CARICOM moves towards Food and Nutrition Security

Praedial Larceny: Its Consequences for Caribbean Agriculture

Agribusiness is Good Business!

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The challenge facing us and the world is the creation of sustainable food production systems. We have to maintain a supply of healthy food at affordable prices when there is mounting pressure on nearly every element affecting the process with the devastating effects of climate change taking the greatest toll.

The FAO predicts that agricultural production will have to increase by 70% by 2050 to feed a population of some 9 billion people. And climate models predict a much more uncertain climate in the next several decades. In the next 40 years, agricultural land will be lost to urbanization, desertification, sea level rise and increasingly salt water intrusion in which few crops can grow. Extreme weather events are also likely to become more severe and more frequent, and an unpredictable world economic outlook will result in more volatile food production and prices.

Our Region cannot afford to be complacent and has to be more proactive than reactive. The swift implementation of the Jagdeo Initiative on Agriculture remains our critical opportunity to up the region’s tempo on food production. It must be noted that some Member States have introduced policies and programmes aimed at encouraging their societies to change their consumption patterns, become taste-sensitive and eat what they grow. This will, in limited ways, boost the agriculture sector and empower rural communities, ensuring access to food and maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

In Guyana, for example, the "Grow More Food" campaign has gained currency and the Agriculture Ministry has developed a 10 year Food and Nutrition Security
Strategy that will address availability, affordability, nutrition and stability. Guyana, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago are moving ahead with cassava flour initiatives as one way of shaving high wheat import costs. In Jamaica, the “Eat Jamaica” initiative was recently launched with its Agriculture Minister indicating that Jamaica could replace 45 percent of imported food items with local produce.

Instead of only engaging in isolated measures, the Region should seek better coherence and coordination in their policy responses as outlined in the JI framework and the added inputs of the FAO and IICA. These must yield both greater assurances of unimpeded access to global supplies, and improved confidence and transparency in market functioning, especially in the major commodity exchanges. An improved regional-public surveillance system on export availabilities and import demands would help temper uncertainty and enable countries to equip themselves better before the full impacts of crises transpire. Such measures would also help stabilize the market.

Countries in the Region must constantly and carefully examine the implications of high food prices and not to take any policy actions that might appear useful in the short term, but could have harmful, longer-term effects or even aggravate the situation. Thus, the Regional Policy for Food and Nutrition Security, approved in October 2010, aims to ensure that the regional food production, processing, distribution, marketing, trade, and food safety and agricultural public health system is capable of providing safe, adequate, nutritious and affordable food for the Region’s inhabitants at all times, thereby achieving food and nutrition security. It is expected that the Action Plan with identified priorities will be submitted for approval in October 2011 at the Special COTED for Agriculture.

As CARICOM Lead Head of Government with responsibility for Agriculture, I applaud these developments including the initiatives towards a regional market information system that will provide objective information on the regional markets for both consumers and producers, and the reaching out to the youth to become involved in the agriculture sector which undoubtedly will provide them with an opportunity to become entrepreneurs therefore earning a living and contributing significantly to the development of their country and the Region.

However, the problem has to be tackled in multiple dimensions, and over different
time horizons. As an urgent priority, poor consumers, who spend a disproportionate share of their incomes on food, must be cushioned from the most severe impacts. This will require careful monitoring as well as efficient, well targeted safety nets. By the same token, an effective response over the medium to long term must also include an increase in food production and the reduction of distribution costs.

Therefore, as a Region we should take a more consolidated, aggregated look at where and how we support food production across each country. We need to ask: How much food does a particular piece of land yield? What critical inputs are required? Water, land, soil, and natural and chemical fertilizers are all important, but we need to look at which components are suitable for specific settings and countries. We need to focus on approaches that look at food security, environmental concerns, water efficiency and biodiversity in one, holistic context as opposed to considering them separately. Hence, the Region must draw up principles related to environment, transparency, land issues, and other areas, to improve the likelihood of investments yielding positive results.

Moreover, integrating agriculture education into primary and secondary schools is important because it reflects the reality of rural children. Education at this level should focus on sustainable production practices and help students answer practical question such as: How do I save water? How do I minimize the use of agricultural inputs? How do I improve the quality of soil?

When we talk about agriculture and food production, we are talking about a complex and interrelated system and it is simply not possible to single out just one objective, like maximizing production, without also ensuring that the system which delivers those increased yields meets society’s other needs. These should include the maintenance of public health, the safeguarding of rural employment, the protection of the environment and contributing to overall quality of life.

We have repeatedly diagnosed and agreed on critical solutions to address the vulnerability of our Region to high food prices. These are well-known to the critical stakeholders. Now what we need is unwavering political will and bold action from the entire Region if the Region will be better prepared to grasp with the current food price situation and take the Region’s agriculture to the required and desired level.
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Youth Development and Agriculture  

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Agriculture significant to Community’s development - Amb. LaRocque

The current soaring food prices were a continuing reminder that the Region needed to pay increasing attention to food and nutrition security and cost-efficient production, and underscored the significance of agriculture to the development of the Caribbean Community, according to Amb. Irwin LaRocque, Assistant Secretary-General Trade and Economic Integration, CARICOM Secretariat.

In an interview with the CARICOM View, Amb. LaRocque pointed out that the sector’s contribution should not only be measured in export figures, but in the broader concept of development.

Renewed emphasis is being placed on agriculture not only to counter food prices but also to ensure the Region’s populace ate what they produced, was nutrition secure and was reversing the high incidence of Chronic Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) now prevalent in the Region. The region’s food import bill hovers at around US$4B, with processed products accounting for most of that amount. NCDs are the leading causes of death in the Caribbean.

“We need to influence the taste and preference of our households to consume nutritionally balanced foods as a means of safeguarding against chronic non-communicable diseases which are prevalent in the Region,” the Assistant Secretary-General stressed, adding that the high prices could be a market signal for the kinds of goods that the sector needed to produce to satisfy the Community.

Amb. LaRocque, whose Directorate’s responsibility includes agriculture and industry, pointed to agriculture’s role as a “significant” one in the context of regional development given its basis for food production and its provision of sustenance, employment – particularly among women - and physical, infrastructural development, particularly in rural areas.

Increased regional content in food, increased use of local inputs, feeds and fertilizers, and increasing the productivity of land, labour and capital in the agricultural sector, were among the measures Amb. LaRocque identified to reduce the Region’s total food import bill.

He also stressed the importance of increasing public expenditure in agriculture, focusing on rural infrastructure, research and development, agricultural health and food safety, and market information systems.

According to Amb. LaRocque, the Community needed to put in place a Regional regime on Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary measures so that the agricultural products could be more easily traded among the Member States of the Community. The Heads of Government, he pointed out, have agreed to create the Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA) as the vehicle to do so.

“… When we do get that right, I expect to see a boost in agriculture trade in the Community,” he said.

Post-harvest losses were also stymieing the development of the sector. “We need to pay a little more attention to post-harvest losses. I’m advised that as much as 40-50 per cent in some Member States is lost to post-harvest problems. If you minimize those losses, obviously you will increase the average income earnings in agriculture,” Amb. LaRocque said.

With regard to the involvement of youth in agriculture, Amb. LaRocque pointed to the aging farming population and advised that youths needed to get on board, to become agriculture entrepreneurs.

“We need to attract youth to the sector, and to do so, we need to modernize the image of agriculture. The traditional image of agriculture is of somebody with a cutlass or a hoe in his hand, boots on his feet and torn pants. We have to move away from that, because agriculture cannot exist without a number of other services that require the use of modern technology,” he stressed.
The Hon. Hilson Baptiste, Minister of Agriculture, Lands, Housing and the Environment of Antigua and Barbuda stands next to a large bunch of bananas at the Caribbean Week of Agriculture held in St. George’s, Grenada in October 2010.

CARICOM moves towards Food and Nutrition Security

The Regional Policy for Food and Nutrition Security

Sergio Garcia, CARICOM Secretariat & Mike Smart, FAO

In January 2011, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) Global Food Price Index surpassed the previous high level reached in 2008 which had led to food riots and social instability in many countries. The present high levels have already sparked bread riots in Bolivia and turmoil in the Middle East in recent weeks.

This is the context in which the CARICOM Regional Policy for Food and Nutrition Security (RPFNS) has been prepared. The RFNSP was endorsed in Grenada at the Special Meeting of the CARICOM Council on Trade and Economic Development-COTED (Agriculture) in October 2010. This milestone was reached through an innovative policy design process looking at practical issues and problems, in which Member States and regional technical institutions collaborated with the CARICOM Secretariat (CCS), supported by the FAO, in a Technical Working Group (TWG) to formulate the RPFNS.

The policy is grounded in the commitments made by CARICOM Member States in adhering to the Right to Food Convention as well as those made at the World Food Summit in 2009, especially Principle 3: Strive for a comprehensive twin-track approach to food security that consists of: 1) direct action to immediately tackle hunger for the most vulnerable, and 2) medium and long-term sustainable agricultural, food security, nutrition and rural development programmes to eliminate the root causes of hunger and poverty, including through the progressive realization of the right to adequate food. The policy will also enable Member States to achieve Millennium Development Goal 1, namely, to reduce respectively, the proportion and the absolute numbers of people who suffer from hunger and malnutrition by half by 2015, and to measure progress towards its achievement.

The policy is set in the context of a mix of pro-actively linked national and regional policies including the Community Agricultural Policy (CAP), Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), Caribbean Cooperation in Health (CCH), Community Agribusiness Strategy (CAS) in support of health and nutrition, domestic food production and allied services at all stages and levels of the agri-food supply chain. There are also on-going discussions on Agricultural Risk Management and Crop Insurance Policy and Programmes.

The COTED acknowledged that regional food security is not the exclusive remit of the agriculture sector and that the resolution of particular problems requires complementary inputs and coordination among different sectors (agriculture, education, health, trade industry and infrastructure,) and at different levels (household, community, national and regional). They also agreed that the policy should be adopted as the sole, comprehensive and integrated framework for actions to achieve the objectives of adequate availability, access, utilisation and stability of food supplies throughout the Region. The RPFNS has also been accepted by CARICOM’s international development partners as the framework to guide their interventions in the field of Food and Nutrition Security in the Region.

1The TWG members are Antigua, Belize, Dominica, Jamaica, Grenada, Guyana, OECS, CFNI, CAFAN, UWI, and IICA.

The Hon. Hilson Baptiste, Minister of Agriculture, Lands, Housing and the Environment of Antigua and Barbuda stands next to a large bunch of bananas at the Caribbean Week of Agriculture held in St. George’s, Grenada in October 2010.
The Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy established four goals:

- **Food Availability** - Promote the sustainable production, processing, preparation, commercialization and consumption of safe, affordable, nutritious, high quality Caribbean food commodities/products. This concerns food, agricultural, rural, infrastructural development, land use and trade issues.

- **Food Access** - Ensure regular access of Caribbean households, especially the poor and vulnerable, to sufficient quantities of safe, affordable, quality food at all times, particularly in response to diverse socioeconomic and natural shocks. These are issues related to prices, incomes, agricultural public health, food safety and social development.

- **Food Utilization/Nutritional Adequacy** - Improve the nutritional status of the Caribbean population, particularly with respect to Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) including diabetes, hypertension, overweight and obesity. This goal focuses on healthy lifestyle choices from early childhood-education, health, nutrition and social welfare issues.

- **Stability of Food Supply** - Improve the resilience of the region's national communities and households to natural and socio-economic crises. This goal addresses information and early warning systems, disaster preparedness and management, and adaptation to climate change issues.

It is clear, given the scope and nature of these goals, that policy and investment actions for their achievement require a holistic approach. All the relevant public and private sector stakeholders must act together in an integrated and concerted fashion on a wide front.

### Action Programme/Plan

The COTED agreed that the next step in the process would be the preparation of an Action Programme/Plan, using the same modality of the TWG and giving priority *inter alia* to the following areas:

- Promotion of increased availability of regionally produced nutritious food (looking at the whole supply chain from farmer to consumer) at remunerative market prices so as to increase production, productivity and returns to farmers;
- Identification and mapping of vulnerable groups (who are the food insecure, why are they food insecure and where are they located?) with special emphasis on women, children, the elderly and the physically and mentally handicapped, and establishment of a national and regional database of this information;

- Removal of non-tariff barriers to trade (Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary- Technical Barriers to Trade (SPS-TBT)) that increase marketing costs and hinder access to and distribution of food within the Region, as well as the development of strategies to address regional transportation so as to reduce distribution costs and improve the movement of food commodities across the Region;

- Promotion of healthy Caribbean diets and optimal nutrition to reduce NCDs, obesity and malnutrition, especially at all stages of the education system;

- Building of resilience to the recurring threats to food security bearing in mind that the Region is prone to the risks posed by climate change and natural disasters, through the establishment of a Regional Information and Early Warning System for Food and Nutrition Security, the construction of risk profiles for the Region’s main crops in support of emergency preparedness, agricultural risk management and crop insurance.

### Actions currently underway

The first meeting of the TWG to prepare the Regional Action Plan for the implementation of the Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy was held at the CARICOM Secretariat in Georgetown, Guyana from 17-21 January 2011. Between February and July 2011, the TWG will prepare a draft Action Programme that will be submitted for discussion in workshops at national and regional levels before being finalized, submitted to COTED in October 2011 for approval and presented to a donor conference in the first quarter of 2012. The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) has indicated its willingness to co-host and contribute to the funding of this Donor Conference in support of the implementation of the RPFNS/RPFNSAP, approved by COTED and to be organized by FAO.
The FAO Trust Fund Project, ‘Promoting CARICOM/CARIFORUM Food Security,’ which assisted the Secretariat in the in the preparation of the RPFNS, is now scheduled to terminate in August 2011. FAO has agreed to continue to provide technical support to the CARICOM Secretariat and the TWG in the preparation of the Regional Action Programme as well as to individual Member States, whenever requested. Barbados, Grenada, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago have already requested (or are in the process of so doing) technical support for this purpose from FAO under its Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) facility.

At the same time, FAO is in the process of preparing a regional Umbrella TCP project to support Member States’ efforts to prepare national Food and Nutrition Security (FNS) policies and Action Programmes as well as to strengthen their capacities and that of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat in that area. This would continue the provision of technical support to the CARICOM Secretariat and the TWG beyond the termination of the GTFS project until the end of 2011.

The FAO, in consultation with the CARICOM Secretariat has also prepared a draft FAO regional TCP project dealing with the setting up of an Early Warning System based on a region-wide Information System for Food and Nutrition Security (ISFNS). This project has already been reviewed and endorsed by the Standing Committee of CARICOM Chief Statisticians and is expected to run concurrently with the TCP project for FNS policy preparation.

The output of this FAO TCP assistance would be two-fold: a proposal concerning the institutional framework and arrangements to be put in place at national and sub-regional levels and the appropriate mix of technical resources and allied training needs; and a programme outlining the relevant investment actions and the recurrent costs involved, for the establishment of a cost-effective Early Warning System and Disaster Preparedness, Mitigation and Management Action Programme in the CARICOM sub-region to enable rapid prediction of and responses to natural disasters and external economic shocks.

The Way Forward

In 2011, the Region again faces the challenge of soaring food prices. It is generally agreed, based on an evaluation made by the United Nations of the results of the actions taken to deal with the soaring food price crisis of 2008-9, that joint and integrated action is of paramount importance. This is imperative for CARICOM comprising small states that (with the exception of Belize, Guyana and Suriname) are net food importers and price takers with no influence on the world market.

It is also clear from an analysis, recently carried out by FAO, of the forces driving food prices (oil prices, expansion of ethanol production from corn, increased demand from developing countries such as China and India, climate change – giving rise to an increased frequency of natural disasters) that world food prices will continue to be volatile and remain at high levels in the foreseeable future.

It follows therefore that CARICOM Member States can no longer afford to adopt an *ad hoc* approach to food price volatility in the interest of sustaining regional and national food security. As the FAO Committee on World Food Security has agreed, the situation requires a systematic approach and a formal mechanism to manage food price swings. This would encompass *inter alia* actions:

- To promote an increasing degree of self-reliance through measures to encourage local production
of food staples;
- To develop more storage facilities at national and local levels;
- To establish early warning systems;
- To strengthen consumer safety nets; and
- To foster a trade environment designed to facilitate intra-regional trade and supplies from CARICOM net food exporting countries (Belize, Guyana and Suriname) at competitive market prices.

In addition, the Region needs to have a more forward-looking mechanism, possibly within the institutional framework established for the ISFNS and the Early Warning System, which examines global agri-food commodity trends, anticipates price shocks and proactively takes steps to address price shocks such as negotiating supplies with large commodity cartels and promoting private sector hedging on the commodity futures market.

These considerations underscore the importance and timeliness of the COTED decision to recommend to the CARICOM Heads of Government “the creation of an institutional framework to ensure integrated and concerted action at the national and regional levels to achieve the goal of food and nutrition security and facilitate the linkages between the various levels and the global level” through the constitution:

- at the national level, of Inter-ministerial Food and Nutrition Security Committees/Commissions comprising all the relevant ministries, with a rotating Chair and a permanent technical secretariat from the Ministry of Agriculture, to coordinate, manage and oversee the preparation and implementation of national Food and Nutrition Security Policy measures and action programmes, and ensure their coherence with the RPFNS; and

- at the regional level, of a Food and Nutrition Sub-Committee of the COTED/ COHSOD, serviced by a Food and Nutrition Security Desk within the CARICOM Secretariat”.

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[Guide for Policy and Programmatic Actions at Country Level to Address High Food Prices, FAO Initiative on Soaring Food Prices (ISFP) 2010]
PRAEDIAL LARCENY

ITS CONSEQUENCES FOR CARIBBEAN AGRICULTURE

Dr. Vincent Little

Praedial larceny has been recognized at the highest level of leadership in CARICOM as one of the constraints to sustainable agricultural development in the Region. A 2010 survey carried out among regional stakeholders indicated that more than 90% agree that praedial larceny is the single most discouraging aspect of agriculture and has become a disincentive to investment in the sector and a threat to livelihoods in farming and fishing communities. On average, 82% of farmers and fishers affected are commercial or semi-commercial producers, indicating that praedial larceny strikes at the heart of agricultural productivity in the Region as well as the food security of its most vulnerable populations.

This article describes the extent and nature of praedial larceny in the CARICOM Region, and examines the measures in place to prevent and reduce praedial larceny, and their effectiveness.

The article is based on a Study (Graham, 2010) conducted on behalf of the Technical Management Advisory Committee Disaster Risk Management (TMAC) of the Jagdeo Initiative related to Deficient and Uncoordinated Measures, including Praedial Larceny.

What is Praedial Larceny?

Praedial larceny is simply the theft of agriculture produce, which is well recognized in the Region as a practice that is contributing negatively to the environment in which agriculture producers (crop/ livestock/marine fishers and aquaculturists) conduct business.

In the treatment of praedial larceny in CARICOM member states, illegal fishing or piracy of fish resources in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of respective Member States is also considered praedial larceny.

In many cases, the praedial larceny legislation of member states also makes provision to cover offences that include the theft of agricultural equipment, materials such as agri-inputs as well as secondary products such as feed and fodder. In this respect praedial larceny has...
become an integral part of how agriculture producers function in the Region in an effort to secure the value-added on their investment and how policy-makers build strategies to secure the economic gains from public investment in the sector.

**Changing Nature of Praedial Larceny in CARICOM**

In the last 20 years or so, the Caribbean Region has noted increasingly, the changing nature of praedial larceny in terms of frequency of incidences, the large volumes of crop, livestock and fish stolen, and the highly organized and often violent behaviours of the thieves. In this manner, the environment in which agriculture exists is being increasingly influenced by praedial larceny.

Praedial larceny has emerged from petty thieving to satisfy household food insecurity to the theft of large amounts of agriculture produce involving truckloads of bananas, and the entire field of pineapples or the harvest of the freshwater fish pond. The significance of the loss resulting has become a disincentive to investment in agriculture and fishing and a danger to farmers, fisher folks, aquaculturists, their employees and families.

Conservative estimates reveal that the regional loss resulting from praedial larceny in crops, livestock, and fresh and marine fish is in the region of US$321M annually. This does not take into account the future loss to agriculture productivity as high quality genetic breeds of livestock and crop varieties are stolen from breeding stations and agriculture research facilities, to be sold as food. Also not taken into consideration are the potential public health consequences and subsequent industry consequences when uncertified crops or livestock meats are integrated into the domestic food chain. The social implications are as serious in nature, as it is estimated that this crime is the most extensive among all crimes in the CARICOM Member States in terms of persons and families who are affected.

In Jamaica, official figures report annual loss to farmers and fishers in excess of US$55.0M or 6% of gross output, while Trinidad and Tobago reports US$11.3M over a 6-month period. Belize estimates annual loss to be over US$300,000 and St. Vincent and the Grenadines an estimated US$2.3M. The Commonwealth of The Bahamas estimates annual loss to its marine fish industry in the amount of US$16 .0M. Saint Lucia is spending in excess of US$400,000 annually on district pilot activities to prevent and reduce praedial larceny, and Grenada, Antigua and Barbuda and St Vincent and the Grenadines smaller but relatively important amounts.

In addition, farmers have been killed and others have been known to have received threats and physical attacks by persons who have returned to the communities after serving time in prison for praedial larceny. Farmers’ crops have also been damaged by these same persons.

Regionally, a wide range of produce is stolen. Livestock farmers also suffer substantial losses in numbers of heads of cattle, sheep and goats and aquaculture farmers lose entire harvests of fish while marine fishers lose fish as well as boats and boat's engines. There are reports of abandoned crop and fish farms due to high costs paid for security and the heavy loss to theft, while other farmers have chosen to change to crop types that are less vulnerable in order to secure a harvest and a level of profitability.

A major concern of stakeholders is the weak sensitivity within the societies of the social and economic consequences of praedial larceny. Critical players in the praedial larceny prevention and risk reduction system, including the Police and Judiciary, are unaware of the changed nature of praedial larceny from petty crime to the serious offence that it is today.

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7Presentation to Sensitization Seminar by PLPL-Jamaica 2010
9CDEMA/FAO Questionnaire for lead policy personnel 2010
10CDEMA/FAO Questionnaire for lead polic personnel on PLP 2010
As a result, treatment handed down in the Courts for the offence is often inappropriate and has proven not to be a deterrent to persons who steal agriculture produce. Farmers have become frustrated by long delays in the Court cases and have registered their disillusionment with the justice system as many no longer show an interest in reporting incidences. As a result, a regional level, only an estimated 45% of incidences are reported to the police.

CARICOM Response to Praedial Larceny

Praedial larceny has attracted the attention of the leaders of CARICOM and its development partners resulting in very decisive and tangible actions. In 2004, praedial larceny was listed among the nine-key binding constraints of the Jagdeo Initiative. In this regard praedial larceny was perceived as a hazard with high risks to economic sustainability of Member States and financial profitability of the primary stakeholders in the agriculture sector. In this manner, praedial larceny was viewed as requiring urgent attention under the initiative to reduce the constraint linked to deficient and uncoordinated disaster risk management including praedial larceny.

There are many initiatives being undertaken in the Member States to prevent and reduce praedial larceny. These include strengthening the policy and legislative frameworks, improvements in traceability systems off farm and for improved security systems on the farm, the establishment of support institutions and implementation of special programmes. Many countries have also adopted a participatory approach to the design of praedial larceny prevention programmes involving all stakeholders, which has served to strengthen the strategic actions in the national programmes. In this regard, the Vision 2030 Jamaica Final Draft Agriculture Sector Plan includes five strategic actions to prevent and reduce praedial larceny. Saint Lucia established a Praedial Larceny Unit in 2009 and enacted a Sale of Produce Act (2010). The 2008 Annual Agriculture Review of St Vincent and the Grenadines listed praedial larceny as a major constraint to agricultural production and enacted legislation in 2009. Also in 2008, two other countries, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago made proposals to amend praedial larceny prevention legislation in order to bring greater enforcement of the law. In the case of Trinidad and Tobago, several initiatives have been undertaken since 2009. St. Kitts and Nevis also drafted an Agriculture Produce and Livestock (Prevention of Theft) Bill in 2010, and Grenada established a Special Police Unit to provide greater enforcement to the Praedial Larceny Prevention Act (2004). Antigua and Barbuda also initiated a process to review the Praedial Larceny Prevention Act (1954). There is, therefore, better organization in national systems to prevent and reduce the risk from praedial larceny.

There are several measures taken at the international level that are of relevance to the Caribbean Region. In the livestock sub-sector, the measures for prevention and risk reduction include the employment of high tech investigation technology such as implanted computer chips and DNA fingerprinting. Branding of animals, ear tags and the use of photographs, good management practices such as records of date of birth and breed and special marks are also common tools to prove ownership when the animals are recovered or for enforcement of the law. Many of these measures are common to the Caribbean, including others such as the use of armed guards, and dogs.

In the case of crop praedial larceny, a common practice in the developing world is to sleep near the crop close to or during the time of harvest, the use of trained dogs or the harvesting of the crop before it is fully mature in an effort to reduce losses.

In respect of the fisheries sub-sector, several technological solutions are being used by commercial fishers, shipping lines and coast guards around the world to combat piracy on the high seas. Some of these
measures include High Frequency Surface Wave Radar (HF SWR) to detect small boats well beyond the horizon at up to 25 km and Automatic Identification Systems, a new technology which allows ships to transmit information about their identification (ship name, registration), cargo, position, course and speed over a common VHF channel. Panoramic Area Surveillance System (PASS), a 360° video camera and display system for visual identification, movement detection and threat level alarms is also used as are Passive Radar Identification System (PRISM) which provides early warning of an unidentified radar carrying vessel.

Despite the aforementioned measures, the experience to date is that many challenges exist and there are clear warnings that agriculture stakeholders in primary production may not be able to sustain or improve their operations at the current level of risk associated with praedial larceny and that stronger measures must be imposed urgently to prevent or reduce praedial larceny.

Recommendations

The conclusions of the analysis of the state of praedial larceny in Member States of CARICOM are clear indicators that a set of recommendations to prevent and reduce the associated risks need to be implemented with urgency. However, for this to happen, praedial larceny must be recognized under law for the serious crime that it has become in nature and in magnitude. Priority must be given to tighter measures of enforcement and appropriateness of the penalties handed out by the Court. In addition, the Court system must be significantly improved in its capacity to manage praedial larceny offences in a timely manner. The recommendations focus on short- and medium-term measures to prevent and reduce risk. However, important longer term measures necessary for sustainability are given consideration.

Urgent steps must be taken to strengthen the national legislative frameworks to support the work of the Police and the Judiciary for the prevention and reduction of praedial larceny, including amendment of praedial larceny legislation for enforcement and stiffer penalties, strengthening the effectiveness of traceability systems, and Sensitization of the Police and the Judiciary.

Member States should prepare and implement results-based National Plans of Action for Praedial Larceny Prevention and Risk Reduction.

Data collection and monitoring tools should be developed for risk analysis in praedial larceny and a framework to facilitate the monitoring of the state of praedial larceny over the long-term should be established, with assessments and
evaluations at least every two years.

Community Strategy in praedial larceny prevention and risk reduction should be examined and evaluated and documented for its adoption in all Member States. This will require close collaboration between the communities, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Judiciary and the Police and considerations for the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among all three on roles and responsibilities.

The Receipt Book System should be reviewed in all the Member States in which they are in use, and a system which allows the farmer registration ID to follow the produce to the point of consumer purchase be instituted. In this manner, the Farmer Registration Number on the documentation of the Vendor must be transferred to the transaction document of the exporter or greengrocer or restaurateur. Street food people restaurants who purchase agriculture produce above a prescribed limit must also be able to show evidence of purchase from a farmer or vendor.

Each Member State should establish the necessary infrastructure for information management based on computerized data base to manage the risks associated with praedial larceny. Strategic partnerships should be established to design and implement options and alternatives for livelihoods and to satisfy household food security among vulnerable populations that have found themselves entrenched in praedial larceny.

Programmes should be put in place to build farmers’ and fishers’ capacity for effective participation in the praedial larceny prevention systems.

Communication strategies and packages should be developed

Conservative estimates reveal that the regional loss resulting from praedial larceny in crops, livestock, and fish is in the region of US$321M annually.
at the level at each Member State to promote praedial larceny prevention through public awareness and public education.

The usefulness and sustainability of Special Praedial Larceny Units including Special Police Units should be evaluated. The basis for this recommendation is that the longer term resourcing of these Units will have to be addressed in the immediate to short-term.

Consideration should be given to compensation and incentives for victims of praedial larceny.

Consideration should be given at the regional level for resource mobilization for praedial larceny prevention and detection (surveillance) as it relates to the management of piracy of marine resources and its impact on the livelihoods of fisher folk, and the danger it sometimes poses to their lives and equipment, as well as cross-border business and the praedial larceny chain for meats intertwined with other illegal activities.

At another level, there is the need for technical cooperation in areas where a regional approach can be adopted, such as models for praedial larceny prevention legislation, risk analysis and information dissemination and communication strategies.

Fact Box 1

Regional Transformation Programme for Agriculture
The Jagdeo Initiative Explained

WHAT IS THE JAGDEO INITIATIVE (JI)?
The Jagdeo Initiative is a determined approach to fast-track the Regional Agriculture Development Process by identifying a set of pressing and binding constraints and developing a corresponding set of interventions to address these constraints.

WHAT ARE THE IDENTIFIED CONSTRAINTS?
- Limited financing and inadequate investment
- Deficient and uncoordinated Risk Management Measures including praedial larceny
- Inefficient land, water distribution and management systems
- Inadequate research and development
- Outdated and efficient agricultural health and food safety systems
- Inadequate transportation system particularly for agricultural products
- Fragmented and unorganized private sector
- Lack of skills and quality human resources in agriculture
- Market infrastructure including market information and market linkages

WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THE JI?
To make the difference in our economies through:
- More private and public investment in agriculture
- Increased employment in the sector
- Increased intra-regional agricultural trade
- Increased extra-regional trade and hence foreign exchange
- Improved food security and nutrition

WHAT ARE THE SPECIFIC SHORT AND MEDIUM TERM TARGETS TO BE ACHIEVED THROUGH THE JI?
- Increase in investment in agriculture
- Increase in agriculture production
- Increase in intra-regional trade

WHAT IS THE INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISM FOR IMPLEMENTATION?
Technical Management Advisory Committees (TMACs) for each constraint
- Lead country minister as Chair of each TMAC
- Lead agency responsible for technical perspectives

HOW DOES THE JI ACHIEVE THESE TARGETS?
By planning and operationalising the interventions, in each constraint, which are likely to lead to the achievement of these targets
By relating for example, the increase in expenditure on land and water management to a specific increase in the production of agricultural commodity

WHEN CAN THE IMPACT OF THE JI BE EXPECTED TO YIELD RESULTS?
Accelerated implementation of the interventions should show positive results as measured by agreed indicators

WHERE CAN MORE INFORMATION ON THE JAGDEO INITIATIVE BE FOUND? Details on the process can be found at the CARICOM website: www.caricom.org

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Fisheries and aquaculture is a dynamic and growing sector in CARICOM contributing to economic activity and offering significant opportunities for further growth and development. The sector continues to expand, innovate and diversify in response to growing regional and international demand for fish and fishery products, improved access to technology and growing need for stable employment. At the same time the sector continues to face serious challenges amidst increasing calls for improved governance to ensure optimum utilization, effective conservation and long-term sustainability of the living marine resources and ecosystems.

The land (terrestrial) space available to CARICOM countries is less than 18% of the total area under the sovereignty or jurisdiction of the States. The remaining 82% is marine space consisting of the seabed and superjacent water column with various benthic communities, fish species and other living marine species. The living and non-living species within this enormous, dynamic and highly complex environment can make significantly enhanced contribution to the economic and social development of the Region.

Steady growth in annual domestic production of fish in the Caribbean
Annual domestic production of fish in the Caribbean States has been growing steadily since the 1950s with an estimated 164,000 MT valued at about US$5-600 million in 2009. The catch plays an important role in nutrition and food security, as fish and other marine species provide a vital source of protein and minerals in the diets of Caribbean people, particularly the poor and vulnerable members of society. Per capita consumption of fish is high in most States, ranging from 57 Kg in Guyana and 55 kg in Antigua and Barbuda at the higher end, to 15 Kg in Belize and Trinidad and Tobago and only 3 Kg in Haiti. Average per capita consumption in the CARICOM countries overall is approximately 31 Kg per annum which is nearly double the world average per capita consumption of about 15 Kg per annum.

Exports of fish from the CARICOM Member States have been growing steadily and in 2009 were approximately 41,000 MT. The US market is the major destination for exports. High-value species such as shrimp, lobster, tunas, queen conch, snappers and groupers, which command premium prices on the international market, dominate exports. Generally, marine products with high economic value are exported, whereas products with high nutritive value and lower prices are imported to satisfy domestic needs. Total imports were estimated at over 110,000 MT in 2009 including intra-regional trade.

Perhaps one of the most important roles of fisheries is the employment opportunity that the sector provides for thousands of people in a Region where the high levels of unemployment and under-employment continue to be a major concern. The fisheries sector provided stable full-time direct employment for more than 120,000 fishers in 2001 and indirect employment opportunities for thousands of others in the processing, marketing, boat building, net making and other support industries. The persons engaged in fishing often have low-levels of formal education, limited access to capital and limited occupational and geographic mobility. For these reasons they are highly dependent on the fisheries for their livelihoods.

Since the early 1980s, aquaculture, although still under-developed, has nevertheless been making an increasingly significant contribution to the economies of some countries. Whereas at the global level aquaculture is now contributing nearly 50% of the global production of food fish, within the Region, with the exception of Belize and Jamaica, production is still negligible. Total aquaculture production in CARICOM States was approximately 15,500 MT in 2009.

While the living marine resources have the potential for making increased contribution to social and economic development and improvements in the standard of living and quality of life of particularly the poor and marginalized who live in the coastal areas and depend upon fishing for their livelihoods, realizing such goals require carefully crafted policy interventions based on the characteristics of the sector.

Fisheries resources are living, dynamic systems. Their population size, distribution and abundance vary in response to human intervention, natural and environmental factors. Many fish species migrate or are dispersed by ocean currents during their early life cycles, and are thus distributed across jurisdictional boundaries established by nation States, frequently moving through the waters of several different States. The fish stocks within the Region are common resources that are shared by States. This interconnectedness was demonstrated in the summer of 1999 during the massive fish kill that stretched from Guyana all the way up to Dominica and the more recent invasion of the lionfish that has been rapidly spreading across the entire region. The only way to ensure effective conservation and obtain optimum long-term sustainable benefits from such fisheries is through cooperation among all States sharing the common resources.

In 2003, CARICOM Heads of Government reviewed the situation regarding fisheries and called for the preparation of a Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) to facilitate closer cooperation.
among the CARICOM States. Since then, the CARICOM and CRFM Secretariats have been coordinating the preparation of the CFP through a consultative process involving a series of studies, public consultations among stakeholders including fishermen, and regional meetings involving officials of Member States and regional experts in fisheries, marine law and policy.

Stakeholders, at a Multi-disciplinary Workshop in Georgetown, in April 2011, agreed on the text of the draft Agreement on the Establishment of the Common Fisheries Policy.

The Common Fisheries Policy will set out the goals and objectives of the Community regarding fisheries, including the desired improvements in social and economic conditions, the targets in respect of conservation and protection of the fish stocks and associated ecosystems, and the principles to be followed to ensure good governance, fairness and equity in utilization and management of the resources.

Furthermore, the rights and obligations of States, and the rules and standards to be applied to achieve the objectives should also be articulated. The policy should be the Region’s main instrument for transforming the fisheries sector and bringing it into the mainstream of social and economic development to create new opportunities for growth and prosperity, and bringing security and hope to the tens of thousands of people who depend upon the resources for their livelihoods.

A common fisheries policy thus developed should in the long-term, firstly, enhance the Region’s food security by providing consumers with adequate supplies of safe and affordably priced fish and seafood.

Secondly, it should enhance employment opportunities and improve incomes, personal development and security of fishers and their families, and transform the marginalized fishing communities into economically vibrant communities.

Thirdly, it should protect and conserve the fish stocks, associated ecosystems and marine biodiversity from over-exploitation and degradation due to irresponsible fishing and pollution from other human activities.

### Fact Box 2

**Caribbean Week of Agriculture**

Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA) was conceptualised by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) as part of efforts to frontally place the key agriculture sector on the Region’s agenda. Caribbean Week of Agriculture was first held in 1999. It has been held in various territories across the Region and has since evolved into the Region’s premier agriculture event.

The CWA is held under the patronage of the Alliance for Sustainable Development and Rural Milieu (The Alliance). The CARICOM Secretariat, IICA, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), and the Caribbean Agriculture Research and Development Institute (CARDI) are the main collaborating agencies in the mega event.

**One – 1999- Trinidad and Tobago:** High Value Exotic Foods

**Two – 2000- Jamaica:** The Caribbean Agriculture Policy; Challenges for Regional Food Security; Caribbean Renewable Energy and BioEnergy Action Program; Effects of Climate Change on Agriculture in the Caribbean

**Three - 2001-Dominican Republic:** Trade and Investment Opportunities for Agri-Food Enterprises

**Four - 2003-Guyana:** Facilitating Economic Development through the Promotion of Competitive Agriculture in the Caribbean

**Five - 2005-St. Kitts and Nevis:** Exploring and Enhancing Opportunities for a New Agriculture

**Six - 2006-The Bahamas:** Sustaining Marine and Agriculture Resources into the Future

**Seven - 2007-Jamaica:** Agriculture – Harvesting Wealth through Tourism

**Eight- 2008-St. Vincent and the Grenadines:** Innovative Agriculture and Agri-Industries

**Nine - 2010-Grenada:** ‘Sustainable Agriculture Development to Achieve Food and Nutrition Security’
The goal and vision for agricultural development, as articulated in the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas, is the ‘fundamental transformation of the agricultural sector towards market oriented, internationally competitive and environmentally sound production of agricultural product’.

The quest for transformation, however, has been challenged by limited financing and inadequate investment – the first key binding constraint to the sector’s growth, as identified in the Jagdeo Initiative.

The erosion of preferential market access and the advent of increased competitiveness on the world market spawned by globalisation have exacerbated this investment challenge. Experts and policy-makers have responded by focusing their energies on reshaping the regional agriculture agenda, so that it secures higher food production, income and competitiveness. In its quest to build and preserve the region’s agricultural sector and achieve those goals, CARICOM, in its interface with International Development Partners (IDPs), has continually stressed the need to take account of the special needs of small vulnerable economies.

The IDPs have responded to the Region’s overtures, and have been providing assistance for CARICOM to address the myriad challenges in agriculture to put the sector where it belongs as a critical contributor to sustainable development and as a main driver of the regional economy.
The European Union (EU) has led the development assistance through the European Development Fund, the largest tranche of which became available in January 2007 with the signing of a Financing Agreement for a grant of €40.5M. The Fund is the backbone of the Caribbean Integration Support Programme (CISP) within which projects are implemented to support the Region in advancing the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME).

In addition, the CARIFORUM-EC Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) signed in 2008, has a component which lists agriculture and fisheries; and sanitary and phytosanitary measures among its priorities. In the agricultural and fisheries sectors, this Agreement should contribute to increasing the competitiveness of production, processing and trade in agricultural and fishery products in both traditional and non-traditional sectors, between the Parties, consistent with the sustainable management of natural resources.

As CARICOM and the wider region begin to embrace agriculture as a ‘value chain’ system made up of multi-dimensional economic transactions, partners, including the EU and the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations, have been supporting the Community’s growing agribusiness sector.

Their support has brought to fruition the Draft Strategic Framework of the Regional Agribusiness Sector that is aimed at developing an action plan to promote the growth of the sector towards the development of Targeted Commodity Enterprises in CARICOM.

The draft Community Agricultural Policy (CAP), which was designed to assist Member States in agricultural policy formulation, planning, implementation and the monitoring of national policy processes, also attracted the support of development partners including the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). Beyond what may be considered its traditional partners in development, CARICOM’s third state partners including Spain, Italy, Japan, Australia and Brazil, have also supported the Region’s agriculture agenda.
Through the 2006-2010 Agreement for Scientific and Technical Cooperation between CARICOM and the Government of Spain, nine Hinterland Villages in Guyana have benefitted from a food security project for rice and peas cultivation. In addition, the establishment of a Centre of Excellence for Advanced Technology in Agriculture in Jamaica, and a diagnostic study to determine poverty levels in fishing communities in CARICOM, were funded through this cooperation agreement.

As CARIFORUM states intensify efforts to improve the food security, the Government of Italy has allocated considerable resources to increase the availability and access to adequate quantities of safe, quality assured food products to vulnerable groups and poor rural communities in the Region through the Caribbean Regional Food Security Project.

A tangible result of this Project is the CARICOM Regional Policy for Food and Nutrition Security which outlines policy guidelines and strategies to secure higher food production, better health and nutrition, income and employment opportunities, poverty alleviation, among other areas in CARIFORUM.

The EU, FAO, CIDA, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) have all thrown their support behind the Regional Policy for Food and Nutrition Security.

Japan has formalised its commitment to assist in the development of the agriculture sector through the Japan-CARICOM Friendship and Cooperation Fund which has benefitted the Community in the areas of agricultural capacity building and sustainable development, particularly marine fisheries resource management.

At the second CARICOM-Japan Ministerial Meeting held in Tokyo, Japan, in September 2010, the two sides agreed on a new cooperation framework with opportunities for project development in the areas including disaster risk reduction, adaptation to the effects of Climate Change, management, human resource development, waste management, and alternative sources of energy. These projects, particularly climate change and disaster risk management, would indirectly redound to benefits for the agriculture sector.

Australia’s commitment, in November 2010, to provide A$17.5 million to support the Region’s efforts to adapt to climate change and to manage the impacts of natural disasters could also serve to reinforce ongoing initiatives aimed at leveraging agriculture as a tool in sustainable development.

Agriculture was among the sectors identified for enhanced cooperation between the Caribbean Community and Brazil at the First CARICOM-Brazil Summit in April 2010. As a first step toward the intensification of cooperation between Brazil and the Caribbean countries, a proposal was endorsed for the establishment of a Regional Office for Central America and the Caribbean by the Brazilian Agricultural and Livestock Research (EMBRAPA).

The other outcomes of the Summit that elaborated Brazil’s commitment to partner with CARICOM for the transformation of the agriculture sector were complementary agreements for the implementation of specific projects in the agricultural and livestock sectors among Brazil and Barbados and Jamaica; the signing of Memoranda of Understanding between Brazil and Grenada, Saint Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, envisaging preliminary cooperation actions in this area; a Memorandum of Understanding between Guyana and Brazil in the area of phytosanitary security for products of vegetal origin; and preliminary understandings between EMBRAPA and the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI), with a view to concluding an agreement for the development of joint research and exchange of technical personnel.
The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and its partners in development have redoubled their efforts to address the institutional challenges in agricultural disaster risk management. The renewed steps are being taken against the background of the current risk mitigation measures that have been characterised as severely inadequate to inspire the kind of confidence necessary for investments to further propel development of the sector.

Analyses of traditional risk management strategies such as crop diversification, the use of drought resistance crops, and provision of relief by Governments in the face of disasters, have found that they too were neither robust nor efficient in preventing serious economic loss.

The Jagdeo Initiative (JI) lists the **deficient and uncoordinated risk management measures including praedial larceny** among nine Key Binding Constraints (KBC) to the transformation of the agriculture sector into one that is economically viable. Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Heads of Government in the Liliendaal Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security, drawn up in July 2009, reaffirmed their commitment to remove all of the Key Binding Constraints to the development of the agriculture sector and food and nutrition security.

Agriculture risk mitigation drew a range of stakeholders in the management of disasters, and the development and management of agricultural insurance schemes to Antigua and Barbuda, last year for a **Caribbean Agriculture Symposium on Disaster Risk Management**, convened under the auspices of The Hon. Hilson Baptiste, Antigua and Barbuda’s Minister of Agriculture, Lands, Housing and the Environment.

The Symposium was coordinated through a regional collaboration among the CARICOM Secretariat, the Ministry of Agriculture of Antigua and Barbuda and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on
Agriculture (IICA). It was supported by the World Bank, the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations, the Government of Australia Aid Programme, and the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA).

These specialised agencies were continuing the discourse on agriculture risk management which was discussed at the Thirty-Third Meeting of the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) on Agriculture in March 2010. At that Meeting, CARICOM Trade Ministers had lauded Antigua and Barbuda’s facilitation of the dialogue on agriculture risk management to strengthen the capacity of policy-makers and technicians, development bankers, private insurance technicians and producers in planning, innovation and management of a sustainable agricultural insurance scheme for the Caribbean. Determining the main tenets of an overarching agricultural sector risk management strategy, added significance to the Symposium.

In this search, the Caribbean Agribusiness Association (CABA) proposed a market driven model in which the market determines what is produced. CABA identified 26 agribusiness clusters that promoted vertical integration among agencies involved in research and development of appropriate technologies; propagation and growth of the particular products; differentiation and processing into value added variants; branding and securing finished presentations by invoking intellectual property rights; formalizing channels of distribution; capturing global market share; and supporting what the Region sells with promotions and enlightened customer service.

According to Dr. Keith Amiel, President of CABA, the clusters for which the Caribbean would have a strategic advantage included animal feed manufacturers; pork producers; poultry producers and processors; nutraceuticals, pharmaceuticals and cosmetics; bananas; small ruminants; coffee; traditional fruit and vegetables; exotic fruits and vegetables; and coconuts and other edible oils.

Dr. Amiel suggested that when this agribusiness model was placed in the context of disaster risk management, the sector was likely to attract greater levels of investments from financial institutions, and security from insurance companies because of the stability of a system based on genuine Caribbean activities.

He advocated strongly for a paradigm shift away from the traditional view that the agriculture sector was primarily the farmers and producers, towards one that was open to the multi-dimensional nature of the sector in which producers/farmers were included.

A closer examination of the potential of agribusiness, Dr. Amiel suggested, was critical in the context of disaster risk insurance, as the other elements of the sector were not necessarily exposed to the ravages of hurricanes and other natural disasters. Therefore, its insurability increased tremendously, he said.

Chief Coordinator of the Caribbean Farmer’s Network (CaFAN), Mr. Jethro Greene was among representatives of farmers’ organisations who articulated strong support for the development of appropriate mechanisms to secure the sector from risks associated with natural disasters. Speaking on behalf of the Region’s crop producers, Mr. Greene said that the timing for the development of a regional disaster risk management strategy was apt in light of the unpredictable environmental conditions the region faced, including droughts, La Nina conditions and hurricanes.

In the first half of the year, CARICOM Member States from Jamaica in the North to Trinidad and Tobago in the South had experienced the worst drought in decades. Governments and institutions allocated significant financial and human resources to implement adaptation measures including water rationing, improved agricultural irrigation systems, and the use of drought resistance crops to deal with a drastic decline in water reservoirs.

Mr. Greene was strong in his advocacy for a comprehensive agricultural insurance mechanism which he said should capture strategies related to mitigation; risk reduction and coverage from natural disasters such as hurricanes; plant pests and diseases.
Other factors such as price stabilization, yield risks, and market risks needed greater levels of research and capacity building so that the Region could determine its own solution, he posited.

CaFAN’s Chief Coordinator was of the view that careful consideration of the farmers - whether small-scaled or commercial - was needed. Conceding that farmers were traditionally not preoccupied with weighty issues such as agricultural disaster risk management, he said that in the search for a solution, systems had to be developed that would facilitate farmers’ contribution to an insurance scheme.

“You cannot insure small farmers by going around and collecting premiums; it has to be a group approach...,” he said, stressing on the critical importance of the sustainability of the sector. In this regard, he also underscored the need to build systems that would attract young people to agriculture.

Mr. Greene noted that CaFAN was in the process of organising its network to approach insurance companies to provide what he described as “cushion coverage” for the commercial farmers.

Even as the Region searched for an appropriate agricultural insurance scheme, Mr. Greene lauded CARICOM Heads of Government’s foresight in the establishment of the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF), the world’s first multi-national risk pool to cover sovereign risk for hurricane and earthquake catastrophes via parametric insurance. He suggested that a regional agricultural risk facility could be modelled after CCRIF.

At the conclusion of the wide and varied discussion at the Symposium, the stakeholders agreed to the following critical steps as the way towards the achievement of the overall objective:

1. The establishment of a Regional Programme for disaster risk management for the agricultural sector in the Caribbean;
2. The design and implementation of a regional catastrophic risk facility for agricultural insurance in the region;
3. That governmental support be provided to existing private sector insurance and reinsurance entities in the Caribbean utilizing the experiences gained in the present initiatives such as Windward Islands Crop Insurance (WINCROP) and CCRIF and other related ventures.
4. That the technical team established under the oversight of the Technical Management Advisory Committee (TMAC) will undertake the necessary technical work to complete the Action Plans for the regional insurance programme in the short-term and the regional disaster risk management plan in the medium-term. These Action Plans will include timelines for the completion of the identified activities.
5. The Chairman of TMAC will submit the Action Plans for the establishment of a Regional Agricultural Insurance Programme and a Disaster Risk Management Programme for the approval of the Council of Ministers and subsequently to the Heads of Government.
The enormous benefits that could be derived from pursuing agribusiness, the necessity for diversification and substitution for imported food items, and its over-arching contribution to food security have served as the catalyst for the Community’s renewed emphasis on the agribusiness sector.

Agribusiness is defined broadly to include all agriculture-related activities, including agro-processing, input supply, marketing and transportation services, and food distribution services in general such as restaurants, hotels, and supermarkets.

The CARICOM Secretariat has prioritised efforts to bolster agribusiness, partnering with the public and private sectors to ascertain the most efficient avenues to success. The broader context under which agribusiness is being pursued includes the development of the Common Agricultural Policy and a regional food and nutrition strategy. The latter was recently adopted by the Region’s Agriculture Ministers.

The Secretariat’s agribusiness initiative focuses on providing strategic, analytical and informational guidance for the sector. Among the more recent Secretariat-led interventions were an initial agribusiness promotion exercise and several workshops that brought together buyers and sellers, and consultations aimed at devising a strategic framework for the sector.

At the centre of deliberations on agribusiness is the regional consumer based on the fact that understanding what the consumer wanted was a critical element of any strategy to push the sector.
The type, quality and quantity of produce is determined by the consumer, and therefore policy makers must consider the consumer in tandem with matters such as technology and production. The consumer, in turn, is urged to become “taste-sensitive” and eat more of what is produced in the Community, thus boosting the agriculture and agribusiness in the Region.

**Opportunities**

A study by Landell Mills Development Consultants that was presented to one of the consultations on the establishment of a regional framework for agribusiness, concluded that a number of possibilities existed in the areas of import replacement and substitution and regional trade expansion and exports. Among these were:

- greater use and processing of root crops as a replacement for imported white potatoes;
- increased production and better post harvest capability to reduce the import of onions;
- better utilisation of salad greens and fruit plates to capture high end supermarkets and hotel and tourism trade;
- Improvements in infrastructure to facilitate business with the tourist sector and high end supermarkets
- Development and expansion of animal feed production, using available fish waste and fruit and vegetable waste with local corn that could result in the reduction of costs and expanded livestock production

**Challenges**

The study also pointed to the challenges that existed including:

- Weak enabling environment infrastructure;
- General lack of infrastructure to facilitate agricultural development such as poor drainage and irrigation
- Lack of intra-extra regional transportation capability thus limiting the development of both intra and extra export trade;
- Diversion of agricultural land into housing and other construction;
- High cost of finance for investment in agriculture and agribusiness, as well as limited availability of financial resources in both areas;

- Disconnect between farmers and processors as there is competition between supply for the fresh produce trade and the processing trade;
- High cost of imported inputs-packaging material and where available, of questionable quality resulting in poor product presentation;
- lack of comprehensive policy to encourage youth in agriculture and agribusiness as a replacement for the existing aging farmers.

As part of efforts to shape the Region’s agribusiness sector, internationally accepted methods for understating and addressing the constraints facing industries will be utilized including value chain analysis, clusters, networks, and competitiveness analysis.

One of the main outputs expected from the agribusiness initiative is the establishment of a regional agricultural market information system. Provision of timely and accurate market information is key to improving the positions of both producers and consumers.

At the national level, significant progress has been achieved by Trinidad and Tobago in setting up its National Agricultural Market Information System (NAMIS) and the intention is to extend the best practices developed there to other member countries. Linkages are also being developed with several international partners who have expertise in this area.

Another key output will be the creation of a web-based agriculture information platform, which will serve as means for exchanging information among the agribusiness community. The aim is to establish an interactive and collaborative environment, which will serve as the major regional conduit for information exchange in all areas of agribusiness, including product-specific information, and issues of interest to the sector, such as production technicality, marketing and processing.

The agribusiness initiative also includes work on deepening of linkages between agriculture and tourism as well as support to the organization of the regional private sector.
The Caribbean Agribusiness Association (CABA) is committed to the regional transformation of agriculture through the creation of value chains and upscale information systems.

We submit that the historical emphasis on primary production - determined by the colonials’ obsession with sugar and bananas, in response to the perceived needs of their homeland populations in Europe - was not sustainable for the region because of changing demand on the one hand, and the low returns from primary production that locked the Caribbean into subsistence and poverty because of inadequate returns to labour, on the other.

CABA considers that the transformation will essentially involve identification, selection and differentiation of those products in which the Region can achieve strategic advantages. These products are spread out across the region and range from forestry, rice, turmeric and fisheries in Guyana and Suriname to cocoa production in Trinidad and Tobago; to sea Island cotton and black belly sheep in Barbados; to nutmeg and other spices in Grenada; to Blue Mountain coffee, ackees, logwood honey, yellow yams and ginger in Jamaica; to peppers and peas in Belize.

We believe that more than 30 such elements can be identified. The persons involved in these elements of production will be brought into clusters which will form the basis on which value chains will emerge. Members of each value chain will form a vertically integrated association to ensure the continuity of inputs and outputs and to facilitate the sharing of the returns from the end product more equitably.

The Caribbean Poultry Association (CPA) is an example of an association that encompasses successful vertically integrated complexes. Other successful examples are to be found in the ‘rums and spirits’ and ‘spices’ sectors.

We have found that the vertically integrated process must, of necessity, extend beyond the private sector to involve national and regional public and private sector organizations. Each element of the value chain will require specific inputs. These requirements will include the adjustments of the curricula of tertiary institutions, such as the UWI, to turn out appropriately trained personnel. The universities, with organizations such as the Caribbean Agriculture Research and Development Institute (CARDI) and the Scientific Research Council...
(SRC), will be required to do the applied research to perfect recipes that will be used in product differentiation. The financial institutions in the Region must adjust to provide the necessary venture capital at realistic interest rates, while the Lead Agencies within CARICOM must ensure that their policies are goal aligned.

The value added products will be incorporated into distinctive mixes; will be nutritious, healthy and cost effective as well as present attractive ‘Product of the Caribbean’ labels. Distinctive recipes and regional branding will enable us to invoke rules of origin and intellectual property rights to prevent the emergence of counterfeit extra regional Caribbean brands.

It will be necessary to rationalize production so as to minimize utility costs and to take advantage of economies of scale and the availability of labour and raw materials. The factors that will allow for the movement of technical skills, and goods and services will be essential to facilitate the ‘just in time’ management of perishable inventories and to complete the value chain production based on inputs to be drawn from across the region.

In this regard, the Caribbean Regional Organization for Standards and Quality (CROSQ) infrastructure, none of which currently exists. CABA will need a strong executive director and support staff to guide the critical elements of production and to interact with the CARICOM institutions on behalf of its members. The regional body must be based on strong national CABA chapters capable of coordinating local activities and providing the communication systems to improve market access.

We have sought funds to improve market access skills through fostering a greater understanding of the needs of the target market and know how to source the raw materials and technology required. In this regard good agricultural practices (GAP) and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) will be articulated with standard operating procedures (SOP) being introduced to effect repeatability and professional standards. ISO procedures will be available to enhance the operation of upgraded facilities. To this end, we have sought the assistance of the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB). The assistance will require counterpart funding from participating countries.
Before I speak to the above topic and by way of setting the context, I would like to quote philosopher Immanuel Kant: “All our knowledge begins with the senses, proceeds then to the understanding and ends with reason. There is nothing higher than reason.” At this time I will not provide an interpretation of this great saying, but it serves to show that there is a logical route to everything in life. The concepts of Youth Development and Agriculture are not abstract, but tied together. It is my task, though not an easy one, to explain why in Anguilla we must begin to sense that sustainable Youth Development must be matched with Agriculture.

The National Youth Ambassador Corps is an autonomous and non-partisan organization whose mandate is to represent and articulate on behalf of Anguilla’s Youth. The Anguilla National Youth Council and the Youth Ambassador Corps firmly believe that it is essential that Youth are involved in decision-making forums. Youth forms the grass roots of social structure and is an intrinsic component of the civil society network. In other words, it is Youth that form the succession plans and the continuing capacity for innovating and continuing holistic national development.

The development of Agriculture is a potential avenue out of the global economic crisis and addresses youth development in the context of Anguilla. The Agriculture and Food Production Sector stands to benefit the most from the deliverables of cohesive youth development, the umbrella for capacity building and youth involvement. Many find the terms involvement and development to be similar in meaning but in correcting this fallacy, we must first understand that ‘involvement’ just means that an individual or an association only has to follow a trend while development means that the individual or their elements must form an integral part of the framework. It is this dynamic, that enables informed direction and develops to social capital for moving the development agenda forward.

Globally, the Agriculture and Food Production Industry is striving for greater food security and agricultural resilience. This is primarily because of the growing food consumption strain in the global food system and the current and potential impacts of Climate Change.
It is evident, that there continues to be fluctuating changes in weather patterns and storm frequencies and as such, it renders us susceptible to an ever changing environment. Agricultural production takes place in a natural system, meaning that any enhancement to build resilience or protect against sudden environmental changes must be anticipated well in advance because natural systems take an extended period to rebuild and repair. The good news is that in most cases, building agricultural resilience can be done using simple techniques, making it relatively easy. What reduces the development capacity of the above process is the growing food demand, lack of policy and legislation, adaptation, human resources and gaps of new science and innovation.

In reading the UN-FAO Report on ‘Food Security and Agricultural Mitigation in Developing Countries: Options for Capturing Synergies’ the following statement holds true for the Anguilla context:

“FAO projects that global agricultural production will need to grow by 70 percent overall by 2050 (Bruinsma 2009),” and has identified that there are “three main means of increasing agricultural production to meet projected increases in demands: 1) bringing new land into agricultural production; 2) increasing the cropping intensity on existing agricultural lands; and 3) increasing yields on existing agricultural lands. Adoption of any one of these strategies will depend upon local availability of land and water resources, agro-ecological conditions and technologies used for crop production, as well as infrastructural and institutional development.”

Within the Region, the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) document identifies Agriculture as one of the pillars for development. CARICOM also strongly considers integrating youth into developing all policies, as they form the majority of civil society and the potential succession plan to improving any sector and also, the demographic most likely to meet face to face with the consequences of future policies developed and implemented. What exacerbates the growing food security issue within the region are 1) the number of ageing persons moving out of agricultural production at a rate that exceeds those coming in. 2) the face of agricultural seems one of little innovation and in some respects unpopular, rigid and archaic 3) the regional food import bill is well over four billion dollars. 4) food prices continue to increase globally notwithstanding a 47% increase in current wheat prices which speaks to a price increase for our basic food items, and 5) fuel and energy costs continue to rise and more directly impact the cost of agricultural productivity.

Given our regional scenario, Youth can bring energy, capacity and abilities to enhance the agricultural sector resources both human and technical.
Youth already influence the Agricultural sector as they form the majority in food consumption and, as a consequence, they are the demographic that can greatest influence trends and patterns in food consumption. Youths have the greatest potential impact on public opinion and action as it relates to current and future policies once this right is exercised.

The Anguilla context holds an agricultural system that is replete with opportunities. Our food import bill is approximately 87 million dollars. Our fresh vegetable and fruit bill is over 18 million dollars and the remainder is more so in vegetable and fruit by-products, fish and fish by-products, plants, meats, eggs and dairy products. Our current gross local production and recently increased local production figures, we barely skim the dollar figure sent off island. For example, in a year where we imported 99 tons (99,000 Kg) of tomatoes (ASD, 2010) the island was producing over 15 tons of tomatoes. So, in actual fact, our total consumption of tomatoes is 114 tons per annum and we were only locally producing around 13% of the tomatoes we eat. By now, you must be thinking that we could never meet these demands. However, allow me to show you how easily it can be done if we begin by growing the fresh vegetables we import so much of.

In the case of sweet peppers, a quarter acre of sweet pepper plants grown under local optimum conditions can yield approximately 4000 Kg of peppers, meaning that an acre can conservatively yield 16 tons of sweet peppers. So while current import figures are just over 60 tons of sweet peppers per annum, it means that using a mere four acres of arable land would cease imports of this commodity. Furthermore, we would be employing approximately four to eight farmers/entrepreneurs into the sector. If I now have your interest, I will explain how all of this is possible. For a small investment in the current agricultural technology on the island and a designated arable land space, one can produce any crop effectively and efficiently. In looking at local tomato production figures, just less than five tons per annum in 2005 were produced and in 2008, a year of sky-high food prices, the sector using the current technology was able to produce over 15 tons of tomatoes. This sort of production has been exercised on less than three acres of arable land in just less than 3 years, and I am being conservative in the information I deliver. In my opinion, one of the challenges on the ground seems to be the farmers (human element) that may be resistant to change, that is, transforming their traditional or conventional crop production and animal husbandry into a more efficient production system. Also, a bigger challenge is a funding agency that has low interest loans for the start up of such projects, primarily for efficient animal protein production.

In recent years, young persons have been slowly moving into the sector and taking advantage of the somewhat lucrative and beneficial markets but not without commitment to new technology and hard work. You may have heard the names CalTel Farms and Island Greens both farms being owned and managed by young men. Agricultural production in the Anguilla context makes perfect business sense with low input and a medium to high return. The more you invest, the more efficient you can make the system. Therefore, the subset of the local food service that purchases local produce is almost saturated. If the greater part of the food service opens up it would allow the sector not only to grow but also to encourage more consistent production and more consistent local prices, I dare say lower prices. But land must be made available by private individuals; it cannot be done on government lands alone. Anguilla has over 637 acres of arable land and counting downwards, I want us to think on the production potential and self-sufficiency we would create if we produced crops and animal protein on 300 of these acres, given the technology we have available.

Efficiency allows us to be more competitive and lowers production costs but the policy framework must be a nexus between food producers and the food service sector all linked to the overall tourism product. But I would also want to advise those of us who are farmers in the sector and potential farmers to the sector, that if we strive to
produce a premium local product that we also strive to produce a premium service. Local produce is of a higher quality, through better shelf life, closer proximity to the farm gate and consumer and therefore can demand a higher price. As good husbandrists of the earth, we must continue to look at new and innovative ways of integrating our local resources to lower costs and strive to deliver consistent high quality meat and crop products in a sustainable manner.

It would be remiss of me if I spoke only of production and did not give details in creating your own home or patio garden. First, you will need three-gallon pots (as much as you can afford), compost, vegetable transplants and fertilizer; all can be bought at the local garden stores and the Department of Agriculture. Using a little bit of local soil from your backyard or purchasing a couple buckets or bags from the Department of Agriculture or local garden stores, you can mix a 1:1 ratio of soil to compost for each pot. After mixing, fill the 3 gallon pots to within a ½ inch from the top, make a hole about 1 ½ to 2 inches deep in the center of the soil and plant your favourite vegetable seedlings into the pots. Insert one plant to each pot, water it well and place two tablespoons of 15:15:15 fertilizer in each pot after one month of growth or when the plants begin to flower/fruit. Be careful to keep the fertilizer at least two inches away from the plant stem and water in after placement of the fertilizer. Place the plants in a semi-sunny to full sunny location for best results.

Three sweet pepper plants can suffice a family of four for more than two months with peppers once they come into production. Some vegetables and herbs do very well such as chives, cauliflower, sweet peppers, cabbage, broccoli, mint, thyme, parsley, celery, tomato, hot peppers and basil. In 2002, we spent over 39% of our household expenditure on food items. Today that dollar figure is even higher. Some food for thought (pun intended) is to remember that the dollar figure on the bread line (poverty line) that separates all of us from being poor is the same dollar figure that we spend in the shop. Therefore, there should be no underestimation of the potential reduction of the food import bill or household bill that the regular household garden as a unit and collectively can contribute to Anguilla’s agricultural resilience.

In closing, involving youth in this sector will add to innovation, continuity, industry improvement and growth, greater contribution to the national domestic product, greater self-sufficiency and overall food security for further enhancement of the Anguilla Brand. Who better to effect change than those who stand to benefit most?

The words of William Arthur Ward come to mind as I end this article “Do more than belong: participate. Do more than care: help. Do more than believe: practice. Do more than be fair: be kind. Do more than forgive: forget. Do more than dream: work.”

Yams grown under drip irrigation

(This article was first published in The Anguillian 4 February, 2011 edition)
We, the Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community at our Thirtieth Meeting in Liliendaal, Guyana, 2-5 July, 2009, affirm our commitment to the principles and objectives of the Caribbean Community as embodied in the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas establishing the Caribbean Community including the CARICOM Single Market and Economy –

1. We recognize the multi-functional nature of agriculture as an important contributor to rural development, GDP, employment, export earnings and to the overall sustainable development of the Member States of the Caribbean Community;

2. Recognising that agriculture is of strategic significance for the sustainable development of our Region, we have identified the sector as one of the drivers of economic growth and poverty alleviation of the Community;

3. We acknowledge that the agriculture sector has faced overwhelming challenges in recent years;

4. We recognise that the further development of the agriculture sector as elaborated in the "Jagdeo Initiative", including in particular, production and productivity, competitiveness and exports, is inhibited by key binding constraints including a reduction in development support and investment. We further recognize that financing for agriculture development is proving to be the major limitation which is affecting the speed and effectiveness of dealing with the other constraints;

5. In order for agriculture to continue to play a positive role in the Region’s economic and social development, there is need for a more concerted effort among all stakeholders in addressing the challenges facing the sector. Public sector/private sector partnership is essential. We are also aware that Governments must increase budgetary resources and implement other policy incentives to buttress the agriculture/agro-industry development agenda. It is also vital that the multilateral trading system take account of the special needs of small vulnerable economies in their quest to build and preserve their agricultural sectors;

6. We also recognize the critical role of the fisheries sector to the livelihood and well-being of the coastal communities and its value to the food security needs of our people. We also recognize the economic benefits that can be realized from the sector.

7. We further recognise that balanced development of rural areas and communities will ensure the retention of skills required to produce agri-products competitively and sustainably manage the natural diversity, thus ensuring the

Fact Box 3

LILIENDAAL DECLARATION ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY

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5. In order for agriculture to continue to play a positive role in the Region’s economic and social development, there is need for a more concerted effort among all stakeholders in addressing the challenges facing the sector. Public sector/private sector partnership is essential. We are also aware that Governments must increase budgetary resources and implement other policy incentives to buttress the agriculture/agro-industry development agenda. It is also vital that the multilateral trading system take account of the special needs of small vulnerable economies in their quest to build and preserve their agricultural sectors;

6. We also recognize the critical role of the fisheries sector to the livelihood and well-being of the coastal communities and its value to the food security needs of our people. We also recognize the economic benefits that can be realized from the sector.

7. We further recognise that balanced development of rural areas and communities will ensure the retention of skills required to produce agri-products competitively and sustainably manage the natural diversity, thus ensuring the
equitable distribution of income within the rural areas and between the rural and urban areas. We recognise as well that greater emphasis must be placed on the more vulnerable rural groups such as indigenous and other tribal peoples, youth and women to bring them into the economic mainstream;

8. The 2007/2008 Food Crisis highlighted the urgent need to maximize Regional agricultural production to meet our food security and nutrition needs, address poverty alleviation as well as income and employment generation and ultimately our need to ensure that agriculture be recognised as a real generator of wealth. We recognize the need for a more coordinated framework in developing and implementing appropriate policies, programmes and incentives in support of the sector’s development agenda;

9. In that regard we welcome the decision by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation to convene a World Summit on Food Security in November 2009 and look forward to participating fully and effectively in the Conference; and

10. We further recognise the importance of effective agriculture health and food safety systems and sanitary and phytosanitary measures to our food and nutrition security.

We, the Heads of Governments of the Caribbean Community therefore renew our commitment to pursue a strategic approach to transforming the agriculture sector into an internationally competitive sector with increased capacity to contribute to the sustained economic development of the Region, the economic livelihood of entrepreneurs, the rural sector and to food and nutrition security -

1. To this end, we are committed to the provision of the necessary financial and other resources to ensure internationally competitive, market led production, and the identification and effective employment of the appropriate policies and strategies which will bring about the desired improvements to the sector including the agri-business sector. We call on our development partners to assist us in our efforts;

2. We reaffirm our commitment to remove the following key binding constraints, identified in the Jagdeo Initiative, to the development of the agriculture sector and food and nutrition security including-

(i) Limited financing and inadequate levels of new investments;
(ii) Deficient and uncoordinated risk management measures;
(iii) Inadequate research and development;
(iv) Outdated and inefficient agricultural health and food safety (AHFS) systems;
(v) Weak land and water distribution and management systems;
(vi) Inadequate transportation systems, particularly for perishables;
(vii) Weak and non-integrated market information and intelligence systems and
(a) Weak linkages and participation of producers in growth market segments;
(viii) Lack of skilled and quality human resources;
3. **We also recognize** the challenge posed to small farmers by the lack of adequate equipment.

4. **We affirm** that the production of energy and biofuels from biomass must be increased in a sustainable manner so as to provide for our energy, economic, environmental and agricultural needs and does not compromise food security;

5. **We commit** ourselves to provide farmers with adequate mechanisms to manage risks and market crises, and to establish early warning systems to anticipate disasters such as floods and hurricanes.

6. **We commit** ourselves to strive against unfair competition and agricultural trade distortions providing farmers with new opportunities to sell their products on world markets and support their efforts to increase productivity and production;

7. **We agree** that the priority Regional actions in agriculture on which we will focus will include:
   
   (i) Elaboration of the Community Agricultural Policy and regional Strategic Plan;
   (ii) upgrading of facilities and services for trade in agriculture products; strengthening national and Regional (collaboration in agriculture) research and development;
   (iii) establishing an effective regime of sanitary and phyto-sanitary measures including a Regional Agriculture Health and Food Safety System (CAHFSA);
   (iv) developing appropriate policies and incentives to encourage a stronger agriculture private sector;
   (v) development and implementation of a Regional agriculture market information and intelligence system;
   (vi) addressing the inadequacy of transportation to better enable the export of agriculture products;
   (vii) maintenance of a reliable information platform to facilitate monitoring and evaluation and to indicate priority areas for urgent action;
   (viii) Ensuring competitiveness in the agriculture sector;
   (ix) Ensuring that adequate land is retained for agricultural production; and
   (x) Encouraging the youth to become more engaged in the sector.

**4 July 2009**
The Single Market component of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) came into being on 1 January 2006. Twelve of the fifteen Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) are participants of the CSME. The Bahamas had not signified its intention to participate in the CSME, while Montserrat – a British dependency – must await the necessary instrument of entrustment from the United Kingdom Government. Haiti is in the process of putting the necessary arrangements in place to participate in the CSME.