

# IICA JAMAICA

## FOOD SECURITY

### What is Food Security?

"Food security, at the individual, household, national regional and global levels, exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life."

*FAO Rome World Food Summit 1996.*

"Every man, woman and child has an inalienable right to be free from hunger and malnutrition in order to develop fully and maintain their physical and mental faculties..."

*Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition, 1974*



**Inter-American Institute for  
Cooperation on Agriculture**

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**Developing local food strategies to solve a  
global problem.**



## Rising Food Prices Poses a Threat to Food Security

Food prices have been rising internationally due to:

- Increased demand for agricultural products as feedstock for bio-fuel production
- Droughts in Australia and low crop output in Europe
- Increased demand for meat protein and cereals, especially in China and India
- increased cost of agricultural inputs such as fertilizers and pesticides as a result of increased oil prices

IICA Director General Chelston W. D. Brathwaite has said that sustained food prices could contribute to higher levels of poverty and poor nutrition in this hemisphere.

IICA recommends that countries pursue policies that protect the most vulnerable in society from the impact of increasing food prices, while stimulating food production to satisfy increased food demand. Furthermore, agricultural production must be made a development priority.



## What Should Jamaica Do to Ensure Food Security

Jamaica has to correct its heavy dependence on food imports (for e.g., rice, wheat for flour, processed foods) and start consuming and producing more local food if the country is to maintain an acceptable level of food security over time.

**IICA Jamaica believes the following are necessary to ensure food security:**

- Increase production of starchy foods (yam, sweet potato, cassava and others), with an emphasis on improving efficiency such that local foods are competitive with their imported substitutes
- Implement a public awareness campaign to encourage consumers to eat more local foods
- Introduce more convenient forms (e.g. semi-processing) of local foods
- Improve our capability to quickly recover from bad or devastating weather conditions and natural disasters (hurricanes, floods, droughts) which pose a severe threat to food availability
- Resuscitate the dairy cattle industry to ensure sufficient supplies of milk
- Resuscitate the goat industry to ensure sufficient local supplies
- Rehabilitate the fisheries sector to prevent over-fishing and ensure that we can sustain the supply of local fish over the long run
- Research, develop and produce alternative animal feed crops, such as cassava and sorghum. The cost of animal feed is increasing substantially on the world market.

## IICA and Food Security

“The new IICA supports its Member States in their efforts to reduce poverty and improve food security.”

*Chelston W.D. Brathwaite*  
Director General, IICA

IICA is prepared to help member states, including Jamaica, with technical knowledge that will increase food production and energy security, and promote a sustainable environment.

The Institute has been focusing its efforts in the countries of the Americas in the areas of trade and agribusiness, agro-energy, agricultural health and food safety, biotechnology, agricultural insurance, agro-tourism, rural agro-industry and organic agriculture.

These initiatives are expected to have a significant impact on promoting food security in the region.

