

GOVERNMENT OF ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

POLICY FRAMEWORK & STRATEGIC PLAN FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT 2012 - 2018

FINAL VERSION

**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, RURAL TRANSFORMATION, FORESTRY AND
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ALBA	Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas
ATI	Agricultural Training Institute
CAO	Chief Agricultural Officer
CARDI	Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CED	Centre for Enterprise Development
CEHI	Caribbean Environmental Health Institute
CFO	Chief Fisheries Officer,
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
CRFM	Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism
CWSA	Central Water and Sewerage Authority
DCAO	Deputy Chief Agricultural Officer
DoF	Director of Forestry
EAS	Extension Advisory Services
EC\$	East Caribbean Dollar
EUREPGAP	Euro-Retail Produce Working Group (EUREP) Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
FI	Financial Institution
GDP	Gross domestic product
ICCAT	International Committee for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas
IWC	International Whaling Commission
L&S	Lands and Surveys Department
MARTFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Transformation, Forestry and Fisheries
MH&E	Ministry of Health and Environment
MoRT	Ministry of Rural Transformation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NCB	National Commercial Bank
NDF	National Development Foundation
NEMO	National Emergency Management Office
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NIS	National Insurance Services
NIPI	National Investment Promotions Inc
NPL	National Properties Limited
OECS	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
PPD	Physical Planning Dept
PS	Permanent Secretary
SVG	St Vincent and the Grenadines
SVBGA	St Vincent Banana Growers Association
VINLEC	St. Vincent Electricity Services Ltd
WIBDECO	Windward Island Banana Export Development Company
WINFRA	Windward Islands National Farmers' Association

1.0 BACKGROUND

This document was prepared by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations at the request and with the assistance of the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines utilizing funds provided by the European Union under the country's 2006 Special Framework of Assistance. The FAO was designated by the countries and the European Union (EU) as the implementing agency for the project *"EU-funded assistance to agricultural diversification in the Windward Islands: SFA2006 activities for implementation by FAO"*. Three projects were identified for St. Vincent and the Grenadines, viz.: a new Strategic Plan for Agricultural Diversification and Development 2007 – 2016; Strengthening Health, Quarantine and Phyto-sanitary Systems; and an Environment Watershed Project. This document satisfies the first of the three projects.

The first three (and most relevant) items in the terms of reference (ToR) for this assignment were as follows:

1. Review and update the 2009 Policy Framework and Strategic Plan in the context of national, regional and international dimensions/initiatives and incorporate germane elements from the [below identified] consultancy reports
2. Review the three studies/reports of consultants (an incentive framework in support of agriculture; the role of the State in driving the new agriculture in relation to land use planning; the role of youth in agricultural development) financed under SFA2006 and identify recommendations from these studies that are germane to agricultural development in St. Vincent and the Grenadines
3. Hold consultations and other meetings on the above, as required.

The development of this document must be placed within the context of other policy/strategy documents for the agriculture sector which have sought to adjust Government policy to the realities of changing global and national environments. This policy document was developed as a successor to the "Strategic Plan for Agricultural Diversification and Development 1997-2006" which broadly guided agricultural development in St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) for over a decade. Since 2007 a number of other policy documents and study reports were commissioned to address emerging issues. These have been reviewed as part of this effort. These documents include: the National Medium Term Investment Plan (NMTIP) and investment projects for Arrowroot and Livestock prepared by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in 2006; the National Agricultural Production Plan to address Rising Food Prices prepared in 2007; 'rolling' plans titled "Strategic Policies and Priorities" prepared by the Fisheries Division and the Forestry Department, and an EU-funded study on Agricultural Diversification concluded in 2008. Further in 2009, a draft of this document was produced under a consultancy from the EU-funded SFA 2006 project. This consultancy sought to update the 2009 document by taking account of international and national developments and more detailed work in the areas of agricultural incentives, youth in agriculture, and land policy.

The process of developing this policy framework and strategic plan had to contend with one major development – addition of the mandate for rural transformation into the portfolio of the Ministry in December 2010. The Vision, Goals, and institutional framework for advancing rural transformation are well laid out in a number of Cabinet-approved documents – viz.: the Strategic Plan for Rural Development (2008); the Institutional Framework for Rural Development (April 2010); and the Action Plan for Rural Development – Implementing the More Participatory Community-oriented Approach (June 2010). The Vision, Goals and institutional framework are presented hereunder.

The Vision for the rural sector is:

“To create economically viable and self-sufficient rural communities in St. Vincent and the Grenadines in which people are empowered to contribute to the development of their own communities and to national growth, whilst ensuring the sustainable use and management of natural resources” (Strategic Plan for Rural Development (SPRD); 2008)

The Goals for the rural sector (SPRD; 2008) are:

1. Promote economic growth in rural areas while protecting the physical environment
2. Support the development of human and social capital
3. Assist in the creation of an environment that will facilitate investment in service and infrastructure in rural areas
4. Assist in the promotion of good governance
5. Reduce poverty and unemployment markedly

The institutional framework for advancing rural transformation is comprised of three elements:

- a. ***A more participatory community-oriented approach to rural development interventions.*** Thus, communities will be the focus of rural development efforts with objective of empowered communities and their people working in partnership with Public/Private/NGO entities towards a shared vision of the transformed community.
- b. ***Implementing entities, functions and systems.*** The key institutional entities are: The Rural Transformation Unit (now of the MARTFF); the Rural Transformation Steering Committee; the Rural Transformation Technical Committee; and Community Partnership Groups (CPGs), which are community level organisations that can mobilize residents and represent their interests.
- c. ***An organisational structure for the Rural Transformation Unit (RTU).*** The RTU has been proposed with a complement of four (4) Rural Development Officers, one Project Officer, one Research Officer and a Senior Technical Officer, as Head of Unit.

There is some divergence in the focus and approach to interventions for rural development (people and community focussed; agricultural and non-agricultural) and interventions for agricultural development (production; environment; people). While both have the ultimate aim of improved livelihoods and development in rural areas and nationally, there will be some challenges in integrating the two approaches. The aim in this policy document will be on exploring areas of synergies between the two approaches for the benefit of rural populations and communities.

1.1 Definition of the Terms ‘Agriculture’ and ‘Agricultural Producer’

The term ‘agriculture’, when used in this document, refers to farming (crop and livestock agriculture), forestry and fishing along with the consequent and associated activities of marketing and processing.

The term ‘agricultural producer’ in this document refers to persons engaged in production activities in the farming, fishing and forestry sub-sectors. The term ‘agricultural producer’ therefore includes farmers, fishers and forestry workers.

1.2 Vision of the Agriculture Sector

The vision, which will drive the policies and strategies detailed in this 2012 - 2018 document, is of:

An agriculture (farming, forestry, and fishing) sector that is innovative, internationally competitive and efficient in the management and use of all resources for the long-term benefits of citizens.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

St. Vincent and the Grenadines is an archipelagic State in the Eastern Caribbean. The country is comprised of a main island, St. Vincent, and a chain of 32 islands and cays, the Grenadines, of which only seven are inhabited. The total area of the country is 389 km² of which the main island is 344 km². The country has a territorial sea of 12 nautical miles and an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and continental shelf of 200 nautical miles. The marine space is 70 times the land area. The terrain of the main island and several of the Grenadines is mountainous. The highest point on the main island is Mount Soufriere at 1,234 m. The climate is tropical with average yearly temperature of 27° C (81° F) and a rainy season from May through November. Annual rainfall averages range from 1,500 mm on the coast to 3,800 mm in the central mountains. Forests cover between 25% and 30% of the country. The islands are located in the hurricane zone with hurricane Lenny causing extensive damage in 1999. The active volcano on the main island, La Soufriere, last erupted in 1979 damaging the agricultural sector and disrupting rural life. The population is 106,253 (2001) with 92% residing on the main island.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines is a founding member of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), whose members have a common currency and some institutions (such as in aviation and the judiciary). From 1 August 2011 the OECS countries initiated an economic union with free movement of persons. The country is a member of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the CARICOM Single Market. Members of the CARICOM have functional cooperation in areas of trade negotiations, health, education and in the coordination of foreign policy.

3.0 NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

The country had mixed economic performance in the last decade. Annual increases in real GDP¹ ranged from -2.30% to 7.24% with negative growth in the 2008 – 2010 period. Inflation rates ranged from a low of 0.1% in 2003 to 10.1% in 2008 and were 0.5% and 0.6%² in 2009 and 2010 respectively. Table 1 provides information on GDP growth rates and inflation rates. The exchange rate was stable –the pegged rate of EC\$2.70 to US\$1.00 is unchanged since 1976. Aspects of poor economic performance include the negative and increasing current account balance (-EC\$m318.29 in 2006; -EC\$539.41 in 2009)³ and long-standing high levels of unemployment – 21.1% in 2001; 19.8% in 1991.

Table 1. Real GDP Growth Rates and Inflation Rates 2002-2010

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Real GDP Growth Rate	6.12	7.24	4.62	2.99	5.99	3.12	-0.60	-2.30	-1.84
Inflation Rates	0.8	0.1	2.9	3.5	3.0	7.0	10.1	0.5	0.6

The structure of the economy is changing. The agriculture and industrial sectors are declining while service sectors (Government services, wholesale retail trade, and financial services) are increasing in importance and relative contribution to GDP. Agriculture's contribution to GDP declined from 12.55% in 1996 to 7.23% in 2010. Manufacturing, which comprises significant agro-processing, also has declined in

¹ Statistical Office, Ministry of Finance and Planning; Gross Domestic Product by Economic Activity at Basic Prices in Constant (2006) Prices

² Statistical Office, Ministry of Finance and Planning; Point to Point Inflation Rates 2002 – 2011 (Jan 2010=100)

³ Data obtained from the Statistical office – tables on Balance of Payments

its contribution to GDP, from 8.30% in 1996 to 5.70% in 2010. Tourism, though not identified as a distinct sector, is growing in importance and is the largest source of foreign exchange earnings.

Tourism is concentrated in the Grenadine islands with relatively minimal activity on the main island. One implication of this is the importance of the marine environment to the country's tourism industry, foreign exchange earnings and development. One consequence is that of diminished positive impacts on infrastructure and human resource development and economic and social opportunities on the main island. On the main island, agriculture and related activities are the major economic activities in areas outside of the capital city.

Indicators of social performance presented in the UNDP⁴ Human Development Reports paint a mixed picture. The country is ranked 91st in the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP's) 2007 Human Development Index (HDI). This performance placed St. Vincent and the Grenadines in cellar position among the OECS States but still better placed than larger CARICOM States Belize, Suriname, Jamaica, Guyana and Haiti. Table 2 presents information on some of the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) indicators provided in the Human Development Reports.

Table 2. Indicators of Social Performance for St. Vincent and the Grenadines

Indicator	Performance of St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG)
Life expectancy at birth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SVG = 71.4 yrs (females: 73.6; males: 69.4) versus Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) = 73.4 yrs; worldwide = 67.5 yrs
population undernourished	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SVG = 6% in 2006 a decline from 18% at the beginning of the 1990s
Infant mortality per thousand live births	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SVG = 12 per 1000 live births Versus LAC = 19; Worldwide = 44
under 5 mortality per thousand live births	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SVG = 13 per 1000 in 2008 versus 24 in 1990; Versus LAC = 23 per 1000; Worldwide = 63
total debt service as a share of GDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SVG = 5.5% in 2005 up from 2.2% in 1990 compared to 2005 levels for LAC = 6.6%; Developing countries = 4.6%
debt service as a share of exports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.9% in 1990 and 11.2% in 2005 compared to 2005 levels for LAC = 22.9%; Developing countries = 13%

Poverty rates have improved. In 1995-96, 37.5% of the population was classed as poor and 25.7% as indigent. In 2007/2008, 30.2% was classed as poor with an additional 18%, defined as vulnerable of falling into poverty. In 2007/2008, 2.9% were classed as indigent (Kairi, 1996 & 2007/2008). The highest incidence of poverty was found in the north of the main island, the Georgetown/Sandy Bay area.

There is universal access to primary and, more recently, secondary education. The 2001 Population Census Report reveals low educational levels -- the bulk of the labour force either had none or primary level education with agricultural producers having the worst educational profile among the employed and unemployed groups. The labour force was relatively young --52% in the 15-34 age group -- with more males than females. The unemployment rate was 21.1% in 2001 and was highest among the younger age groups and in the north of the main island. The least educated formed the bulk of the unemployed. Agriculture was the largest employer of males (20.2%) and the wholesale & retail trade the largest employer of females (22.6%). The decline of the agriculture sector partially can be explained by average returns (measured as GDP/worker), which is much lower than the national average.

⁴ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

4.0 AGRICULTURE SECTOR

Agriculture is the main rural enterprise though its importance in the economy has been declining (e.g., in terms of share of GDP and labour share in the workforce).

The structure of agricultural GDP has been changing. While crops continue to dominate, accounting for more than 70% of agricultural GDP, there have been significant declines in the importance of bananas from 31% of agricultural GDP in 1996 to 10.11% in 2009 and 7.07% in 2010 (see Table 3). The 'other crops', and livestock sectors have shown substantial growth while the forestry and fishing sub-sector have been in secular decline. The 'other crops' that have increased, even as banana declined, include root crops – such as cassava, eddoes, dasheen, yams and sweet potatoes.

Table 3. Composition of Agricultural GDP

	1996	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Agriculture	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Bananas	31.64	32.04	28.92	28.98	20.68	22.21	19.19	14.93	14.50	13.63	10.11	7.07
Other crops	42.80	44.54	47.82	50.86	55.51	52.59	55.06	57.31	57.63	58.66	52.82	65.25
Livestock	6.15	15.13	14.69	13.62	15.49	16.69	17.10	19.37	18.62	21.55	29.25	19.70
Forestry	4.26	1.14	1.20	1.06	1.09	1.11	1.07	1.05	0.96	0.98	0.84	0.99
Fisheries	15.21	7.13	7.35	5.48	7.23	7.40	7.59	7.34	8.28	5.17	6.99	6.98
Value of Agric GDP EC\$m		86.49	80.59	89.86	85.32	82.14	83.97	86.92	96.46	92.52	106.56	86.76

Source: St. Vincent and the Grenadines Statistical Office \ECCB; Tables on Gross Domestic product by Economic Activity at Basic Prices, in Constant (2006) Prices

4.1 Global and Regional Context

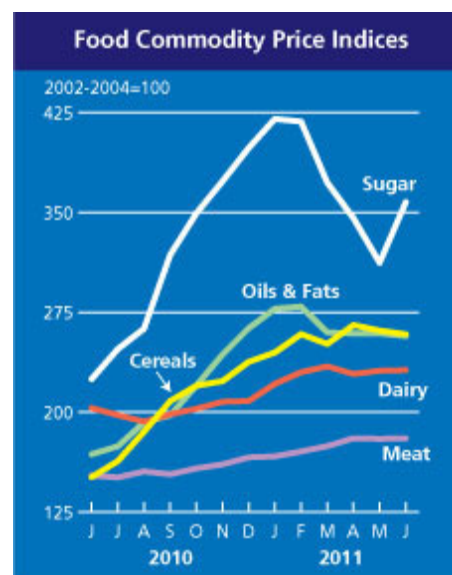
Globalisation has presented both challenges and possibilities for the domestic agricultural sector. Sadly, this has precipitated a decline of the banana sub-sector as a consequence of a diminution of preferential access to the European Union (EU) markets and increased standards and quality requirements. At the same time, trade liberalisation has increased competition in the marketplace for the produce of SVG.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines has a number of trade agreements, negotiated under the umbrella of the CARICOM, that are intended to improve access to markets in other countries. In addition the country has a number of bi-lateral cooperation agreements, such as those with Cuba, Taiwan and Venezuela (e.g., ALBA/PETROCARIBE).

The major new international development in the past few years is the issue of rising and volatile food prices. International prices of the major agricultural commodities have increased substantially in recent months as they also did in 2007-2008. The FAO's Food Price Index (FFPI) reached the unprecedented level of 238 in February 2011. It was 232 in May 2011. Importantly, the May 2011 index value was 37% above the May 2010 value due to higher levels in all components of the index – meat (+20.4%), dairy (+10.5%), cereals (+69.0%), oils and fats (+52.4%) and sugar (+44.0%). There also has been substantial volatility. For example, while the sugar price index recorded a decline of 40.10% in the first half of 2010 it registered a 61.07% increase in the second half of that same year. The figure below gives a graphical representation of changes in food commodity prices in the period mid-2010 – mid 2011.

Closely tied to the issue of rising food prices is the issue of reliability of supplies of food from the international market. The past year has seen the imposition of export bans on key commodities by several major exporting countries, which seek to maintain domestic supplies and prices.

The recent developments in international commodity markets have had the consequence of forcing countries to place greater emphasis on the issue of food security at a national level. Given that the forces driving the rising prices and instability (climate change, speculation, growth in China and India) are unlikely to abate the issue of sustainability of domestic production has been brought to the fore. Further, food price increases have a disproportionate impact on lower-income groups (since they spend a larger share of income on food) and urban groups (since they have limited capacity to alter budgets). Thus, there is increased focus on social safety nets and household gardening programmes. Programmes also have focused on ameliorating price increases of agricultural inputs such as fertilisers.



www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/FoodPricesIndex

St. Vincent and the Grenadines along with the other OECS countries have initiated an economic union with free movement of people from 1 August 2011 that adds to the existing free trade in goods. Within the wider CARICOM there already exists free trade in goods and a goal for a deepening of the integration process. Despite this goal in the OECS sub-region and wider CARICOM, St. Vincent's agricultural relationships largely are based on exports of primary agricultural commodities among the parties but particularly to Trinidad and Tobago and imports of processed products from Trinidad and Tobago. There are few direct formal interactions among planners, policymakers and senior officials of the Ministries of Agriculture and key State Agencies in the countries of the southern Caribbean. There is little in the way of coordination or exchange of information in the areas of research and development, marketing, and policy development. Generally, formal interactions among the countries and institutions occur within the framework of the organs of the OECS and CARICOM. Trinidad and Tobago is an important transshipment and shipment point for many of the food products sold and agricultural technology used in the southern Caribbean.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines is a net food importing country. The value of food imports exceeded the value of food exports by 83%, 121%, 163%, 129% and 183% in years 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010 respectively. The value of food imports (SITC⁵ 0: food and live animals & SITC 1: beverages and tobacco) in 2010 was EC\$218.4 million. The value of food exports in 2010 was EC\$77.2 million. The United States was by far the largest source of imports, followed by Trinidad and Tobago and the United Kingdom.

4.2 Performance of the Sector

The following provides information on the major components of agriculture in St. Vincent and the Grenadines: Bananas, Arrowroot, Root crops, Vegetables and Fruits, Fishing, and Forestry. In addition, information is provided on sanitary and phyto-sanitary (SPS) measures.

⁵ SITC = Standard International Trade Classification

Banana: Banana is still the single most important agricultural commodity though declining in production and exports. Acreage under cultivation declined from in excess of 4,000 acres in the 2000-2003 years to less than 3,000 acres since 2007 and reaching 1,702 acres in 2010. Likewise production has fallen from 119 million pounds in 2001 to 42 million pounds in 2011. Exports declined from 38,947 MT (EC\$55.5 million) in 1998 to 8,939MT (EC\$13.8 million) in 2010. In 2009, banana exports amounted to 18.338 MT (EC\$21,15 million). Banana exports, as a share of crop exports declined from 75% to 57% over the 2004-2009 period. The average price of banana exports was EC\$1.25 per kg in 2004; it was EC\$1.15 in 2009. Banana production and exports are affected by changes in rules for banana imports into the EU, which have meant increased price competition from non-ACP⁶ bananas, and increased production costs from implementing the EUREPGAP standards. Farmers have adjusted by reducing acreage, increasing sales of fair trade bananas and increasing exports to the regional market. Exports of bananas to regional markets increased from 13% (3,659 MT) of total banana exports in 2004 to 47.7% (4,267 MT) in 2010.

Arrowroot: Production and area under cultivation is declining. In the 2001–2010 period, production hit a high of 1.697 million pounds in 2004; it was 0.484 million pounds in 2010. Acreage under cultivation is falling –118 acres and 153 acres in 2001 and 2002 respectively; 60.5 and 84 acres in 2009 and 2010 respectively. Exports of arrowroot were valued at EC\$0.656 million in 2009. Over the past few years, the industry has implemented programmes for revival of the industry. These programmers aim for: production expansion; increased purchasing and processing; promotion, and marketing of arrowroot starch, and other value-added products for domestic and export markets. The industry continues to be plagued with many problems including, labour shortages for harvesting, difficulty in obtaining/developing a mechanical harvester, low yields, and low returns to farmers. The industry is an extremely high cost producer, uncompetitive in its current state and requires radical policy reforms to address issues of governance, commercialization, encourage joint venture investments and competitiveness (MAFF; 2006).

Rootcrops: The island of St. Vincent has good soil, climatic conditions and knowledge for production of a range of rootcrops. The major rootcrops (produced on small farms for domestic consumption, some processing and export) are dasheen, eddoes, yams, sweet potatoes, ginger, tannia. Aggregate exports of the major rootcrops (dasheen, eddoes, yams, sweet potatoes, ginger, tannia) has fluctuated in the past few years (2006-2010) between a low of 6,820 MT in 2008 and a high of 10,004 MT in 2009. In addition, cassava, carrots and peanuts are produced. During the period 2001 – 2010, there has been an increase in the aggregate output of rootcrops – the average annual aggregate output in the 2001-2003 period was 25.55 million pounds; it was 32.58 million pounds in the 2008-2010 period. Comparisons of average annual crop production in the 2001-2003 and 2008-2010 periods show increased output of carrots (24%), cassava (40%), dasheen (64%), eddoes (2%), ginger (28%), sweet potatoes (90%) and yams (8%). There were declines in production of peanut (-48%) and tannia (-14%). An industry plan has been implemented for cassava. This plan involved the establishment of a factory at Orange Hill and introduction of new varieties to farmers.

Vegetables and Fruits: A wide range of vegetables and fruits are produced. Table 4 provides information on the average annual production in two time periods (2001-2003 and 2008-2010) and the percentage change in production between these two time periods. Only a few of the vegetables, viz., pumpkins and hot peppers, are consistently exported. The major deterrent to a wider range and higher quantity of vegetable exports are related to cost of production and quality. There is some export of

⁶ ACP = African Caribbean and Pacific States.

anthuriums and some spices (nutmeg and mace). Between 2004 and 2010 the data show declining exports of breadfruit, citrus, paw-paw, soursop, passion fruit and hot peppers. Increasing levels of exports were recorded for golden apples, avocados, plums, coconuts and mangoes. There is importation of some of the fruits and vegetables produced locally. However when average annual quantities of imports are compared in the two time periods, 2004-2005 and 2009-2010, there is a declining trend for most of the imported fruits and vegetables – e.g., Cabbages (-30%), tomatoes (-69%), cucumbers (-49%), pineapple (-47%), melons (-13%). Sweet peppers (55%) and lettuce (105%) are the two vegetables with significant increases over the two time periods.

Table 4. Average Annual Production during 2001-2003 and 2008-2010 and Percent Differences

Commodity	2008-2010	2001-2003	Percent		Commodity	2008-2010	2001-2003	Percent
Vegetables	lbs	Lbs	Change		Vegetables	lbs	Lbs	Change
Lettuce	92,667	20,833	345%		Radish	3,700	3,033	22%
Patchoi	69,667	21,667	222%		Sweet Pepper	387,667	351,533	10%
String Beans	230,667	85,700	169%		Cabbage	1,777,667	1,627,333	9%
Peas	22,533	9,533	136%		Ochro	241,000	221,867	9%
Chive	367,000	178,000	106%		Eggplant	183,000	175,233	4%
Parsley/Celery	23,067	11,433	102%		Corn	1,396,667	1,351,667	3%
Squash	22,333	11,600	93%		Tomatoes	1,346,667	1,835,667	-27%
Cauliflower	39,200	21,333	84%		Pigeons Peas	467,333	802,000	-42%
Sorrel	83,667	55,667	50%		Beet	1,907	3,533	-46%
Cassava	1,236,667	885,333	40%		Peanut	586,667	1,127,000	-48%
Pumpkins	679,333	507,333	34%		Hot Pepper	219,333	431,667	-49%
Cucumber	1,289,333	992,500	30%		Asparagus	3,203	7,947	-60%
Carrots	1,444,333	1,165,200	24%		Melons	70,067	186,533	-62%
Fruits					Fruits			
Pineapple	503,333	194,500	159%		Soursop	131,667	124,333	6%
Plantain	6,260,000	3,333,333	88%		Orange	3,486,667	3,310,000	5%
Passion Fruit	171,333	105,667	62%		Guava	262,000	275,000	-5%
Golden apple	2,245,000	1,676,667	34%		Grape	43,000	46,200	-7%
Mangoes	3,887,333	3,208,333	21%		Lemon	78,733	84,667	-7%
Nutmeg	770,333	650,000	19%		Limes	2,271,667	2,448,000	-7%
Sugarapple	50,000	43,200	16%		Grapefruit	601,333	659,333	-9%
Pawpaw	92,333	80,000	15%		Avocado	660,333	730,000	-10%
Coconut	5,310,000	4,758,667	12%		Carambola	113,333	874,667	-87%
Sapodilla	768,333	700,000	10%					

Source: 2010 Agriculture Sector Report; Agricultural Statistics Unit, Ministry of Agriculture

The Taiwanese Agricultural Mission, Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) and the Extension Services of the Ministry have activities intended to provide vegetable and fruit crop farmers with improved varieties, quality planting material and improved husbandry techniques. The Ministry provides farmers with high quality seedlings for fruit, vegetable and ornamental production.

Livestock: The livestock industry is small, relative to crops, with production of poultry, pigs, cattle (mainly for meat) and small ruminants. The country is self-sufficient in table eggs and there is a significant level of self-sufficiency in pork and small ruminants. However, there is overall a high level of importation of meat and dairy products. Chicken meat (largely parts) accounted for 81% of the 7.27

million kilograms of meat imported in 2010⁷; turkey meat accounted for another 10.0%. Beef represented 4.6% of meat imports and pork 3.8%. A project proposed for livestock development aims for a substantial expansion of domestic poultry production and for modernization of abattoir facilities and cold/cool storage. This project will address key constraints such as low productivity, poor husbandry and management practices, and poor slaughtering practices and facilities.

Fisheries sub-sector: The fisheries sub-sector and the marine environment are exceedingly important to economic performance, foreign exchange earnings and livelihoods of many rural communities in SVG. The marine and coastal environments lie at the core of the country's tourism appeal and thus have strong, though underestimated, linkages to the growing and important tourism sector.

Fishing is an extremely important industry in the Grenadines and some rural communities on mainland St. Vincent. It is estimated that 2,500 persons are employed in the fishing industry with 70% being dependent on this or related activity for economic survival. The industry is predominantly small-scale and artisanal with most fishermen operating from small boats close to the shore. There are plans to migrate fishermen to larger boats capable of longer distances and longer stays. This move is expected to reduce pressure on the inshore fisheries and provide better returns to fishing effort. There are 36 landing sites, though not all have modern facilities for storage. There are 600 fishing vessels operating in the waters of SVG and 216 operating on the high seas. These boats harvest a variety of demersal finfish and shellfish, large offshore and small coastal pelagic, turtles and mammals. A variety of freshwater fish and crustaceans also are harvested. In 2010, 2.00 million lbs of fish (estimated value of EC\$9.266 million) were landed on beach sites in SVG. While the quantity landed in 2010 was a 6.9% decline on 2009, it was still a significant surplus over the quantities landed in 2008, 2007 and 2006.

The bulk of the landed catches are sold locally to retailers/vendors and directly to consumers, and to middlemen or fish traders for export to the United States, Martinique and other regional markets. Most of the landed catch is sold fresh with a very small proportion being salted and dried. The country is still unable to export to the European Union, though efforts are being made to meet the required standards. There is considerable year-to-year variation in the quantity of fish and fish products imported. Imports in 2010 amounted to 357.3 MT. However, the quantity imported in 2009 was 2,835.9 MT, but in 2008, 2007 and 2006 the respective quantities were 408.4 MT, 3,509.2 MT and 294.1 MT.

Strategic priorities for the fisheries sub-sector include: reducing pressure on the inshore fisheries and increasing the returns to fishing effort; sustainable utilization of fisheries resources; sustainable aquaculture development; enhancing safety, quality assurance, value addition and marketing. Achievement of these strategic priorities will require institutional capacity building and strengthening of the policy and legal frameworks. The Fisheries Division of the MARTFF has draft management plans for several fisheries (such as conch, coastal pelagic, and lobsters).

Several Agencies, in addition to the Fisheries Division of the MARTFF, play a role in sustainable management of the marine living resources and the coastal ecosystems. These include, the Coast Guard, the Ministry of Finance and Planning (coastal zone planning) the Ministry of Health (pollution monitoring) and the Customs Dept (seafood trade). A number of regional and international organizations are important. These include the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM), the Environment and Sustainable Development Unit of the OECS Secretariat, the International Whaling Commission (IWC) and the International Committee for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT).

⁷ Source: 2010 Statistical report of the Agricultural Statistics Unit, Ministry of Agriculture

Forestry sub-sector: St. Vincent and the Grenadines is covered by 25-30% forests, which include several forest types including Montane Rainforest, Coastal Dry-woodlands, littoral forest and Elfin Woodlands. Some of these forests are important for timber production, including high value species such as Blue Mahoe and Mahogany. The Forestry Department of the MARTFF has an annual reforestation activity to reclaim deforested lands for the purpose of soil and water conservation.

Forests provide several benefits to the country and people of SVP. Forests provide a livelihood or supplement to income for several persons in rural communities (such as the charcoal makers and agro/eco-tourism operators). Forests help in the conservation of water which benefits the population with water for drinking, irrigation and hydro-electricity generation (which provides roughly one-quarter of national needs). Forests also contribute significantly to the Tourism sector through eco-tourism and the several areas designated as national parks.

Conservation of the forests and wildlife resources is a major area of work. SVG forests, like others, are important from a conservation and environmental standpoint for biological diversity (12 plants, 2 birds, 4 reptiles and 1 amphibian are endemic to SVG), water production and conservation, positive effects to clean air and the climate, and soil fertility and conservation. There are several Forest Reserves including at Cumberland and Kings Hill. Conservation efforts also are advanced through an Environmental Education Programme.

The major threats to forests and biological diversity are deforestation due to illegal crop production, encroachment, poaching, and overexploitation. More recently with increased law enforcement efforts against the producers of illicit crops, there is a need to provide alternative livelihoods (e.g. charcoal making, agro-tourism/beautification and re-forestation) for persons in rural communities.

Strategic priorities for the forestry sub-sector include: increasing the contribution of forests to GDP; conservation of biodiversity and soil and water resources; development of a comprehensive national forest policy that includes examination of the forest and wildlife legislations; and strengthening institutional capacity.

Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary Measures (SPS): There are inadequate laboratory facilities and responsibilities for SPS matters are spread over several Ministries. A National Committee of Agricultural Health and Food Safety is operating and this helps with coordination among the several relevant agencies (*inter alia*, the Ministry of Health and the Environment, the Standards Bureau and MARTFF).

Agri-business (agro-processing and input suppliers and traders): St. Vincent and the Grenadines has a varied agro-processing sector. Many small cottage-level firms produce seasonings, hot sauces, jams, jellies, wines, milk-based drinks, and chips. Additionally, there is substantial small-scale processing of cassava, plantains and fruits. The small-scale cottage level agro-processing sector comprises approximately 35 small entities registered with the Ministry of Agriculture. There are several medium to large scale processors, such as the Arrowroot Association, WINFRA, the Vacuum packing Facility at Lauders and Erica's Country Style. The Eastern Caribbean Group of Companies differs from most other agro-processors in that it is a substantial user of imported inputs, which is used to produce rice, flour and animal feeds. Agricultural processing is done on a large scale for arrowroot, rice, wheat flour and alcohol distilling. Substantial quantities of these large-scale products are exported largely to destinations in the East Caribbean region.

The Agricultural Input Warehouse (AIW), a State-owned import and sales company, is the major supplier of agricultural inputs. This has worked in favour of the agricultural sector because of benefits of bulk purchasing, reduced margins and cross-subsidisation from the monopoly importation of sugar and a few other imported consumer items. The AIW allows for direct sales to farmers. There are a few other suppliers of agricultural inputs; however these do not stock the range available at the AIW.

Cross-cutting Issues

The area under agriculture declined 50% between the 1972 and 2001 agricultural censi. Farm sizes are very small. Farms of less than 2 acres comprised 66.8% of all parcels. Parcel size distribution was skewed with 12% of farmers being landless, the smallest 44.6% of parcels occupying 6.3% of the agricultural land and the largest 2.3% of parcels occupying 31.4% of the land. Twenty-two percent of the agricultural land was classed as flat; 59% as gentle slopes; and 19% as severe almost vertical slopes.

Tenure insecurity is a major issue. The 2001 census data masks the extent of this problem by revealing very low values for those classes that are definitively subject to tenure insecurity -- 5% of parcels were squatted and 6.7% were 'rent-free/peppercorn rent'/'rented for cash/crop'. However, it must be noted that within the category of 'Owner/owner-like', which comprise 73% of all parcels, would be persons without proper documentation (such as those occupying family lands). The Government has initiated a number of reforms to regularize rights in land. The Possessory Titles Act was passed and a Unit established to implement the legislation. However, fully resolving the land tenure issue will require legislation, changes in the land surveying and recording systems and infrastructure, and the institutions and infrastructure for a full adjudication campaign together with changes in the land registry to provide titles to land with clear boundary descriptions. Agriculture is facing increasing competition from residential and commercial users for land.

Alienation of agricultural land is another major issue. The "Report on the Conversion of Agricultural Land" (Allahar 2010) found that there was a "40% decrease in the amount of land in agricultural use in SVG between 1985/6 and 2000" when censi were conducted. The decreases were most severe in the rural north windward and leeward parts of the island (which the consultant attributed to abandonment of agricultural land and under-reporting) as well as in the areas of Kingstown and to its south and in the Grenadines (which the consultant attributed to conversion of land to non-agricultural uses). In the case of abandonment of agricultural land the solution will involve improving the profitability and attractiveness of agriculture (particularly in terms of a replacement crop for bananas), resolving constraints to the effective management of leasehold State lands on the former sugar estates in north Windward, and improving the effectiveness of land markets for leasehold and private lands.

The average age of agricultural producers reported in the 2001 agricultural census was 49 years. The educational profile of agricultural producers was lower than that of the national employed workforce, which had 78% with primary schooling and 14% secondary schooling. Farmers with holdings in the smallest farm size category (i.e., <0.5 acre) were more likely to be engaged in off-farm work, in occasional work on the farm or be economically inactive. At the same time there are several disincentives to the involvement of youth in agriculture. These disincentives include: praedial larceny; difficulty accessing quality farmland; insufficient technical training; and inadequate credit arrangements⁸.

⁸ Ganpat, Wayne (May 2011) draft Final Report "Youth in Agriculture Policy for St. Vincent and the Grenadines".

The major problems of farmers reported in the 2001 agricultural census were praedial larceny (20% of reports) and destruction from pests and diseases and animals (32%). Issues of obtaining markets, labour, transportation and credit also were highlighted.

Agricultural producers have access to 2 major types of credit -- cash and input credit. In 2000, 22.7% of holders received credit during the year with the majority (by a ratio of 5:1) being input credit⁹. Agricultural producers and agri-businesses have access to credit from several sources¹⁰ – commercial banks, savings and loan banks, cooperative credit unions, local development institutions, donor projects, and trading organizations (which provide input and trade credit). The National Commercial Bank (NCB) has the largest agricultural portfolio (3% of its portfolio) and has an agricultural specialist. The other commercial banks and savings and loan institutions have smaller portfolios and depend on the Centre for Enterprise Development (CED) or consultants for technical assessments of loans. The NCB offers a non-secured micro-enterprise loan (between XCD 5,000 – 15,000) for a maximum of 4 years. Generally though, the Banks provide loans at between 11-14% interest with repayment based on cash flows, with a maximum grace period of 6 months and security required in the form of property. The credit unions have small agricultural portfolios. Twenty-two percent of the portfolio of the National Development Foundation (NDF) is in the agricultural sector. The NDF provides loans at an interest rate of 9% to a maximum of XCD 80,000 with grace periods of up to 6 months and repayment based on cash flows.

Agricultural marketing¹¹ in SVG operates within the constraint of a small internal market¹². The marketing agents for domestic produce comprise of small domestic traders (many of whom are small farmers), small regional traffickers, large regional and international traffickers, institutional exporters (such as WIBDECO and WINFRA), and individual producers/exporters. Supplies are directed to the domestic market (consumers, hospitality industry and agro-processors), and export markets in the United Kingdom, North America and the Caribbean (particularly Trinidad and Tobago, and Barbados).

Only a few of a potentially large number of products are consistently exported from St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The main exported products are: fish; bananas; rootcrops (dasheens, eddoes, sweet potatoes, ginger, and yams); plantains; mangoes and coconuts. Arrowroot is the main processed output of the agricultural sector. Meat and meat products, juices and jams, and dairy products are major imported products. Chicken and turkey are the main imported meat products. Dairy products are imported and consumed in the processed form, such as powdered milk.

Potential exporters are faced with significant problems occasioned by operating in a small island developing State with high costs of marketing and weak enabling environment (e.g., institutional, physical infrastructure; private sector enterprises). The problems of weak market information flows and infrastructure, and unorganized producers have been overcome in the past with well-developed value-chains for bananas and arrowroot aimed at target markets. WIBDECO is seeking to grow similar initiatives for the non-traditional produce.

⁹ 2001 Population Census Report

¹⁰ The information presented in the remainder of this paragraph is from the Agribusiness Development Report (2007) of the project of Technical Assistance to the SVG Agricultural Diversification Programme.

¹¹ This section on marketing has benefited tremendously from the “Marketing Report prepared for the Agricultural Diversification Programme by Landell Mills Ltd; September 2007”

¹² caused by limited population size; moderate income levels; high unemployment and poverty levels

5.0 RECENT AND PLANNED INITIATIVES FOR SECTOR MODERNISATION

Several recent initiatives have the potential for transforming the sector. These initiatives generally involve the establishment of packing and agro-processing facilities to aid the export thrust. Such recent initiatives include the recently established cassava processing plant and processing facilities by the National Properties Ltd, along with efforts by WIBDECO to link with producers for consistent supplies of non-banana produce for export to the European market.

A number of other planned initiatives, if well executed, have the potential for significant impact to the pace of sector development.

One such planned initiative is in the area of livestock development and specifically investment for an expanded modern integrated poultry operation. At this time private sector investors are in discussion with the Government and it is hoped that on the ground activities will be initiated in 2012. Additionally, an FAO project has been written for the establishment of a modern abattoir/processing facility that would link with the development of farms with improved housing and production systems (stock, management and feeding regimes) with aim of substantially increasing competitiveness and output of pork and small ruminants. While the FAO project document identifies key binding constraints and appropriate solution pathways, implementation is dependent on private (and to a smaller extent public) sector funding.

Another planned initiative is aimed at expanding and reconfiguring the fishing fleet to a higher proportion of larger boats capable of fishing in the open seas and remaining at sea for longer periods. This initiative involves making loans available to fishers and providing technical assistance in the procurement of suitable boats. This initiative is intended to increase landings while simultaneously reducing pressure on the inshore fisheries. The major hurdle facing this initiative is the reluctance of fishers to accept loans for boat and gear purchases.

The third planned initiative is that of the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI). The ATI started operations on a limited scale in mid-2011. It is intended to provide formal training for persons interested or involved in agriculture (farming, fishing, and forestry). However, the short-term goal of the ATI is very limited being constrained largely to providing training to improve farm husbandry skills. In the longer-term, the ATI should be positioned as the centre of learning/knowledge for the agriculture, food and landscaping industries, which will ensure relevance and sustainability not just for the ATI but also for the domestic agriculture sector.

6.0 SECTOR INSTITUTIONS AND GOVERNANCE

The following institutions have some significant level of involvement in the agricultural sector.

- Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Transformation, Forestry and Fisheries – the Ministry has 5 broad areas of operation – Farming (crops and livestock), Forestry, Fisheries, rural development and support services such as statistics and planning.
- National Properties Ltd -- a State entity intended to assist in further development of private sector activities. The NPL is involved in managing government-owned agricultural estates, agricultural production using improved methods, agro-processing, supermarket retailing, and the storage, packaging and export of commodities.

- National Investments Promotions Inc. –a State agency with Mission “to facilitate sustainable economic growth in St. Vincent and the Grenadines by providing Investment Promotion, Export Development, Business Facilitation and Research Services to potential and existing local and foreign investors and Government Agencies. The Agency is in effect an export and investment promotion agency. Agro-processing is a priority area of the agency.
- WIBDECO – the shareholders of the WIBDECO are the Governments and Banana Growers Associations of the English-speaking Caribbean banana exporting countries. The WIBDECO, with the diminution of the banana sector, is pursuing a strategy of using its marketing facilities and expertise to stimulate export development of non-traditional exports in the Caribbean islands.
- St. Vincent Banana Growers Association (SVBGA) -- a statutory organization that controls the cultivation of bananas and banana plants in the country.
- Windward Islands National Farmers’ Association/Fairtrade (WINFRA) --WINFA administers the Fairtrade label for banana growers in the Windward Islands.
- Bureau of Standards – responsible for the preparation, promotion, and implementation of national standards in relation to goods, services, processors, and practices. The Bureau has laboratory testing facilities that can support efforts to improve agriculture production and marketing and the environment.
- Agricultural Input Warehouse (AIW) – a State agency that has monopoly rights over the importation of sugar. The AIW imports and distributes fertilizers and other agricultural inputs to farmers. The AIW aims to reduce price volatility and prices of agricultural inputs sold to farmers.
- Arrowroot Industry Association (AIA) – manages the industry and is the sole exporter. The AIA has integrated the value chain from production to marketing.
- The Centre for Enterprise Development (CED) “is a non-profit organization established by the Government to provide a range of business development services and training to the private sector. Its operations aim at creating, nurturing and strengthening the local private sector”.
- Ministry of Rural Transformation (MoRT). The Ministry has a mission of “To improve the standard of living in rural communities through transformative development; to facilitate the transformation of the public service for the delivery of efficient and effective public service; to inform and educate the population through effective dissemination of public information; and to encourage spiritual well-being and fulfilment.”
- Ministry of Housing, Informal Human Settlements, Physical Planning, and Lands and Surveys – has responsibilities for land management and tenure.
- Ministry of Education, Ministry of Trade, Ministry of Legal Affairs, and the Ministry of Health each have mandates that will impact on, particularly medium and longer term, agriculture sector performance.
- Regional institutions: the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) and the University of the West Indies (UWI).

The MARTFF is headed by a Minister, who is responsible for policy and reports to Cabinet. The Permanent Secretary (PS) is responsible for the day-to-day functioning of the Ministry. The PS is assisted by three Chief Officers (Fisheries, Forestry, and Agriculture (essentially farming)).

The structure of the Ministry was augmented with the addition of the Rural Transformation Unit in December 2010 and an Agricultural Planner in early 2011. The addition of the rural transformation portfolio brings to the fore the need for attention to operational targets and systems to facilitate integration and synergies. The addition of the Agricultural Planner has meant the reordering of some functions and reporting relationships in the Ministry. The Planner can now relieve the Chief Agricultural

Officer of direct supervisory responsibilities for areas such as Statistics, Marketing development, Agri-business development, the preparation of capital estimates, policy and strategy development, monitoring and evaluation. These 2 additions suggest a need to relook the structure and distribution of responsibilities at the top of the Ministry. One critical aim of such an examination should be to greatly improve information flows across the Divisions/Units of the Ministry with aim of a more cohesive organisation.

There are two inter-Ministerial Cabinet-appointed Committees (one on Food Security, and the other for Rural Transformation) that involve the non-governmental sector. These Committees involve many of the same public institutional stakeholders. The MARTFF has leadership of the Rural Transformation Technical Committee.

There is no formal mechanism for involvement of the private sector stakeholders in the processes of agricultural sector policy and planning. Consultations are called from time to time by the Ministry on specific issues. Generally, agricultural producers' organizations (excepting WINFRA) tend to be weak. At the same time it must be highlighted that the planning function in the Ministry can now be more organised given the assumption of an Agricultural Planner.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS OF GLOBAL/NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS FOR SECTOR POLICY AND STRATEGY

The global economic slowdown and consequent impacts to tourism and exports coupled with the high levels of debt service and several already initiated large capital projects (such as the airport) suggests that St. Vincent and the Grenadines will have difficulty (particularly in the short term) to fund any significant increases in budgets for the agricultural sector.

Globalisation has presented more challenges than possibilities for the agricultural sector. This has been so because the sector has been slow to transform and innovate in anticipation of and response to the changing global situation. In part the slow response has been due to structural constraints that require significant effort to resolve – such as small farm sizes, the mountainous terrain, and absence of significant research and development capabilities. Any new policy must address these key binding constraints to the development of a more dynamic, internationally competitive agricultural sector.

The social situation of high rates of poverty particularly in rural/agricultural areas in the north of the main island suggests that the need for heightened attention to issues of rural development and food security in addition to the traditional areas of production and conservation.

The strong culture of agricultural production and small size of the domestic market suggests the need for a more efficient marketing system for agricultural produce and for significant new production to be export oriented and/or directed into processing. However, there are considerable costs associated with developing export markets and new products particularly given the reality of SVG being a small island State. Therefore an export strategy intended to further the process of agricultural diversification must focus on building/strengthening value-chains that are market oriented/led and which provide information and reduce risks for agricultural producers and marketing intermediaries.

The research and development and training capacities of the sector must be dramatically improved if diversification is to be achieved. The establishment of the ATI, if well resourced and given a suitable vision and mandate, will partially address the training situation. Other training areas that must be

addressed include school-based agricultural programmes and training of existing agricultural producers in their farm and community settings. The research and development capacity of the country must be significantly augmented to provide stakeholders with the alternative technologies and profitable commodities to increase producer incomes, increase productivity, reduce drudgery, improve quality and switch from existing declining commodities. This however, will require a strategic approach to research as exemplified by an agreed research agenda and work plans that are well resourced and accompanied by suitable monitoring and evaluation to facilitate accountability. The MARTFF should strive for the inclusion of stakeholders in setting the research agenda and monitoring research effort. Synergies, in areas such as staffing and facilities, may be obtained from linking the ATI and the Research Unit.

The attraction of the agricultural sector as a destination for investments in the economy is negatively affected by low returns relative to other sectors of the economy, higher levels of risk, praedial larceny, small size of farms, relative absence of suitable mechanization, difficulty in obtaining labour, and inadequate marketing arrangements. These disincentives to investment must be addressed if agricultural diversification efforts are to succeed.

Farm size and alienation of agricultural land are increasingly important issues. The size of many farms (30% of parcels were less than 0.5 acres) has reached uneconomic levels given rising GDP and personal income levels and is a significant constraint in developing export-oriented commercial agriculture. There is need for systems that will foster the amalgamation of small farm units. There is increasing competition for land from residential and commercial uses. If not addressed, this process will result in the alienation of significant amounts of the quality (re: slope and soil quality) lands from agriculture with implication for effects on future generations. Additionally, the issue of abandoned agricultural land must be tackled through strategies that improve the profitability of agriculture and that improves the management of State leased land.

Land tenure is a major issue though the importance is not fully captured in the statistics. Part explanation for the land tenure problems is the weak institutional environment for the registration and enforcement of land rights, and customs that encourage squatting and informal distribution of property among family. Most of the tenure insecurity issues can be resolved through a land adjudication campaign and strengthening of the institutions for land identification and registration. Land adjudication is being looked at by the Ministry with responsibility for physical planning. However, this systematic but resource intensive avenue for addressing land tenure and land registration and title information is in the conceptual stage and thus years away from implementation.

The need for an adequate system of agricultural finance that meets the needs of agricultural producers is made even more pressing in light of the issues of small farm size, tenure insecurity and the need for medium to long-term investment financing. Agricultural credit systems in the country have and continue to favour banana farmers because of a guaranteed stream of income, credit history and arrangements that allow repayment from sales receipts. It is unlikely that these features will be so completely replicated in another commodity industry. The major financing institutions find agriculture a risky proposition given the probabilities of crop/market failure and natural disasters (in an environment of no agricultural insurance). Further when presenting to the banks, many small agricultural producers have unacceptable collateral or financial background data, and insufficiently finished business proposals. There is need for the Government to work with the current financial institutions (largely the Banks and credit unions) to mitigate some of the risk of agricultural lending. Also there is need to work with farmers to improve their credit-worthiness profiles and documentation for presentation to the banks.

Intra-regional and international trade developments present significant challenges for the agriculture sector. Efforts to diversify the agriculture sector are driven by the changing nature of trade with the European Union (diminishing preferential access and rising standards-EUREPGAP). There is need for reorganization and realignment of the St. Vincent Banana Growers Association and the industry to further reduce costs and increase returns to farmers. There also is substantial room for expansion of the intra-CARICOM banana export trade to existing destinations, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago, and new destinations such as Antigua and Barbuda. There is opportunity to initiate/expand exports of vegetables to Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados, both of which have a strong demand for these items. However, the challenge is for vegetable producers to improve quality and consistency of supplies, which requires action from research, extension and private sector marketing.

Conservation of the soil and living natural resources is an important though understated responsibility of the agricultural sector. Conservation efforts and institutions suffer from inadequate resources, in part, because the contribution to the economy is understated. SVG has a marine space that is 70 times the land area and within which there are world renown Cays, beaches, coral reefs and other attractions that form the basis for tourism in the country. The forests and national parks also are a source of leisure and tourism. Possibly the greatest boost for the conservation effort will come about when there is a much better appreciation of the pivotal role of the marine, forest and land resources in generating wealth for present generations and in sustaining wealth for future generations.

Natural disasters pose a significant challenge for the rural/agricultural sector. SVG lies in the hurricane zone and thus subject to wind and water damage. The Government has put in place the institutional capability for education, preparedness and response in times of emergencies. However, the risks of natural disasters should receive consideration in crop selection and research for the agriculture sector.

8.0 POLICY FRAMEWORK

This policy framework is intended to foster private sector investment and enhance efforts for the sustainable use and conservation of the natural resources. Increased private sector investment is crucial to a more productive agriculture. The natural resources are the basis of the tourism and agriculture industries in St. Vincent and the Grenadines and so key to the short and long term prosperity and quality of life of citizens. The MARTFF is the institution of the State with primary responsibility for agriculture, the land and marine resources and the rural sector.

8.1 Public Goods and the Role of the State:

The policy position in respect of the role of the State and the provision of public goods is that:

The State will facilitate private sector activity and conservation of the natural resources by creating an enabling environment and efficiently and effectively providing public goods and engaging in public-private sector collaborative activities. The State only will intervene in markets, for limited periods and until market failure is corrected, to ensure the provision of private goods that are of strategic importance to agricultural development and in the wider/longer-term public interest. The State will hold to the principles of openness, transparency and accountability with criteria widely disseminated and fairly applied for its incentives/investments frameworks, provision of public goods and interventions in private markets.

Two fundamental issues for the agriculture sector in SVG involve a clearer distinction between public and private goods and, somewhat related, clarifying the role of the State. A public good has characteristics that consumption of the good by one individual does not reduce availability/enjoyment by others and it is difficult to exclude persons from freely enjoying the good. Because of these characteristics, pure public goods will not be produced by the private sector in quantities to maximize public welfare.

It can be expected that the State will supply public goods, since the benefits accrue to the broader society. Private goods will be supplied by the private sector. Public policy and even intervention generally is viewed as justified when the market fails to deliver the correct quantities of private goods required for optimum societal welfare.

Public goods include: extension services; research; drainage, irrigation and road infrastructure in the public domain; control of plant and animal infectious diseases; development of grades and standards; enforcement of regulations and provision of certification for, e.g., food safety and quality assurance; development of markets (domestic and import) but not marketing; efforts to protect the public interest in environmental issues, and broad-based efforts to reduce production and marketing risks.

Given the large list of public goods to be supplied in an environment of budget constraints, the State will examine its activities to make a determination on the provision of goods that fall in the middle of the public-private goods continuum or that clearly are 'private' in nature. Private goods include: the provision of infrastructure (irrigation, access roads etc) and free or subsidised services (e.g., land-preparation) on private lands. Goods that fall further into the public-private goods continuum include publicly funded soil conservation on private lands, and the supply of quality certified planting material.

Where incentives are made available and private or public goods provided at a discount, these will occur within the framework of a coherent investment regime for the sector and hold to the principles of openness, transparency and accountability with criteria widely disseminated and fairly applied.

8.2 Definition of the Agricultural Sector: The agricultural sector is defined as encompassing activities of and support systems for farming (crop and livestock production), fishing and forestry, and activities associated with sustainable management and conservation of the country's flora (including traditional crop varieties), fauna, land, water and renewable natural marine resources.

8.3 Delineation of Rural Areas: The rural sector is that part of the St. Vincent economy that contributes to and drives rural livelihood systems. Rural livelihood systems are the livelihoods of those people who live outside urban areas. Income for these livelihood systems may derive from within or outside the rural area of residence. The implied objective is thus the growth of the rural economy. In line with Sections 2.2 and 2.3 of the Strategic Plan for Rural Development, which is part of Government policy, "rural St. Vincent includes all of the communities outside of Census Divisions (CDs) 1 and 2 (Kingstown and suburbs of Kingstown) and some communities in CD 3". Thus, the area defined as rural is defined as all the communities "from Richmond Vale in CD 11 to Pembroke in CD 09 on the Leeward side; and from Diamond in CD 03 to Fancy in CD 08 on the Windward end. This includes all the windward communities that fall within these regions". This demarcated rural area excludes "some communities in which many persons sustain their livelihoods through agriculture and which do not fall within these geographical boundaries. Most noticeable are those communities that stretch from Rillan Hill to Questelles".

8.4 **Rural Development:**

The main focus of policy in respect of rural development will be:

“To assist rural communities to become economically viable and self-sufficient, in which people are empowered to contribute to the development of their own communities and to national growth, whilst ensuring the sustainable use and management of natural resources” (Strategic Plan for Rural Development (SPRD); 2008)

Farming, fishing and natural resource-based activities are the main economic drivers in rural areas. Indeed land and the renewable natural resources often are the primary assets of rural households and communities. However, rural communities need a wider set of development activities for their existence, quality of life and happiness. This wider set of development activities includes infrastructure (roads, utilities inclusive of telecommunications, fishing facilities, water and soil control structures) education, health, sporting and recreation activities etc.

The MARTFF will be mindful of its mandate in agricultural development and the importance of agriculture in rural livelihood systems. Thus, an important aspect of rural development will focus on the need for increased profitability and sustainable incomes from farming, fishing and value-added activities and increased household and community access to resources managed for sustainability. Part of this thrust will involve assisting communities and groups to organize to derive more benefits from value chains and the natural resources. In respect of the ‘wider set of developmental activities’ required by rural communities for holistic development, the MARTFF will utilize the approaches and methods detailed in the Institutional Framework for Rural Development. Thus, in order to more effectively and efficiently meet the demands of rural communities there will be a community focus reinforced with collaborative relationships with communities, civil society, and public sector bodies.

8.5 Scope and Responsibilities of the MARTFF: Given the agriculture sector defined as above, the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Transformation, Forestry and Fisheries (MARTFF) has oversight and regulatory responsibilities for agricultural production, marketing and small-scale agro-processing, and conservation activities. However, of note is that the activities under the purview of the MARTFF are part of wider commodity and environmental systems. The commodity systems involve input supply, production, marketing, value-addition, and consumption with aim of satisfying consumers. Thus, primary production cannot be treated as an isolated sub-system, divorced of developments in respect of input supply or consumers. The environmental systems include the ecosystems, communities and users. Therefore, the challenge for the MARTFF is to influence planning, oversight and regulatory responsibilities for the entire agriculture and food systems and the natural resources management systems through effective implementation of its mandate, strategic relationships with other Ministries and institutions, and effective relationships with stakeholders.

Notable stakeholders in the agriculture sector are farmers, fishers, processors of primary products, input suppliers, marketing agents including vendors and exporters, saw-millers, foresters, and others providing support services, national/regional/international institutions that work in the sector, and staff of the MARTFF and other institutions. Other important stakeholders are homeowners (involved in gardening, floriculture, fruit production, processing), florists, consumers, restaurateurs and others in the hospitality industry, supermarkets, landscapers, conservation groups, tourists and leisure groups.

8.6 Role of the Agriculture Sector: For the period 2012 -2018 , the policy position in respect of the role of the agriculture sector, is that:

Agriculture has a central and multifunctional role in the social, economic and cultural life of the country. The agricultural sector has important roles in food production, foreign exchange earnings, diversification of the economy, rural identity and development, conservation of the environment, preservation of bio-diversity, food security, health and well-being of citizens, and incomes of many families.

Agriculture is not an isolated activity in the economy or important only to the livelihoods of rural people and communities. Therefore, efforts will continue towards: strengthening the links between food production and food consumption and nutrition; increasing the integration of agriculture with other sectors of the economy (such as tourism); and addressing deficiencies within the sector that diminish the earnings and livelihoods of producers.

8.7 Agricultural Land: The goals of policy in respect of agricultural land will be to:

- 1) ensure the availability and accessibility of quality agricultural land for productive use by the present and future generations;***
- 2) motivate improved rates of productive utilization of agricultural land;***
- 3) promote the conservation of soil and water resources.***

The “Report on the Conversion of Agricultural Land” (Allahar 2010) found that there was a “40% decrease in the amount of land in agricultural use in SVG between 1985/6 and 2000” when censuses were conducted. The decreases were most severe in the rural north windward and leeward parts of the island (which the consultant attributed to abandonment of agricultural land and under-reporting) as well as in the areas of Kingstown and to its south and in the Grenadines (which the consultant attributed to conversion of land to non-agricultural uses). The Report also notes that the land management functions of the State do not reside in the Ministry of Agriculture but fall under agencies, primarily the Land and Surveys Department of the Ministry of Housing. Also given steep slopes, the issues of soil conservation and water conservation are of great importance to prospects for the longer-term success of the agricultural sector.

A number of measures will be given effect to the first and second policy goals. The Government will improve its systems and more effectively manage State land leased for agricultural purposes to ensure that these are kept in production. The Ministry of Agriculture will become more involved in the process of agricultural land management by formalising relationships with the Land and Surveys Department that may include providing reports on land-use and identifying a Senior Officer as a focal point for land matters. In respect of private agricultural land, the establishment of the agricultural land bank will see the Government assuming an intermediary role in effecting the rental or lease of land from owners to persons suitably interested in agricultural production. Additionally, the Government is exploring ways of clarifying titles to land that may involve a process of adjudication and registration. This will address issues related to ‘family land’ and further strengthen the functioning of markets for the rental, lease and sale of agricultural land to address issues of availability and encourage farm consolidation. To preserve quality agricultural land for future generations, the Government will explore a system of land zoning.

In respect of the second policy goal, efforts will be made for increased profitability of farming and to address constraints to agricultural production, such as credit, praedial larceny and deficiencies in the marketing systems.

In respect of the third policy goal, the emphasis will be on providing education and incentives for soil and water conservation while simultaneously enforcing regulations for good land use and husbandry practices.

8.8 *Agricultural labour:* The intent is to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the market for agricultural labour and the productivity of agricultural labour (which would also allow for higher farm wages).

Strategies that can be effected include: (i) introduction of a specialist agricultural labour force and agricultural labour/machinery contracting companies, (ii) establishment of an applied research programme for agricultural machinery intended to resolve machinery (e.g., planting, harvesting, weed control) and labour problems (e.g., need for specialised tools) faced by farmers, and (iii) collaborative action among area farmers as a means of facilitating the use of labour-saving machinery in planting, field operations, and harvesting.

8.9 *Agricultural Credit:* The main thrust of activities by the MARTFF will be to ***improve the environment for increased lending to the agricultural sector by financial institutions.***

Long-term credit (with suitable moratoria) to finance capital investment is an important input for transforming an increasingly technological and capital intensive agriculture sector. At the same time agricultural lending has been characterized by relatively high default rates.

Measures will aim to reduce risks (to borrowers and lenders) such as by ensuring secure titles, increasing the expertise of agricultural producers and having functional marketing arrangements. Also effort will be placed on enhancing the capacity of agriculturalists to present more effectively with financial institutions through the use of business plans and credit and financial histories. “The aim of these initiatives should be to create a level of performance that allows the financial sector to adopt the paradigm of “Management as Collateral”. Under such circumstances, the primary rationale for lending funds would be not the availability of collateral (although this will always be required), but the overall feasibility of the proposed business plan. Access to credit is then predicated on the premises that (1) the logistics of trading opportunities are well delineated and (2) the recipient of the credit has adequate business management capacity to mitigate against the chance of business failure.”¹³

As part of this quest for increased financing for the sector, the MARTFF will initiate discussions with financial institutions intended to identify opportunities and constraints and a way forward. In defining the way forward consideration will be given to short-term measures such as a facility for either subsidized credit or providing guarantees (or both). Two institutions in Trinidad and Tobago provide relevant examples – the Agricultural Development Bank (ADB) provides subsidised credit, several specialised targeted loan products and has a youth window; The Business Development Company (BDC) provides a system of loan guarantees that facilitate lending by private financial institutions to ‘approved’ businesses. In the medium to longer term the main thrust of activities will be to improve the environment for increased lending by financial institutions by reducing risks (to borrowers and lenders).

¹³ Landell Mills Ltd (2007); Team 3; Agribusiness Development Report; St. Vincent and the Grenadines Agricultural Diversification Programme.

8.10 Agricultural Risk: Policy will aim to *reduce risk in the agricultural sector by addressing the principal and underlying causes of risk.*

Higher levels of production and marketing risk in agriculture (in part due to environmental conditions and the perishable nature of produce) are a disincentive to investment into the sector. The MARTFF will seek to reduce the risk inherent in agricultural production and marketing by improving the knowledge and skills of producers and marketers in production and post-harvest operations, addressing praedial larceny, providing infrastructure (such as irrigation, access roads, docking and cold-storage facilities), and improving marketing arrangements. Assistance will be provided to producers during and after times of natural disasters.

8.11 Stakeholder Participation: *The MARTFF aims for the fullest participation of agricultural stakeholders in the processes of policy, planning and evaluation of sector programmes.*

Agricultural production is carried out by the private sector with substantial support from the public sector in the form of public goods and an enabling environment. The renewable natural resources are utilized by and managed for the benefit of citizens. Given the role of the State as a facilitator of private sector activity, public-private sector collaboration is required for success in production and conservation. In consequence, the Government will establish formal structured means of interacting with relevant stakeholders in a more participatory process. The MARTFF will expand on efforts for the establishment of representative committees to participate in policy, planning and evaluation at the sectoral and commodity/resource levels, and in its thrust in rural development. Also, the MARTFF will support the strengthening and development of representative democratic organizations for agricultural stakeholders (fishers, farmers, foresters, marketing agents, input suppliers).

8.12 Youth in Agriculture: *The intent of policy will be to increase the attractiveness of agriculture for young people.*

The policy goal above will be accomplished by (i) reducing the constraints to involvement of youths in agriculture and (ii) highlighting and raising the profile of career paths in agriculture, agribusiness and conservation

The involvement of youth in agriculture is constrained by several factors including, (i) the capital intensive nature of farm ownership and operation, (ii) difficulty accessing land, (iii) inadequate technical training, and (iv) the general increasingly negative attitude to agriculture. Other disincentives that more equally affect all segments of the population include: (a) praedial larceny; (b) the unattractiveness of agriculture because of its relative low profitability, high risk and drudgery; and (c) the long gestation period of many agricultural projects.

Policy and strategies to encourage youth in agriculture will aim to reduce the disincentives that have a disproportionate impact on youths. The Government already has in place or is addressing the more general disincentives to involvement in the sector such as praedial larceny and relative low profitability. In respect of the barriers that impinge more heavily on the youth, the Government will pursue several programmes. The MARTFF will engage the financial services sector with intent of facilitating establishment of a youth window in a credit programme for the agricultural sector or other credit products tailored to the circumstances of youths. Efforts to establish the Land Bank will be intensified as this will address to some extent the issue of access to land. The offerings of the Agricultural training Institute (ATI), if complemented with a youth apprenticeship/mentorship scheme for agriculture should

address issues of training. The ATI and apprenticeship/mentorship programmes should have significant outreach and development components intended to reduce “ignorance of the range of opportunities in the sector, as opposed to the stereotype of drudgery and low returns on investment¹⁴”. The apprenticeship/mentorship programme will enable the State to combine training, mentorship and employment in a comprehensive programme.

Attention also will be focussed on rejuvenating school-based agriculture and conservation programmes. This will be pursued through curriculum reform and/or enrichment at the primary and secondary school levels and through focused collaboration between MARTFF and the Ministry of Education by way of the medium of the 4-H or school garden programmes. In addition, a school and community-based programme intended to change the perception of youths to agriculture is required. Such a programme should highlight the place of agriculture in society, opportunities for technology and innovation, and success stories.

8.13 Research and Training: *In the period covered by this policy document, research and training are viewed as public goods vital to processes for transforming and enhancing the competitiveness of agriculture and to efforts for agricultural diversification. The Government will ensure that, in particular, research is strategic in meeting the needs of the sector and with adequate means for accountability.*

Inadequate research capacity is a significant reason for poor response to the global challenges. The issues of insufficient labour, low labour productivity and drudgery can be partially addressed with effective applied research programmes. The terrain and small farm sizes in St. Vincent means that there will be challenges in finding appropriate equipment. Hence there is need for an applied research programme to evaluate farm equipment and train operators. This must be one focus of the research agenda. Commodity research also is important and should focus on: increasing yields/output; improving quality; reducing post-harvest losses; and identification of alternative commodities to bananas. A restricted set of commodities should be researched. All research will entail analyses of technical responses and impact on profitability.

The strategic approach to agricultural research will involve priority setting, developing agreed research agenda, multi-year work plans with specified targets to be accomplished within given time frames, and identification of lead Agencies and researchers for purposes of accountability. An Agricultural Research and Training Committee will be instituted within the Ministry with involvement of stakeholders (including farmers/fishers) and objective of setting/approving the training and research agenda, oversight and coordination of the research and training processes, and monitoring and evaluating the training and research programmes.

Science and innovation will be fostered with improved quality of the human resources in agriculture. Improvements are required in areas such as husbandry, management, entrepreneurship, marketing, processing, information gathering and sharing. In the longer-term the soon to be opened ATI would be positioned to be at the centre of efforts to train and upgrade farmers, input suppliers, marketers, restaurateurs, landscapers, florists and Extension Officers, and even home gardeners. The course offering of the institution will reflect the view of agriculture as being ‘from farm to table’ and thus include training programmes in processing and landscaping. The Training Institute would seek collaborative programmes with the training institution for hotels and with the Ministry of Education.

¹⁴ Ganpat, Wayne (March, 2001); Final Report – Youth in Agriculture Policy for St. Vincent and the Grenadines

8.14 Incentives: *Consideration will be given to providing incentives to further policy goals of (i) increasing private sector investment in agriculture, (ii) encouraging the adoption of innovation intended to address specific core agricultural developmental issues, such as increasing labour productivity, and (iii) encouraging conservation of the natural resources.*

The scope of the current incentives¹⁵ available to the agricultural sector includes: income tax exemptions for farm income; duty concessions on farm vehicles, equipment and inputs; provision of technical services such as terracing and contouring at subsidised prices; provision of vegetable seedlings at subsidised prices; free technical assistance with the establishment of green houses; the periodic supply of fertiliser and livestock feed, also at subsidised prices; and special assistance to disadvantaged poultry farmers. Based on anecdotal evidence, the investment impact of the greenhouse incentives is good. For some of the other measures however, such as the periodic supply of fertiliser and livestock feed or the supply of vegetable seedlings, the investment impact is weak because of the inconsistency of supply or the insubstantial impact on the cost of production.

In respect of the first policy goal, which is to encourage private sector investment, the emphasis will be on facilitating access to financing and enabling effective marketing systems that capture value-added and provide some measure of price stability. In this thrust, particular attention will be paid to increasing the effectiveness of export marketing systems through, for example, addressing infrastructural, quality and relationship constraints. Improving relationship constraints can be achieved by, as one example, forward contracting supply with supermarkets or processors in a regional export market thereby allowing for higher prices and contracting of farmers. Incentives also should be targeted to commodities and producer subsets (Gordon 2010; pp vi) with intent of addressing industry/commodity constraints towards reducing cost and/or increasing market access for targeted agricultural commodities. Meat, vegetables, fruits and root crops might be commodities of focus in a targeted framework. The important producer subsets are commercial and semi-commercial farmers. Agricultural entrepreneurs in these two sub groups, among other things, are innovators and derive their income or a substantial portion thereof from farming. Targeting also facilitates the necessary monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the incentives framework. In addition, the incentive package should be sustainable over time, creating a stable environment within which producers' investment decisions are made. Other output-based incentives can be used to stimulate private sector investment.

In respect of the second policy goal the adoption of innovation can be directly encouraged by providing incentives for the adoption of the identified technology. For instance, to enhance labour productivity, mechanisation and irrigation can be encouraged, while livestock development can be enhanced through the use of better breeds or artificial insemination techniques.

In respect of the third policy goal, the incentive system should encourage soil and water conservation, promotion of distant water fishing to shift fishing effort away from the inshore fisheries, protection of indigenous germplasm and the protection of environmentally sensitive areas, along with a stricter enforcement of existing provisions regulating use of and access to the natural resources.

¹⁵ This paragraph is reproduced from a Consultancy Report prepared in 2010 by Ronald Gordon Ph.D and titled "Review of the Role of the State in the Agricultural Sector and reformulation of the System of Incentives for Production, Marketing and Conservation Activities, for St. Vincent and the Grenadines"

8.15 Conservation of the Natural Resources: *The Government recognises the importance of the marine, land and water resources to social and economic development and will enhance conservation efforts based in science and international best practices. Every effort will be made to meaningfully involve the relevant stakeholders (communities, NGOs and other State Agencies) in management/conservation of the natural resources*

St. Vincent and the Grenadines has significant marine, land and water resources underlie the success of key economic sectors, such as tourism and agriculture and hydro-electricity generation. The marine space is 70 times the land space. There are several sensitive and important marine and coastal ecosystems. Forests occupy 25%-30% of the land space. Much of the country's tourism is built on the attraction and quality of the marine space, coastal resources, forested areas and national parks. The continued capacity of the agriculture sector for production of a range of rootcrops and other commodities is dependent on the quality of land.

The MARTFF will ensure that there are Management Plans for all aspects of the natural resources of the country. These management Plans will be based in science and international best practices, and have the active participation of stakeholders in their development. Also the Management Plans will seek to meaningfully involve the relevant stakeholders (communities, NGOs and other State Agencies) in the management/conservation of the natural resources. Possibilities for stakeholder involvement can include the development of systems to combat illegal fishing and reef and coastline destruction that integrate the more active participation of fishing communities, fishing vessels and other crafts of SVG, and the Coast Guard. The conservation of forested areas also can benefit from the more active involvement of communities and NGOs. Soil conservation on non-forested private lands may require some incentives such as the provision of technical assistance plus the required grass or tree planting materials. The MARTFF will ensure that Management Plans propose cost-effective approaches and achievable objectives.

9.0 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

9.1 Vision of the Agricultural Sector

The vision, which will drive the policies and strategies detailed in this 2012 - 2018 document, is of:

An agriculture (farming, forestry, and fishing) sector that is modern, innovative, internationally competitive and efficient in the management and use of resources for the food security, poverty reduction, wealth creation and wellness of all citizens.

9.2 Overall Goal for the Sector

The overall goal of policy/strategy for the period 2012 through 2018 will be to:

Promote the development of agri-businesses that are financially, socially and environmentally sustainable

Promoting the development of agri-businesses and financial, social and environmental sustainability invariably will lead to a repositioning of the agricultural sector within the economic, cultural and social landscapes. In this repositioning, the focus will be on the entrepreneur (producer, processor, marketer) and the private sector, where production response must occur. Successful agri-businesses engage in risk-taking to exploit opportunities and create value through the introduction of new production methods, products or markets and/or use of new supply sources or systems of organization¹⁶. Agribusiness development is fostered in an environment that provides opportunity and rewards innovation; thus the enabling environment and incentive systems are important. Sustainability is a key concept as it emphasises the need for agribusinesses to be facilitated in an environment and use methods that benefit the businessman but also is of benefit to wider society by not causing harm to the social and environmental systems.

9.3 Specific Goals for the Sector

Specific goals for the period 2012-2018 are as follows:

1. Increase agricultural production, competitiveness and incomes and reduce associated risk
2. Protect the natural environment and biodiversity
3. Strengthen the institutional environment for agricultural development
4. Enhance the viability of rural areas
5. Contribute to increasing food security

9.4 Broad Strategies for Achieving the Specific Goals

9.4.1 Increase Production, Competitiveness & Incomes and Reduce Risk.

The essential strategy will focus on strengthening the value chains of a select set of crop, livestock, fisheries and forestry products with objective of significant increases in output. 'Market opportunities' will be the key criterion used in selecting the crop, livestock, fisheries and forestry products. Some of these value chains will be export-oriented (primarily bananas, rootcrops and fisheries but with possibilities for fruits and even vegetables in the longer-term) while some will be oriented towards reducing imports, such as meat and vegetables. Thus, 'market-led' will be the basis in selecting and developing the commodity value chains. The value chains for each product (or groups of products) selected will be mapped so that constraints and opportunities can be identified and strategic actions

¹⁶ Joseph Schumpeter, 1943; Stevenson et al, 1989

implemented. Each value chain (for a product or group of products) will have a stakeholders' committee (inclusive of MARTFF, farmers and marketers, inclusive of large buyers) with oversight of the value chain analyses, identification of key constraints and opportunities, writing of the strategic development plans and implementation activities.

The process of formulating strategic development plans for identified products will lead to consideration of a number of issues, primarily marketing but also including issues of incentives and investment regimes, agricultural land, labour, credit and the quality of the human resources.

In respect of selected export commodities, a major strategic move will be to facilitate/encourage links between value chains (input suppliers/farmers/packing house) in SVG on the one hand, and supermarkets/hotels and other large buyers in export markets (Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados initially) on the other hand. The packing-house operation in SVG would collect, sort, grade and wrap packages of root-crops, vegetables and fruits for direct placement onto the shelves of specific/contracted supermarkets in these countries. Branding (using an SVG label, and/or certification under an SVG label or standards) would be promoted. The operations of the commodity value chains will be completely private sector operations that add value to SVG produce and keeps as much of that value in SVG. Importantly, the arrangements should facilitate the flow of information between farmers/packing house and the Supermarket(s) and in time move to a system of forward contracts which could lead to farmers being placed under contract with guaranteed prices.

In respect of the commodities selected to displace imports, a major strategic move will be building domestic value chains that include packing houses and large buyers, such as supermarkets and hotels. A key ingredient of these value chains will be the flow of information among chain actors so that quality and production can be synchronised with demand. The objectives for import displacement will heavily depend on success in the broiler industry, for which a plan of action already is being effected.

For the period 2012 – 2018, the objective will be to increase the exports of rootcrops (100%), bananas (100%), tree fruits 10%) and fisheries (35%) and reduce the imports of meats (20%) and vegetables (40%). In monitoring and evaluating this objective, average annual values for 3 year periods will be used. The reference period for comparisons will be 2009 – 2011.

9.4.2 Protect the Natural Environment and Biodiversity

The core strategic actions for protecting the natural environment and biodiversity will be:

- a. Developing and implementing Management Plans based in science for the marine and land (including soil and forests) resources. The Management Plans will detail strategies that are cost-effective and in line with international best practices. Further, the development and implementation of the management plans will involve collaborative effort by all stakeholders
- b. Involving all sectors of society, and in particular adjacent communities, in protection and conservation efforts
- c. Instituting public awareness and education programmes to underline the importance of the natural resources to the tourism and agriculture industries and the role of watersheds in the production of food, water, energy and other basic needs. The programmes will make the link of these resources to the country's potential to earn foreign exchange and provide a decent standard of living for its citizens, and in particular its rural citizens.

The MARTFF will ensure adequate resources are available for conservation efforts so as to ensure outcomes consistent with approved management plans.

9.4.3 Strengthen the Institutional Environment for Agricultural Development

Strategy will aim for an efficient and effective system of public institutions and public infrastructure that provides public goods and services in support of competitive agricultural production, marketing and trade. This system of public institutions will include the Agencies that provide physical infrastructure, pest control, market information, research and development, biotechnology etc.

Strengthening the institutional environment will require attention to issues of governance, institutional coordination and collaboration, reform of the Ministry of Agriculture for increased efficiency and effectiveness, and strengthening of stakeholder institutions, such as farmers/fishers organisations.

A major governance issue is that of stakeholder participation in policy development and planning. Agricultural production is carried out by the private sector with substantial support from the public sector in the form of public goods and an enabling environment. The renewable natural resources are utilized by and managed for the benefit of citizens. Given the role of the State as a facilitator of private sector activity, public-private sector collaboration is required for success in production and conservation. In consequence, the Government will establish formal structured means of interacting with relevant stakeholders in a more participatory process.

The formal structured mechanisms for interacting with stakeholders will involve:

- a. An annual Stakeholder Outlook and Planning Consultation that also is associated with or preceded by a sector review and evaluation exercise. This will be a one or two-day event that includes the private sector and relevant civil society in the process of reviewing sector performance, formulating strategy and setting targets for the coming year and medium-term.
- b. Value-chain/industry development Committees for commodities or groups of commodities (such as tree-crops, rootcrops, short-term crops, fisheries, livestock etc). These Committees will allow strategy development and identification of pressing issues to be addressed for sector development

Institutional coordination and collaboration will be improved by inclusion of affiliate Agencies (such as the National Properties Ltd, and Agricultural Input Warehouse) into the policy and planning development and implementation processes. The MARTFF will have regular (monthly or quarterly), formal structured meetings that involve the high-level officials of the Ministry and the affiliated public and international agencies. These meetings will allow for work planning and monitoring, and provide opportunities for sharing information on the activities of each institution. Additionally, the MARTFF will allocate resources and support the strengthening and development of representative democratic organizations for agricultural stakeholders (fishers, farmers, foresters, marketing agents, input suppliers).

There is need for some restructuring of the MARTFF. The main objectives of restructuring should be to:

- a. put in place a structure and systems that would facilitate a Ministry-wide all-out focus on facilitating transformation of the private (agricultural sector).
- b. reform of the Extension & Advisory Services (inclusive of methodology and operational methods) to serve the clientele better, more efficiently and more effectively.
- c. reform of the Research Division of the MARTFF for a greater focus and efficiency in on resolving the problems of farmers/marketers.
- d. Ensure a dedicated Unit for addressing issues related to food safety/certification/good agricultural and manufacturing practices,

- e. increase the flow of information across Divisions/Units so that all Senior Managers have good knowledge of the work of all Units of the Ministry
- f. improve efficiency and effectiveness of programmes and implementation
- g. implement a much improved monitoring system for performance of services, programmes and key institutions. The monitoring system should generate regular reports for the consideration of the Permanent Secretary, the Chief Agricultural Officer and the Management Board of the Ministry.

Additionally, restructuring of the MARTFF must provide a resolution to the disparity in influence and remuneration between the senior staff of the farming section of the Ministry (Deputy Chief Agricultural Officer, Diversification Officer, Agricultural Planner, who are all in Range B2) on the one hand and the Heads of the Livestock and non-farming sections (Heads of Fisheries, Forestry, and Rural Transformation, all in range C). This is particularly relevant given the increased emphasis on conservation of the natural resources. Figure 1, provides an organogram of the Ministry.

9.4.4 Enhance the Viability of Rural Areas

There will be a focus on improving economic opportunities and living conditions in rural areas. Two consequences of poor performance in these areas of economic opportunities and living conditions are abandonment of agricultural land and relatively high levels of poverty in the north windward and leeward regions of the main island. Given that agriculture is the main economic activity in rural areas, the inclusion of the mandate for rural development alongside agriculture in the MARTFF now allows for more holistic and coherent approaches to addressing issues of rural poverty and living conditions.

The Rural Transformation Unit (RTU) of the MARTFF is at the forefront of implementing Government policy in respect of rural development. The policy is detailed in two documents – the Strategic Plan for Rural Development and the Institutional Framework for Rural Development. The policy highlights an integrated community focussed approach to interventions in the rural sector with the aim of such interventions being “empowered communities and their people working in partnership with Public/Private/NGO entities towards a shared vision of the transformed community”. The policy identifies an implementation structure that in addition to the RTU includes: the Rural Transformation Steering Committee (RTSC); the Rural Transformation Technical Committee (RTTC); and Community Partnership Groups (CPGs), which are community level organisations that can mobilize residents and represent their interests.

For the 2012 – 2018 period, the MARTFF will:

- a. Continue implementing the existing policy and strategy for rural development. The existing policy and strategy has a focus on working with and empowering rural communities.
- b. Support the units of the Ministry in efforts for improved stakeholder interaction and in the formation and sustainability of stakeholder groups. The RTU has (relative) experience and focus in the social aspects of development and in group formation and dynamics.
- c. resource the RTU, re staffing and equipment needs, in line with recommendations of the Institutional Framework for Rural Development

9.4.5 Contribute to Increasing Food Security

This will be accomplished in collaboration/cooperation with the National Food Security Committee. However, there is need for a comprehensive food security strategy and plan that addresses the four components of national availability, household accessibility, individual nutritional security, and stability. Such a plan would allow for coordination and collaboration among the relevant Ministries and Agencies,

and stakeholders and allow the MARTFF to know its role and contribution in the overall strategy and activities.

The MARTFF in contributing to food security (and in the absence of a Food and Nutrition Strategic Plan) will:

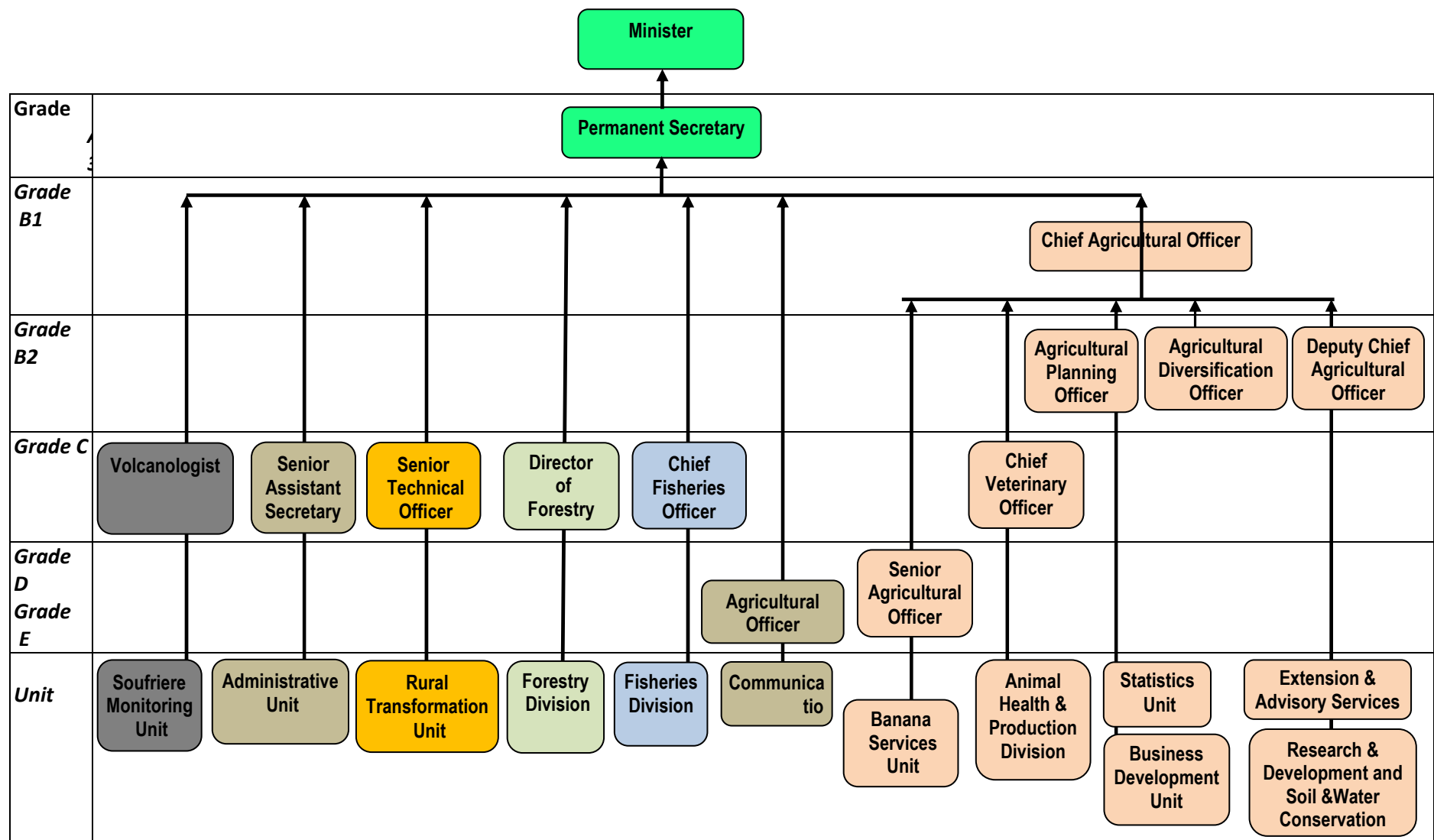
- a. Designate a Senior Officer as a Food Security focal point within the Ministry.
- b. Promote utilization of locally produced foods in the diet.
- c. Develop & promote technologies that can add shelf-life and/or value to primary produce
- d. Develop and implement effective plans for preserving the bio-diversity

9.5 Action Plans

Actions Plans are presented in Annexes I - VI. These provide more detail to the strategies expressed in Section 9.4.1 and on the cross-cutting issues that must be addressed. The Annexes are:

- Annex I: ACTION PLAN: Cross-cutting Issues
- Annex II: ACTION PLAN: Increase Agricultural Production, Competitiveness and Incomes and Reduce Risk
- Annex III: Protecting the Natural Environment and Biodiversity
- Annex IV: Strengthening the institutional environment for agricultural development
- Annex V: Enhancing the viability of rural areas
- Annex VI: Contributing to increasing food security

Figure 1. Reporting Relationships/Organogram for the Top Offices of the MARTFF with associated Salary Ranges



ANNEX I: ACTION PLAN FOR CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

Goals	Objectives	Principal Strategic Implementation Activities	Time Frame	Responsible Parties	Supporting Agency	Evaluation Criteria
Provide the environment to foster private sector investment	Role of the State: Greater transparency & equity in distribution of public goods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop guidelines and procedures for a more transparent and equitable process in allocating public expenditure to private interests. Such expenditure include the provision of soil conservation activities and irrigation on private farms 	2012-2013	Agricultural Planner		Documented approved guidelines/procedures
	Incentives System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stimulate increased private sector investment, facilitate adoption of innovation 	<p>The incentive system should seek to stimulate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) export marketing systems/arrangements or to remove bottlenecks and constraints to export marketing (b) longer-term investments such as forests & agro-forestry (including on environmentally sensitive private lands). (c) development of key commodity groups in the tree crop, livestock, fisheries and forestry sub-sectors (d) the adoption of specific technologies to address labour and land productivity – such as irrigation & varieties to increase land productivity; mechanisation to increase labour productivity (e) conservation of natural resources – e.g., soil and water conservation; protection of environmentally sensitive areas; community participation in conservation 	2012-2014	PS, CAO, Agricultural Planner, Chief Fisheries Officer, Director of Forestry	FAO, IICA	Acceptance of document by the Government Implementation of the document
	Credit: Improve accessibility to credit from Finance Institutions by Dec 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designate an Officer/desk in the MARTFF with responsibility for Credit (and marketing) issues. This Officer/desk should (i) strengthen relations between Producers & Financial Institutions(FIs) and between MARTFF & FIs (ii) assist producers to build credit worthiness, (iii) increase the capacity of producers to prepare documentation for financial institutions Provide technical assistance to creditors to lend money to the farming sector Create a special fund through the existing financial institutions to lend to the agri-sector linking credit to training/experience. 	2012-2015	CAO, Chief Fisheries Officer, Director of Forestry	Banks, Credit Unions	loan portfolios of the FI in agriculture
	Agric Land: ensure quality land is available for production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate on developing and presenting to Cabinet a Paper on loss of quality agric land, and land use of existing agricultural land. Include recommendations Designate a focal point for Agricultural Land within the MARTFF. This Senior Officer will be responsible for liaising with Land Management and the land Agencies 	2012 2013	PS MARTFF, L&S, Physical Planning Dept	NPL	Cabinet approval of a policy;
	Marketing: Create environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate dialogue with large buyers (supermarkets, processors, exporters) to understand their requirements and have their inputs into the design of mechanisms to satisfy their requirements. These mechanisms can include a system of forward 	2012 2015	- ADU	Supermarkets Hotels importers	Import replacement for

Goals	Objectives	Principal Strategic Implementation Activities	Time Frame	Responsible Parties	Supporting Agency	Evaluation Criteria
	where large buyers have consistency of supply year round and access to quality produce	contracting especially to replace imports, establishment of a wholesale market, establishment of packing houses etc. Participation of the large buyers/importers in an agreed system also can have impact of addressing imports. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a farmers wholesale market (at first on a trial basis with intent of bringing buyers and sellers together, and so this can be started in a designated space without need for too much infrastructure, such as buildings etc) Develop information systems (like NAMIS) to link buyers and sellers with information Operate a desk in the Ministry of Agriculture (in the Business Development Unit) for addressing marketing system issues Capacity building/farmer training to ensure food standards and safety. Allocate adequate resources to Bureau of Standards to fulfill their mandate effectively including compliance with regional and institutional standards for agricultural and food products. 			Exporters BoS NPL	supermarkets and hotels
	Research and Training: More effective Agricultural Research and Training (AR&T) support for producers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an AR&T Committee, that includes stakeholders, to agree, coordinate, & monitor AR&T processes & the research agenda Implement a strategic approach to AR&T -- this will involve priority setting, having agreed research agenda with multi-year work plans that specify targets & given time frames, and identification of lead Agencies/researchers for accountability Have applied research programmes to (i) evaluate farm equipment and training operators;(ii) increase yields/output; (iii) conduct Commodity research for alternatives to bananas/arrowroot, (iv) improve quality; increase profitability Examine existing institutions facilities to properly resource them to deliver on their mandate 	2012-2013	CAO/PS	CARDI IICA FAO UWI	ART Committee established and approve Workplan; Number of applied research programmes in operation
	Soil Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a strategy and plan to popularise soil conservation (with more focus to targeting farmers and specific communities 	2012	CAO	CARDI IICA FAO	Strategy and plan approved; Resources allocated to programme

ANNEX II: ACTION PLAN FOR INCREASING PRODUCTION, COMPETITIVENESS AND INCOMES AND REDUCING RISK

Goals	Objectives	Principal Strategic Implementation Activities	Time Frame	Responsible Agency	Supporting Agency	Evaluation Indicator
Increase agricultural production, competitiveness and incomes	Increase exports by 100% each of rootcrops & banana and 10 % of tree fruits by December 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify/assess export-markets – initially Trinidad & Tobago, Barbados, Venezuela, UK/Europe. Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) demand – quantities, prices, customers, standards, delivery schedules, (b) supply – quantities, prices, producers (c) information requirements and flows (d) participants & value-chain-industry organization (existing and required) (e) opportunities and constraints and associated strategy Organize/develop private sector commodity value chains targeting these markets Address urgent/important constraints (e.g., transportation, market information system, disease monitoring and prevention, cold storage facilities and internal buying depots equipped with refrigerated facility) Establishment of an Agribusiness Development Unit with primary focus to undertake market and value-chain assessments for key commodities and <u>facilitate private sector led</u> exporting Initiate programme to address longer-term constraints/opportunities -- e.g., Increasing yields, improving quality, improving returns to farmers 	2012 – 2015	Agribusiness Development Unit (ADU)	Private Marketing Agencies, CaFAN, CARDI, IICA, TTMA, Vincy Fresh, Invest SVG, ECTAD	Compare to 2009-2011 average annual values by weight and value
	Increase exports of fish and fisheries products by 35% by Dec 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure compliance and secure access to export markets and in particular Europe/French West Indies. Successfully implement the large vessel programme with the target boat numbers Implement an investment promotion programme, in part to address (a) pelagic and under-utilized species, and (b) post harvest handling and processing, and development of value-added products Develop management plans for capture species Develop/implement mechanisms to reduce impact of natural disasters on industry Improve and expand the domestic marketing system for seafood 	By 2015	Fisheries Division		Compare to 2009-2011 average annual values by weight and value
	Reduce imports of meats overall by 20% by Dec 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Poultry</u>: Modernize and expand the poultry industry using the avenue of private sector investment in larger more intensive units. <u>Pork</u>: Encourage investment (from particularly existing farmers) in larger operations and in animals with better genetic potential <u>Beef</u>: Increase the productivity of beef and dairy cattle production systems by improving the genetic potential of farm animals, husbandry systems, and technical capacities of farmers Improve slaughter facilities, post-slaughter facilities, and competence of butchers 	By 2015	Livestock Division	Bureau of Standard	Compare to 2009-2011 average annual values by weight and value

Goals	Objectives	Principal Strategic Implementation Activities	Time Frame	Responsible Agency	Supporting Agency	Evaluation Indicator
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote a value chain approach to industry organization to meet the needs of large buyers (e.g., hotels and supermarkets) Develop, implement and monitor Good Agricultural Practices on farm Strengthen existing commodity /farmers organization and support formation of others Implement measures to reduce dumping of meat and meat products into SVG market Conduct regular monitoring of animal feed quality 				
	Reduce imports of vegetables by 40% and fruit and fruit juices by 10% by 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of value chains directed at meeting the needs and quality standards of large buyers (hotels, supermarkets and protective agricultural system) Increase yields & reduce costs with attention on knowledge/skills of farmers Emphasize research and development and transfer of knowledge and skill of farmers Promote the establishment of greenhouse farms through: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review of incentive framework to facilitate investment by farmers in the green house technology Mentorship programme (training in green house operations etc) Promote farmers corporative utilizing a planned production system 	2012–2018	Farmers organization Farmers	Extension & Research Divisions BoS Processors TTAM ABU	Compare to 2009-2011 average annual
	Increase farmers income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve productivity on farms with attention to knowledge and skills of farmers in areas such as agronomic practices, agro-processing, postharvest management/marketing. Make available appropriate innovations to suit local circumstances (land mechanization and irrigation) Improve record keeping systems on farms Promote formation of farmers orgs and in particular the development of value chains targeted to markets 	2012-2018	Research & Extension Divisions R&D and AHPD	Large buyers ABU Farmers	Collect information on farm incomes in base year of 2011
	Agricultural Risk: Reduce production risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a portal for reporting (and record keeping) on praedial larceny. Establish monitoring and evaluation systems for praedial larceny policing interventions; establish programmes to assist producers and communities in securing their interests Continued provision of assistance during/after times of natural disaster Conduct vulnerability assessments Establish mitigation mechanisms to reduce the impact of climate change Assess and establish mechanisms for insurance for non-banana crops, livestock and fisheries Implement integrated pest management systems to prevent disease 	2012-2013	CAO, CFO, Director of Forestry	Police Dept NEMO	Records of response to natural disasters

ANNEX III: ACTION PLAN FOR PROTECTING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND BIODIVERSITY

Goal	Objectives	Principal Strategic Implementation Activities	Time Frame	outcome	Responsible Agency	Supporting Agency	Evaluation Indicator
Protect the natural environment and bio-diversity	Effective and efficient management of forests and bio-diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a forest and natural resource inventory (1) Map forests; (2) identify species wrt fauna and flora; (3) conduct a wildlife census and other relevant data 	2013–2015	Stakeholders aware of diversity and value of the resources;	Forestry Dept.	UWI TNC	document
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valuation of the natural resources (1) Develop proposal for evaluation; (2) Consultancy, (3) Evaluation of flora, fauna and fresh water resources. 	2015		Forestry Dept	FAO National Parks	valuation document
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop specific and site specific management plans (1) Consultations with relevant stakeholders; (2) Identify sites to be considered; (3) Develop action plans; (4) Identify resource for implementation 	2016–2017	Forestry Dept has management tools for general and site-specific management.	Forestry Dept	FAO Min of Environment	Management plan
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and upgrade environmental legislation (1) Review and Identify the shortcoming of the legislations and their regulations -- Forest Resource Conservation Act 1992 & Wildlife Protection Act 1987; (2) Submit to Legal authority for review and enactment 	2016		Legal Affairs Forestry Dept	National Parks,	Laws and regulations enacted
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance/ strengthen forestry education and public awareness programs (1) Training of Officers responsible; (2) Design and deliver programs; (3) Acquisition of appropriate equipment and accommodation; (4) Access suitable vehicle for outreach programs 	2012–2018	Public knowledgeable and committed to participation in natural resource conservation	Forestry Dept	Community groups,	program manual
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue annual reforestation program in critical areas (1) Source finance for venture trust; (2) Procure planting materials; (3) Planting of trees (30 acres per year) 	2012–2018		Forestry Dept	Ministry of Finance	200 acres of trees established
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop sustainable land use practices (1) access technical capacity (in-house/external); (2) Establishment of data base of lands (characteristic, use, capability); (3) Design land-use plans; (4) Ensure appropriate legislation is in place 	2012–2018	Land use practices established	Ministry of Agriculture	Physical Plann, Lands & Surveys	Land use determined
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with individuals and communities in developing sustainable livelihoods opportunities (1) Identify target individual and communities; (2) Identify areas for development; (3) Identify needs and support required; (4) Identify source of funding 	2012 – 2018		Forestry Dept	Community groups,	Profitable sustainable Projects are
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of endemic plant and animal species (1) Identify endangers species; (2) Establishment of plant and animal germplasm banks; (3) Establishment of seed bank 	2012–2018		Forestry Dept	UWI	Well maintained germplasm banks

Goal	Objectives	Principal Strategic Implementation Activities	Time Frame	outcome	Responsible Agency	Supporting Agency	Evaluation Indicator
	Effective management of fisheries and coastal zones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and maintain marine protected areas <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Develop management plan; (2) Introduce regulations and policies; (3) Develop action plans to manage impacts of disasters; (4) Establish partnerships between fishers, water-sports operators and dive shop operators to reduce conflict; (5) Designate areas for users; (6) Public consultations 	2012-2016	More cost effective management of protected areas	Fisheries Division	National Parks; TNC	2 functional marine protected areas; Management plans
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection of endangered/exploited marine species <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Establish partnership fishers, water sport operators, sport fishers and hoteliers/dive operators; (2) Promote sustainable use of endangered marine species; (3) Review and update legislation; (4) Enforce legislation; (5) Public awareness and education programs 	2012-2018	Programs on sustainability of marine resources; Community Partnerships	Fisheries Div.	Police Dept.	Positive public response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of the fisheries coastal zones <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Develop and implement legislation into coastal zone management systems; (2) Integrate fishing into coastal zone planning and management; (3) Partnership with national coastal zone management authorities on marine space uses and habitat degradation 	2013-2016	Improved Coastal Zone management	Fisheries Div. Min of Planning	Min of Finance	Legislation; Established working partnerships
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection against invasive species <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Conduct public awareness/educational programs; (2) Partnership with dive shops and fisher folks 	2013	Cooperation of the public	Fisheries Div	Ministry of Tourism	Public response

ANNEX IV: ACTION PLAN FOR STRENGTHENING THE INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Goals	Objectives	Principal Strategic Implementation Activities	Time Frame	Responsible Agency	Supporting Agency	Evaluation Indicator
Strengthen the institutional environment for agricultural development	Stakeholder influence: Increased stakeholder influence in policy formulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formation of an umbrella body intended to present the views of agricultural stakeholders at the level of policy and planning. Constitution and operating principles of the umbrella body based on democratic principles and to reflect good governance practices 	2012 – 2013	Farmers groups	MARTFF	Umbrella body operational and registered
	Stakeholder Participation: Institutionalise Stakeholders in policy and planning processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an Annual Stakeholders Outlook and Planning Consultation to review activities and plan priority activities for the coming year Establish/strengthen industry/value-chain committees to provide input in policy and planning for commodities and commodity groups Strengthen & develop representative democratic organizations for agricultural stakeholders (fishers, farmers, foresters, marketing agents, input suppliers). 	2011-2013	Permanent Secretary/ CAO		Annual Stakeholders consultation held; Industry/value chain committees active
	Infrastructure: Improve farm access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess farm and feeder roads; categorise and develop a plan for repair and upgrade. Upgrade feeder roads to motorable status Establish refrigerated chambers at export points; Provide incentives for refrigerated carriers Provide farmers and farmers groups with technical support services for on-farm infrastructure projects 	2012-2015	CAO	NPL	Improved public infrastructure in agriculture
	Institutional Strengthening: effective support for diversification and conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reorganize the MARTFF for: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) A greater focus on relationships with and providing support and services to producers, conservationists and rural communities, (2) An increase in the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery to both commercial and subsistence farmers (i.e., a two prong approach to targeting of service delivery) (3) Greater equity for the non-crop portfolios (fisheries, forestry, rural development) within the MARTFF hierarchal structure and for staff promotional opportunities (4) Improved information flows between Divisions and Units 	2012 – 2013	Permanent Secretary, CAO, Agricultural Planner	Cabinet, CPO, Public Sector Reform Unit, FAO	Revised structure for MARTFF Refocused Research and Extension Div Review of systems & procedures

ANNEX V: ACTION PLAN FOR ENHANCING THE VIABILITY OF RURAL AREAS

Goals	Objectives	Principal Strategic Implementation Activities	Time Frame	Responsible Agency	Supporting Agency	Evaluation Indicator
Enhance the Viability of Rural Areas	Creation of Social infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MARTFF to continue implementation of the 'community and individual empowerment approach' and the wider Strategic Plan for Rural Development and the Institutional Framework for Rural Development. These approaches and documents already have been approved by the Cabinet Adequately staff (at least 3 Rural Development Officers) and resource the Rural Transformation Unit (RTU) The RTU to be more integrated into the agriculture development work of the MARTFF with special emphasis on group formation and sustenance, and work with communities on the wider aspects of rural development that involve meeting community needs Community Mechanism for identifying and disseminating funding to rural groups MARTFF/RTU to design an equitable and transparent funding mechanism to assist community groups with community enhancing activities Strengthen community groups to function and be sustainable 	2012 – 2015	RT Unit	FAO	Community groups functioning under the Strategic Plan for Rural Development;
	Incentive for Youth Increase number of youths involved in agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a national policy supporting youth in agriculture Ensure accreditation of educational programs Operations of the Land Bank, Credit products tailored to the circumstances of youths Easy access and programmes tailored to youths into the Agricultural Training Institute Establish a youth agricultural apprenticeship/mentorship programme Review curriculum and agriculture programmes in primary and secondary schools and the 4-H programme to ensure attractiveness to target youth populations 	2012 – 2015	RT Unit/ Extension Division; ATI	FAO, Ministry of Education; Community College	Approved policy document
	Promotion of Traditional Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation of traditional indigenous cultures and customs to maintain community pride and form the basis for commercial enterprises Encourage and develop value-added local products among women 	2012 – 2015	RT Unit	FAO	Reports on enterprise formation/perf
	Development of Rural Enterprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage agri-business in school through develop of after school farms utilizing existing farm operation Facilitate enterprise formation in targeted rural areas, Sandy Bay (coconut oil), casava factory (utilize for training in value added) and work with these enterprises for success and transfer of business and technical skills 	2012 – 2015	RT Unit	FAO	Reports on enterprise formation and performance
	Develop related Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilization of Bamboo and value added uses Practical Training at the Orange Hill Farm 	2012 – 2015	RT Unit	FAO	

ANNEX VI: ACTION PLAN FOR CONTRIBUTING TO INCREASING FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY

Goals	Objectives	Principal Strategic Implementation Activities	Time Frame	Responsible Agency	Supporting Agency	Evaluation Indicator
Food and Nutrition Security	To increase the per capita consumption of targeted commodities by x% by 2018	• Reactivate the National Food and Nutrition Security Committee (NFNSC)	Jul 2012	CABINET	MARTFF	A functioning NFNSC
		• Prepare a National Food Security Policy and Action Plan and gain approval of stakeholders and Cabinet	July 2013	NFNSC	MARTFF	- NFNS policy, plan agreed
		• Promote school gardening and incorporation of local nutritious foods into school feeding/government institutions.	2012 – 2018	Ministry of Education	MARTFF, Health, Farmers Orgs, FAO	- X schools with gardens & improved feeding prog
		• Promote home gardening and small farm production (fruit trees, livestock, fresh water fish farming etc) to increase nutrition and reduce expenditures of low-income households	2012 – 2018	MARTFF	- Farmers Organizations ; CARDI,	- 500 home gardens established & ppl trained
		• Develop a Plan for data collection and management of national food reserves(largely comprised of the stocks held in private warehouses and homes during the hurricane season)	2014	MARTFF NEMO	FAO, WINFA, Min of Trade, IICA, farmers org exporters,	- Research on national food reserve and Action Plan
		• Promote new recipes and nutritional content of local foods (using innovative means such as schools competitions etc)	2013	Min Education (nutrition unit)	- IIC - A, CAFAN FAO CARDI, VINCYNKUS, ,	- No. recipes published utilizing local foods
		• Educate and sensitize women (as producers and preparers of food) on health and nutrition and food security	2013-18	MARTFF	-MARFF, CFNI, -VincyKlus	- 3 progs/yr conducted
		• Training and demonstration for women in alternative livelihood activities.	2012	MARTFF	- BoS, WINFA, VincyKlus FAO, IICA,	- women trained Activities doc approved.
		• Preparation of disaster management plan for the industry, through networking with farmer organizations.	2012-2018	MARTFF	-NCW, WINFA, VincyKlus	- Records
		• Effective pest surveillance systems to strengthen local production efforts(emergency action plan)	2014	MARTFF		- Records
		• Designate a Food Security focal point in the Ministry	2012	MARTFF		- Records