

# **NATIONAL AGENDA**

## **DOMINICA**

### *EXECUTIVE SUMMARY*

The National Agenda of Dominica is the outcome of a series of National Consultations which started in 2001 and continued at the request of the Director General in 2002. The intent of the Agenda is to address the serious challenges now being experienced by Dominica as a result of the dramatic declines in the contribution of the banana industry. It highlights the concerns of the Government as expressed through the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and its vision for a revitalized sector, making optimum contributions to revenues and poverty alleviation. It elaborates the proposed actions to be pursued in collaboration with IICA over the period 2002-2006.

The issues that emerged and which shaped the Agenda are; the current status of the economy in general, the challenges resulting from the changes in international trade in agricultural commodities, including the imminence of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy and the implications for the smaller economies of the region, capacities of stakeholders in the sector to identify and benefit from emerging opportunities, the readiness of Dominica to access and benefit from grant funds for agriculture and rural life and the challenge of converting its agriculture to satisfy the requirements of organic certification status for all exports.

The National Agenda is not the national program for development of Dominica's agriculture, but those distinct components where IICA will partner the stakeholders in the sector in the thrust to achieve sustainability and competitiveness in markets and address issues of poverty alleviation. The latter through transformation of economic activities in farming communities. In this regard while the Agenda is developmental in its objectives and focuses on policy, institutional and technological issues that will foster an enabling environment for agriculture and rural life, it is very specific in the areas of interventions.

The priority areas to be addressed include, capacity building strategies for improved participation of agriculture-based communities and enterprises in the development process, capacity strengthening within the public agencies to improve agricultural trade facilitation and monitoring, support technologies to facilitate production and marketing of selected commodities with major emphasis on organically produced commodities, improved coordination for better quality in the delivery of agricultural health and food safety services, a new 5-year agricultural development plan and technologies to enhance the diversification and modernization of rural-agri-based activities.

The details of the Agenda suggest that there are areas where IICA will have to play a broker role in order to access technologies and even to secure funding for the execution of the program. The program is practical in that its outputs are measurable. They are also phased over the four year period, thereby providing the opportunity for objective performance monitoring and evaluation. It also allows for orderly re-phasing in line with the availability of resources.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The on-going changes in the multilateral trading environment and in particular the rulings in the World Trade Organization on trading of agricultural commodities are having a negative impact upon the competitiveness of Dominica's principal foreign exchange earner – bananas. As in the case of all other ACP banana growing countries, and in particular the countries of the Windward Islands, the banana industry is increasingly experiencing major challenges in order to maintain market shares, in a liberalized world market. However the fact that banana is the major foreign exchange earner as well as an important generator of employment, means that this situation if allowed to continue could push Dominica's economy close to a chronic situation, unless economic alternatives are implemented on an urgent basis.

In response to the pressures in July 1999, Dominica along with the other states in the Windward Islands subgroup, adopted the *Windward Island Action Plan*, which foresees the restructuring of the banana industry. In this context the Windward islands are adopting measures to commercialize the banana industry. This is expected to result in the considerable downsizing of the industry. It is therefore clear that competitiveness, expansion and growth must be pursued in non-banana agriculture, if the perceived gap in revenue earnings is to be significantly reduced, and in order to maintain livelihoods in those farming areas affected by the declines in banana.

Dominica has indicated that the National Agenda for its technical cooperation program with IICA should over the next four years focus on selected policy, institutional and technological issues that are developmental in nature and create an enabling environment to foster the following:

- ❖ An improved response within the sector to the imperatives brought about by changes in international trade in agricultural commodities (multilateral, hemispheric and the CARICOM Single Market and Economy)
  
- ❖ A national thrust towards organic agriculture

- ❖ Improved efficiencies in the delivery of agricultural health and food safety Services.
- ❖ A diversified and modernized set of rural-based micro-enterprises, and
- ❖ Strengthened capacities and linkages for rural transformation, in farming communities.

It is expected that the final outcomes of this four year program will be an agricultural community better prepared to benefit from external aid financing (increased capacity to absorb aid funding), in a timely manner and through the implementation of projects which impact on agricultural competitiveness, sustainable livelihoods, food security and the natural resource base.

## 2. THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

### **2.1 *Methodology Adopted for the National Agenda***

In July 2001, a national consultation with leaders of the community of agriculture and rural life was held at the Public Service Union Building in Roseau. Following a presentation of the rationale for the Ministerial Declaration and Plan of Action, participants were placed into four working groups – Agri-Food Chains, Rural Spaces, Institutional Framework for Agriculture and the Rural Setting, and Policy Formation and the Role of the Ministries of Agriculture. Each group discussed the objectives, critical issues and actions related to their thematic area.

The outcome was the priority issues and strategic actions critical to Dominica's agriculture to be given consideration in the Ministerial Declaration and Plan of Action for the Americas. The priority issues listed at that time are shown below:

	<b>Sectors</b>			
	<b>Private</b>	<b>Public</b>	<b>NGOs</b>	<b>Academia</b>
Develop National policies and strategies aimed at modernization and diversification of the agricultural sector with specific attention to production, product development, marketing, investment and sustainable management of natural resources.	MOA Ministry of Trade	DEXIA		
Establish mechanism for effective coordination between public and private sector agencies involved in agricultural and rural transformation.	MOA		DNWC	
Generate and access improved appropriate technology for improved productivity in the agri-food sector.	MOA	Agro-processors Farmers DEXIA	CARDI	
Improve potential for commodity exports by meeting requirements for food safety, SPS and product standards through legislation and regulations, improved infrastructure and capacity building.	MOA Bureau of Standards PCB	DEXIA		
Develop a national agricultural information system.	MOA		DNCW, CARDI	

	<b>Sectors</b>			
	<b>Private</b>	<b>Public</b>	<b>NGOs</b>	<b>Academia</b>
Provide capacity building at all levels of the agri-food through training of the human resource with special emphasis on developing entrepreneurial skills and technical competencies required for modernization of the agricultural sector.	MOA	Farmers Processors	DNCW	
Provide the enabling environment to foster growth and development of farmer organizations and rural based community groups involved in developmental activities such as agro-processing, agro-tourism/eco-tourism, commodity production and marketing.	MOA Environmental Coordinating Unit		DNCW	

The methodology adopted for building the National Agenda, was to use as a point of departure for the new consultation, the contributions made by Dominica during the 2001 Consultations on Agriculture and Rural Life. The draft Medium Term Plan 2002-2006 and the document Repositioning IICA to Meet the Challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century also formed part of the background to the final decisions taken.

Subsequent to a meeting between the IICA Representative the Permanent Secretary and Director of Agricultural Services held on April 3, 2002, representatives of the groups who participated in the extensive consultation of 2001 met again at the Public Service Training Centre on April 4, 2002 to review the continuing relevance of the 2001 recommendations and to identify areas for IICA's participation, in the areas to be

pursued over the next four years. The composition of the group which met on April 04, 2001 is shown below:

- Public Sector
  - Ministry of Agriculture
  - Ministry of Trade
  - Pesticides Control Board
  - Bureau of Standards
  - Environmental Coordinating Unit
  
- Private Sector
  - Farmers
  - Processors
  - Dominica Export and Import Agency (DEXIA)
  - Dominica Banana Management Company (now defunct)
  
- Non-Government Organisation and Civil Society
  - Dominica National Council of Women

This group agreed that the priorities were still relevant and should be used as the basis for the current discussions.

The interest of the various representatives were indicated in the matrix shown earlier.

A second meeting was held with the Ministry's designate for the National Agenda on April 5, to clarify and elaborate the recommendations.

The draft Document was sent back to Government for review and comments, after which it was finalized.

It is against this background that Dominica is presenting its four-year national agenda for its technical cooperation programme with IICA.

## **2.2 Issues Considered in Building a National Agenda**

The issues considered relevant to the IICA/Government of Dominica agenda included:

- a) The current status of the Dominica economy in general;
- b) The dramatic decline in the traditionally significant contribution of bananas to Dominica's economy;
- c) Imperatives for sustainable agriculture in general in light of the coming into being of the FTAA and in particular, CARICOM Single Market and Economy;
- d) Falling standards of living especially in traditional farming communities;
- e) The most efficient strategies to benefit from technical cooperation and development programmes of external agencies, which can impact on agriculture and rural life; and
- f) The capacities of rural beneficiaries to effectively participate especially during project implementation.

### *2.3.1 External Environment of IICA's Office*

**Economy:** The economy of Dominica is heavily dependent on the agricultural sector, specifically crops and fisheries. Agriculture's contribution to GDP moved from approximately 21% in 1997 to 18.23% in 2000 mainly. This was the combined effect of a reduction in output from the banana industry and increased GDP attributed to non-agriculture sectors. The sector provides employment for approximately 24% of the labour force estimated at 25,694 (1997), of which the majority is employed in the banana industry. The decline of the banana industry has increased the urgency for success stories in agricultural diversification and other rural-based activities to counteract depressing economic conditions in rural areas.

The Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica considers agricultural diversification of the banana and non-banana sub-sector a development priority. An expanded non-banana agricultural sub-sector will provide additional rural incomes and employment opportunities; greater food security; and a decrease in the dependency on conventional bananas for foreign exchange earnings. Furthermore the contracted banana industry must be modernized in order to penetrate the high-ended part of the

market (multiples and supermarket chain). In this regard, the Government has stated its purpose to achieve organic status for all of Dominica's export agriculture.

Dominica is also a signatory to various regional and hemispheric trade agreements and as such is part of the process that is evolving from, the FTAA process and the CARICOM Single Market and Economy. All of these are critical elements of trade liberalization and together bring more challenges than opportunities to the local agriculture sector. Dominica is also a member of the OECS and the ACS, which promotes regional development and trade.

***Institutions:*** The Ministry of Agriculture and Environment is the primary institution with responsibility for agriculture, forestry and fisheries. The Department of Agriculture is responsible for providing technical assistance, regulatory and support services and the policy framework to guide development of the agricultural sector. The Department of Fisheries, the Department of Forestry, the Department of Environment work with a number of local and regional institutions in planning implementing, monitoring and evaluating agricultural programmes.

Among the local and regional institutions are Dominica Export and Import Agency (DEXIA), the organisation responsible for the organization of markets and market research, Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute and (CARDI), the regional research organization sponsored primarily by the Government of the region. Collaboration is also undertaken with two Civil Based Organizations – Small Project Assistance Team (SPAT) responsible for the implementation of the NGO agricultural diversification programme, and Springfield Research Institute – involved in training, promotion and research of sustainable agricultural practices.

***Performance in Agriculture:*** Dominica, like the other members of the Windward Islands sub-region, is faced with the challenge of keeping the contribution of the agriculture sector to gross domestic product, at current levels. So far the efforts at agricultural diversification into non-banana exports have not been able to cover the shortfall in foreign exchange earnings brought about by the decline in bananas despite

significant increases in the production of these crops. The minimum requirement is that the combined outputs of banana and other agriculture related rural-based activities must be adequate to maintain living standards in agriculture dependent rural areas as well as the traditional income streams through the rural-urban agri-food chain.

The appropriate response therefore rests in the identification of those commodities, which by their nature, or by the processes that identify or determine the product in the market place, command higher and consistent prices. Organic agriculture is being given major and urgent attention in Dominica.

***Impact of trade liberalization:*** The decline in contribution of bananas is almost entirely due to developments since the Uruguay round of the GATT and the creation of the WTO. Like most developing countries, dependent on trading in agricultural commodities, the impact of the new rules governing agriculture is presenting new and different challenges and opportunities in the marketplace. An understanding of the application of the new rules of trading and how they can be turned into opportunities for the sector, require improved and different capacities and productive activities.

The conceptualization and actualization of new strategies to sustain agriculture must be manifested in the work of the stakeholders (policy, technical, and the various types of agri-enterprise). In this regard the Department of Agriculture in Dominica recognizes fully the need for its technicians to become better players in the change process. For example, technicians must be better prepared to be the backward and forward linkages in matters of trade negotiation trade policy and implementation (technical advise, commenting on documents, monitoring impact of trade compliance measures on performance in the sector) as well as facilitating and providing technical support to agri-enterprises (education of agri-producers and marketers who operationalize adjustments in the sector and benefit from incentives, phasing out of enterprises, introduction/modernization/diversification of enterprises).

**A new policy framework required:** At this stage Dominica sees the need for a new national policy framework to guide the development of agriculture. The last sector plan

was prepared in, July 1991. Since that time the agriculture landscape has changed significantly. There have been declines in the contributions of the major commodities, first coconuts and now bananas. On the other hand growth in commodities such as pineapples, dasheen and plantains have been more than encouraging, and their real potential to remain competitive need to be determined and developed. Marketing channels have also changed with developments in the operations of the hucksters and DEXIA in the trading of fresh produce, the liquidation of the Dominica Banana Marketing Company and the dissolution of the Agriculture component of the OECS Export Development and Agriculture Diversification Unit, which was hosted in that country. The Bureau of Standards has increased its role in agri-food trading and now facilitates increased competitiveness in fresh produce trading. The incidences of exotic diseases such as pink mealy bug and citrus black fly have caused disruptions with trading partners impacting negatively on farm incomes.

Notwithstanding all of the above, the social, economic and environmental benefits and costs of the policy decision to convert to agricultural practices, in order to satisfy organic certification for all of Dominica's agricultural export farms is likely to have the strongest influence on the new sector plan. The formulation and implementation of such a policy must be carried out with due consideration.

***Capacities for rural transformation:*** 35% of Dominica's population is rural and depend on agriculture and related activities for their livelihoods. 34.7% of these are within the category of youth 20% of whom are unemployed. As in the case of most of the young people in the region, they are either unprepared for the workplace or disinterested in work with the least interest being shown for agriculture and related activities. Young men are also less interested in work than are young women

Over the years NGOs and other community-based organisations have been involved in strengthening capacities of youth and other rural-based people to allow them to become more involved in the development process. However, many of these non-governmental organisations need to be strengthened in areas such as project identification, formulation and implementation for sustainable livelihood groups, in financial and

business management, markets and competitiveness, networking, and in sourcing and accessing extra-budgetary funds. At the other level the project beneficiaries have little knowledge in readiness strategies to allow them to benefit from the services provided by NGOs and other organized groups.

Dominica believes it can benefit from external funding sources linked to the marginalization of farm families as a result of decline in the banana industry, as well as from global financing linked to sustainable development because of its well established credibility for environmentally friendly practices, including its major thrust towards organic farming. In order to enhance opportunities for agri-food sector groups and enterprises to access these funding sources, Dominica's intention is to strengthen organizational, management and business capabilities of rural based enterprises and groups in farming areas. A targeted approach to the diversification and development of existing micro-enterprises, which provide products, and services in the agri-food sector is the long-term vision for rural transformation.

### *2.3.2 Internal Environment of IICA's Office*

The Cooperation Agency in Dominica is staffed with one technical specialist and an administrative secretary. Additional technical support is provided through the regional projects in agricultural health and food safety, in tropical fruit crops and to a limited extent in policies, trade and integration. The availability of quota funds for operational activities is a major constraint.

The CA has established strategic relations with relevant national ( National Bureau of Standards, NGOs, DEXIA, NIPA) and regional institutions( CARDI, OECS/EDU, FAO) in the country and through those relationships have in the past provided credible assistance in agricultural health and food safety (plant quarantine and pest management) science and technology (tree crop management, organic farming technologies, production and marketing technologies for selected commodities) modernization of agribusiness (business systems approach in production and marketing

of pineapples and dasheen) . Next to bananas, dasheen, pineapple and plantains are the three most important export commodities.

Dominica's position as a member of the Windward sub-group has afforded it the opportunity to participate in IICA Coordinated externally, funded projects of which there has been three in the past three years. Two of these projects were in the strategic area, agricultural health and food safety (establishment of a quality control and inspection system for the fresh produce trade; institutionalization of GAPS in the OECS). The third was in the area of sustainable rural development (sustainable livelihoods in the OECS).

### *2.3.3 Priorities as defined by the various stakeholders*

The priorities identified for Dominica were defined by representatives of government and non-governmental organisations and by members of civil society. This combined group through a process of national consultations held in 2001 made recommendations for Dominica's input into the Hemispheric Declaration on Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas. Two other documents *Repositioning IICA to meet the Challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* and the draft *Medium Term Plan 2002-2006* were also reviewed. The group which met again on April 4, 2002, agreed that the priorities in IICA's programme for the period 2002-2006, would be as shown below:

1. Capacity strengthening for rural transformation. Strategies and actions to allow selected clientele to benefit from available external financing for the sector.
  - ❖ EU/ Dominica programs for alleviation of poverty will necessitate training in entrepreneurial skills and new rural business (processing for value-added, packaging for fresh produce, simple rural technologies, marketing);
  - ❖ Strengthening rural-based capacities to (i) identify, formulate, manage and implement projects (ii) benefit from exchange of relevant experiences (iii) access technology; (iv) exploit opportunities to create economic linkages

with other sectors such as tourism and (v) understand issues related to international competitiveness (standards and quality);

- ❖ Target selected clientele (NGOs, Village Councils, youth and agri-enterprises).

2. Capacity strengthening for trade facilitation and for monitoring impact of trade policy implementation: Capacity strengthening of policymakers and technicians in the sector to participate in trade policy decisions, in guiding agri-entrepreneurs towards competitiveness and in the assessment of all these combined processes on the sector. The objective is to create the knowledge base to interpret information emerging from international and regional forum and to convert these into strategic responses by the sector that give adequate attention to:

- ❖ the impact of national decisions on the sector (ability to trade products and services and to maintain standards of living) The concept of a Trade Monitoring Unit in the Department of Agriculture is attractive to Dominica, but such a Unit has resource implications. Dominica would therefore wish to strengthen capacities in its Agricultural Information and Communication Technology Unit (AICTU) to carry out this function;
- ❖ monitoring the effect of application of measures such as SPS, food safety product standards and other requirements for certification on trade in general and also, on the ability of various players along the agri-food chain to continue to participate and to enhance competitiveness in the sector;
- ❖ other trade-related issues emerging from the FTAA process and the CARICOM Single Market and Economy in which agricultural technicians need to be better educated and trained. The implications of the Single

Market and Economy are of particular concern, bearing in mind the disadvantaged status of the OECS countries, within the CARICOM group.

- ❖ response and impact of the new way of doing business in agricultural trade especially on small farmers whose livelihoods depend on agricultural activities.

3. Technologies to facilitate production and marketing of selected agricultural commodities: Organic agriculture was presented as the way forward for Dominica's agriculture and as such was considered more so a trade policy issue requiring national attention than an agri-enterprise option. Accordingly the group identified as a priority

- ❖ a policy framework specifically to support the development of an organic industry;
- ❖ the strengthening of the capacities of technicians and other players along the agri-food chain to convert to attitudes and practices that would lead to the large scale production and marketing of organic products;
- ❖ introduction of enterprise oriented production technologies for organic;
- ❖ the modernization of support services ( extension, research, certification, input providers, farm labour) to comply with the demands of an organic industry, and
- ❖ the social, economic and financial implications of wide scale organic production.

4. Coordination of agricultural health and food safety issues for improved efficiencies and services including:

- ❖ Rationalization of the many agencies and several pieces of legislation, which address matters related to agricultural health and food safety,
  - ❖ Feasibility of the setting up of a single agency including possibilities for creating income streams.
  - ❖ Measures to absorb the impact of displaced employees currently working in agricultural health and food safety agencies
  - ❖ Public awareness programs to promote the importance of agricultural health and food safety issues;
5. Review of the agricultural sector and a new 5-year development plan. Due to the many changes in the agriculture landscape in the past years, and the new strategies being contemplated, it was agreed that a sector review, inclusive of strategies and a 5-year Plan of Action be prepared.
6. Diversification and modernization of rural-based activities:
- ❖ Selected viable new rural-based economic enterprises identified and developed, for example tractor services and entrepreneurial labour, agro-processing, agro-tourism, farming activities;
  - ❖ Identify and initiate strategic options to diversify and strengthen existing micro-enterprises for job creation and increase levels of productivity.
  - ❖ Institutionalize a culture of entrepreneurship and a business approach to agri-enterprise development,
  - ❖ Strengthen capacities and linkages to manage the production and marketing of selected commodities using a systems approach.

- ❖ Development of an enabling private sector organization to represent agribusiness.

### 3. THE NATIONAL AGENDA

#### 3.1 *Agreed goals, priorities and strategic actions in line with IICA's activities*

- ***Policy, Trade and Integration:*** The goal of Dominica is to create a cadre of policymakers, technicians and agripreneurs who can respond to the dynamics of the international, regional and subregional markets in agricultural commodities. Furthermore this must be achieved in a manner that sustains adequate export earnings, guarantees optimum contribution to food security and protects the natural resource base. Priority will be given to training and education across the agri-food chain, with the expectations that the best trade policy measures will be in place and that agribusiness people and farmers will adopt attitudes and practices conducive to achieving competitiveness in domestic and export markets.

The strategic actions will include a trade support and monitoring capacity in the Agriculture Information and Communications Technology Unit, formulation of a policy to support conversion to organic agriculture and the creation of an enabling environment through the formulation of a new 5-year plan for the sector. The three subsectors of, agriculture, forestry and fisheries must be given consideration. This would suggest that the technical cooperation assistance provided by IICA be carried out in collaboration with other relevant agencies perhaps FAO and UNEP.

- ***Agribusiness Development:*** Agribusiness development is being viewed as the vehicle for diversification and transformation of rural-based enterprises. Priority will be given to the modernization of existing micro-enterprises, exploring new options for new businesses, including currently urban-based agribusinesses which could operate in rural areas (packaging, processing, transportation, shipping arrangements agri-input supply services, technical information centers). Dominica would want to share in the experiences of countries in the region with similar resources and where there are success stories in development of agribusinesses based in rural areas.

- ***Sustainable Rural Development:*** Dominica has established a strong link between its long-term vision for sustainable rural development and the success in the development of agri-enterprises. The rural-based populations are feeling the pinch of developments in Windward Islands bananas. Declines in incomes and loss of income streams will in due course begin to impact on welfares, food security and livelihood practices linked to the natural resource base.

Priority will be given to capacity strengthening of selected clientele and groups who can benefit from the various external aid sources to modernize attitudes and practices in micro-enterprises including farming, as well as to create employment opportunities. Strategic actions will include capacity building among NGOs, CBOs, youth and women and will relate to their respective roles in the process. Other actions will provide support to the modernization of production, processing and marketing technologies and the strengthening and creation of economic linkages with other sectors, in particular tourism.

- ***Food Safety and Agricultural Health:*** Dominica's goal is to establish credibility in its agricultural health and food safety system, in order to facilitate trade. Equally important is the need to strengthen agricultural health services to increase food production. In the case of the former, priority is being given to the establishment of a single entity to coordinate agricultural health and food safety services. Public participation in compliance with measures such as SPS, food safety and product standards as well as the prevention of incidence of exotic pests and diseases is to be pursued through support given to public awareness programs. In regard to the latter, Dominica would want to continue to receive on-going support from IICA in the form of the Caribbean newsletters and publications e.g. Caraphin News as well as in the subregional activities to manage exotic pests and diseases.

### ***3.2 Agreed goals, priorities and strategic actions that are in line with IICA's supporting areas.***

- ***Technology and Innovation:*** The goal is to use the most appropriate technologies in agri-food processes. Priority will be given primarily to facilitate access to technological options in support of an organic industry. Access to production and processing technologies for sustainable conventional practices will also be given attention (pineapples, dasheen, hot peppers, sweet potato, passion fruits and plantains).
- ***Training and Education:*** Training and education is a major support area of the National Agenda. In the area of policies and trade, extensive training is foreseen for all the players along the agri-food chain. For the policymakers training will be required to improve their preparedness to participate in the processes resulting from the new rules on agriculture in the WTO, the FTAA process and the CARICOM Single Market and Economy. It is planned that policymakers, technicians, farmers and agribusiness will be trained and educated through seminars and workshops. Extensive training is also planned in support of the national thrust towards large-scale organic farming. Targeted farmers/ commodities/r farmer groups will need to receive special training to allow them to convert their production and post harvest management practices. Conventional production practices that enhance food safety will also be sourced and transferred. In the area of sustainable rural development capacity building to identify, formulate, manage and implement projects is foreseen for selected groups, while the training in food quality and safety, good agricultural practices and product standards will continue to enhance competitiveness in commodities. Efforts will be made to use the most modern but appropriate forms of communication technology to provide information and to train.
- ***Institutional Modernization and Planning:*** Dominica is seeking to create an enabling environment for sustainable agriculture. Accordingly a number of relevant support institutions are being addressed. In the area of agricultural health and food safety the intention is to create a single entity to provide these services. Formulation of policy for organic agriculture and the formulation of a new 5-year sector plan are

also being given attention. Consideration is also being given to modernizing farm management and processing operations, in order to create an enhanced environment for economic linkages between farm and tourism ( fresh produce and agro-tourism), farm and processing and processing and tourism. Dominica also intends to explore options for a better-organized agribusiness sector.

- **Information and Communication:** The full participation of all stakeholders including civil society in the proposed strategic plans for Dominica's agriculture is critical to the success of the undertaking. In this regard public awareness is a key in implementation. Two areas have been given; public awareness in support of the thrust towards organic agriculture and awareness of agricultural health and food safety requirements in agri-food trade. Support within the competence and financial limitations of IICA will be directed towards improved access of rural communities to information and communication facilities.
- **Horizontal Technical Cooperation:** Throughout the region are many success stories in agribusiness development at regional (within the country) or national level, in change processes that have benefited small-farm operators and agriculture related institutions (governmental and non-governmental, private sector, chambers of agriculture, rural organizations). Dominica would like to share in these experiences of selected countries either through visits or transfer of technologies. Experiences in organic agriculture, in particular the process of conversion and the challenge of maintaining organic status is a priority.

Other innovative rural-based production or service-oriented activities and mechanisms related to agriculture are also seen as necessary support areas for horizontal cooperation. For example Dominica is interested in how successful cooperatives function, initiatives that have successfully linked the small farmer or small entrepreneur/marketer/processor to commercial operations and the global markets and the kind of dynamic transformation in rural communities experienced in countries such as Brazil and Mexico through linkages between agriculture and other sectors such as tourism. Technologies in support of efficient use of energy and

water on the farm, use of indigenous raw materials for foods and craft are also area of interest to Dominica.

4. MATRIX FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC AREAS AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

STRATEGIC AREA: **POLICY, TRADE AND INTEGRATION**

Support Areas	Implementation Year				Alliances/ Partners	Beneficiaries
	2003	2004	2005	2006		
<b><i>Training and Education</i></b>						
Facilitate and provide training for 2-3 technicians in the Agricultural Information and Communication Technology Unit for the specific purpose of providing trade monitoring support to the Unit (impact of SPS on trade, impact of tariffication, response to other WTO FTAA and the Single Market Economy, related matters).	√	√	√	√	Regional Trade Specialist Ministry of Trade OECS Secretariat	Ministry of Agriculture
Introduction of technologies for the production and marketing of organics* through national workshop and seminars for the key stakeholders.	√	√	√		PCBs Bureau of Standards CARDI	Farmers
<b><i>Technology and Innovation</i></b>						
Facilitate the sourcing and accessing of production and marketing technological options for organics (videos, new and improved technologies, packaging and handling, quality control and marketing, use of local raw materials).		√			Regional Technology Specialist	Farmers
<b><i>Institutional Modernization and Planning</i></b>						
Facilitate the formulation of a policy to support a national programme for organic agriculture.	√				CARDI	Farmers
Facilitate the development of a 5-year sector plan, inclusive of a strategy and Plan of Action.	√	√			Regional Project Specialist	Ministry of Agriculture
Support an inter-ministerial group on trade to liaise with the AICTU and assist agri-business decision-makers as strategic business options.	√	√	√	√		Ministry of Agriculture
Continue to support trade facilitation through the Fresh Produce Inspectorates.	√	√			Bureau of Standards	Fresh Produce Exporters Farmers

\* *Dominica regards organics as a trade policy issue*

STRATEGIC AREA: **POLICY, TRADE AND INTEGRATION (Cont'd)**

Support Areas	Implementation Year				Alliances/ Partners	Beneficiaries
	2003	2004	2005	2006		
<p><b>Information and Communication</b></p> <p>Facilitate a six-month public awareness programme on the critical issues related to organics in support of the policy.</p> <p>Continue the provision of technical information on multi-lateral trade matters, the FTAA, and SME and agriculture in general (In a Nutshell; Performance and Prospects in Caribbean Agriculture, AgriView and other IICA publications).</p> <p><b>Horizontal Technical Cooperation</b></p> <p>Support the exchange of experiences in organics between private sector groups and technicians from the region, with preference on Costa Rican organic practices.</p>		√	√	√		Farmers
	√	√			OECS Secretariat	Ministry of Agriculture Agribusinesses
			√		IICA Representative/ Costa Rica	Ministry of Agriculture Farmers

## STRATEGIC AREA: AGRIBUSINESS

Support Areas	Implementation Year				Alliances/ Partners	Beneficiaries
	2003	2004	2005	2006		
<p><b>Training and Education</b></p> <p>Facilitate training in selected areas for viable micro enterprise development in agriculture and related areas (services, entrepreneurial approach to labour, agro-processing, marketing services and farming activities).</p> <p>Train agri-business persons in the use of modern technologies for marketing their commodities (e- commerce, the creation of websites).</p> <p>Facilitate training in business and entrepreneurial skills for agri-business entities.</p>		√	√		Ministry of Agriculture Bureau of Standards EDU*/OECS	Agri-business  Producers Marketers/ Exporters  Farmers Agro- processors
<p><b>Institutional Modernization and Planning</b></p> <p>Strengthen organizational management capabilities of rural-based enterprise in farming areas (review enterprises and prepare strategic options to improve productivity, sustainability and job creation potential).</p> <p>Facilitate the development of commodity industries (pineapples, passion fruit, dasheen).</p> <p>Explore options for development of a private sector organization to represent agri-business.</p> <p>Facilitate project identification and preparation to modernize or expand agri-business.</p>	√	√	√	√	FAVA/CA  EDU*/OECS  CABA	CBOs, Farmer Organisations  Farmers Processors  Agri-business
<p><b>Horizontal Technical Cooperation</b></p> <p>Facilitate and support the exchange of relevant experiences of similar enterprises (status and development process) in the Caribbean and Latin America area (preference for Cuba)</p>			√	√	Regional Project Specialist	Ministry of Agriculture Agri-enterprises NGOs  Ministry of Agriculture Processors Value-added

**STRATEGIC AREA: AGRIBUSINESS (cont'd)**

Support Areas	Implementation Year				Alliances/ Partners	Beneficiaries
	2003	2004	2005	2006		
<b><i>Technology and Innovation</i></b> Support technology transfer and adoption of technologies for production of pineapples, dasheen, and passion fruit.	√	√	√	√	CARDI	Farmers
Facilitate access to modern farm technologies with emphasis on pineapples, dasheen, passion fruit and plantains.	√	√	√	√	CARDI	Farmers
Facilitate access to technologies (production, marketing, management) in support of selected micro-enterprise		√	√	√	CARDI EDU/OECS	Community Groups Rural Youth Groups

\*EDU – Export Development Unit

**STRATEGIC AREA: SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Support Areas	Implementation Year				Alliances/ Partners	Beneficiaries
	2003	2004	2005	2006		
<p><b>Training and Education</b> Facilitate training to build capacities of selected clientele to identify and formulate projects, and to manage and implement same (Youth, NGOs, CBOs, Village Councils, Beneficiaries).</p>		√	√		Ministry of Social Transformation	Rural Women's Group Youth Groups NGOs Village Council
Facilitate training in readiness strategies for project beneficiaries.		√	√	√	DNCW*	Women's Groups Youth Groups
<p><b>Technology and Innovation</b> Support project implementation by sourcing and accessing production and marketing technology options.</p>		√	√			Women's Groups Youth Groups Farmers
Assist in the introduction of environmentally friendly technologies e.g. IPM and efficient water use technologies.	√	√			CARDI, Chemical Companies	Farmers Processors
<p><b>Institutional Modernization and Planning</b> Promote, encourage and develop linkages, mechanisms and options for linkages between agriculture and tourism that create new opportunities for agriculture or in farming areas (services and products).</p>		√	√	√		Farmers Groups, CBOs St Lucia Agro-tourism Association
Promote and support the development of nodes to the ADLC.	√	√			ADLC	Farmers Technicians Marketers

\*DNCW - Dominica National Council for Women

**STRATEGIC AREA: AGRICULTURAL HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY**

Support Areas	Implementation Year				Alliances/ Partners	Beneficiaries
	2003	2004	2005	2006		
<b>Training and Education</b> Continue training in areas such as GAPs, HACCP, quality control and food safety product standards and SPS across the agri-food chain.	√	√	√	√	CIDA/CPEC* PCBs	Farmers Processors
Training in pest risk analysis.	√					Ministry of Agriculture
<b>Information and Communication</b> Support the development of a public awareness campaign for agricultural health and food safety.	√	√	√			Ministry of Agriculture
Support the development of protocols to facilitate trade among islands during or after the incidence of exotic pests and diseases (regional approach).	√	√	√	√		Fresh Produce Traders
<b>Institutional Modernisation and Planning</b> Facilitate the reorientation of the agriculture extension system by creating a capacity in GAPs and quality control in fresh produce.	√	√			PCB, CPEC	Ministry of Agriculture Technicians
Facilitate an initiative to determine the feasibility of a single national entity with responsibilities for national agricultural health and food safety matters.	√	√	√		Bureau of Standards PCBs	Agri-food businesses

\* Caribbean Regional HRD Program for Economic Competitiveness

**5. EXTERNALLY FUNDED PROJECTS THAT CAN SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGENDA**

Currently there is only one project that falls into this category. Project *Institutionalisation of GAPs in the Selected Commodities in the OECS* funded by the CPEC/CIDA. The project terminates in 2003.

Dominica has expectations that funding from global financing sources in the form of grant monies, sympathetic to countries committed to conservation of their natural

resource base will become available sometime in the medium-term. These funds the country hopes will support its organic and rural development programmes.

#### 6. ADJUSTMENTS REQUIRED AT THE NATIONAL OFFICE IN ORDER TO IMPLEMENT THE NATIONAL AGENDA

**Technical capacity:** The National Office will require a technician who can lead a programme in trade issues, effectively participate in a program to monitor and pace Dominica's thrust towards organic export and who is also able to elaborate an agriculture-based, modern and diversified micro-enterprise component of a sustainable rural development programme. The area of sustainable development in rural areas and organic agriculture are the areas where Dominica expressed strong interest and hopes to access substantive grant funds. As shown in the matrix, the area of sustainable rural development needs to be more fully developed in order to identify more clearly IICA's role. This is expected to happen in the successive Annual Plans of Operation as the process becomes clearer and the availability of external grant funds becomes more of reality. Terms of reference for this technician has been developed.

**Support facility:** Dominica is one of the three countries in the ECS which does not have a link with The ADLC in Barbados. It is important that a facility be established in Dominica at the CA and with at least two nodes in rural communities.

#### 7. POTENTIAL AREAS OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION THAT CAN BE SHARED WITH OTHER COUNTRIES

Most of the areas can be shared with the other IICA Member Countries in the OECS. The areas of trade identified are very similar to the other countries. This is the same in the case of rural development, agricultural health and food safety systems. The request for large-scale organic production is specific to Dominica, though most countries have some level of interest in organics.

**Capacity building in trade-related issues:** An approach to provide training and education to improve capacities in trade-related areas in particular, but in other common areas is being contemplated through e-means (distance with the cooperation of the ADLC or the virtual trade academy being contemplated for the region). The management of the IICA website in Saint Lucia to carry technical information as well as specific issues of relevance to the ECS is also an area that will be pursued. This will be done in collaboration with the Regional Trade Specialist. In the meantime the process of workshops and seminars on a country-by-country basis will continue but this is becoming an expensive way of providing information and generating discussion forum.

**Protocols for trade resumption:** Dominica is interested in protocols to facilitate trade among island during or after the incidence of exotic pests. This is important to all the countries and should be a regional approach with the participation of CARICOM.

**Creation of a single food safety entity:** This request is common to at least three countries and so a common model should be developed for small economies as those in the ECS and disseminated. Currently the only experience being talked about is that of Belize which is not appropriate for the small economies of the ECS.

**Public awareness campaigns in agricultural health and food safety issues to enhance competitiveness in trade:** Most countries are making the request to develop these programs. A common template could be developed for dissemination and customization by the countries.