

# IICA



*The Contribution of:  
The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture to  
Agriculture and the Development of Rural Communities in  
Trinidad and Tobago*



Annual Report 2002

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## MESSAGE FROM THE REPRESENTATIVE



Aaron H. Parke,  
Representative in Trinidad  
& Tobago and Coordinator,

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture, Office in Trinidad and Tobago is pleased to present the Annual Report to our stakeholders, collaborators/partners and clients throughout Trinidad and Tobago and beyond. The report is intended to disseminate information on our initiatives for supporting the development of Agriculture and Rural Life in Trinidad and Tobago.

Our work is reflective of our mission, which is to support the efforts of Trinidad and Tobago to achieve progress and prosperity through the modernization of the rural sector, the promotion of food security and the development of an agricultural sector that is competitive, technologically prepared, environmentally managed and socially equitable for all nationals.

Our many accomplishments were attained with the direct assistance and joint collaboration of many. We are particularly proud of the strong alliances that we have managed to forge with our many international, regional and national strategic partners, and the fact that our joint actions to promote and reposition the agriculture and rural sectors have begun to bear fruits as evidenced by the level of assertiveness and interest of the private sector in improving agro-industries.

Our work has been greatly facilitated by the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources, whose support and collaboration we continue to rely on as we seek to advance the pace of development in the agriculture and rural sectors.

The dedication of the IICA staff in achieving our goals and satisfying the needs of our clients is deeply appreciated and acknowledged. The funds received from external resources, as well as, the quota contribution from Member States to carry out our work are duly acknowledged.

We hope that you will accept this report as a true reflection of our work and contribution to Agriculture and Rural Development in Trinidad and Tobago.

*Aaron H. Parke*

IICA Representative in Trinidad and Tobago and  
Coordinator, Caribbean Regional Agenda

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The agricultural sector in Trinidad and Tobago is recognised as a key pillar in the island's economic development thrust. The latest economic data<sup>1</sup> suggest that the performance of the sector continues to be less than satisfactory with the contribution to gross domestic products (GDP) having increased minimally from 3.1% for October 2000 – March 2001 to 3.4 % for the corresponding period in 2002. This sub-optimal growth has been attributed to a number of factors including structural transformation of the economy, developments in international trade environment and the so called Dutch Disease<sup>2</sup> whereby rapid developments in the Petroleum/Energy Sector tend to thwart development of other sectors. In addition, the international events in 2001, mainly the terrorist attack of September 11 on the United States contributed to the dampening of the local economy, and this was exacerbated by the political uncertainty, which existed during the year.

The case of Trinidad and Tobago clearly demonstrates that for sustainable development to be achieved, greater emphasis has to be placed on developing agriculture and the rural spaces simultaneously with the other sectors. It is in this context, that the work of the Institute has gained momentum with increasing demands on its services by the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources (MALMR), as well as, other collaborators and stakeholders in the sectors.

In response, the Institute armed with a new vision for facilitating the repositioning of agriculture and the sustainable development of rural spaces has focussed its assistance through six strategic areas, viz. Trade and Agribusiness Development, Technology and Innovation, Agricultural Health and Food Safety, Sustainable Rural Development, Education and Training, and Information and Communication. The following summarizes the major achievements by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) in Trinidad and Tobago for the period 2002.

**Trade and Agribusiness Development:** The IICA office made an effective contribution by assisting the stakeholders to keep up with the fast pace changes taking place in the WTO Negotiations on Agriculture and in enhancing their understanding of these changes and implications for the local economy. Through seminars held by the Caribbean AgriBusiness Association (CABA) awareness of global developments that impact on local agriculture was heightened. Stakeholders were reminded of the need to ensure that their commitments under the existing WTO Agriculture Agreement are completed within the time frame specified. To facilitate this, an assessment of the status of compliance of Trinidad and Tobago was undertaken. In this regard the office provided information on ongoing and emerging trade-related issues directly to clients and the general public via the AgriView Newsletter and the "In a Nutshell" series. Commodity organisations were very grateful for the support received from IICA and CABA to assist the respective industries in preparations for the negotiations. As a result members have taken the lead in the process by preparing industry proposals and justifications to inform the preparation of tariff offers for the Free Trade Areas of the Americas (FTAA) negotiations.

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<sup>1</sup> Review of the Economy, 2002. Ministry of Finance, 2002.

<sup>2</sup> Planning Division. Sector Policy for Food Production and Marine Resources. MALMR, 2001.

The Trinidad and Tobago chapter of CABA initiated the process of increasing collaboration among the stakeholders in order to engender proactive participation in the Global Trade Negotiations. In this regard the chapter facilitated a meeting of members and the ministers of Trade and Agriculture. This meeting appraised the ministers of the work of CABA and the plight of the various agricultural sub-sectors with respect to various trade issues. The ministers applauded the proactive actions of the CABA members and promised the support of their respective ministries. The Chapter also facilitated the participation of its membership in several national and regional trade shows, which is expected to result in increased opportunities in trade. The membership was also pleased with CABA's efforts to highlight the issues of funding for agri-business in Trinidad and Tobago.

Assistance was provided to the South West Development Agency (SWDA), an umbrella community group in the La Brea Area to develop its agricultural business plan and to articulate same to its community members on February 28<sup>th</sup> 2002. The plan aims to engage the communities in an integrated mix of agro-tourism and agribusiness enterprises, to be implemented on 300 acres of state-lands for which the Agency is now seeking a long term lease. Among the enterprises proposed in the plan are production and processing of short-term vegetables and food crops, fruits crops production, and the rearing of small livestock. The development of enhanced natural forests for outdoor recreation as well as the use of abandoned dams in the area to create water sport facilities were also identified as means of further exploiting the tourism potential of the La Brea Region. A cost/benefit analysis of the plans indicated that these enterprises can be profitable after the first five years, with total cost approximating TT\$1.03 million and total benefits expected benefits approximating TT\$1.3 million in the fifth year.

**Technology and Innovation:** Within this Strategic Area, the Institute promoted technologies for enhancing local production and competitiveness in the areas of herbs, dairy production, fruit and tuber crops. Most notable was the co-hosting of the Caribbean Herbs Business Forum, December 2-5, in Montego Bay, Jamaica. Representatives from over 130 companies and organisations from 33 countries discussed ways to develop the Caribbean herb industry. In the end Caribbean Herbs Business Association (CHBA) was formed to promote regional cooperation in the research, development and selling of herbals from the Caribbean. Promotion of the St. Stanislaus Dairy Production model demonstrated positive results in 2002. These included improved performance of milking cows, increased stocking rates, reduction in mortality rates and enhanced management skills. Two workshops on "Producing High Quality Seeds for Commercial Yam Production highlighting the miniset technology have resulted in a request for further technical assistance and planting materials. Accordingly, the office has initiated steps to secure raw materials as well as small scale irrigation equipment to establish demonstration plots.

The Institute continues to provide strong support to the local fruit industry. This included participation in the Citrus Task Force (CTF) to coordinate the development of the citrus industry plan through the inter-institutional/industry collaboration. In association with the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources (MALMR), a National Pineapple Stakeholders meeting was held to discuss results of postgraduate research student project on the analysis of the pineapple commodity chain. Farmers appreciated participating in the discussion and sharing in the results disseminated. Ongoing collaboration with the National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation (NAMDEVCO) to develop trade in fresh produce, which included a Presentation at a NAMDEVCO Workshop on "Quality, Food Safety and Packaging



Requirements of Fresh Agricultural Produce.” Forty participants representing traders, hotels, supermarkets, producers, benefited. Continued support was provided to the University of the West Indies (UWI) postgraduate student in completing M.Sc. research and thesis report titled “Pineapple Commodity Chain: Economic Study of the case of Trinidad and Tobago”. The results will be used to develop an industry plan.

**Agricultural Health and Food Safety:** Ensuring food safety is important to maintaining export market share and to protect the health and well being of domestic consumers. In order to improve the national food safety system, IICA in collaboration with the European Union/Caribbean Forum of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (EU/CARIFORUM), initiated the project “Strengthening Agricultural Quarantine Services in the Caribbean” in September 2002, which will significantly enhance the country’s position in this regard. The project has already initiated actions to strengthen the national food safety committees in Trinidad and Tobago, among other CARIFORUM member states. IICA co-hosted a regional workshop on International Standards for Phyto-sanitary Measures in Trinidad and Tobago; four participants from the MALMR attended and actively participated in the development of international standards. IICA also co-hosted a workshop on Qualitative Risk Analysis for Plant Health. Participants from the MALMR reported that the workshop enhanced the Ministry’s understanding of pest risk analysis. The Food Safety initiatives of the MALMR also received a boost from the participation of its staff in the Canada/Caribbean Common Market (CARICOM) Alliance on food safety, which was held in Belize, July 3-7, 2002.

Reduction of Microbial risk was the focus of IICA sponsored/supervised M.Sc. research student’s project on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP). As a result protocols for peppers and pumpkins are being developed. The Institute also undertook several activities to sensitise stakeholders of the concept of GAP.

The national capacity to confront emergency pest and disease problems was enhanced with the training of several persons on citrus canker identification and prevention. This was also supported by two Table Top Emergency Simulation exercises, one for animal diseases and the other for plant diseases. These exercises contributed significantly to the islands emergency response capabilities and to the refining of the national emergency plans.

**Sustainable Rural Development:** The process of enhancing the empowerment of individuals and groups in the rural development process continued with the organizational strengthening of a number of community/women’s groups. These efforts focussed on the umbrella association of the Network of Rural Women Producers (NRWP). The Institute provided administrative, secretarial and financial assistance to the network for the development of a revolving credit scheme to support commercial initiatives by individuals. In addition to the networking support and group exchanges attention was given to the promotion of an aggressive marketing program by the participation of small-scale producers in national trade shows and exhibitions. Members of the network also benefited from the preparation of grant proposal to secure external supplemental financing for commercial and community initiatives. The Institute also promoted the participation of small-scale producers in a series of regional trade exhibitions and training programmes, which focussed on business management and handicraft; the latter utilizing tutors from Guyana.

Strategic alliances with other developmental agencies have resulted in strengthened collaboration with these agencies. The following highlights the results of this collaboration: The

University of the West Indies (UWI) has assisted in the dissemination of the new concepts in rural development, namely the “New Rurality” and “Territorial Competitiveness” and on the propagation and dissemination of the Mulberry; the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) has actively participated in the promotion of the Mulberry as a forage crop; the Caribbean Network for Integrated Rural Development (CNIRD) has collaborated on market promotions for small scale, rural producers and on training for community groups; and the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources has collaborated on the hosting of agro-processing training sessions for community groups.

The institute also supported the MALMR in its development of a “ Youth Apprenticeship Programme for Agriculture”. The framework outlined the key elements of an apprenticeship programme for engendering greater involvement of youth in agriculture in Trinidad and Tobago. The concept which was successfully implemented in 2002 involved the placement of young persons as interns in a range of successful public and private sector agriculture and agribusiness entities in order to enhance their skills and understanding of the process, as well as, to temporarily supplement the labour supply of these enterprises.

**Education and Training:** In 2002, IICA pioneered Distance Learning for the local agriculture sector. This resulted in the following achievements: One hundred and eleven students were registered during the year; 82 Students were trained in computer literacy and 89 students completed courses in Farm Management for Owners; Farm Management for Technicians; E-Commerce; Health and Occupational Safety; Information and Extension Methods in Agriculture. A ceremony was held to highlight the achievement of the students, as well as, recognise the support of our collaborators.

**Information and Communication:** the Institute continues to be a major source of information to the local agriculture sector with the regular publication of the AgriView and CARAPHIN News. Two issues of the In a Nutshell series, a newspaper supplement and over twenty media releases have served to keep the national community abreast of the major developments in agriculture. The IICA Annual National Seminar Series: A Community Approach to Promoting Agribusiness and Trade was launched with three fora being held with an average participation of over eighty persons.

The SIDALC network was further strengthened in 2002. Following a training workshop in Jamaica in which two participants attended, plans have been finalised to repeat this training in early 2003 which will result in a virtual library with full text being established early in 2003.

### **Other Technical Programs**

- a. **Regional Transformation Programme:** As a member of the Committee of Lead Agencies responsible for the implementation of the Regional Transformation Program (RTP) for Agriculture, IICA was given responsibility for completing Competitiveness Studies on two commodities - papaya and coconuts that were identified as priority products within the region. Work on the two studies was initiated.
- b. **IICA/CARDI Agreement:** Within the framework of the IICA/CARDI Agreement, efforts were made to streamline the networks operating under PROCICARIBE and to ensure that approved Research & Development (R&D) projects are synchronized with the Regional R&D priorities.



## **Publications**

- From the 'Green' to the 'Gene' Revolution Transforming Agriculture: DFrancis, IICA - Trinidad and Tobago
- The Mulberry. ABenn, Consultant
- Technical Evaluation of the Feasibility of Producing Organic Cocoa in Grenada. PChesney
- Report of Technical Assistance in the Development of Quality and Food Safety Systems for the Meat and Poultry Industry - The Bahamas. JAFrancis, IICA - Trinidad and Tobago
- Agriview, Vol. 7, #3/Vol. 8, #1
- Agriview, Vol. 8, #2

## **Plans and Programs for 2003**

In harmony with the National Agenda for Trinidad & Tobago, the office proposes a work program embracing the six strategic areas of technical cooperation.

Emphasis will be placed on the following:

- Supporting the national efforts in improving WTO compliance in Agricultural Health & Food Safety.
- Improving the capacity of stakeholders to understand and interpret the ramifications of the multilateral trading systems.
- Supporting national public and private sectors' efforts at achieving competitiveness for specifically identified commodities/industries, such as, citrus and poultry, in order to access regional and international markets.
- Assisting the MALMR and other stakeholders in embracing new technologies to access market opportunities in organic and in improving productivity in the fruit industry.
- The office will take the lead in collaborating with the Ministries of Agriculture, Health and Trade to develop the framework for modernization of the national Agricultural Health and Food Safety System (AHFS) in addition to ensuring compliance with the WTO/SPS agreement and dealing effectively with emerging issues.
- Collaborating with national poultry and egg producers associations to promote avian Health and promote good agricultural practices
- Through identification and promotion of opportunities for agro-tourism linkages, training, technology transfer and market promotion, among others, the office will promote and support the development of rural enterprises and the empowerment of rural producers to participate in the development of the agri-food system.
- Strengthening national organizations in their objectives to foster rural development and to improve income and living conditions in rural areas.
- Collaborate with the UWI, MALMR and the Ministry of Science, Technology & Tertiary Education to expand the scope of distance learning in the rural spaces in order to improve the knowledge and skills of rural persons.
- Provide information to the public on the importance of agriculture and to improve the public image of IICA through the publication of AgriView, In A Nutshell, CARAPHIN News and the Tropical Fruits Newsletter.
- Continue to provide a forum via Seminar Series for public discourse on key issues to the sector.

## INTRODUCTION

In 2002, IICA's Cooperation Agency in Trinidad and Tobago celebrated 25 years of service to the local agriculture sector. This milestone was celebrated in the month of October together with IICA's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The year was also significant for some major achievements. The incoming Director General brought a renewed focus to the work of the institute with the introduction of national consultations and the approval of a national agenda and work programme that the institute undertook in 2002. The commencement of the European funded project "Strengthening Agricultural Quarantine Services in the Caribbean (SAQS)" was approved and begun its operations with its implementing unit based in Trinidad and Tobago. Another significant achievement was the large number of students completing courses in IICA's Distance Learning Centre, which was launched in 2001.

During the year the office met the high demand for the information on WTO Negotiations and the implications on the agriculture sector. Considerable support was also provided in the area of agribusiness development with emphasis on the development of several commodities, such as, pineapples, citrus, dairy, pork, and poultry. A business plan was also developed for the South West Development Agency which sought to develop 300 acres of state lands. Considerable efforts were made to continue to strengthen and empower rural groups.

### REVIEW OF THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO IN 2002



Adoption of modern technologies  
key to competitiveness

The agricultural sector in Trinidad and Tobago is recognised as a key pillar in the islands economic development thrust. The latest economic data<sup>3</sup> suggest that the performance of the sector continues to be less than satisfactory with the contribution to GDP having increased minimally from 3.1% for the October 2000 – March 2001 to 3.4 % for the corresponding period in 2002. This sub-optimal growth has been attributed to a number of factors including; structural transformation of the economy, developments in international trade environment and the so called Dutch Disease<sup>4</sup>, whereby rapid developments in the

Petroleum/Energy Sector tend to thwart developments of other sectors. In addition the international events in 2001, mainly the terrorist attack of September 11 on the United States contributed to the dampening of the local economy, and this was exacerbated by the political uncertainty which existed during the year.

However, in discussing agriculture's contribution to the GDP one must be cognizant that the approximately 3% relates only to primary production. This contribution does not account for the substantial forward linkages that have generated industries, such as, the vibrant food and beverages industries, which are classified under manufacturing in the national accounting system.

<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Finance. Review of the Economy 2002. Ministry of Finance, 2002.

<sup>4</sup> Planning Division. Sector Policy for Food Production and Marine Resources. MALMR, 2001.

The case of Trinidad and Tobago clearly demonstrates that for sustainable development to be achieved greater emphasis has to be placed on developing agriculture and the rural spaces simultaneously with the other sectors. A more accurate accounting of agriculture's contribution in the broadest context will greatly facilitate sustainable development. It is in this context, that the work of the Institute has gained momentum with increasing demands on its services by the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources, as well as, other collaborators and stakeholders in the sectors.

### **Public/private Sector Institutional Framework**

Overall responsibility of agriculture in Trinidad falls directly under the jurisdiction of MALMR, while in Tobago, it is the Department of Agriculture and Marine Environment (DAME) of the Tobago House of Assembly (THA) which assumes responsibility for the sector. Both institutions are staffed with highly skilled personnel. Many frontline extension staff have first degrees and, in some instance, a second degree.

Other institutions that provide support to agriculture include NAMDEVCO, which has the responsibility for marketing and standards; the Agricultural Development Bank (ADB), a financial provider; and the Agricultural Society of Trinidad & Tobago (ASTT). Other support groups include IICA, FAO, UWI and CARDI. The primary private sector institutions include the Caribbean AgriBusiness Association (CABA) and the Trinidad & Tobago Manufacturers Association (TTMA). Both groups, particularly the former, serve as a voice for the private sector agribusiness groups and generally allocate and pursue the general development and sustainability of the sector.

Despite the presence of these various public and private sector groups, there is harmonious interaction and focussed efforts at developing the sector. However, continued collaborative work by the various institutions is required to effect greater enhancement of the sector.

### **Domestic Agriculture:**

As at March 2002, domestic agriculture displayed growth of 1.8 %. This increase was largely attributable to developments in industries, such as, pork, beef, poultry, and citrus which grew by 29.3%, 11.1%, 8.8%, 8.6%, respectively. Improved production efficiency was essential in enhancing performance for the livestock sub-sectors. Increases in citrus production was essentially due to developments in plant health through the management of the citrus black fly.



Growing the fruit sub-sector

At Caroni (1975) Ltd, production activities increased from October 2001 to June 2002, particularly through increases in sugar, citrus and beef production, which grew by 11.6%, 52.3% and 145.3%, respectively.

### **Export Agriculture:**

Cocoa and coffee did not share a similar fate in Trinidad and Tobago. As at March 2002, cocoa bean production had increased by an estimated 34%, whereas coffee bean production declined to 330,000 kg. This is significant given the inability of the industry to meet the local demand. Industry sources indicate that the reason for this decline is probably due to the relatively low price that farmers receive for their beans.

### **Manufacturing:**

With respect to manufacturing (a component of agriculture, the contribution of which is accounted for in industry and not agriculture), the food beverage and tobacco sub-sectors declined by 2.0%. This decline is viewed as an indication of the influence of trade liberalisation. Many manufacturers are down-scaling production activities and are now focusing on distribution type operations.



Self sufficiency in poultry

### **Employment in the Sector:**

During the period under review, agricultural labour force comprised 39,950. This figure amounts to 6.8% of the total labour force in Trinidad and Tobago. In comparing these figures with those for the corresponding period in the previous year, there has been a decline of 3.4%.

### **Future outlook:**

Despite the lackluster performance of the sector, efforts are being made to enhance performance. As stated previously, the work of IICA and other development agencies continue to provide support to agricultural development. The MALMR has also indicated that in its efforts to arrest the decline in agriculture and enhance the sector's competitiveness, a number of initiatives, which were in various stages of implementation in 2002 would be hastened in 2003. These include: establishment of working groups to develop action plans for specific commodities; land administration and distribution; development of infrastructure; improved marketing facilities; upgrading of fishing facilities to HACCP standards; Youth Apprenticeship Programme in Agriculture; enhancement of the Agricultural Incentives Programme; and improved research and development.

## **THE NATIONAL AGENDA FOR TECHNICAL COOPERATION**



Cross-section of stakeholders at National Consultation

A National Agenda for Trinidad and Tobago was prepared following a mandate by the Director General, as part of a new vision for repositioning IICA to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. An important element of this vision is that the Institute must seek to become more aware of, and responsive to, the specific needs of its clientele, for its technical support to be more relevant and meaningful. In order to achieve this, it was necessary that an in-depth and broad-based process of consultation be undertaken with all relevant stakeholders in the national agri-food system.

The agenda was prepared following a process of consultation by the MALMR and IICA, respectively. Both organizations engaged during the period 2000-2001 extensive consultations with a wide range of agriculture and rural sector stakeholders. In the case of the MALMR, an intensive round of national consultations were held during the preparation of a new national agricultural policy for agriculture for the period 2001-2005. During this time also, the Tobago House of Assembly (THA) engaged in consultations with Tobago agri-sector stakeholders in order to prepare a new technical agenda for developing agriculture in Tobago, within the context of the broader national agriculture policy framework. In both of these processes, IICA was invited to participate and offered technical inputs. In addition, IICA itself also engaged in two rounds of consultations with national stakeholders. The first of

these consultations took place in April 2001 when the Institute presented the proposed '*National Integrated Project for Trinidad and Tobago*' in order to obtain feedback on the project proposal. The second consultation was motivated by the results of the Quebec Summit, in which IICA was mandated to lead the process towards the preparation of a National Ministerial Declaration on Agriculture and Rural Life.

As a consequence of the above considerations, it was felt that a relatively simple consultative methodology would suffice in order to identify, validate and arrive at a consensus on any proposals for a National Agenda for Trinidad and Tobago. The following methodology was therefore applied. The MALMR was informed of the rationale for consultation and invited to collaborate. A letter from IICA's Director General outlining the purpose, nature and scope of the consultation formed the basis for initial contact with the MALMR and gained rapid approval from the Minister and his staff. It was then agreed that the previously appointed sub-committee of all the stakeholders that had participated in the process of developing the Ministerial Declaration and Plan of Action would be mobilized to meet the consultation objectives.

Arising out of the consultations with stakeholders, and taking into account the guidelines for the repositioning of the Institute as issued by the Director General, the proposed objective of the National Agenda for technical collaboration in Trinidad and Tobago is ***to foster the improvement of the capacity of Trinidad and Tobago's agri-food system to respond to changes in the global trading environment.***

Specifically, the National Agenda will seek to:

- Foster the improvement of the agri-food system's position in international trade, and in the hemispheric integration process relative to selected commodities, communities and organizations
- Support the improvement of living standards in selected rural communities
- Support the development of human resources required to satisfy the need of the agri-food system in the context of liberalized trade

These actions will be undertaken within the ambit of IICA's strategic areas of technical cooperation and other support areas, namely:

- i) Trade and Agribusiness Development ;
- ii) Agricultural Health and Food Safety;
- iii) Sustainable Rural Development;
- iv) Technology and Innovation; and

the following supporting areas:

- v) Horizontal Technical Cooperation;
- vi) Education and Training;
- vii) Information and Communication.



**i) Trade and Agribusiness Development:**

The specific actions in this strategic area for IICA's National Agenda in Trinidad and Tobago are:

- Undertake analyses of specific commodity systems in order to identify opportunities for enhancing trade competitiveness - (Commodity Systems Analyses)
- Conduct analyses, which explore the role and scope of agriculture in alleviating rural poverty.
- Apply alternative methodologies to trace/revalue selected agro-industries' contribution to the Trinidad & Tobago economy
- Support national policy decision making by conducting research into appropriate policies that facilitate investment
- Conduct and disseminate the results of research on the impact at the production and trade levels of bi-lateral, regional and international policies
- Undertake research into the various trade-enhancing options available to stimulate agricultural trade in the context of open markets and integration movements
- Develop and conduct workshops and public awareness programmes for public/private sector policy-makers and small farmers/producers on elements of the trade environment and negotiating agenda of specific interests to CARICOM
- Support the establishment and operations of a 'Virtual Trade Academy' to strengthen the trade-specific human resource base for agriculture
- Support the development and implementation of work programmes of stakeholder organizations and facilitate their access and linkages to regional organizations
- Support the identification, establishment and expansion of rural enterprises in the areas of agro-tourism and agro-processing.
- Support the consolidation of a National Alliance for Sustainable Development of Agriculture and the Rural Milieu so as to provide a forum within which the voice of the private sector could be heard
- In collaboration with CARDI, provide support to the Agricultural Society of Trinidad and Tobago to develop marketing systems, including its cooperative outlet
- On behalf of and through CABA, engage in competitiveness studies for selected industries, including pork, dairy, citrus and oils and fats and support the implementation of recommendations arising from the studies
- Support national organizations, including CABA, to develop and implement plans for increasing domestic and export trade

**ii) Agricultural Health and Food Safety:**

The specific actions in this strategic area for IICA's national agenda in Trinidad and Tobago are:

- Strengthening of National Agricultural Health and Food Safety Systems to comply with the requirements of WTO/SPS
- Promote the use of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) and HACCP
- Promote programmes in GAP, including IPM, oriented towards reducing the damage levels caused by pests and reducing pesticide use so as to achieve sustainable agricultural and environmental conditions
- Institutional modernization of national agricultural health and food safety systems

- Facilitate exchange and improve coordination with other Caribbean countries and other regions

### **iii) Sustainable Rural Development:**

The specific actions in this strategic area for IICA's National Agenda in Trinidad and Tobago are:

- Strengthening of National Organizations through the development of work programmes, support to the implementation of such programmes and facilitating their access to regional umbrella, organizations in association with training and group exchanges. These national organizations include the Network of Rural Women Producers, Cattle Farmers Association (CFA), Agricultural Society of Trinidad and Tobago (ASTT), Country Agricultural Consultative Committee (CACC), Paramin Women's Group, San Francique Sport, Education and Cultural Council (SANSECC), Caura Women's Group, Pt. Coco Agricultural Cooperative Society and St. Helena/Matelot Women's Group
- Development of rural enterprises through support to product development and market promotion on behalf of the NRWP, including commodities such as hot pepper sauces and pasteurized milk and collaboration on research on factors which impact on the success/failure of small scale processing enterprises
- Development of specialized revolving credit schemes for rural women and dairy farmers
- Provision of alternative forage planting material and coordination of research on the adaptation and validation of the St. Stanislaus Dairy Production Model
- Dissemination of results on research on the impact of international trade policies on the production of specific commodities at the national level

### **iv) Technology and Innovation:**

In Trinidad and Tobago, aspects of IICA's support in this area include the following:

- Technology Accessions and Transfer for Dairy and Fruits
- Strengthening of research capacity of relevant agencies (PROCICARIBE, CLAWRENET, NFC)
- Providing technical support for enhancing production and processing of dairy, fruits, pork and oils and fats through technology accession and transfer mechanism.
- Providing support to national research institutions and mechanisms (networks) in the evaluation of existing competencies and impact of research
- Strengthening of research capacity by supporting greater coordination of the research networking mechanism (PROCICARIBE National Network Committee and national thematic and commodity networks)
- Support to UWI in modernizing the curriculum for agriculture
- Provide technical support to national committees on GMO and Organic Production in developing policy framework and legislation
- Promote linkages between research and development institutions and national stakeholder organizations to improve research priority setting and management
- Facilitate the conduct of national workshops on valuing biodiversity and traditional knowledge – access and benefit sharing particularly but not limited to herbal medicines



**v) Horizontal Technical Cooperation:**

The Cooperation Agency (CA) will actively support exchange of the actors involved in agriculture and rural development within the region and the hemisphere. This exchange will be in both directions as Trinidad and Tobago does have experiences and technology, e.g. the control of Pink (Hibiscus) Mealy Bug, to other IICA member countries. The Horizontal Collaboration will use existing programmes, such as, the Cochran Fellowship, the Student Intern Programmes, managed by the Washington CA and Headquarters, the Canada Professional and Farmer Attachment Programmes and FAVA/CA.

**vi) Education and Training:**

The aim of this support area is to foster the upgrading of capabilities among stakeholders in the agri-food sector. The following actions are identified for Trinidad and Tobago:

- Collaboration with various agencies in the conduct of relevant seminars and workshops
- Implementation of specific training through the Agricultural Distance Learning Centre (ADLC).
- Collaboration with various agencies in the conduct of relevant seminars and workshops for the various Strategic Areas
- Implementation of specific training through the ADLC placing emphasis on development of structured programmes with key stakeholders and clients, such as, the MALMR, NRWP and the Eastern Caribbean Institute of Agriculture and Forestry (ECIAF).
- Support to the Faculty of Agriculture and National Sciences, UWI in the revision of the Curriculum so as to produce a graduate that is more suitable to the current demands for the development of agriculture and the rural milieu.
- Support student internship programmes at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

**vii) Information and Communication:**

The purpose of this support area is to complement the management of information on specific themes, so as to promote an image of institutional excellence. For Trinidad and Tobago this includes:

- Promotion and dissemination of project outputs, and other technical information through publications and other relevant activities.
- Promotion and dissemination of project outputs and agricultural related information.
- Consolidation and expansion of the agricultural library network through the SIDALC project.
- Support to the maintenance and upgrading of the Caribbean Region website
- Support to the publications, Tropical Fruit Newsletter, CARAPHIN News, In a Nutshell, and AgriView.

**IICA's MISSION AND VISION**

**Vision:**

To transform the IICA into a development agency that promotes the sustainable development of agriculture, food security and the prosperity of rural communities in the Americas.

### **Mission:**

To support the efforts of the Member States to achieve progress and prosperity in the hemisphere, through the modernization of the rural sector, the promotion of food security and the development of an agricultural sector that is competitive, technologically prepared, environmentally managed and socially equitable for the peoples of the Americas.

### **IICA'S MISSION IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**

IICA's mission in Trinidad and Tobago is to provide co-operation services and facilitate national dialogue to reposition agriculture and the rural milieu to operate sustainably and competitively in all markets for the maximum benefit of nationals.

### **IICA'S VISION FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL LIFE IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**

IICA's vision in Trinidad and Tobago is to become an effective partner in the quest to transform and reposition the agri-food system to one, which is competitive and equitable within a sustainable and holistic framework.

## **HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR ACTIONS IN 2002**

### **TRADE AND AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**



The world is now our competitor

The agricultural development agenda for Trinidad & Tobago in 2002 was dominated by the urgency to prepare for trade negotiations, particularly in respect to concluding the negotiations to establish a FTAA by 2005. Simultaneously, all agricultural enterprises, regardless of size and scope, were becoming more aware of the need to adapt in order to meet the significant challenges brought about by the advances in production and information technologies and trade liberalisation. These challenges will profoundly affect the viability of the individual agricultural enterprises, the agri-food system and ultimately, national food security and economic wellbeing. Consequently, within the context of the international environment, efforts in Trade and Agribusiness Development focused on ensuring that stakeholders were kept adequately informed, sufficiently mobilized and appropriately supported to interpret and embrace these challenges for sustained development of agriculture and the rural sector. Throughout 2002, the private sector having become more aware of the challenges facing the sector began to lobby for changes which resulted in a noticeable shift from reliance on public-sector resources and programmes to the private sector assuming greater responsibility for agricultural development in Trinidad and Tobago. Previous efforts of a number of agencies, including IICA, to promote the importance of agricultural development has contributed to this 'awakening' of private sector groups.

#### **✧ Promoting viable agriculture enterprises and rural prosperity**

##### ***... taking a community approach to agriculture:***

In 2002, the private sector assumed greater responsibility for agricultural development in Trinidad and Tobago. One such group is the South West Development Agencies (SWDA), a

community-based organisation, which sought to acquire and develop 300 acres of State lands in the South West Region of Trinidad. In support of this initiative, IICA provided the SWDA with technical assistance in completing strategic and technical analyses to guide the preparation of a business plan. This business plan is integral to a successful application for the lease of the targeted State lands.

Support included analysis of 13 enterprises, including short-term crops (hot peppers, pumpkins, tomato, condiments), medium term crops (pineapple, papaya) and tree crops (citrus). The business plan also made the explicit linkage between agriculture and tourism by analysing potential agro-tourism enterprises. The results of a cost benefit analysis showed that these enterprises will earn profits within the first five years of operation, with total benefits of the development approximating TT\$1.2M and total costs, TT\$1.03M at year five. IICA's support to the SWDA continued with assistance in presenting the plan to the State and target community through three specially planned seminars. Preliminary feedback suggests a successful response to the lease proposal from the landlord.



Presenting Business Development Plan to stakeholders

### ***...developing 'minor' agricultural enterprises***

Recognizing the need to engage in developmental work with the non-traditional and sometimes, minor, agricultural enterprises, support was initiated to develop the apiculture, condiments, vegetable and rabbit industries. Local beekeepers, in particular, have the tremendous task of supplying the country's demand for honey due to SPS-based import restrictions. In keeping with this responsibility, the Tobago Apicultural Society (TAS) has embarked on measures aimed at elevating the productivity and status of Bee-keeping as a strategic industry in Trinidad and Tobago. IICA's involvement in this process included supporting TAS in broadening the dialogue and consensus building on the importance of developing the Bee-keeping industry, in its preparations for the 4<sup>th</sup> Regional Bee-keeping Congress in Jamaica, and in establishing a Caribbean Association of Bee-keepers. Arising from much of this dialogue, research and analysis were initiated towards the drafting of a National Bee-keeping Development Strategy for Trinidad and Tobago.

Stakeholders in the rabbit industry are also keenly interested in commercializing their operations, making rabbit meat a popular household and commercial entrée and providing a feasible entrepreneurial activity to both young and rural people.

### ***... making the links to tourism***



Agriculture and the environment interest visitors

A significant amount of effort and resources are being placed to develop the tourism product. An equally significant aspect of this is to develop community-tourism in rural areas, in the context of sustainable tourism development. Also recognizing the inherent symbiosis between agriculture and tourism, IICA has been promoting dialogue and public awareness to gain a wider understanding and acceptance of the need to create a policy and business environment that facilitates linkages between agriculture and tourism enterprises to maximize benefits in rural areas.

By assisting with the planning and hosting of two seminars on behalf of rural community groups, the understanding of the concept of agro-

tourism was improved and stakeholders provided with prospective agro-tourism opportunities in rural areas. This was done in collaboration with and on behalf of the Women of the Soil (CBO), from the agriculture-based Palo Seco Community and the Network of Rural Women Producers.

### ***. . . tackling the problems of financing***



Participants at financing seminar

A seminar entitled “Identifying Available Funding Opportunities for Agribusiness Development” was hosted in an attempt to bring together and inform stakeholders on the existing providers of financing for agriculture and related enterprises. The seminar was advertised via the media to attract entrepreneurs, including CABA members and particularly, the youth. The advertisement was successful in attracting over 40 participants, with a good representation of youth. The participants were quite surprised at the wide range of funding options available to entrepreneurs, from sources such as the ADB, the Business Development Company and the Development Finance Company (DFL), all of whom participated and made excellent presentations.

### ***. . . nurturing young agribusiness entrepreneurs***

Emerging from the Alliance, IICA increased its focus on mechanisms to attract and increase youth participation in agriculture. Consequently, a Regional Forum for Youth in Agriculture was launched to facilitate same. The National T&T Forum for Youth in Agriculture was established to compliment the Regional Forum and support was provided to facilitate participation of members at the Agribusiness seminar on funding opportunities. The National Forum is scheduled to meet in early 2003 to develop strategies for achieving the objectives of the Regional Forum. IICA has committed to continue support the forum in its activities to engage more youth in the business of agriculture.

## **✧ Promoting food security and intra-regional trade**

### ***. . . supporting the development of food policy in Tobago***

Based on the collaboration with the THA, IICA committed to support a food trade study aimed at identifying opportunities for export of food to Trinidad. To achieve same, in July 2002, assistance was provided in the design and implementation of a field survey and 8 weeks of trade monitoring in order to assess these trading patterns. The field survey involved eighty participants of which 14 were monitored weekly over an eight-week period. The survey was completed, but human resource constraints at the THA’s Marketing Division hampered the continuity in trade monitoring aspect of the exercise. However, with continued support from IICA, preliminary analysis of the data collected, was completed. The results of this survey will significantly impact the food production plan for Tobago and ultimately its overall agricultural development.

### ***. . . beefing up trade between Trinidad & Tobago and Jamaica***

In order to stimulate agri-business opportunities while simultaneously facilitating intra-regional trade, IICA successfully completed a study to determine the nature and scope of the market for beef in Trinidad and Tobago. In undertaking same a number of discussions were held with the major local importers and distributors of beef. These discussions revealed an interest in exploring the possibility of increased sourcing of beef from Jamaica. All parties further agreed to work together to foster intra-regional trade, particularly in the development of a strategy to promote Jamaican beef exports to Trinidad and Tobago.



## ✧ **Supporting the global repositioning of agriculture**

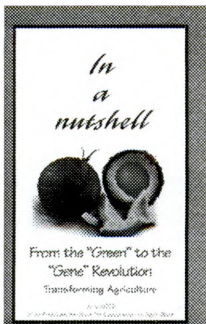
### ***... enhancing understanding of the WTO Agriculture Agreement***

With the preoccupation on the current WTO and FTAA negotiations involving agriculture, stakeholders were reminded of the need to ensure that their commitments under the existing WTO agriculture agreement are completed within the specified timeframe. To facilitate this, a draft report on the status of compliance of Trinidad and Tobago was completed. It briefly outlines agriculture within the GATT and WTO, the specific commitments of the Agriculture Agreement as they apply to developing countries, such as, Trinidad and Tobago, and an assessment of the level of compliance achieved to date.

Research towards the preparation of this report was undertaken with the support of a UWI undergraduate student of the Faculty of Agriculture whose previous exposure to the WTO-rules-based international trade system was extremely limited. This exercise was mutually beneficial to IICA and UWI, since it provided research and data collection support and contributed to the human resource development objective of UWI. The student intern was exposed to the elements of the WTO multilateral trading system, which enhanced understanding of Trinidad and Tobago's commitments and greatly facilitated completion of the report. The report will be finalised and complemented with other trade-related information for submission to interested stakeholders.

### ***... informing and educating on critical issues impacting agriculture***

Agriculture is no less affected by the information and knowledge era, and having the right information is now a critical factor of production and competitiveness. Ensuring that the persons who do the business of agriculture have a precise awareness and understanding of all issues that impact agriculture is essential for successful agribusiness. Providing information on trade and other related issues that could influence agriculture, food and rural development continued to be an important aspect of the work programme, implemented through the following media:



Simplifying issues  
in agriculture

- Trade-related articles and information published in the AgriView quarterly newsletter, geared towards public awareness and sensitisation and information sharing. The trade aspect of AgriView continues to be an important and specialised medium through which general information on agriculture and trade is shared among stakeholders.
- The In a Nutshell booklet series, has emerged as a popular medium that provides an introductory education to a range of specific issues that affect agriculture. An issue on biotechnology in agriculture was prepared with technical assistance from the Life Sciences Department of UWI, published and disseminated to interested stakeholders.
- Seminars presenting topics, ranging from the general, such as, international agreements, trade liberalisation negotiations, to the very specific, such as, funding opportunities for agribusiness aimed at raising awareness of the pertinent issues. Agribusiness stakeholders in Tobago were briefed on the various global developments that have already begun to change the way we see, think and do the business of agriculture. The Tobago community in general, benefited from this presentation, which was subsequently broadcast in its entirety.

**... mobilising stakeholders to identify and defend their trade policy interests**

IICA, as well as its stakeholders, clearly recognise the importance of collaboration between the public and private sectors. Such collaboration and joint action is an imperative in the process of preparing for the trade negotiations and in the repositioning efforts. Joint action between the two programme components of Trade and Agribusiness has served to sensitise and mobilize, within a relatively short time period, key agribusiness groups and industries, to participate more actively in the preparations for the negotiations. Stakeholders have been updated as to the status of the two major negotiations (WTO, FTAA), with particular emphasis on the tight deadlines to be met to achieve progress in the agricultural negotiations. This joint action contributed largely to:

- wider information disseminated directly to stakeholders on the specific requirements to prepare for the negotiations and increased awareness and knowledge among the agribusiness community, ranging from small-medium sized enterprises to large industries, of the importance of active participation;
- members of CABA, as well as other important stakeholders being fully sensitised on the need to take a very proactive approach to the preparations process. Supported by IICA, they have begun to lead the process, taking the initiative in preparing industry proposals and justifications to inform the preparation of tariff offers for the FTAA negotiations;
- stakeholders becoming more assertive in discussions to determine which among domestic industries could be considered to be 'sensitive' in the context of more open trade in the hemisphere. These discussions, initiated by CABA T&T, were expanded and merged with the preparatory meetings for the FTAA, chaired by MALMR, the national authority for agriculture in these negotiations.

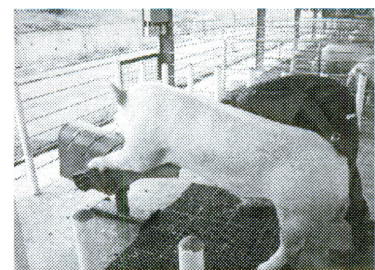
To reinforce the joint action between the Trade and Agribusiness programmes, CABA became the conduit through which the development of industry positions and consultation both between and within industries was promoted and supported.

▣ **Strengthening co-operation in the agribusiness community – CABA T&T**

CABA, as the vehicle for supporting agribusiness development, has been heavily involved in activities aimed at creating a favourable environment for the national agro-industries and agribusinesses so as to enhance their competitiveness. Within this objective, CABA, with support from IICA has been able to make meaningful interventions that have contributed to the advancement of agribusiness, both in terms of individual firms and industries and to the sub-sector in general. IICA continued supporting the Executive Secretariat of CABA providing administrative, secretarial and financial assistance to the national efforts, in addition to facilitating networking with other CABA members throughout the region.

**... industry studies**

A well-defined development plan and/or strategy is an essential tool to guide actions aimed at achieving competitiveness and growth in an industry. On the heels of the success of the poultry industry to establish a regional producers association and complete a competitiveness study, IICA, through CABA, continued to spearhead, encourage and collaborate with various industries to undertake industry studies as an initial first step. Such a study was completed for the Pig and Pork Industry in Trinidad and Tobago, and distributed to industry



High quality stock a key to competitiveness

stakeholders. Among the recommendations of the study was the need to establish a national industry association.

With support and encouragement from IICA, the Pork Producers Association of Trinidad and Tobago (PPATT) was launched in November 2003. IICA has also facilitated collaboration between the PPATT and other regional counterparts on issues affecting the pork industry in the region. IICA also initiated a similar study on the dairy industry, which will be completed in 2003.

### **... product and trade promotion**



CABA members at trade shows

CABA was heavily involved in market promotion on behalf of its members and supported by IICA, facilitated participation in three major trade shows in 2002: the Trade and Investment Convention (TIC), the National Agricultural Exhibition (NAE) and the SouthEx International Trade Show (SouthEx). Both the TIC and SouthEx were international trade shows, while the NAE focused on showcasing local producers. These trade shows were well

attended and on average, promoted the products of at least seven CABA members at each show. Some of the relatively smaller CABA members gained valuable exposure from both their larger counterparts in CABA, as well as from the general public. The showings also presented opportunities to forge business contact and increase product sales.

### **... membership drive in Tobago**

Given the limitations of transportation costs, a sensitization and membership drive was undertaken to propose the possibility of establishing a Tobago arm of the CABA T&T. CABA was recognised as a viable mechanism for collective and concerted action and response to issues affecting agriculture and agribusiness, particularly as they concerned the most current and pressing issue of preparing for trade negotiations. The stakeholders expressed an interest in pursuing the establishment of an arm of CABA T&T in Tobago.

### **... networking and information sharing**

The importance of cooperation and shared action between the private and public sectors was continually emphasized as the best approach to effectively address issues of concern to the sector generally, to the individual industries and representation at the various trade negotiating meetings. To promote such, CABA:

- facilitated increased networking between the public sector officials and CABA members, through courtesy calls to various government officials, including the Ministers of Agriculture and Trade. This aimed to familiarize the Ministers to the presence of CABA in T&T and to advance the interests of members by opening the lines of communication between CABA and the political directorate;
- exploited the opportunity at every bi-monthly meeting, to continuously update Members on the status of the various negotiations (WTO, FTAA) to assist their effective participation in trade negotiations and capitalize on opportunities arising out of free trade;
- facilitated the participation of Members in regional and national fora on issues related to the negotiations;
- developed a bulletin to continually inform and sensitise the agribusiness community on current issues of interest;



Government Minister visits CABA's booth



- established contact with the Briefing Room (a Jamaican private sector initiative aimed at sensitizing the private sector to the dynamics of trade policy and negotiations) to circulate their briefs and information on training activities to the CABA membership.
- Developed a CABA Website and promoted E-Commerce linkages through the Caribbean Export Development Agency (CEDA).

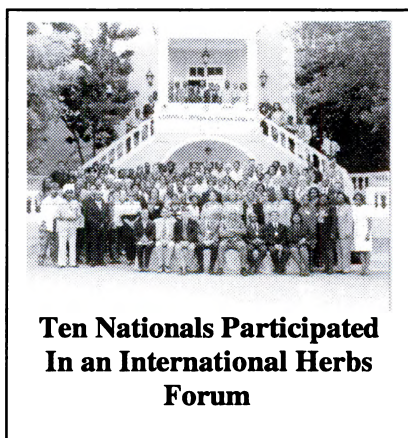
## TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

The major areas of focus for the year included Technology transfer and capacity building; Research management and coordination; and Information dissemination; with the main objectives were to Support Fruit Industry Expansion and Improve Technology Transfer Management Systems.

Project goals were achieved through collaboration with key national, regional and international strategic partners.

### *.... technology transfer and capacity development*

The programme supported training to enhance the knowledge and skills of stakeholders to improve the quality and safety and expand the range of fruit and vegetable products produced and marketed in Trinidad and Tobago. A joint training workshop was held with NAMDEVCO. Training support focused on quality assurance, food safety and conformance to produce and product standards. Approximately forty representatives from marketing agencies participated in the training workshop.



**Ten Nationals Participated  
In an International Herbs  
Forum**

In addition to enhancing capacity of the national stakeholders in the fruit and vegetable sector, the programme also focused on supporting agricultural diversification through its collaboration with three major international strategic partners in co-hosting the Caribbean Herbs Business Forum in December in Montego Bay, Jamaica. This Forum was co-sponsored by the Centre for the Development of Enterprise (CDE), the Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation (CTA) and the Commonwealth Secretariat and IICA. Approximately ten nationals of Trinidad and Tobago participated in the Forum and they represented various disciplines, organizations and business enterprises. The Forum provided a unique opportunity for academia, traditional herbalists and representatives from the herbal business sector

to dialogue on the technological, research and development, marketing and legislative issues which must be addressed to support the further expansion of the Caribbean Herbs Industry. The Forum also provided the Trinidad and Tobago delegates with the opportunity to network with over one hundred other delegates from the wider Caribbean and approximately forty North American, European and Latin American delegates. They were also able to explore avenues for developing business partnerships with their counterparts from these countries. A major outcome of the workshop was the agreement to establish a Caribbean Herbs Business Association, which would work in close collaboration with the Caribbean Association of Researchers and Herbal Practitioners (CARAPA) to advance the Caribbean Herbs Industry.

Following up on the major international workshop on diversifying into organic horticulture, which the programme co-hosted in Trinidad in 2001, both the government and the ASTT expressed an

interest in developing the Organic Horticulture Industry. As such, the programme supported the Trinidad and Tobago Government in drafting its National Organic Policy Guidelines. The Costa Rica model was sourced, translated and disseminated to the government.

A UWI postgraduate student from Trinidad and Tobago executed a research project "*Analysis of the Pineapple Commodity Chain in Trinidad and Tobago.*" It focused on determining the competitiveness of the commodity chain and identifying areas for improving its competitiveness. Preliminary findings were shared with over thirty farmers and representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture in Trinidad and Tobago thereby affording the stakeholders the opportunity to identify gaps in the research. The student was able to refine the data subsequently and complete the thesis report. The national summer internship programme for 2002 was also supported and student research projects focused on several IICA related national programmes in Technology and Innovation, Policy and Trade and Rural Development. The Future Farmer for the Americas (FFA) summer intern worked with Caroni (1975) Limited in reviewing the traditional rice production systems to determine what was required for conversion to organic production. Caroni (1975) Limited was pleased with the collaboration.

A direct request was made to IICA to follow up a request of the Agricultural Society of Trinidad and Tobago to the Caribbean Regional Human Resource Development Programme for Economic Competitiveness (CPEC) for financing an organic project and widen the mandate. A sub-regional project covering Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana and Trinidad & Tobago was developed and submitted to the CPEC. Phase 1 of the project was approved and CPEC's direct financial contribution is US\$150,000. This Phase will focus on marketing research and developing the organizational and management capacity of stakeholder organizations. IICA plans to launch the Trinidad and Tobago leg of the project in January 2003. This project will compliment the ongoing national training in organic horticulture that is targeted to farmers, and being implemented by CARDI under the IICA/CARDI agreement.

In addition to these major initiatives, the Technology and Innovation Programme continued to provide support for developing specific fruit commodities and enterprises in Trinidad and Tobago. The main fruits targeted for intervention were citrus and pineapple and small- to medium-scale enterprises continued to receive direct technical assistance. The National Citrus Task Force was assisted in developing a draft five-year plan for citrus which has led to a collaboration between the Cooperative Citrus Growers Association (CCGA), an input supplier – National Agro and IICA in developing a fifty acre model citrus farm which would embody all the latest and most relevant technology for the local situation.

The programme also participated in various discussion fora on Science and Technology Trade related and emerging issues including sustainable and economic use of agro-biodiversity and issues pertaining to global climate change. Direct technical assistance was provided to organizations and other thematic areas e.g. evaluation of micro-enterprises in Trinidad and Tobago for accessing FAO funding and serving as a resource on agro and fruit processing for the Business Development Company in Trinidad and Tobago.

#### **.... research management and coordination**

IICA continued to provide support to the CARDI in 2002. Emphasis was placed on improving the quality of research projects submitted to IICA for funding, improving collaboration between CARDI and other national institutions in executing research projects to engender greater cooperation between CARDI and the research units of the Ministry of Agriculture and ensuring that projects focused on improving the development of related agro-industries namely livestock,

fruits, root crops, which were deemed to be priorities in the region. One project was approved for Trinidad and the other is pending approval as CARDI needed to hold more dialogue with other national stakeholders who would be participating in the research project.

The inability to prepare bankable projects suggested that there was need to focus on re-engineering the approach to project preparation and approval process and providing technicians with the requisite training. Consequently, a collaborative CTA/IICA/CARDI regional workshop was held in Trinidad and Tobago. Approximately ten nationals of Trinidad and Tobago benefited from this workshop, which focused on improving knowledge and skills in project preparation, management and resource mobilization capabilities of CARDI team leaders, PROCICARIBE Network Coordinators and other related personnel including IICA staff.

The PROCICARIBE Mechanism also came under scrutiny in 2002. Respective meetings of the Executive Committee and Regional Coordinators were held in Trinidad and Tobago with a view to determining the way forward for PROCICARIBE and identifying an integrated research project, which would cut across thematic and commodity networks. The Executive Committee agreed that the PROCICARIBE mechanism would be evaluated and rationalized in 2003 in keeping with the requests of national stakeholders that the number of networks be reduced and that a strategy be developed to strengthen the mechanism to engender greater participation of the national research systems. The Regional Coordinators agreed that an integrated PROCICARIBE research project would be developed, which would focus on "Developing the Commercial Potential of Selected Commodities" by concentrating on identifying and characterizing the local and regional genetic stock including imported material, conducting related research trials to evaluate performance of crosses and market acceptability thereby contributing to enhancing the availability of high quality planting material and livestock breeds. Priority would be given to commodities, which were identified for development by national governments and involving national, regional and international institutions in the project. IICA through the IICA/CARDI Agreement would provide seed capital for PROCICARIBE. Trinidad and Tobago would be a beneficiary of these initiatives.

Trinidad and Tobago was represented at the FORAGRO Meeting in Brazil. The delegation comprised representatives from academia, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus and the non-governmental organization, ASTT. They joined their colleagues from the Bahamas, Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname and Latin and North American countries. The meeting was successful and the delegation agreed that it was important that steps be taken to forge a close alliance between the public and private sectors to advance the research and technology and innovation agendas for modernizing agriculture. This approach would be further developed in Trinidad and Tobago in 2003.

The alliance with UWI was further strengthened and the programme initiated work with lecturers to address research gaps on protecting traditional knowledge with emphasis on studying Traditional Knowledge pre and post Columbus as it relates to the Herbal Industry and analyzing and resolving post harvest related problems impacting on the competitiveness of the local pineapple industry. The results of these studies will be disseminated in 2003.

IICA continued to collaborate with the CARICOM Secretariat, Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), CARDI and the University of the West Indies (UWI) on the Regional Transformation Programme (RTP) for Agriculture in the region. CDB agreed to provide direct financial resources to the execution of the industry development studies for selected industries, namely, coconuts, small ruminants, papaya, hot peppers and sweet potato. Several meetings of the management committee were held in Trinidad and Tobago in

2002. A sensitization workshop to launch the RTP project funded by CDB was also facilitated and over thirty industry stakeholders participated. IICA's Technology and Innovation programme was given the leadership role for coordinating the studies on the coconut and papaya industries which are of direct relevance to Trinidad and Tobago.

The programme continued to coordinate a multi-disciplinary, inter-agency research project on "Pesticide Residue Analysis of Vegetables in Trinidad and Tobago" which is funded by the Consumer Affairs Division of the Ministry of Legal Affairs. Support was provided to NAMDEVCO through provision of a gift of equipment to the Food and Drugs Division of the Ministry of Health for use in analyzing vegetable samples for export. This initiative is expected to facilitate the exports of fresh vegetables to Barbados based on results of Pesticide Residue analysis.

#### ***.... information dissemination***

A paper on "Agro-processing for Industry Development" was prepared and presented at the regional venture capital workshop, which was held in Trinidad and Tobago early in 2002. Data on the growth of the local food manufacturing sector and the opportunities for expansion were highlighted. A modified version was also presented at the IICA 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Breakfast Meeting, which was held jointly with the South Trinidad Chamber of Industry and Commerce (STCIC). The STCIC has expressed a desire to work with IICA to revitalize the agriculture sector.

### **AGRICULTURAL HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY**

As previously alluded to, the agricultural sector in Trinidad and Tobago is important as a foreign exchange earner, as a source of employment, as a source of food and in its overall contribution to GDP. Despite this, it has not yet adapted to a rapidly changing global system that is open, but regulated by a standardized set of fundamental rules and disciplines that are internationally agreed and applied. In the context of the WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, the agricultural health and food safety authorities have a responsibility for ensuring safe food supplies and protecting agricultural health. Countries are required to use a scientific risk basis for preventing the importation of plant and animals and their products.

The recent outbreaks in the region of pests and diseases like the Pink Hibiscus Mealybug, Black Sigatoka and Classical Swine Fever demonstrate the devastating consequences of inadequate quarantine protection. Equally unfortunate, pesticide overuse and abuse have reduced the acceptability of Caribbean produce in export markets and constitute a hazard to human and ecosystem health. Microbial hazards have also prevented the entry of some fresh produce from Trinidad and Tobago into important export markets. Meanwhile, international economic relations are changing rapidly, and the new dynamics of international agricultural trade require Caribbean countries to compete on the basis of quality (including health and food safety) and price. Agricultural Health and Food Safety is increasingly driven by international standards, developed through a process of consensus building among countries scientists and regulatory authorities. It is in this context the Institute's Agricultural Health and Food Safety Programme continued in 2002 to work closely with national authorities to prepare the sector and its key players to satisfy Trinidad and Tobago's obligations under the various international trade agreements.

**.....Trinidad and Tobago benefits from regional efforts at strengthening quarantine services**

The EU/CARIFORUM funded project "Strengthening Agricultural Quarantine Services in the Caribbean" (SAQS) was approved by the European Union in July 2002, and operations commenced in September 2002. The project aims to modernize agricultural health services in the region for the purpose of increasing trade by improving Caribbean countries ability to comply with international sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) requirements. IICA developed the project and is the implementing agency. The Project Implementation Unit was established in IICA Trinidad and Tobago in 2002. A national seminar on SPS and Food Safety was conducted in Trinidad and Tobago in December 2002. Assistance was offered to national authorities for the formation of a national food safety committee.



Agreement signed to implement quarantine project



IICA Representative at Workshop opening

In complimentary efforts IICA and the FAO co-hosted a regional workshop on International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures in Port of Spain Trinidad from October 9-11, 2002. Four representatives from the MALMR of Trinidad and Tobago joined thirteen other participants from the Caribbean in obtaining a greater understanding of the new IPPC standards 'Pest Risk Analysis for Quarantine Pest' and "Analysis of Environment Risks' were addressed and recommendations made.

**.....preparing key stakeholders to address agricultural health issues in international trade**

Several actions, which focussed on training, were undertaken by the Institute to enhance the national capacity, from farmers to policy makers, in promoting greater food safety. These have led to a greater understanding of the international process for setting standards and their implications to the local agriculture sector.

IICA facilitated the participation of two delegates from the MALMR at the WTO SPS Committee meetings in Geneva from November 4 – 8, 2002 with funding from the USDA. Delegates from Trinidad and Tobago responded to a challenge by Argentina regarding prohibition of import of pork from Argentina. Trinidad and Tobago will be invited to two additional SPS Committee meetings in 2003. The participants were equipped to sensitize their colleagues on the WTO SPS agreements.

Delegates from the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources participated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Canada/CARICOM Alliance on Food Safety in Belize on July 3 to 7, 2002. The theme of the meeting was "Strengthening Food Safety Partnerships". Under the auspices of the Canada/CARICOM Alliance on food safety, one delegate from the Ministry of Health was sponsored to attend the Codex Committee on Food Labeling meeting in Halifax, Canada on May 6 to 10, 2002. Phase III of the Canada/CARICOM Alliance on Food Safety will be held in Trinidad and Tobago in 2003 with the theme "Sustainability of Food Safety Services."

Pest Risk Analysis is important in providing the scientific basis for ensuring export market access of locally produced commodities and preventing entry of commodities and products with





Agriculture Minister opens workshop

a high risk. To this end a regional workshop on Qualitative Risk Analysis for Plant Health was held in Trinidad and Tobago on June 25-28, 2002. It was co-organised by IICA and USDA. Five officers from the MALMR of Trinidad and Tobago joined 18 other persons from 13 Caribbean countries that were trained in Pest Risk Analysis. The workshop focused on practical applications to the Pest Risk Analysis process and commodities important in Caribbean intra-regional and extra-regional trade.

In an effort to reduce microbial and chemical hazards in fresh produce, Good Agricultural Practice guidelines are being developed for two priority export crops for Trinidad and Tobago, i.e. pumpkins and hot peppers. A UWI graduate student surveyed production practices in Trinidad. She also surveyed hygienic practices in packing houses and in markets. Experimental Plots following the Good Agricultural Practice guidelines for these two commodities were established at Centeno and will be completed in January 2003. Results of field trials will guide GAP recommendations on the reduction of microbial risk.

A workshop on 'Improving the Quality and Safety of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables' was held for Technical officers of the Tobago House of Assembly at the Kendall Farm School Tobago October 25 and 26, 2002. Presentations on SPS and Good Agricultural Practices were also made to the Extension & Training Division of the MALMR; and at three training courses in Marketing of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables on the Foreign Market, which was sponsored by the EU/CARIFORUM Regional Farmer Field School Program. Over 100 persons have benefited from the training in this area.

*Salmonella enteritidis*, linked to the consumption of raw or undercooked eggs, has been shown to be a common cause of food borne disease outbreaks in Trinidad and Tobago. The Trinidad and Tobago component of the project "Salmonella Risk Reduction in Table Eggs" commenced in February 2002, with funding from USDA/FAS. The implementing agency is the Poultry Surveillance Unit of the Veterinary Division of the MALMR.

- A questionnaire survey on farm production and hygiene practices was administered on 10 participating egg farms that supply 90% of national production.
- Salmonella survey began in August with environmental sampling on participating farms.

IICA co-organised and co-sponsored a regional workshop on "Improving Competitiveness of Table Eggs in the Caribbean" at the University of the West Indies campus in St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago from November 12 to 15. This was collaboration with the Caribbean Poultry Association, Association of Trinidad and Tobago Table Egg Producers, the Livestock and Livestock Products Board of the MALMR and IICA. The regional egg workshop sensitised egg producers to *Salmonella enteritidis* and food safety, and developed regulatory protocols for SE positive farms as well as Good Agricultural Practices for egg producers.

**.... Identification and surveillance of exotic pest and diseases**

Identification of the exotic pests and diseases for a country is a key step in the pest risk analysis. The Institute continues to provide assistance in the identification of exotic pest and diseases, and preventing their entry. In this regard a national workshop on Citrus Canker was co-hosted by IICA, FAVA/CA and the MALMR, from August 5-9, 2002 in Trinidad. Resource persons were provided by FAVA/CA. The workshop recognized this disease of citrus as an



Citrus expert talks to local farmers

emerging issue and focussed on surveillance and identification. Over 25 persons were trained from Trinidad and Tobago, Antigua and Barbuda and Dominica.

**...emergency preparedness**

Liberalisation of agricultural trade can result in the unwanted entry of exotic agricultural pests and diseases. In evaluating a country's agricultural health regulatory services, trading partners need to have confidence that a country has effective systems to respond rapidly and effectively to any possible introductions of pest and diseases. In 2001, IICA assisted the MALMR in developing national emergency response manuals for the introduction of exotic plant pests and exotic animal diseases. In order to test the response capabilities of Trinidad and Tobago to an animal disease emergency and to evaluate the national Emergency Preparedness plan, a table top Animal Disease Emergency Simulation Exercise was held on 7 March 2002. The exercise was held in collaboration with PAHO/WHO, NEMA and the MALMR. Over 60 persons from Trinidad and Tobago participated in the exercise. A similar table top simulation exercise for Plant Health emergencies was held in Trinidad and Tobago on November 13. This workshop was held jointly with the MALMR and NEMA. Over sixty persons from Trinidad and Tobago participated.



Participating in simulation exercise

**SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

**.....empowerment of groups and individuals**



Students engaged in craft making

In keeping with the overall objective of improving the capacity of rural people to accelerate their own development processes, the empowerment of individuals and groups in the rural communities continued to be a major focus of the Institute's Sustainable Rural Development program in Trinidad and Tobago. This was achieved via several lines of actions. Firstly, through direct technical assistance extended to eight community/women's groups, namely:

- Caura Valley Women's Group
- Lopinot Community Group
- Paramin Women's Group
- Valencia Pentecostal Assembly Women's Group
- Women of the Soil
- Women in Progress
- The Trinidad and Tobago Federation of Women's Institutes; and
- The Strong Foundation Women Empowerment Organization



Demonstrating craft making

Activities undertaken to promote the empowerment of these groups were multi-faceted and wide ranging. These included the provision of administrative, secretariat and financial assistance to the executives and community leaders to assist in the design and implementation of their respective work programmes. Facilitating their participation in national and regional trade shows and exhibitions fulfilled their need for a more aggressive market promotion of their products. Some groups were assisted in the preparation of grant proposal to



secure external, supplemental financing on behalf their members to support commercial and community initiatives. The establishment of a food processing facility and a drapery factory are two notable examples. The implementation of various training programmes was also key to the process of empowering these groups. One such programme focussed on 'Business Management' including sessions on Feasibility Studies, Record Keeping, Marketing and Cooperative Development. A second programme on 'Handicraft' consisted of two, two-week, training sessions utilizing tutors from Guyana and demonstrating the indigenous Amerindian techniques of craft making which utilize local material to produce high quality craft that has a healthy demand in both the domestic and tourist trade. The third programme consisted of two training sessions on 'The Commercial Production of High Quality Seed Yams.'

#### ***....Network of Rural Women Producers***

Another major focus of the targeted interventions within the rural communities was the institutional strengthening of the umbrella association: the Network of Rural Women Producers (NRWP). Although the organisation is closer to greater self reliance, IICA provided secretarial services to the NRWP to coordinate monthly executive meetings and the implementation of its work programme for 2002, which included the commemorative brunch for World Rural Women's Day and the convening of the Biennial General Meeting. IICA also co-sponsored, together with Caribbean Export Company, the participation of two small manufacturers in a regional trade exhibition held in St. Lucia under the auspices of CNIRD and the Government of St. Lucia. The NRWP continues to regard IICA's direct support as critical to achieving its mandate.

#### ***...a revolving credit scheme***

A revolving credit scheme to support commercial initiatives by members of the NRWP was consolidated during the year. Seven loans were successfully disbursed as a result. Ms. Catherine Medina expanded her wine production with funds she obtained through this facility. Mr. Mervyn Toussaint purchased an irrigation system for the production of vegetables. He can now produce year round and stands to significantly enhance his earning capacity. Ms. Olive James was glad to expand a poultry production with her credit. Mrs. Merlyn Rosales used her loan to purchase stock to start up a vegetable retail stall. Ms. Maria Daniel was able to expand her production of vegetables through a small loan that allowed her to prepare a greater acreage of land. Ms. Lucy Constantine was also able to expand her food processing with the purchase of a commercial blender, which resulted in an increased throughput in her processing of green vegetable seasonings. The Paramin Women's Group was able to use their loan to better market their high quality seasonings by the design and purchase of more attractive labels.

#### ***.....promotion of group exchanges***

The promotion of networking and group exchanges is another effective way in which the program was able to empower rural communities. In 2002, members from groups in Palo Seco, Valencia, Penal, Caura and Paramin visited the Lopinot community to view a commercial kitchen and to exchange experiences. The Institute also facilitated the participation of members of the NRWP in its training programmes/lectures as well as some hosted by other organizations.

#### ***...enhancing the NRWP's public image***

The public image of the NRWP and their members were enhanced through their participation in several trade shows, such as, the exposition on the occasion of International Women's Day. Of note is the continued success of the Network in the prestigious Annual Flower Show, hosted by the Horticultural Society. For the third time, the NRWP won first prize in the Educational Category.

Executive members of the NRWP were also assisted by IICA to coordinate a Regional Board Meeting, held in Barbados, and the Annual General Meeting of the Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers, held in St. Lucia.

#### **.....giving the Dairy Farmers a Voice**



Improving returns from dairy production

The second line of work has been in the area of advocacy on behalf of dairy farmers affiliated to the Cattle Farmers Association in collaboration with the National Dairy Committee (NDC). The NDC was provided with secretariat services to coordinate bi-monthly meetings and to implement the annual work programme. One notable achievement has been the coordination of an inter-agency forum to discuss the national dairy industry. The impact has been that the NDC has greatly enhanced its lobbying capabilities as evidenced in its efforts at preparing a paper to support its request to have the local dairy industry declared a 'sensitive' industry within the

international trade negotiations. Initiation of a revolving credit scheme for dairy farmers was another significant achievement for 2002.

#### **....facilitating Technology Accession by Communities**

The Sustainable Rural Development program in Trinidad and Tobago also facilitated the transfer of technology, specifically: the St. Stanislaus Dairy Production model, whereby two model farms that were established in 2001 to showcase feeding, irrigation and record keeping components of the model have produced positive results under local conditions. The propagation and dissemination of the Mulberry as an alternative forage among dairy farmers also continued to produce positive results in 2002 with requests for planting material coming from the public and private sector entities.

In 2002, the Minisette Technology for the commercial production of high quality seed yams was introduced to the members of the NRWP. Based on the positive feed back and requests for planting material, this would be expanded in 2003 with the establishment of several model farms.

#### **.....strengthening Strategic Alliances**

Renewed efforts to forge strategic alliances with other developmental agencies have resulted in strengthened collaboration with the following organizations:

- The University of the West Indies (UWI) has collaborated on the dissemination of the new concepts in rural development, namely the "New Rurality" and "Territorial Competitiveness". Technical assistance has been extended to the University as part of the undergraduate course on 'The Economic and Social Environment'. Secondly, the terms of reference for a collaborative study on selected community/women's groups 'To identify the Characteristics that Impact on the Success in Enterprise Development' has been completed and forwarded to the University. Additionally, the UWI Field Station has collaborated on the propagation and dissemination of the Mulberry
- The Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) has collaborated on the dissemination of the Mulberry
- The Caribbean Network for Integrated Rural Development (CNIRD) has collaborated on market promotions for small scale, rural producers, specifically, in facilitating the participation of two small scale producers at a regional Trade Exhibition in St. Lucia and on training for community groups. Additionally, the terms of reference has been completed and

forwarded to CNIRD for a collaborative study on 'Identifying Opportunities for Expanding Commercial Initiatives among Rural Groups'; and

- The Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources, specifically, the Caroni County Extension Office, has received technical and financial assistance for the hosting of agro-processing training sessions for community groups.

## EDUCATION AND TRAINING

### *...Distance Training*



Farmer receives certificate

Training at all levels is a key strategy for tackling the many challenges impacting on the agricultural and rural sectors. In this regard, the year was very successful for IICA's Distance Learning Centre in Trinidad and Tobago. IICA, MALMR and UWI collaborated to successfully mount training courses via a distance learning mode. Over 200 participants were registered in Trinidad and Tobago with 111 registering for the IICA distance learning courses in Farm Management for Owners; Farm Management for Technicians; E-commerce; Health and Occupational Safety; and Information and

Extension Methods in Agriculture. Of the 111 registered students, 89 completed the respective courses in 2002 with 67 students graduating. The interactive nature of the courses was highly praised by the participating students.

The Institute also successfully introduced several innovations, such as, setting rural internet sites in collaboration with authorities located in the rural communities to afford greater access by rural communities to the training available.

### *....Student Internships and Post-graduate Training*

During the summer months of 2002 two students from the University of the West Indies (UWI) and the World Food Prize Winner from Iowa spent a six week attachment at the IICA Office in Trinidad and Tobago working along with the professionals on various subjects.

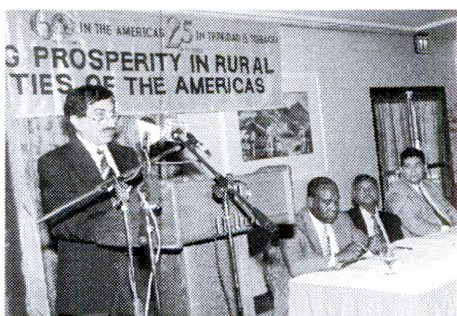
The Institute continued to support post-graduate students of the UWI 2002 subsequent to the signing, in 2001, of an agreement to support postgraduate research students. Assistance was provided to a student to complete a study of the Pineapple Commodity Chain. The work of another graduate student on Good Agricultural Practices, which seeks to develop protocols for the development of two export crops: hot peppers and Pumpkins was also supported.

A UWI postgraduate student from Trinidad and Tobago executed a research project "*Analysis of the Pineapple Commodity Chain in Trinidad and Tobago.*" It focused on determining the competitiveness of the commodity chain and identifying areas for improving its competitiveness.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

### *....60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations*

The IICA office in addition to celebrating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Institute also celebrated 25 years of sterling contributions to the local agriculture sector in the month of October. To mark this milestone an Open Lecture at the Hilton Trinidad and Conference Centre was held on October 14. His Excellency Mr. Carlos Isidro Echeverria, Ambassador of Costa Rica, delivered the feature address on the "Role of Agriculture in the Economic Development Programme;" his



UWI Rep.....Greetings at 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

presentation was very well received particularly as he drew heavily on the Costa Rican experiences in developing its agriculture. Mrs. Wendy Lee Yuen, President of the Agriculture Society of Trinidad and Tobago, gave a private sector's perspective to the same topic. She called for better rural infrastructure and marketing opportunities, as well as, proper policies to support local agriculture together with promoting exports of locally produce.

On October 15, at the Centre Pointe Mall, Chaguanas, IICA and the Network of Rural Women Producers explored the topic "Your Rights to Clean Water" at a Business Brunch, which also commemorated World Rural Women's Day. The proceeds of the event were dedicated to support a programme of market promotions on behalf of small scale, rural female producers. The forum highlighted the role of water in both the domestic and agricultural sectors. A clean reliable source of water was identified as a must for agricultural production and processing activities. Those gathered were urged to work closer with the community-based organisations to demand their right to clean water.

October 24 was a milestone for over 40 farmers, rural women and technicians who successfully completed training programmes in Farm Management; Occupational Health and Safety, Agricultural Information and Extension and E-Commerce and received their certificates at a ceremony hosted at the Sevilla Club, Brechin Castle, Couva. Ms. Jennifer Sampson, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Science Technology and Tertiary Education, congratulated IICA for pioneering Distance Learning in the Agriculture Sector in the Caribbean and at the community level involving farmers. She underscored the role this technology will play in the future development of the agriculture sector and in the realization of the government's stated goal of increasing the percentage of the population possessing a tertiary education.

Among the activities was a Breakfast meeting and Panel Discussion on "The Role of Agriculture in the Economic Development of Trinidad and Tobago" co-hosted with the South Trinidad Chamber of Industry and Commerce (STCIC). In highlighting the Government's efforts in repositioning the agriculture sector as the country strives for develop country status by the year 2020, the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources outlined his Ministry's strategies to achieving this goal. These include identifying and promoting high value commodities; improving marketing system and adopting policies to promote export agriculture which could include setting up storage facilities in importing countries; and supporting agricultural development and establishing linkages to other sectors. The meeting ended on a positive note with consensus on the need for a participatory approach to the development of and implementation of strategies to encourage investment into the agriculture sector. This is in keeping with IICA's "Beyond a Sectoral Approach" to agricultural development, which seeks the development of entire commodity chain from the farm gate to the consumer's plate.

The series of activities was highlighted in a newspaper supplement on November 03, 2002.

#### ....National Seminar Series

IICA Annual National Seminar Series with the theme: A Community Approach to Promoting Agri-Business and Trade was held. The following Table provides the specifics.

Date	Location	Topic	Speaker
June 10	Chamber of Industry and Commerce	An Overview of the Draft Water Resources Management Policy for Trinidad and Tobago	Mr. Keith Meade
		Perspectives of Availability of Water for Agricultural Community	Mr. Robert Salandy
July 26	Cascadia Hotel	Agricultural Health and Food Safety in Trinidad and Tobago	Dr. Sandra Vokaty
		Approaches to Natural Resource Valuations – Policy Issues for Rural Development	Mr. Willard Phillips

This series has now become important fora for discussing technical and policy issues affecting the agriculture sector in Trinidad and Tobago. An average of 70-80 persons attended, including many key persons in the sector.

#### Other Technical Cooperation activities conducted in 2002

- Regional Transformation Programme: As a member of the Committee of Lead Agencies responsible for the implementation of the Regional Transformation Program (RTP) for Agriculture, IICA was given responsibility for completing Competitiveness Studies on two commodities - papaya and coconuts that were identified as priority products within the region. Work on the two studies was initiated.
- IICA/CARDI Agreement: Within the framework of the IICA/CARDI Agreement, efforts were made to streamline the networks operating under PROCICARIBE and to ensure that approved Research & Development projects are synchronized with the Regional R&D priorities.

#### Strategic partnerships developed

Within the six strategic areas, the office collaborated with several international, regional and national agencies. These are highlighted in this section.

##### International:

To operationalise a memorandum of understanding between the Director General of IICA and his counterparts at FAO and PAHO and the OAS, the office undertook several initiatives aimed at strengthening quarantine services among other activities in Trinidad & Tobago and the region. These included:

- IICA and FAO co-hosted a regional workshop on International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures
- PAHO/WHO and IICA hosted a Table Top Animal Disease Emergency Simulation Exercise in March.



- The MALMR has accepted joint IICA/FAO proposals to develop three projects to address priority areas of the Ministry. These jointly developed projects have been submitted for funding and it is expected that IICA/FAO would jointly execute these projects on behalf of the MALMR.
- As a member of the Committee of Lead Agencies, the FAO, IICA, CARDI, UWI and the CARICOM Secretariat are working on a food security program for the region which would offer benefits to Trinidad & Tobago.
- Collaborated with the Centre for the Development of Enterprises (CDE), the Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation (CTA) and the Commonwealth Secretariat to co-host the Caribbean Herbs Business Forum.
- IICA/CACHE/OAS collaborated in the development of the Human Resource capacity in Distance Learning. Additionally, Trinidad & Tobago nationals benefited from a regional grant that provided scholarships to pursue courses via distance. Over 200 students benefited.

#### Regional:

- Collaborated with the Caribbean Regional Human Resource Development Programme for Economic Competitiveness (CPEC) for financing an organic project. Their financial contribution to Phase 1 is US\$150,000.
- Collaborated with CARDI and national institution of the MALMR to engender greater cooperation and coordination of national research.
- Joint effort between CTA/IICA and CARDI were undertaken to provide training on project preparation and approval.
- IICA/CARDI collaborated to enhance the various networks under the PROCICARIBE network.
- IICA/UWI collaborated in the provision of training via the distance learning mode.

#### National:

- Collaborated with the MALMR in several areas including inputs into development of a Youth Apprenticeship Programme in Agriculture, developing an Organic Agriculture Policy, support to the development of a framework for the Beekeeping Industry in Trinidad & Tobago
- Collaborated with the Business Development Company (BDC) in promoting agri-entrepreneurship among rural communities.
- Initiated collaboration with the Development Finance Limited to provide technical cooperation in developing agribusiness projects.
- Collaborated with the Livestock Products Board to undertake studies in the livestock sector in particular, pork and beef competitiveness studies.
- Collaborated with the MALMR, CARDI, UWI, CARIRI, NALIS in disseminating information to the public via the SIDALC Network.
- Supported the National Training Agency in developing occupational standards for the agriculture sector in Trinidad & Tobago.
- Assisted the ASTT in mounting the National Agricultural Fair.
- Supported the Citrus Growers Association in their efforts to rehabilitate the citrus industry.
- Supported the THA in developing an Agricultural Plan for Tobago.
- Continued dialogue with the Ministry of Community Development and Gender Affairs in support of their efforts at developing Rural Development Programmes
- Following a successful collaboration with Caroni (1975) Ltd in mounting an Occupational Health and Safety Course, initiated discussions with the company for an expanded distance training programme.

## **Opportunities for future development**

Future opportunities for IICA in Trinidad & Tobago lie in providing strategic, analytic and technical support to assist the growth of industries to achieve competitiveness, facilitate regional trade and enhance national efforts aimed at development of rural spaces. The Institute continues to be regarded as a key strategic partner in the agriculture sector.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

As outlined in the results section, the Cooperation Actions of the IICA Office in Trinidad & Tobago were strategic, timely, appropriate and consistent with Government's policy for redeveloping the agricultural sector. As a result, the Institute's reputation as an efficient, capable and strategic partner in agriculture and rural development has been enhanced.

### **Recommendations:**

- Implementation schedule and the various work programmes must be better coordinated to ensure even distribution of work throughout the year
- Notwithstanding the fact that IICA is looked upon as a funding agency, increased efforts will have to be made by all professional staff in improving strategic alliances with partners and stakeholders. There is also a need to conceptualize and develop more projects for consideration by potential donors and to generate external resources
- Efforts should be made in encouraging the media to improve its coverage of agriculture in general
- Public relations programme for the office needs to be re-focussed and more proactive
- Provide greater opportunities for training and the upgrading of staff skills
- Need to improve pay packages for general services staff

## **ANNEX**

### **Strengthening Phytosanitary Capabilities in CARICOM countries:**

Four representatives from the MALMR of Trinidad and Tobago joined thirteen other participants from the Caribbean in obtaining a greater understanding of the new IPPC standards 'Pest Risk Analysis for Quarantine Pest and Supplement to ISPM No. 11: Analysis of Environment Risks' were addressed and recommendations made.

### **Salmonella Risk Reduction in Table Eggs:**

- A questionnaire survey on farm production and hygiene practices was administered on ten participating egg farms that supply 90% of the production.
- Salmonella survey was begun in August, with environmental sampling on participating farms.
- Regional workshop was held with egg producers at which good agricultural practice guidelines were developed for the production of table eggs. This was collaboration among the MALMR, the Caribbean Poultry Association, the Association of Table Egg Producers of Trinidad & Tobago and the University of the West Indies School of Medicine and IICA.



## ACRONYMS

ADB	Agricultural Development Bank
ADLC	Agricultural Distance Learning Centre
AHFS	Agricultural Health and Food Safety
ASTT	Agricultural Society of Trinidad & Tobago
BDC	Business Development Company
CA	Cooperation Agency
CABA	Caribbean AgriBusiness Association
CACC	Country Agricultural Consultative Committee
CARAPA	Caribbean Association of Researchers and Herbal Practitioners
CARDI	Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute
CARICOM	Caribbean Common Market
CARIFORUM	Caribbean Forum of African, Caribbean and Pacific States
CARIRI	Caribbean Industrial Research Institute
CCGA	Cooperative Citrus Growers Association
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CDE	Centre for the Development of Enterprise
CEDA	Caribbean Export Development Agency
CFA	Cane Farmers Association
CHBA	Caribbean Herbs Business Association
CNIRD	Caribbean Network for Integrated Rural Development
CPA	Caribbean Poultry Association
CPEC	Caribbean Regional Human Resource Development Programme for Economic Competitiveness
CTA	Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation
CTF	Citrus Task Force
DFL	Development Finance Limited
ECIAF	Eastern Caribbean Institute of Agriculture and Forestry
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FAVA/CA	Florida Association of Voluntary Agencies for Caribbean Action
FFA	Future Farmers for the Americas
FTAA	Free Trade Areas of the Americas
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	gross domestic product
GMO	Genetically Modified Organism
HACCP	Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point
IICA	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
IPPC	International Plant Protection Commission
MALMR	Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources
NAE	National Agricultural Exhibition
NALIS	National Library and Information Services
NAMDEVCO	National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation
NDC	National Dairy Committee
NEMA	National Emergency Management Association

NRWP	Network of Rural Women Producers
OAS	Organization of American States
PAHO/WHO	Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization
PPATT	Pork Producers Association of Trinidad & Tobago
PROCICARIBE	Caribbean Research, Science and Technology Networking System
R&D	Research & Development
RTP	Regional Transformation Programme
SANSECC	San Francique Sport, Education and Cultural Council
SAQS	Strengthening Agricultural Quarantine Services
SIDALC	Agricultural Information and Documentation System for the Americas
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary
STCIC	South Trinidad Chamber of Commerce
SWDA	South West Development Agency
TAS	Tobago Apicultural Society
THA	Tobago House of Assembly
TIC	Trade and Investment Convention
TTMA	Trinidad & Tobago Manufacturers Association
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
UWI	University of the West Indies





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