

Agric Info

The Quarterly Agriculture Newsletter of St. Vincent and the Grenadines

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SVG COVID 19 Agriculture Mass
Production triggered

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Ministry of Agriculture sees First Exportation of 2020

On 6th January 2020, Minister and staff of the Ministry of Agriculture gathered at the Kingstown port to witness the first shipment of assorted commodities out of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Rural Transformation, Industry and Labour, Hon Saboto Caesar congratulated the farmers of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and encouraged them to continue producing crops and livestock of the highest quality.

He expressed his pride in St. Vincent and the Grenadines for being deemed the breadbasket of the southern islands for 2019 and used the opportunity to encourage all Vincentians to participate in the national “Buy Local” campaign.

Minister Caesar also mentioned that efforts are being made to decrease the importation of processed foods. He noted that this shipment consisted of the largest quantity of turmeric to have ever been exported. (Turmeric is a potent anti-inflammatory and antioxidant which helps to pre-



Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Rural Transformation, Industry and Labour, Hon Saboto Caesar



Cassile Walsh-De Young, Supervisor for the Plant Protection and Quarantine Unit

vent heart disease, Alzheimer's and cancer).

Cassile Walsh-De Young, Supervisor for the Plant Protection and Quarantine Unit, expressed gratitude for being given the chance to work along with farmers, ensuring that phytosanitary standards are maintained for imported and exported produce.

She stated that 2020 has been dubbed the year of plant quarantine and health worldwide and many activities centered around this will take place throughout the year.



Produce for Export



CLOSED SEASON
Mammals: 1st February-30th September
Birds: 1st March-30th September
PLEASE DON'T HUNT US!!



Violations

- Hunting out of season
- Removal of eggs or young ones
- Have wildlife or any part thereof in your possession
- Damage to nest or young of wildlife
- Sell or purchase wildlife

Penalty

Max of **\$4000** and up to
1 year imprisonment

Wildlife Protection Act, Chapter 55, Section 17

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CLOSED SEASON 2020

The Forestry Services in the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Transformation, Forestry, Fisheries and Industry is reminding the general public that the close season for Mammals which include Opossum (Manicou), Agouti and Reptiles which include Iguana is 1st February - 30th September.

Therefore, any person who:

- a. Hunts, or is a member of a party engaged in hunting any protected wildlife
- b. Takes or disturbs the egg, or young of any protected wildlife
- c. Damages or destroys the nest, or young of any protected wildlife
- d. Has in his possession or control any protected wildlife or part thereof
- e. Exposes or offers for sale or purchase any protected wildlife or any part thereof, or the egg, or young thereof, is guilty of an offence and liable to a fine of two thousand (\$2000.00) dollars and in the case of a second or subsequent offence, to a fine of four thousand (\$4000.00) dollars and imprisonment for one (1) year according to the Wildlife Protection Act Chapter 55, Section 17.

Persons are to be reminded that it is also an offence to hunt in any Forest Reserve.



**The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry Fisheries,
Rural Transformation, Industry and Labour
of
St. Vincent and the Grenadines
is encouraging citizens to join the national
“Buy Local” Campaign
which aims to reduce the
importation of processed foods.**

On 7th May, 2019, an agreement was signed by the representatives of the Governments of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and the Republic of China on Taiwan to invest in a project geared towards revitalizing the Banana Industry.

This project will be executed over a period of four (4) years. In light of this, the Government of Taiwan donated over five thousands (5,000) sacks of fertilizer to the Ministry of Agriculture.

At the handing over ceremony held on Wednesday 26th February 2020, Ambassador of China on Taiwan, His Excellency, Mr. Calvin Ho noted that The Taiwan International Cooperation and Development Fund (ICDF) is currently implementing three bilateral Technical projects in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

These projects will target areas such as Information and Computer Technology, Public Health and the Banana Industry (Banana Revitalization Project). He indicated that this contribution will assist in the increased production of bananas and expressed his hopes for the prosperity of St. Vincent and the Grenadines economy through this project.

In his brief remarks, Hon Saboto Caesar, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Rural Transformation, Industry and Labour said, he is happy to report that the agricultural sector of St. Vincent and the Grenadines has the most diversified agricultural production platform in the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). He expressed gratitude on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture and farmers to the Government of Taiwan

Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Rural Transformation, Industry and Labour, Mr. Raymond Ryan provided a brief synopsis and objectives of the Banana Revitalization project:

- To improve production and productivity on banana farms.
- To strengthen institutional capacity.
- To support production and marketing of bananas.
- To develop capacity and training to improve knowledge, skills and skills of farmers, farmers service providers, marketers and other value chain stakeholders.
- To meet international quality requirements.

* As part of the Banana Revitalization Project, a workshop on Ripening Techniques in Bananas were held to sensitize farmers and other interested person.



Fertilizer



Handing Over Ceremony



Banana Ripening Techniques Workshop

Food and Agriculture Organization hosted a Pesticide Inspectors Training Workshop

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has implemented a GEF project on the Disposal of Obsolete Pesticides including Persistent Organic Pollutants, Promotion of Alternatives and Strengthening Pesticides Management in the Caribbean, which aimed to inform the public about the dangers of obsolete pesticide stocks. They form partnerships with developing countries to prevent the accumulation of obsolete pesticides and assist them in the disposal of their existing stockpiles.

On Thursday February 27 2020, an opening ceremony was held at the National Emergency Management Organization's conference room to commence a two-day workshop on Pesticide Inspectors Training. The workshop aimed to increase institutional and technical capacities for registration and post-registration system, Technology transfer – contaminated sites and promotion of alternatives to chemical pesticides.

Delivering the feature Address, Hon. Saboto Caesar, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Rural Transformation, Industry and Labour urged the trainers to “study the issue of pesticide from not only an agronomic standpoint but also to conduct a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the benefits to St. Vincent and the Grenadines”. He pointed out that it is more profitable to grow crops free of synthetic herbicide and pesticide, as international buyers prefer these type of commodities.

The minister also spoke on the negative implications of the misuse and improper disposal of pesticides such as long-term illnesses such as Cancer. He thanked the Food and Agriculture Organization for implementing this initiative and viewed this workshop as an opportunity to equip the necessary personnel with the knowledge needed to carry out their tasks.

Deputy Chief Agricultural Officer, Renato Gumbs welcomed all participants and stressed the importance of the role inspectors play in ensuring the safety of farmers as well as consumers and urged the participants to take the workshop seriously.

FAO National correspondent Dr. Coleen Phillips gave an overview of the project, which involved the training of person in eleven (11) Caribbean countries. Ms. Phillips mentioned that St. Vincent and the Grenadines disposed of four thousand two hundred and fifty-four kilograms (4, 254 kg) of pesticides, however she believes that there is room for improvement where it concerns the infrastructure of a pesticide management department.

Consultant for the Food and Agriculture Organization and facilitator of the workshop, Thérèse N. Yarde explained that, the workshop participants were introduced to concepts of pesticide inspection. The workshop focused on the legal basis for inspection, administrative arrangements for pesticide inspection, powers of a pesticide inspector, types of inspections, preparing for inspections, pesticide inspection safety, pesticide sampling, documenting inspections, Professional conduct and communicating with the public. Ms. Yard said that she was pleased with the turn out from the necessary departments because safety of Inspectors and food produced is of paramount importance.



Consultant for the Food and Agriculture Organization and Facilitator of the workshop, Thérèse N. Yarde



Participants of Workshop



Participants of Workshop



Participants of Workshop



FAO National correspondent Dr. Coleen Phillips



Participants of Workshop

School Garden Competition Award Ceremony 2019

The Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Transformation, Forestry, Fisheries, Industry and Labour is continuing its quest to ensure that the citizens of St. Vincent and the Grenadines have sustainable food sources.

In 2018, the National School Garden Competition was launched with the objective to encourage the application of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEMS) to agriculture, present a tool which can be used to enhance teaching and learning and create an interest amongst students in Agriculture.

On Monday 9th March 2020, the Rural Transformation Unit within the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Rural Transformation, Industry and Labour in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, National Reconciliation and Information hosted a Prize Giving and Award ceremony at the Fisheries conference room for the 2019 National School Garden Competition.

Of the thirteen (13) schools that participated in the competition, the West St. George Secondary School took 1st place in the Secondary School category; while the Sandy Bay Government School took 1st place in the primary school category as well as the 2019 grand prize, the Saboto Caesar Challenge Trophy. This is the second (2nd) consecutive year that the Sandy Bay Government School has won the Challenge Trophy.

Speaking at the ceremony, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Rural Transformation, Industry and Labour, Hon. Saboto Caesar stressed the importance of being entrepreneurial at a young age and pointed out that St. Vincent and the Grenadines is one of the most “Food secure” countries in the world given our rich and fertile soils.

He congratulated the students and others who played a role in the execution of this programme and was impressed with the level of participation. He looked forward to what is in store for the National School Garden Competition 2020.

In his remarks, Deputy Chief Agricultural Officer Mr. Renato Gumbs expressed his admiration for the students who got involved in the project and encouraged them to continue despite the challenges faced.

During her remarks on the competition, Mrs. Currel Thompson-Fergus, Senior Technical Officer in the Rural Transformation Unit stated, “School gardens allow students to develop worthwhile life skills such as patience, cooperation, self-confidence, teamwork, social skills and even become more focused learners.”

She mentioned that the competition commenced in 2019 from June to November of that year, where selected schools registered to participate in three (3) categories, which consisted of crops only, livestock only and Mixed (Crops and Livestock). She said the main aim of this initiative is to contribute the achievement of a more sustainable food system. She highlighted praedial Larceny and animal damage among the damage faced by the schools

Schools were judged based on five (5) categories; Use of Technology, Diversity, Sustainability, Management of Livestock and Crops.

RESULTS

2019 SCHOOL GARDEN COMPETITION

Management of Livestock :

1. New Prospect Primary School

2. West St. George Secondary School

Management of Crops

1. Mustique Primary School

2. Adelphi Secondary School

Sustainability:

1. Mustique Primary School

2. Petit Bordel Secondary School

Diversity

1. Sandy Bay Government School

2. West St. George Secondary School

Use of Technology

1. Westwood Methodist School

2. Adelphi Secondary School

	Primary Schools	Secondary Schools
3rd	New Prospect Primary School	North Union Secondary School
2nd	Mustique Primary School	Adelphi Secondary School
1st	Sandy Bay Government School	West St. George Secondary School

Winner of the “Saboto Caesar Challenge” Trophy

Sandy Bay Government School

National School Garden Competition

Award Ceremony

2019



Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Rural Transformation, Industry and Labour, Hon. Saboto Caesar delivering featured Address



Deputy Chief Agricultural Officer Mr. Renato Gumbs



Mrs. Currel Thompson-Fergus, Senior Technical Officer in the Rural Transformation Unit



National School Garden Competition

Award Ceremony

2019

SVG COVID 19 Agriculture Mass Production triggered

Minister of Agriculture of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Hon. Saboto Caesar, reassured Vincentians that the country is food secure amidst pending threats of disruptions in international food supply chains.

"We must be focused in this period and work to ensure that structures for life and living are maintained. Our farmers, fishers and traffickers must come out of this period stronger and united around the common goal of making St. Vincent and the Grenadines a better place."

The Ministry has started mass production of vegetable seedlings which will be made available to farmers at a heavily subsidized price. This is the first limb of the revised national production strategy targeting increase production and productivity of short term crops.

The Minister noted in an interview that,

St. Vincent and the Grenadines will continue to honor our obligation to feed our people and to export to OECS and CARICOM member states.

Minister Caesar was recently nominated to chair the committee charged with the responsibility to craft and implement a regional COVID 19 Food Security Plan.

Hon. Saboto Caesar pledge his commitment to continue working with the OECS Secretariat, to foster enhanced intra-regional trade, which has always been encouraged by Dr. Didicus Jules, Director General of the OECS.

On 1st April 2020, the Orange Hill facility began the distribution of seedlings to farmers as part of the regional COVID 19 Food Security Plan.

During an interview, Product Development Officer in the of Ministry of Agriculture, Rohan McDonald, said that distribution will be done in Two (2) tranches:

First (1st) tranche consist of the distribution of sixty thousand (60,000) plants (squash, watermelon, lettuce, cucumbers).

Second (2nd) tranche, will include nine hundred thousand (900,000) plants (tomato, sweet pepper, cauliflower, eggplants, cabbage, lettuce, okra, broccoli, corn) which will all be sold at a subsidized price.

He stated that this initiative was implemented to ensure farmers have the necessary planting material to guarantee food security during this pandemic.



Farmer, Winsbert Springer



Product Development Officer of Ministry of Agriculture, Rohan McDonald handing over plantlets to Farmer, Verina Pilgrim



Farmer, Urcella Jones collecting plantlets



Orange Hill Agriculture Biotechnology Centre



"Boost immune system - Fruits available"

The Ministry of Agriculture is encouraging all churches and faith based organizations, producer co-operatives, sporting organizations, community groups, and any other civil society organization to ensure that their members distribute and share the following commodities which they may have current access to:

- Ginger
- Turmeric
- Soursop
- Orange, Lime, Lemon
- Wax Apples
- Spinach
- Guava
- Golden Apple
- Tamarind
- Cherry

In participating in the national COVID 19 response, the Ministry of Agriculture, acting on the advice of the Ministry of Health will ensure that the above listed fruits known to boost the immune system are readily accessible.

The Ministry wishes to thank all those who responded in submitting commodities, quantities and their respective prices as requested. This information will be provided to all supermarkets and shops on Monday, 20th March 2020, in the Ministry's bid to establish an internal local fruit distribution system.

The Ministry will assist in facilitating the arrangements needed between suppliers and wholesalers/retailers to ensure internal trade.

The Ministry continues to encourage members of the wider society to share these commodities at the community level and to ensure that the handling of all fruits adheres to the highest standards of hygiene. This system must operate within the parameters of all the advice provided by the Ministry of Health.

STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

Avoid close contact with people who are sick.



Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.



Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.



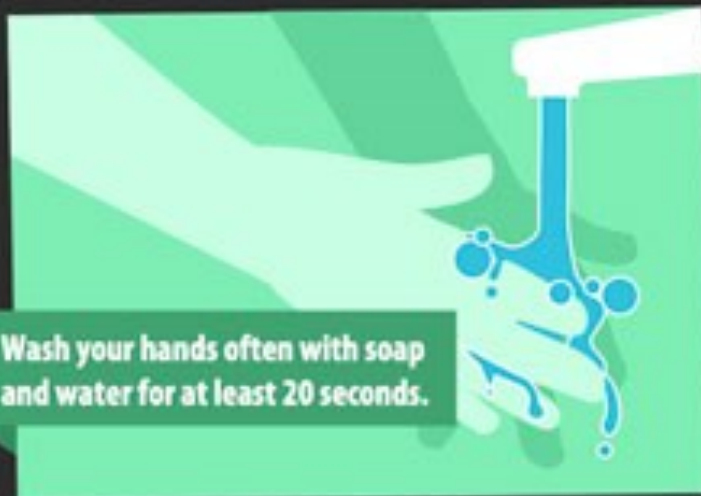
Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.



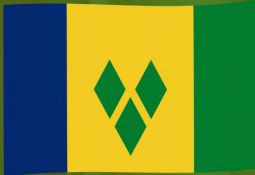
Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.



Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.



For more information: www.cdc.gov/COVID19



Saint Vincent &
the Grenadines

Immune Booster

INGREDIENTS

Turmeric, Moringa, Sweetner,
Guava, Ginger



ONE POPSICLE PER DAY

- boost
- good hygiene
- stay inside
- survive

SMALL SIZE

\$1.50 - single

\$17.00 - pack
(includes 12)

LARGE SIZE

\$3.00 - single

\$35.00 - pack
(includes 12)

FLAVORS

PASSION FRUIT

GUAVA/CARAMBOLA

TAMARIND

TAMARIND (DIABETICS)

DELIVERY BY ORDERS ONLY

CALL: 532-5892, 530-7851 OR 491-1644

AREA CODE: 1-784