

VOLUME 2/2010



IICA ECS News



June 2010

Editorial: *Centre Yourself*

These days we have to use our experiences to centre ourselves. In my most centred day for the month of June, I was searching for the perfect book to spend my evening with and found the following article which was taken from a Newsletter article that a General had written while commanding the 101 Airborne:

“You cannot expect a soldier to be a proud soldier if you humiliate him. You cannot expect him to be brave if you abuse and cow him. You cannot expect him to be strong, if you break him. You cannot ask for respect and obedience and willingness to assault hot landing zones, hump back-breaking ridges, destroy dug-in emplacements if your soldier has not been treated with respect and dignity which fosters unit esprit and personal pride. The line between firmness and harshness, between strong leadership and bullying, between discipline and chicken, is a fine line. It is difficult to define, but those of us who are professionals, who have accepted a career as a leader, must find that line. It is because judgement and concern for people and human relations are involved in leadership that only men (and women) can lead, and not computers.”

I enjoy you to be ever alert of the pitfalls of too much authority. Beware that you do not fall into the category of the little man, with a little job, with a big head. In essence, be considerate, treat your subordinates right, and they will literally die for you.

Keep the feed back coming!

Una May Gordon
IICA Representative in the ECS

Inside This Issue

1. [Editorial](#)
2. [IICA Antigua and Barbuda supports Cost of Production Model Training](#)
3. [IICA Grenada's Intervention Raises Farmer's Hopes](#)
4. [IICA Saint Lucia supports Farmers Exposure through Study Tour to Latin America](#)
5. [IICA St Vincent and the Grenadines' Stakeholders are Happy with the Contributions made to Agriculture and Rural Development](#)
6. [IICA ECS Staff Met in Saint Lucia, June 28-30](#)
7. [Upcoming Events July – September 2010](#)

IICA Antigua and Barbuda supports Cost of Production Model Training



Facilitator, Edric Harry – Policy Analyst and Planning Specialist, IICA Office in Trinidad and Tobago

During a 2-day Workshop, April 20-21, 2010, sixteen persons from a wide cross-section of the agriculture sector in Antigua received training in a new model for “Cost of Production”. The workshop was facilitated by Mr. Edric Harry, Policy Analyst and Planning Specialist from the IICA Office in Trinidad and Tobago, and was held at the Fisheries Conference Room at Point Wharf. Participants included producers of both crops and livestock, representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, Antigua and Barbuda Development Bank, the Antigua and Barbuda Investment Authority, and the National Development Foundation.

In response to Mr. Harry's presentation on the “Cost of Production” model, very keen interest was displayed by participants who asked several questions and engaged in lively discussions. The participants also received “hands on demonstration” during a session in which they were provided with information on an onion crop, and using the new model learned they prepared the cost of production. Field trips to three farms in different locations also formed part of the training exercise. Coming out of this workshop, a meeting will be held to select farmers who will form part of a pilot trial of the model which is programmed to begin in the next cropping season. However, in the meantime, one farmer has already begun to use the model to input data from his farm.

It is hoped that workshop participants will now be able to apply the new model in making accurate assessments of their costs and returns which will aid in making farm management and investment decisions since the model, well applied, can determine the viability or non-viability of a venture.

It must be noted that the new model of “Cost of Production” has been tested in Trinidad and is being used in a joint IICA/CARDI project to determine the production cost of *shadow beni*. Similar models have been developed for livestock, but are still in the validation stage.



Excerpts of field visit

IICA Grenada's *Intervention Raises Farmer's Hopes*

Mr. Winston Alphonzo Ottley was considered the most committed greenhouse farmer in Grenada towards the end of 2009. As a result, he was selected to participate in an IICA-sponsored 1-week *greenhouse technology* training visit to Jamaica. He was accompanied by Ms. Allison Haynes, Agronomist in the Ministry of Agriculture.

In addition to farming a total of thirty acres (mainly tree crops), Mr. Ottley also utilizes a six thousand square feet greenhouse to produce crops such as tomato, bell pepper, cauliflower, broccoli, and lettuce. He plans to establish another greenhouse for which he already has the necessary materials.



When asked about the performance of his greenhouse, Mr. Ottley responded "extremely productive". He boasts of relatively low labour cost, high yields and quality, increased harvesting frequency, reduced post-harvest loss, and greater reliability of forecasted production. His major greenhouse production problems include soil nematodes, a less than efficient irrigation system, and the high cost of production inputs.

According to Mr. Ottley, IICA's intervention has helped to broaden his horizon in terms of greenhouse farming, and farming in general. Consequently, he now envisages greater

agribusiness opportunities not only in Grenada but throughout the region – especially in Jamaica.

Mr. Ottley said that, in addition to the many new greenhouse production techniques he has acquired, his visit to Jamaica has exposed him to (1) the potential for utilizing locally available materials for greenhouse construction; (2) methods for quick removal and replacement of greenhouse covering, as may be necessary during periods of high wind; and (3) the use of bags and pots for production under the greenhouse and in the open field.

In 1993, Mr. Ottley attended the agricultural training school in Grenada where he pursued a 1-year agricultural training course. Immediately after graduation in 1994, he obtained a 2-acre parcel of land, on a lease-purchase arrangement. Eight years afterwards (in 2002), he purchased the said two acres. Subsequently, he entered into two lease-purchase agreements for an additional 28 acres of land. Mr. Ottley cultivates a wide range of fruit crops (papaya, mango, citrus, guava, avocado, wax apple), and plans to get involved in processing (dehydrating) some of his fruits (especially papaya and mango) to meet domestic market demand.



IICA Saint Lucia supports Farmers Exposure through Study Tour to Latin America

During the period, April 10-26, 2010 a group of St. Lucian farmers and agriculture officials received a first-hand look at good agricultural practices in Costa Rica.

The tour, which included cocoa, vegetable and cut flower farmers, were selected from the Banana Industry Trust/IICA project. The tour commenced with a visit to the National Horticultural Corporation of Costa Rica in the mountainous region of Cartago.

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) was integrally involved in the Study Tour. IICA's Representative for the Eastern Caribbean, Una May Gordon, hopes that the visit to the National Horticultural Corporation of Costa Rica would provide the St. Lucian farmers and agriculture officials with a deeper understanding of the level of organization, technical expertise, planning and proper utilization of technology which must be invested if the agricultural sector is to yield desirable and sustainable results.

Marketing Specialist in St. Lucia's Ministry of Agriculture, Vincent La Corbiniere, said that at present quality and marketing are among the major challenges facing the non-banana sector in St. Lucia. He confirmed the Ministry's commitment to strengthening those areas.

La Corbiniere also noted that banana production benefitted from an established structure which includes provision of inputs, packaging and marketing. He said, "unless we can create that kind of structure for the non-banana sector, we are always going to run into the problems of demand outstripping supply". La Corbiniere believes it is critical that farmers' organizations be strengthened to tap into and take advantage of niche markets. He noted that the Agri-Business and Extension Units of the Ministry of Agriculture are working assiduously to achieve that goal.

Mention was also made of efforts to restructure the St. Lucia Marketing Board with greater private sector involvement alongside government and farmers' groups.

Based on the visit to the Cartago operations of the Horticultural Cooperation of Costa Rica, the visiting delegation came to the realization that St. Lucia's production capacity, quality and infrastructure are in urgent need of an overhaul.

The Study Tour was financed under the European Union Special Framework of Assistance (SFA) 2005 Programme through the National Authorizing Office, headed by Mr. Hilary Regis, who accompanied the delegation in Costa Rica.



IICA St Vincent and the Grenadines' Stakeholders are Happy with the Contributions made to Agriculture and Rural Development



Head table (L-R): Mr. Michael Dalton – Technical Specialist, IICA Office in St. Vincent and the Grenadines; Hon. Montgomery Daniel – Minister of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries; Mr. Allan Alexander – Permanent Secretary and Mr. Reuben Robertson – Chief Agricultural Officer

Following the brief Opening Ceremony, IICA's Technical Specialist, Mr. Michael Dalton, presented the results obtained from the implementation of IICA's 2009 Annual Action Plan. The key objectives to be accomplished as part of IICA's 2010 programme were also outlined.

During an open forum which followed the presentation, participants engaged IICA with questions, comments and interventions on IICA's activities in the country. This discourse highlighted evidence of stakeholders' satisfaction with IICA's contributions to agriculture and rural development in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. General consensus was also reached on areas of intervention which included: broadening and expanding IICA's activities among youths in agriculture and the involvement of rural women in production and processing; formalization of systems for agriculture health and food safety; assisting in the capacity development of producer organizations; and continuing assistance to enhance the development of producer groups.

IICA Office in St. Vincent and the Grenadines looks forward to a productive 2010, working in concert with all its stakeholders.

The IICA Office in St. Vincent and the Grenadines held its *Annual Accountability Seminar* on April 22, 2010. The seminar was attended by thirty-one persons representing key stakeholder organizations from the public and private sectors. Among the attendees, the seminar was graced with the presence of the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Honourable Montgomery Daniel, who delivered the feature address. Other participants included senior officers of the

Ministry of Agriculture and representatives from the OAS, credit institutions, input suppliers, marketers, and *The Alliance* constituents (SVGAFY and SVGNRWP).



Cross section of participants at the Accountability Seminar

IICA ECS Staff Met in Saint Lucia, June 28-30



*ECS Representative, Coordinators and Technical/
National Specialists*



ECS Representative and her team

Members of the IICA ECS team met in Saint Lucia, June 28-30 to assess the progress, challenges and opportunities of the last five years and to synthesize new strategies and mandates within the context of the new Medium Term Plan (2010-2014).

Upcoming Events July – September 2010

- Help Out our Primary and Secondary Schools – Expository Fair, **July 9, Saint Lucia.**
- One-day Workshop for “Greenhouse Farmers” in Grenada, **July 21.**
- Young leaders from across the ECS will participate in the *Third Hemispheric Forum for Young Leaders in Agriculture*, in Nebraska, USA, **August 2-6.**
- First Forum for Young Leaders in Agriculture in Saint Lucia, **August 17-19.**



Editorial Team

[Una May Gordon](#), Editor-in-Chief
[Merril Philbert-St John](#), Editor
[Deborah Biscombe](#), Design and Layout

Office in Saint Lucia
 Email: iica.lc@iica.int