

Establishment of a Regional Agricultural Market Intelligence System

The State of Marketing Information Systems /Activities in St. Kitts

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Background: Hierarchy of the Department of Agriculture

- The Department of Agriculture technical activity is divided into two main sub programmes - Crops and Livestock. Each programme has sub programmes such as roots and tubers vet, small ruminants, tree crop, extension etc
- Straddling both programmes are several units which serve both Programmes and several sub programmes. These are Communication, Land Prep and Marketing
- The marketing Unit is manned by a full time Officer with support from other workers who multi task or carry out dual roles.

Market Information System

- One of the pillars of the Marketing Unit is Marketing information and this is built with the following

Market Intel:

- A fact sheet that uses crop forecast information garnered by the Extension staff which is then converted to Market Information. This instrument is then hand delivered in most cases or faxed to the major buyers in the Federation.
- Essentially it bears the status of about twelve selected commodities and a list of the farmers that have these commodities as well as their contact numbers (in the form of a Farmers telephone directory).

Market Corner:

- A 3-4 minute segment on a weekly Agricultural radio programme called Agriscope. Forecast information, market price and price trends are shared with the audience (consumers). Tips on the basics of Marketing and Post harvest practices are also shared

Radio and TV Programmes

- **Radio (Agriscope) and TV (Agriculture in Context)**

Other related activities

Extension Training.

- Marketing and Post harvest management of crops are regular topics in farmer training organized mainly by extension staff 3-4 times throughout the year

Farmers' data Base

- Information on farmers in St. Kitts has been collected and collated on a data base within the Ministry. This can serve as the foundation for an electronic Market Information system.

Promotion activities

- These are incorporated into 3 main calendar events throughout the year
- **Open Day, Eat Local Day and Market Place**

Future Plans

- Use the Farmers' database to initiate an electronic Marketing Information System – targeted at hotels and restaurants
- Upload the current marketing data on current government website

Suggestion for the future

- A Caribbean Agricultural Marketing Information Database where countries can upload information and use the information to engage in regional trade.
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- **Elements**
- Website at central location
- Upload of information in various countries
- Orders placed and trade initiated