

Young leader off to Panama for one-year internship with IICA

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Trinidad y Tobago, November 27th, 2008 (IICA). The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA) is encouraging young people of the Americas to participate and show leadership in the agricultural development of the hemisphere.

To this end, it sponsored a Forum for Young Leaders in March 2008, at IICA Headquarters in Costa Rica. At that time, the IICA Center for Leadership in Agriculture organized a programme of internships for young professionals participating in the Forum.

This programme will enrich and strengthen the professional and human capacities of these young leaders by involving them in initiatives in the agri-food and rural sector in other countries of the region.

Abidemi Smenkh-Ka-Ra, a national of Trinidad and Tobago, was one of two young professionals who participated in that Forum for Young Leaders at IICA Headquarters, has since been awarded a one-year programme of internship at the IICA Office in Panama.

The programme, which has a strong focus on agribusiness, will provide Smenkh-Ka-Ra with an opportunity to contribute to the development and dissemination of information on market opportunities for Panamanian agricultural products.

She will also contribute to strengthening the national system of price and market information for agricultural products as well as collaborate on the development of rural tourism initiatives.

Smenkh-Ka-Ra's background prepares her well for such an assignment. She is currently pursuing an International Masters in Business Administration (MBA) and also holds a Bachelor of Science in Botany with minors in Biochemistry and Biotechnology from the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine.

Smenkh-Ka-Ra is also self-employed and runs an entrepreneurial venture that focuses on business development, project planning, development and implementation as well as market research and market analysis.

During her tenure in Panama, Smenkh-Ka-Ra will interface with a wide range of persons in the agriculture sector – on the ground: producers, agricultural extension officers and people in rural communities.

A very conscientious and ambitious young woman, Smenkh-Ka-Ra sees this as an important opportunity to broaden her business and management skills as well as to become fluent in the Spanish language, which has always been one of her major goals.

She is confident that the challenge will not be too great for her to manage and is looking forward to being able to transfer knowledge, experiences skills gained during the internship when she returns to Trinidad and Tobago at the end of the internship period.

Smenkh-Ka-Ra has already taken up residence in Panama, where she will form part of the staff of the IICA Office, under the guidance of the Representative Guillermo Villanueva.

More information

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