

The Agriculture Sector is Critical in Rebuilding Haiti

'Haiti cannot prosper without a vibrant agriculture economy.' – David C. Hatch, IICA



David C. Hatch, IICA, speaks before Members of the OAS Group of Friends of Haiti.

Washington, DC, July 21, 2010 – “There is no economic sector more important to Haiti than agriculture.” Those were the words echoed by David C. Hatch, Associate Deputy Director General and Representative in the United States of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) before members of the Group of Friends of Haiti of the Organization of American States (OAS) today.

The group comprised of representatives from the OAS Member countries and observer countries is chaired by OAS Assistant Secretary General, Albert R. Ramdin.

Hatch presented a brief overview of the Institute’s activities in Haiti since the devastating earthquake which took place earlier this year. “Officially sanctioned projects are seeking investment and in some cases have secured investments,” he said. IICA has been working closely with the

Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Rural Development (MARNDR) in developing mid and long term plans to help rebuild its agriculture sector.

Since the Earthquake, the IICA Office in Haiti has increased its staff from 50 to 72 employees to help meet emerging needs. According to Hatch the Institute is currently engaged in 30 active projects with at least 24 countries which have directly benefitted over 20,000 small farmers and the cultivation of 10’s of thousands of acres. Projects range from food security including fruits and vegetables initiatives to addressing animal health concerns such as the vaccination of hundreds of thousands of livestock against Swine Fever, as well as some 450,000 cats and dogs to prevent rabies.

Underscoring the value of partnerships, Hatch reminded his audience of the importance of international cooperation and need for sound investments in the sector. “Through the assistance of Brazil, Dominican Republic and the United States over 5,000 acres were prepared and planted before this year’s rainy season,” he said. In addition, the ProHuerta food security backyard garden project involving Canada, Brazil and Argentina has been expanded and work has already begun. According to Hatch, the Office in Port-Au-Prince is collaborating with Brazil on a vegetable production project as well as the construction of 70 cisterns to capture water for various purposes. Hatch also reported that the European Union (EU) is funding a large promising project on mango production.

Hatch concluded by reiterating IICA’s commitment to Haiti.

ABOUT IICA

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture is the specialized agency for agriculture and the rural milieu of the Inter-American System, whose purpose is to provide innovative technical cooperation to the Member States, with a view to achieving their sustainable development in aid of the peoples of the Americas.

For additional information on IICA, please visit

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Additional information

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