



### Agriculture

Opportunity for development  
in the Americas

### Saint Kitts and Nevis



- Under the EU-SPS Project, IICA was able to support the Ministry of Agriculture in capacity building in livestock development. This involved the training of three persons who successfully completed a two-year diploma at the Guyana School of Agriculture in the area of Animal Health and Veterinary Public Health. In addition, two other persons pursued certificate training in Clinical Pathology, Microbiology, Parasitology and specialty services at the Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine in St. Kitts. Consequently, the Ministry's competency and capability in lab diagnostic procedures, surveillance, animal health and food safety have been strengthened.
- In 2016, St. Kitts and Nevis successfully implemented a project to enhance the utilization of its locally grown mangoes. In light of the large quantities of mangoes produced in 2017, it was necessary to mechanize the operations to cope with the surplus. To this end, IICA was able to procure a mango pulper from India with assistance from a local corporate entity. With this appropriate technology, the farmers are now able to increase their production of the raw materials and ensure the availability of products during the tourism season, save on labor and time and increase the profitability of their businesses.
- In support of beekeepers in St. Kitts and Nevis, IICA conducted three training workshops to enhance their production and productivity. Focus was placed on the traditional Longstroth hives and the participants were also introduced to perone hive construction and management. Beekeepers were taught how to build and operate the perone hive. Consequently, 28 hives were built by the group. Participants were also exposed to ways of improving the management of their current apiaries, which include determining the placement of hives and making the bees' entrance more perpendicular to the frames.
- An online farmers' market has been established with funds obtained from IICA, in response to farmers' lack of awareness of potential consumers and their specific needs, as well as consumers not being aware of the availability of local crops. This has led to the importation of crops, even when they are available locally, and marketing problems. This technological and business innovation facilitates e-commerce between 40 registered farmers, fishers, agro-processors and the Department of Agriculture, with consumers such as, hotels and supermarkets, resulting in greater product sales, increased incomes and certified farmers and fishers linked to customers.
- The Institute hosted four Caribbean Climate Smart Agricultural Forums under its resilience project. An average of ten persons from different national authorities and private sector entities participated in each of the four webinars. These forums have identified, developed, promoted and disseminated innovative technologies and strategies aimed at building resilience in the agriculture sector in St. Kitts and Nevis.
- Agricultural organizations are key instruments for the government to use to enhance the development of the agriculture sector. Governance weaknesses were identified among the groups following an evaluation using an Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool. IICA collaborated with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to improve the capacity of members of four agricultural groups in St. Kitts and Nevis, leading to improved meeting planning, communication, efficiency and effectiveness among members.
- In September of 2017, the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis was struck by two Category 5 Hurricanes that caused severe damage to the crop, livestock and beekeeping sectors. IICA, in collaboration with CARDI, was able to provide readily available

materials and technical assistance to some of the producers. As a result, the sector was able to resuscitate eight acres of vegetables, improve food supply needs, re-establish income streams for affected households, assist livestock farmers, energize the beekeeping sector and build resilience in the farmers' activities.

- In response to the unhealthy practice by some agro-processors of selling their products with improper local labels, mostly produced overseas and at a higher cost, IICA assisted the agro-processors' organization in preparing and presenting a proposal to the New Zealand High Commission and obtaining a grant of USD 10,000 to procure labeling material, ink, a labeling printer and laptop. This enabled them to provide all the necessary information legally required on their labels and to produce attractive labels, which assisted with branding and marketing.
- The Ministry of Agriculture is cognizant of the impact that the importation of plants and animals could have on the health of local plants, animals and humans. Consequently, IICA has collaborated with other agencies to train two technicians of the quarantine units, as follows: i) a training session sponsored by SAGARPA in Mexico related to pork, airports and borders, as well as geospatial information for the prevention of disasters; training in the use of drones, formulation of statistics, as well as cellular technology platforms; and ii) training sponsored by FAO, the University of the West Indies and IICA related to the principles and practices of

quarantine. This training enhanced the efficiency & effectiveness of the quarantine unit to ensure that food safety and health of the agricultural heritage are maintained.

- IICA was in the forefront of the introduction of improved technology and innovation in agriculture to students. 20 students from a primary school in Nevis participated in two workshops in Greenhouse Production. These workshops were conducted in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture. It should be noted that the school possesses a greenhouse and this was used as the demonstration site for the workshop. At the end of the workshop, students were able to explain in a simple way a) the purpose of greenhouses b) advantages of greenhouse technology c) other crops recommended for greenhouses and d) types of greenhouses.
- Hydroponics is normally regarded as expensive with very high overheads. With the development by IICA in Guyana of a low-cost home-based hydroponics system, there was horizontal cooperation between Guyana and St. Kitts and Nevis whereby an IICA technician conducted a one-week training program with primary school, high school and college students. Over 70 students are now aware of the advantages and disadvantages of hydroponics, the different production systems, the substrates and nutrients used in the system, some of the appropriate containers for hydroponics and how to construct a box. Many of the students are now utilizing this system at home and at school to grow crops.



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