



**Adding Value to Local Foods for Food and
Nutrition Security:
Myth or Strategic Option
Programme**

Wyndham Hotel, Kingston Jamaica

26-28th November 2012



Background:

The Caribbean region is a net importer of food. According to the Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy (RPNSP), the Caribbean imported US\$ 3.5 billion in both fresh and processed foods, primarily from outside the region and this is trending upwards (CARICOM, 2010). Changing dietary patterns and more sedentary lifestyles over the years have contributed to the high prevalence of non-communicable chronic nutrition related diseases such as diabetes, cancers and hypertension. However, pockets of malnutrition and under-nutrition still exist in some countries, particularly Haiti and Jamaica and between 1999-2005, 7.5 to 7.6 million people were considered malnourished (CARICOM, 2010). Within the last 20 years or more, marketing boards and small and medium-scale food processing enterprises have expanded but they face several challenges; technological, logistical and financial, in accessing and processing locally grown foods e.g. root crops, fruits and vegetables, dairy, fish, poultry and other livestock. At the same time, consumers have been confronted with higher food prices for local and imported foods. Marketing boards and food processing enterprises compete for fresh produce which earn premium prices for domestic consumption and the prices of imported foods have soared due to a range of factors – both domestic and global.

The RNSP identifies several factors as part of the strategy for improving food and nutrition security with respect to increasing food availability– production/trade. These include:

- “Encouraging the addition of value through the expansion of the range and quality of crop, livestock, fishery and other food by-products as well as improved meat cutting, processing and manufacturing techniques; and
- Upgrading of the physical supportive infrastructure (for grading, packaging and certification of agricultural and food commodities) for both the domestic and export markets”.

However, this may be easier said than done as there are several examples from within the Caribbean which can be examined to identify the success factors and limitations to achieving this ambition.

In 2010, the Caribbean Research Innovation and Entrepreneurship Network (RIENet) was launched following a joint CTA/CCST workshop in Jamaica in 2009. It presently comprises over 400 members and includes an online facility. The OAS and CCST supported the development of the website content/functions, the establishment of the network database and the first six months of network facilitation. CTA has been funding the network online operations since that date. At the end of October 2011, the RIE Network boasted 428 members and e- alerts are sent out monthly. About 50% of the content on the website is generated by network members from the small and medium scale enterprises, industry and public sector associations and the research and academic community.

Goal and Objectives

The goal of this present initiative is to leverage the RIENet and its alliances to act as a catalyst for strengthening value-addition capability and improving the food and nutrition situation in the Caribbean. The specific objectives are to:

- Reflect on the experiences of the marketing boards, food processing enterprises, nutritionists and dieticians communities, research and academia and other support agencies in increasing food availability through value addition in the Caribbean;
- Identify the major limitations to growth in agro-processing for food and nutrition security and explore possible options and scenarios .
- Develop a 3 year action plan/roadmap associated with the RIENet which aims to help achieve empirically measurable progress in increasing food availability through value addition for food and nutrition security.
- Facilitate the implementation and monitor the outcomes.

The Output

A strategy paper and three year road map/action plan for increasing food availability in the Caribbean through value addition.

The Outcome

Improvement in the food and nutrition situation through targeted value addition support measures.

The ‘Action’

A two to two and a half day workshop (The ‘Action’) will be organized in the week of November 18, 2012 in Jamaica. This will build upon the lively, frank and productive workshop session held in Jamaica in 2009 which led to the setting up of the RIENet. A great deal of candid conversation will be encouraged to identify a target for achieving increased food availability and some key collaborative and priority setting deficiencies, amongst other things, that need to be addressed. Nutritionists, dietitians, food technologists as well as representatives of marketing boards/agencies, small and medium-scale enterprises, and the research and academic community, will comprise the select expert / interest group who will determine a possible target for the three years and the mechanisms for achievement as well as the system for tracking and evaluation.

DAY 1 – 26th November 2012

8:30 – 9:00 am Registration

Opening Ceremony

Chairperson: Donald Miller, Research Officer, National Commission for Science and Technology (NCST), Jamaica

9:00 - 9:05 Welcome Remarks – Donald Miller, NCST, Jamaica

9:05 – 9:10 Opening Remarks – Dionne Clarke-Harris, Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) Representative, Jamaica

9:10 – 9:20 Opening Remarks – Judith Ann Francis, Senior Programme Coordinator Science & Technology Policy, Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ACP-EU (CTA), The Netherlands

9:20 – 9:35 **Feature Address** - Dr Marc Panton, Chief Technical Director (Ministry of Agriculture, Jamaica

9:35 – 9:40 Vote of Thanks – Phillip Jackson, Ag Chair, Caribbean Council for Science and Technology (CCST), St Vincent and the Grenadines

9:40 – 10:15 Coffee Break

10:15 – 10:45 Eating local: A quality proposition for improved Nutrition (linking Health, Education and Agriculture), Lennox D. Lampkin, Chairman, SVG Chamber of Agriculture & Nutrition Inc., St. Vincent and the Grenadines

Local Food-based Dietary Guidelines - The Key to Food & Nutrition Security, Patricia Anthia Joshua, Agri-Business Manager, Agri-Enterprise Development, Ministry of Agriculture, Food Production, Fisheries and Rural Development, St Lucia

10:45– 10:55 Respondent – Patricia Thompson, Nutrition Consultant, Jamaica Island Nutrition Network, Jamaica

10:55 - 11:20 Plenary Discussion – Emerging Issues and priorities

11:20 – 11:50 Survey and Synthesis Report on Agro-processing Enterprises in the Caribbean, Neela Badrie, Professor, Dept of Food Production, University of the West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago

- 11:50 – 12:05 Adding Value to Local Foods for Food and Nutrition Security - Challenges and Possible Solutions, Astley Joseph, Deputy Director Ministry of Agriculture, Antigua and Barbuda
- 12:05 – 12:15 Challenges and Opportunities of Major Processors in the Caribbean – Phillip Jackson, Policy Advisor to Minister on Telecommunications Science and Technology, Office of the Prime Minister, St. Vincent and the Grenadines
- 12:15 – 12:30 Calculating the True Value of Local Foods- David Thomas, Managing Director, MarketMovers, Trinidad and Tobago
- 12:30 – 13:00 Plenary Discussion – Emerging Issues and priorities
- 13:00 – 14:00 Lunch
- 14:00 – 14:30 Survey and Synthesis Report on Marketing Boards in the Caribbean, Ian Ivey, Consultant & Lead Facilitator, Trinidad and Tobago
- 14:30 -14:45 Promoting Caribbean Food to Caribbean People, Darwin Telemaque, Managing Director, Tropical Farm Produce Ltd, Dominica
- 14:45 – 15:30 Plenary Discussion – Emerging Issues and priorities
- 15:30 - 16:00 Coffee Break
- 16:00 - 17:15 Group Session - What is needed to address the issues / priorities identified?
- A brief scene setter followed by group sessions to identify ways to address specific issues. Individual groups will be allocated one – two issues areas to consider based upon the issues identified in the morning session. They will be asked to identify the gaps, possible solutions and give examples of something working in practice if possible using the template in Appendix 1.
- 17:15 – 17:30 Open Floor Discussions

DAY 2 – 27th November 2012

Chairperson: Ian Ivey, Facilitator

8:30 - 8:45 Brief Scene Setter and Recap Day 1– Ian Ivey, Facilitator

8:45 – 10:00	Group Presentations & Plenary Discussion – Day 1 Group work
10:00 – 10:30	Coffee Break
10:30 – 12:00	Group Session (participants will be re-allocated to different groups to the ones they were in yesterday) – Agencies, enterprises, individual experts will be encouraged to think about their responsibilities and areas of accountability as a progression of the solutions identified to address the gaps in the previous day’s session using a template similar to that in Appendix 2
12.00 - 13:00	Groups reports and Plenary Discussion
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch
14:00 - 15:30	Plenary Session - Towards a RoadMap – This is a consensus based exercise which requires developing a roadmap that provides a specific timeline for delivering the solutions by those who have been deemed accountable. The output will be a 3 year roadmap with milestones for what can be done and who is going to do what and by when to make things happen. Its implementation will be overseen and facilitated by the RIENet and an ‘elected’ support group from amongst those participating. Some specific empirical targets of achievement need to be set along with accountability of progressing towards it. A suggested template for this session is shown in Appendix 3.
15:30 – 16:00	Break
16:00 – 17:00	Continuation of the Roadmap Process including finalisation of the long medium and short term empirical targets for achievement and the election of the support group. Key messages to policy makers
17.00 - 18:00 pm	Plenary

Day 3 – 28th NOVEMBER - Field Trip

- AsanteAdonai organic farm – Winefield, St. Anns
- Walkerswood - St. Ann