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MEDIUM TERM PLAN 2010-2014

The Inter American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) has a mandate that is clearly established in its Convention, requiring it "...to encourage, promote, and support the efforts of its Member States to achieve their agriculture development and rural welfare."

The Institute's Medium-Term Plan (MTP) is the vehicle through which the mandate is executed over a four year period. The development of the MTP is guided by the resolutions adopted and signed by the Hemispheric Ministers of Agriculture at their biannual meetings held within the context of the Summit of the Americas process and endorsed by the Heads of State and Governments.

In an effort to implement its mandate for 2010-2014, the Institute's new Director General, Dr. Victor Villalobos has been undertaking a very rigorous exercise involving all of the 34 offices in the Member States in the development of the "IICA Country Strategy". The Country Strategy serves to guide and channel the technical cooperation provided by the Institute to facilitate the demands of Member States within the MTP's planning horizon.

The Country Strategy is a set of technical cooperation activities that the Institute agreed with the national authorities to undertake. These activities are in support of the Member States' pursuit of a competitive, sustainable and environmental sound agriculture sector.



The national inspection campaign to rid the island of the notorious American Foulbrood disease commenced in March. IICA coordinated training for over 70 bee farmers from the two largest producer organizations who will assist the apiculture extension officers with the island wide exercise. See story on pg. 3

Five Priority Areas for Jamaica's Country Strategy



Trevor Murray
IICA Jam Representative

The IICA Jamaica office recently completed the development of its Country Strategy after intense consultations with the major stakeholders in the agriculture sector. The over-riding focus of the Jamaican Country Strategy is aimed at assisting the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries with the development of an agriculture sector that can reliably address the country's urgent food and nutrition security needs. In this regard, there are five major areas for technical support in which the Jamaican Country Strategy will concentrate over the next four years, 2010-2014.

- 1 Promote the use of Protected Agriculture (PA) for the increased production of vegetables and herbs and provide support for capacity building in the promotion of PA in Jamaica.
- 2 Assist with the development of a sustainable apiculture sub-sector through capacity building for the producer organizations, management of diseases and agribusiness development.
- 3 Assist with the institutional strengthening of the public/private sectors within the agriculture sector, including the various Commodity Groups (PMOs, goat and sheep, pigs, dairy, apiculture, herbs and spices, Jamaica Agriculture Society, Jamaica Greenhouse Growers Association, Youths and the Jamaica Network of Rural Women Producers).
- 4 Review and strengthen the research process through increased collaboration with the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) for validation and demonstra-

tion of efficient production systems.

- 5 Promote community agro-tourism for identified communities and participating agencies through best practices exchange; the provision of information, training and capacity building; the identification of viable economic ventures; access to necessary funding; project proposal preparation; marketing support; and integration into the value chains for identified communities and participating agencies.

It is believed that these efforts will greatly assist the Government and people of Jamaica in their efforts to secure the nation's food supply. The Representative and staff at IICA Jamaica have committed themselves to work assiduously with the Agriculture Minister, the Permanent Secretary and the staff of the Ministry, and all the major stakeholders in the domestic agriculture sector in ensuring that the food and nutrition objective is attained within the shortest possible time.



Eco-Friendly Facilities for Fisher folk

Waste management at the fishing beaches is upgraded to a more modern system comprising septic tanks (as shown in this picture), reed beds, in some instances tile fields, centralized scaling areas and structured drainage.

Waste management is imperative to the preservation of the environment and even more fragile are coastal areas that support marine life and other ecosystems.

With inadequate infrastructure, it has become customary for fish offal (gut) to be disposed of directly into the drains that terminate in the sea or be set aside on the beach for intermittent garbage collection.

Such improper waste disposal has compromised sanitation and comfort at several fishing beaches, turning away customers.

Installation of effective waste management infrastructure to minimise the negative effects of fish vending operations on the environment is now being undertaken by the beach rehabilitation programme of the Improving Jamaica's Agricultural Productivity (IJAP) project.

"Prior to our intervention, most beaches also had just an absorption pit that does not separate effluent and waste water. This was insufficient to prevent contamination of the underground water systems and leakages into the sea," explained Oswin Brooks, IJAP Project Construction Supervisor.

The water table in most of these areas is naturally high Mr. Brooks explained. "This means there is a greater susceptibility of the existing sewage infrastructure to damage from flooding, whether from heavy rainfall or storm surges".

The IJAP beach upgrades are being made with these specific challenges in mind at six fishing beaches along Jamaica's South Coast.

Each upgrade is guided by the findings of an environmental impact assessment of the respective site. To complement that, implementation of final designs is in compliance and with the approval of the respective building and environmental protection agencies.

Overall, the new waste management programmes include a tertiary sewage system, that incorporates a combination of septic tank, tile field and/or reed-bed. Unlike the absorption pits some of the beaches previously had, the septic tank has a built-in waste separation and purification process that reduces the volume of effluent that is absorbed into the soil. It also allows for safe recycling of waste water for green areas.

Those beaches earmarked for new or upgraded markets by the project, such as Old Harbour Bay, Black River, Savanna-la-mar and Negril, will be supported by an even more sophisticated waste management system to match their commercial activity.

Key to these upgrades is a designated scaling station within the market. Centralizing the scaling activity allows for daily collection of the offal for recycling as bait by for lobster and fish pots. The vending stations

are also linked via a drainage network to systematically channel water away from the market into newly built manholes facilitating a much cleaner work environment.



BEFORE: The drainage at the Black River Fishing Beach was unstructured and prone to erosion.



AFTER: The construction of a new concrete culvert will increase carrying capacity of the drain and prevent further erosion.

IJAP Project - Fisheries Update

Beach Rehabilitation: Rehabilitative works continue on the Black River and Rocky Point Fishing beaches. In March construction of the new market, gear sheds and waste management facilities at Black River were 85 % complete. The 42 gear sheds and sanitary facilities at Rocky Point Fishing Beach were 40% complete at the end of March. The new fish market in Old Harbour Bay is in operation. Upgrading of the existing market and construction of new bathroom facilities and offices for the Cooperative at the Savanna-la-mar beach was 65% complete. Work is to commence next quarter at the Negril fishing beach.

Research: The National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA) has approved the installation of artificial reefs by the IJAP project at two sites to encourage an increase in fish stock. Two types of reefs, (Eco reefs and Anthozoculture) have been sourced in China and should arrive for deployment in June at the Montego Bay Marine Park and at the Bluefields Fish Sanctuary.

IJAP Project - CAPACITY BUILDING

Capacity Building activities for the IJAP project are coming to a close. At the end of first quarter 2011 a total of 2224 men and women in the marine fisheries and greenhouse sectors had been trained. Six community groups have been formally registered as cooperatives and another three existing cooperatives have been strengthened to ensure sustainability and provide leadership and management of the facilities built by the project. The capacity building activities will formally end in May.

Greenhouses Budding

Production is in full swing at all 40 greenhouses constructed by the IJAP project. Some farmers have already reaped several crops of tomatoes and bell peppers.

Production began in the St. Elizabeth cluster of 18 farmers in October last year. At the beginning of 2011, all 40 of the 4000 sq. ft. greenhouses were producing these two crops.

Spanning seven of 14 parishes, the new greenhouses were established to boost supply, especially to the hotel and restaurant sector, of top quality vegetables that have a robust demand year round.

Currently, the demand for bell peppers outweighs local supply creating a healthy niche for these farmers.

To address some of the perennial gaps between marketing and production that have traditionally hampered sales, the IJAP project strategically integrated the construction of two Post Harvest facilities to provide the farmers guaranteed markets and afford customers consistent quality and supply.

At the time of writing 50 percent of the farmers from the St. Elizabeth cluster had signed supply contracts with the first Post Harvest Facility in Hounslow, St. Elizabeth. The second facility will be completed by November 2011. It will provide post harvest services and a guaranteed market to farmers from the Manchester cluster.

Research is also ongoing with a range of non traditional greenhouse crops such as ginger and cantaloupe as well as with new varieties of bell peppers and tomatoes and various species of lettuce. The intention is to widen the crop variety based on successful results and provide farmers with Tech Packs to guide their production activities.



BBV Targets Schools

Visits to the Valley are becoming popular especially among students who get an opportunity to participate in experiential learning that delves into the rich heritage and natural history of the region.

Tapping into this niche, an effort is being spearheaded by the Corridor Management Council (CMC) Travel Halt Management Committee with assistance from IICA to target schools in Portland and the Tourism Clubs in the schools in the surrounding parishes of Kingston, St. Catherine, Portland and St. Thomas.

A total of 55 schools are being approached to include tours to the various attractions in the Valley as part of the schools' history and social studies programmes.

This was initiated following visits by Utech Hospitality students and Meadowbrook High school students. In February just over 200 students and teachers from the Meadowbrook High School in Kingston were hosted by the Maroon Museum and Safu Yard attractions as part of Black history month observance. The students had the opportunity to re-enact one of their literature texts by hiking through the Sambo Hill trail that was travelled by their ancestors.

A subsequent media report by the Jamaica Information Service described their visit: "In recounting her experience after completing the three and a half hours trail, Neva Cameron-Edwards, who also teaches at the school, said the students were able to relate to the practical experience. "The fight, the ambush, the survival, it was overall an interesting tour," she added.

Chairman of the CMC Mr. Everal Taylor and the Peace Corps Volunteer Calvin Crouch will be making presentation to the schools to promote the tours.

Among the attractions are the Maroon Museum, Sambo Hill Trail, Herb Gallery, Honey (bee) Bar, Spring Hill Coffee Farm and the Nyam Jam Travel Halt.

The schools will have the opportunity to tailor the tours to their interests.

AFB Inspection Begins

In March a national inspection programme to rid the island of the American Foulbrood (AFB) disease, which affects bees was launched.

Jamaica is among a short list of countries globally, where the AFB is not endemic. As such the sector is determined to preserve this status.

Presence of the AFB disease was first discovered in Jamaica in 1918 and the disease has been kept in check since. The Apiculture industry is now valued at approximately \$2.5 billion. As significant growth is expected, every effort is being made to ensure that existing and new apiaries are free of the AFB disease.

The national inspection programme is a partnership of IICA, the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MOAF) and the country's two main apiculture producer groups - the All Island Bee Farmers' Association (AIBFA) and the Jamaica Federation of Commercial Apiculturalists (JFCA). The project is funded by the European Union Banana Support Programme with support from the AIBFA, JFCA and the MOAF.

By end of year, the project intends to have inspected all of the island's apiaries for the AFB disease, destroyed infected hives and provided capacity building to bee farmers.



AFB Inspectors and Trainees in the field.

The capacity building programme will dramatically increase the number of AFB inspectors as well as educate farmers in six parishes in best practices to modernize and streamline their production activities.

In February just over 70 representatives from the AIBFA and the JFCA were trained to assist the Apiculture Extension Officers with the inspection exercise.

Inspection began in March in St. Catherine, Portland, Westmoreland and Hanover and will continue to other parishes.

Jamaican law requires among other things that any suspicion of AFB be immediately reported to the Chief Plant Protection Officer. Strict regulations governing the importation of bees and bee equipment is another of the control mechanisms to protect the local industry.



EARTH UNIVERSITY TAKES RECRUITMENT TO JAMAICA

Students from over 30 of Jamaica's secondary and tertiary schools participated in an inaugural recruitment drive hosted on the island by Earth University in February.

The Costa Rican based agricultural university is offering two full scholarships, financed by Chris Blackwell's Island Outpost, to pursue a four year *licenciatura* degree in agricultural sciences, starting January 2012.

The *licenciatura* is slightly lower than a Masters degree but higher than a Bachelor's degree.

The successful applicants will be required to be in Costa Rica much earlier for Spanish immersion classes as the courses are taught in Spanish.

In June, short listed applicants will be interviewed and the final two candidates selected. They will be the first Jamaicans to study at Earth.

The University says while academic excellence is important to selection, what is more important is that the selected candidates demonstrate the drive, skill and passion that marks a future agent of change.

Earth's mission is, "preparing leaders with ethical values to contribute to the sustainable development of the humid tropics and to construct a just and prosperous society." It therefore

seeks students who will champion this cause.

Entry to Earth is highly competitive. The University places 114 students annually in the incoming class from an applicant pool of over 1300 persons representing Spanish and non Spanish speaking countries from around the world.

"I see so many students who would welcome this opportunity," said Clinton Brown of the Jamaica 4-H. Mr. Brown assisted the Earth representative to host the information sessions. "This is an opportunity to study fully [financially] covered and to return to Jamaica and contribute to making a difference... because if you change the life of two to three persons it will have a multiplier effect," he added. His expectation of the students, on their return at the completion of their studies, is an increase in agriculture production because of new knowledge they would have gained.

In 2009, Jamaica's representatives in the IICA Youth Leadership Summit had the opportunity to visit Earth University and tour their facilities. They were so impressed with the scope and adoption of new technologies that they were inspired to revisit some of their agricultural approaches and perspectives.

The IICA Jamaica Office was instrumental in facilitating the University's mission to Jamaica.

NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN FOR IICA YOUTH IN AGRIBUSINESS AWARDS

The annual IICA Youth in Agribusiness Awards is open for nominations of candidates for the 2011 competition. Four awards are available in the Small and Large scale categories for any agriculture sub sector.

The YIAB awards were established in 1999 by the IICA Jamaica office in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture to promote entrepreneurship, innovation and employment among youth engaged in agriculture. Nominees are judged for their contribution to the sector especially as it concerns enhancing food security, employment generation and/or the development of new markets. Eligible candidates are within the 17-34 age group who demonstrate excellence in the following areas:

1. Innovation
2. Contribution to employment
3. Knowledge of their industry
4. Potential for developing new markets
5. Adherence to best practices.

Nomination forms may be obtained from the Jamaica 4-H Clubs, Jamaica Agricultural Society (JAS), Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA) or the IICA Jamaica Office. Nominations are to be accompanied by the name and address of sponsor as well as the same for the nominees. The deadline for submission is May 30. All submissions are to be addressed to the IICA Representative, Hope Gardens.

As is customary, the 2011 winners will be announced during the Opening Ceremony of the Youth Day at the Denbigh Agricultural and Industrial Show slated for July 30.



EVENTS SCHEDULE

April 26-29

Mission to Jamaica by Hemispheric Specialist in Agribusiness (Caribbean)
Re: Glut Management Proposal

April 27

Ground breaking Ceremony
for Coleyville Post Harvest Facility

May 2 - 6

Greenhouse Growers Fact Finding
Mission to Dominica Republic

May 2- 6

Mission to Jamaica by International Specialists for Policy & Trade Negotiations
Re: Study of the Impact of Inadequate Infrastructure on Agriculture

May 10

Apiculture Project PSC Meeting
IICA, Hope Gardens

May 11- 12

IJAP Project - Capacity Building
Strategic Leadership Training

Apiculture Project - Capacity Building
Business Management Training Sessions

- *May 17 - St. Catherine
Farmers Training Centre,
Twickenham Park*
- *May 18 - Clarendon
4-H, Denbigh*
- *May 24 - St. James
RADA, Catherine Hall*
- *May 26 - St. Mary
Orange River Research Station*
- *May 31 - St. Thomas
RADA, Belfast*

AFB Parish Sensitization Sessions

See the Press for details

May 30 - June 5

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