



Jamaica

Significant achievements in 2015

- One hundred and seventy-nine stakeholders from Jamaica's sweet potato value chain benefited from capacity building in commercial production, harvesting and post-harvest handling of Beauregard.¹ Ninety-three acres of Beauregard were established by 38 farmers, which is expected to yield 1.2 million lbs through to March 2016. Jamaica Producers Tropical Farms (JPTF) were the first to plant in early August, harvested and cured their sweet potatoes, and were the first to market in PriceSmart Jamaica on 19 November, the week before Thanksgiving. JPTF sent a request to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MOAF) for a weekly supply of 1 Hectare (ha) of slips in 2016 to establish an additional 52 ha of Beauregard based on 2015 performance. The Minister and his team at the MOAF have been very proactive in the development of this new crop in Jamaica.
- 12 communities² in the Blue Mountains in Jamaica, where 87% of coffee farmers are located, were consulted and participated in discussion groups in order to develop an Early Warning System for managing coffee leaf rust, in collaboration with IRAP (climate scientists from Colombia University and socio-economists from the University of Arizona), the University of the West Indies, Mona, and the Coffee Industry Board. This is the start of a 3-year project aimed at understanding the climatic and socio-economic factors related to rust epidemics in Jamaica. Results from this study will help farmers make the best use of their scarce resources by alerting of impending climatic conditions that favor coffee rust outbreaks in sufficient time to optimize disease management strategies.
- 61 participants including livestock farmers, extension and MOAF officers and Agricultural Schools participated in the Silvopastoral workshop conducted in collaboration with MOAF and Corporación Colombiana de Investigación Agropecuaria (Corpoica) Colombia in order to build capacity in the use of forage and fodder species for optimum animal nutrition. The workshop was supported by practical field activities to demonstrate the establishment of silvopastoral systems.

¹ A variety never before grown on a commercial scale in Jamaica.

² 127 coffee farmers participated with small to medium sized coffee farms. Common constraints and coping strategies were identified from 12 communities.

- Export platforms (producer-buyer networks) are being developed under the General Agreement with the Agricultural Competitiveness Programme (ACP) of the MOAF for technical cooperation to operationalize Agro parks in Jamaica. Five US fresh produce buyers from Miami and New York visited with farmers in three Agro parks and orders were placed for pumpkins, hot peppers and chenette. In addition, strong interest was expressed in green mangoes and purple sweet potato for the Asian markets.
- In collaboration with the Technical National Implementation Network Teams (TNINT), the local coordinating committee for the Caribbean Sanitary and Phytosanitary project under the 10th European Union European Development Fund (EDF SPS), a total of seven proposals were submitted to the Project Management Unit in Barbados and full approval was received for two of the projects, namely Production of a Food Control Manual and Food Safety Communication Plan and Training in Pest Risk Analysis.
- Under IICA Jamaica's Women and Youth capacity building programmes, the Jamaica Network of Rural Women Producers (JNRWP) the local chapter of Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers (CANROP) received financial strengthening through the production of three years' audited reports and training in good record keeping and financial stewardship to improve their chances of access to finance. A needs based assessment of what is required to take Youth Agri-entrepreneurs to the next level in their businesses was conducted and a proposal developed for external funding. The proposal was presented to 17 local and international donor agencies present at a breakfast seminar. Discussions will be held with the seven agencies indicating an interest in this proposal in early 2016. Additionally, in 2015, 3 Youth Farmers were recognized for their outstanding achievements and business savvy as agricultural entrepreneurs at the Annual Denbigh Agricultural and Trade Show.

