the Bureau of Standards.

The workshop forged discussion among the participants. Logistics involved in creating the linkages between farmers and distributors were examined and some business opportunities were identified.

A follow-up national consultation was hosted by IICA to foster linkages between the supermarkets and farmers with regard to sale of fresh produce with special focus on the hospitality sector. Special effort was made to initiate discussion among the

key supermarkets where hoteliers and restaurant owners purchased their fresh produce and farmers supplying these fresh produce. The target farmers were members of NAYA and members of the greenhouse Association.

A Draft National Strategic Plan for Agro-Tourism Development in Dominica



The Agro-tourism Plan for Dominica was developed from an initial concept paper and from the report of a National Symposium with stakeholders held on November 28th and 29th, 2007. The Plan was prepared with the goal of developing a strategy and action plan that would guide and stimulate action across the main segments of this emerging sector in Dominica. The Government of Dominica has already adopted a tourism policy and work is continuing on a Master Plan that will guide the sector over the next five to ten years.

The strategic plan outlined the main goals, priorities and key strategic actions

for agro-tourism in Dominica over the next five years. Accordingly, this Paper took into account, the broad vision and goal envisioned by the Government of Dominica through the key Ministries of Agriculture and Tourism. Fundamental to this vision was the need for ecological sustainability, building food security, building competitiveness in the range of products and services being offered and ensuring that rural development and prosperity became paramount in any strategy.

For the purposes of this exercise in Dominica, five types of agro-tourism activities or segments were identified as follows:

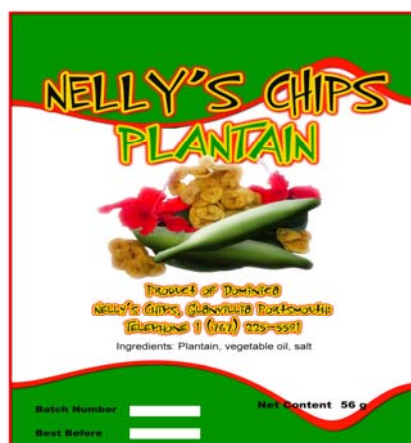
1. Agro-trade
2. Farm Based & Agro-tourism/Farm Tours
3. Health & Wellness Tourism
4. Culinary Tourism/Events
5. Agro-Heritage Tourism

The paper outlined the strategies for all of the above segments and summarized the main thinking and priorities for agro-tourism in line with the Ministries of Agriculture and Tourism vision. It also documented the broad issues related to the state of the art in each segment, focusing on current developments, main challenges and some strategic options for enhancing developments in each segment. Some expected outcomes or impacts of the proposed strategies were mentioned. The draft strategic plan was submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Tourism for review and endorsement.

FAO Strengthening and Expanding Rural Income Streams project

The IICA Office in Dominica worked closely with FAO towards the implementation of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) - sponsored project entitled ***Strengthening and Expanding Rural Income Streams***. The Project focused on developing agribusiness stakeholders from IICA/ FAO/ OECS Member States through the facilitation of activities aimed at reducing vulnerability to food security and livelihood security in rural and farming communities. Particular attention was given to the expansion or strengthening of existing agribusiness or the starting up on new businesses, utilizing profiles developed for that country.

The National Association of Youth in Agriculture (NAYA) was invited to develop a profile for an enterprise that fell within the scope of the project. Guidelines were provided by the IICA Office in preparation of the profile. NAYA presented a case study analysis for an existing agribusiness enterprise (Nelly's Chips) belonging to a sole proprietor, Ms. Nelva Magloire.



New label concept for Nelly's Plantain Chips

The business identified was involved in the production of plantain chips. *Nelly's Chips* was selected on the basis of Ms. Magloire being a member of NAYA who has demonstrated the ability to take command of a market within the vicinity of the business location. In the last six years *Nelly's Chips* sold healthy snacks to the students of Ross University of Medicine in Glanvillia, Portsmouth and the business seemed to grow at a steady rate. The business expanded into the major tourist sites within the community namely the Cabrits Heritage Site and the Indian River. The demand for the chips exceeded the supply, and the entrepreneur's ability to supply was constrained by inappropriate and insufficient equipment, limited technical expertise and inconsistency in supply of raw material.

With the profile accepted and endorsed by FAO, the assistance was specifically to strengthen the existing business and to address the constraints identified in the case study analysis. The project focused on providing the necessary equipment needed to strengthen the existing business.

Veterinary Epidemiologist/ Para-epidemiologist Programme (VEP)

The Veterinary Epidemiologist/Para-epidemiologist Programme (VEP) was formed to establish an early detection and rapid response system in the Caribbean region through the implementation and reinforcement of harmonised and sustainable epidemiological surveillance systems for Transboundary Animal Diseases (TADs) and other priority / emerging diseases. The project was initiated in the original Caribbean Amblyomma Programme countries.

The sponsors of the VEP programme are the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA/APHIS), CIRAD and IICA. In Dominica the priority diseases for surveillance are Avian Influenza, New Castle Disease and Brucellosis. There is also continued surveillance of Tropical Bont Tick (TBT).



IICA Technical Specialist hands over a handset to the National VEPCoordinator while the CVO and Director of Agriculture look on.

The main results attained under the VEP programme were:

- Development of Protocol for chosen diseases (Avian Influenza, Newcastle Disease, Brucellosis)
- Inventory of Livestock farmers
- Georeferencing of poultry, pig and ruminant holdings
- Amblyomma Surveillance in hot spots such as Grandbay and Castle Bruce.

Observatory Consortium

In support of the initiative of the Development of an Information Observatory for Agriculture and Rural Territories, IICA assisted a group of four persons to attend a three-day workshop in St. Lucia from 27- 29 May 2008. The workshop was sponsored by IICA and the

Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement (CIRAD). The overall objective of the workshop was the development of a Caribbean Observatories Network (CONET) to support Agri-business and Agriculture Research and Development in the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). The specific objectives included:

- * Identify and share experiences in the OECS;
- * Identify and share needs and demands at both local and regional levels to be addressed by the observatories' network;
- * Define and schedule collaborative preliminary actions;
- * Design a draft project to be submitted before the end of December 2008.

The IICA Office in Dominica assisted the group in preparation of the national experience regarding information management and sharing.

IICA-CARDI Greenhouse Project

Under the IICA-CARDI Greenhouse project a Greenhouse Specialist, Mohyuddin Mirza, was recruited to assist CARDI in identifying the areas for research as well as formulating the methodology to pursue research activities. Mr. Mirza's met with the CARDI Team Leader and also the project management committee to discuss the proposed way forward for greenhouse subsector in Dominica. Mr. Mirza presence stimulated much discussion on suitable greenhouse production methods for Dominica.



Two proposed undercover systems for validation in Dominica

STDF Project

The overall project sought to identify practical and concrete solutions to institutional problems that limit effective and active participation in international forums, and to problems related to the practical application of the SPS Agreement.

IICA Office facilitated the implementation of a major component of the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) that involved the compilation of information related to Dominica: This is the basis for identifying strengths and weaknesses, as well as opportunities for technical cooperation with other countries. The first stage involved national consultations with key stakeholders from the public and private sectors including NGOs in August 2008. Mr. Everton Ambrose, Agricultural Health and Food Safety Specialist for the ECS, undertook the assessment using the Performance Vision and Strategy tool.

The second stage provided the opportunity to present to the critical stakeholders the findings of the assessments as well as to have an active session involving the public and private sectors to reach consensus on actions

needed to improve the current situation. The Office organized a National Consultation in December 2008 whereby eighteen persons representing critical organizations and Business Associations attended. A small team from IICA including Ana Cordero of IICA Head Office and Mr. Everton Ambrose were present. Also present was USDA Official, Ms. Megan Schildgen. The consultation met its objective which was reaching consensus on the findings.

CODEX Alimentarius Training

IICA Office identified a suitable venue to allow twenty person representing critical agencies to attend the 2-day video-conferencing training workshop on June 18 & 19. Participants who attended the meeting came from Bureau of Standards, Dominica Chamber of Commerce, Dominica Chamber of Agribusiness, farmer organizations, Plant Quarantine, Veterinary Health, Division of Agriculture, National Codex Committee and the Ministry of Trade. The workshop was well received.



Participants at the 2-day Codex training workshop

OIE “Normative Process and You” Training

IICA Office identified a suitable venue to allow fifteen persons representing critical agencies to attend the 1-day training workshop (via electronic forum)



Participants at the 1-day OIE training workshop

6. NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR TECHNICAL COOPERATION

The new opportunities for technical cooperation have already been documented in an Agreement signed between IICA and the Government of Dominica in July 2008. The priority areas identified included a strategic plan for the implementation of the policy, establishment of an Investment Unit, strengthening the agricultural health and food safety system; develop a framework for an agricultural insurance scheme and to accommodate a group of organic farmers to visit Costa Rica.

In view of the above, IICA will pursue the following:

- Development of a 5 year Strategic plan for the implementation of the Agro-Eco policy- This will be done jointly with the Regional Specialist in Policies and Trade Negotiations.
- Further assistance will be provided to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in operationalizing the Investment Unit through the development of Terms of Reference and operational procedures and guidelines
- IICA through is horizontal cooperation will facilitate the visit of a group of organic farmers to

organic farms within the hemisphere.

- Develop an effective risk management Programme with special reference to an agriculture insurance scheme. The first attempt is geared at undertaking a feasibility study on the potential for development of an insurance scheme and present the findings to the national authorities
- Facilitate an assessment of the Extension Service with a view to streamlining and updating knowledge capacity to current trends. The assistance will include workshop sessions to build capacities within the Extension service on the concept of result based management and technical writing.
- Provide Support to the development of a National Agricultural Health and Food Safety System This will be achieved through an assessment of the existing food safety systems and the formulation of TOR for establishing synergies among institutions.

7. MAIN ACTIVITIES ORGANIZED BY IICA

Official name of the event	Date held	Site of the event	Number of participants	Place and date of publication of the report of proceedings of the event
Codex Alimentarius Standard Setting Process and You	June 18 & 19	OECS Conference Room	25	
The OIE Normative Process and You	September 30	National Development Foundation of Dominica Conference Room	14	
Assessment of SPS in Dominica and Common Vision Session	August 19 & 20 and December 2	DEXIA Conference Room and Public Service Training Centre	12 18	
Assessment of Agricultural Information Needs in the OECS	November 13-14	Roseau	20	
Plant Quarantine Inspectors Training	December 3-5	Public Service Training Centre	25	
Agro Tourism Culinary Workshop	March 17-19	Fort Young Hotel	22	

IICA DOMINICA STAFF



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ACRONYMS

APHIS	Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
CANROP	Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers
CARDI	Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CIRAD	The Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement (French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development)
CITES	Convention for International Trade in Endangered Species
CONET	Caribbean Observations Network
CROSQ	CARICOM Regional Organization for Standards and Quality
CTV	Citrus Tristeza Virus
DBOS	Dominica Bureau Of Standards
DEXIA	Dominica Export Import Agency
DNCW	Dominica National Council of Women
DSIF	Dominica Social and Investment Fund
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
IABA	Inter-American Board of Agriculture
IICA	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPPC	International Plant Protection Convention
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry
NAYA	National Association of Youth in Agriculture
NGO	Non-Government Organization
OECS	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
OIE	World Organization for Animal Health
PCL	Produce Chemist Laboratory
RTC	Regional Technical Committee
SME	Single Market and Economy
SPS	Sanitary Phytosanitary
STDF	Standards and Trade Development Facility
TAD	Transboundary Animal Disease
TBT	Tropical Bont Tick
USDA/FAS	United States Department of Agriculture/Foreign Agriculture Service
VEP	Veterinary Epidemiology
WTO	World Trade Organization