

A HISTORY OF THE CARIBBEAN AGRO-ECONOMIC SOCIETY, 1974-2015.

By Rita Pemberton

INTRODUCTION

The development of agriculture has been a central theme in the historical evolution of Caribbean societies since the advent of the European presence in the region. Up to the present time, despite its recognized centrality, there exists no comprehensive history of agriculture in the British Caribbean. As a result, there are many features of regional history which can provide new trajectories for Caribbean historical analysis, but remain hidden from the purview of the wider public. Among these are the histories of organizations, other than those of the state or of the planting community, which were created in response to the issues facing regional agriculture. Since these organizations demonstrate regionalism in action, knowledge of them and their activities will advance both an understanding of the development of agriculture in the region and the development of regionalism through agriculture. The Caribbean Agro-Economic Society is one such organization. Since its formation, this society has persevered in its attempt to make a difference and stimulate regional agriculture on to the path of development. Although its immediate origins were stimulated by an academic community, its activities involved agricultural practitioners and communities across the region as it sought to make a difference to Caribbean agriculture. It is thus necessary to view the interventions of this society in the context of existing knowledge in order to enhance our understanding of the Caribbean historical experience.

This study attempts therefore, to trace the development of the Caribbean Agro-Economic Society from its precursor organizations, through its nascence in 1974 and its activities to date. It is intended to show the circumstances of its origin, its structure and organization, its aims and achievements, its changes, challenges and future prospects.

Nineteenth Century Influences

Traditionally, agriculture in the Caribbean has operated as a private sphere with all decisions relative to production being taken by individual planters. This was the case until the end of the 19th century, when the sugar industry faced serious problems. It is to be noted that this individualistic approach to plantation administration was a practice that was rigidly adhered to only in the 'good' times. When faced with problems, plantation owners took a decidedly regional stance as they complained in unison to the imperial government and begged for assistance. This is well demonstrated in the developments which occurred at the end of the

19th century, when unfavorable market conditions swelled the chorus of planter complaints about distress in the region, which ultimately led the imperial government to appoint a Commission to investigate the state of the territories. In its response, the imperial

Government also took a regional approach to the issue. The resulting West Indies Royal Commission (The NORMAN Commission) was appointed in December 1897 under the chairmanship of Sir Henry Wylie Norman and included Sir Edward Grey and Sir David Barbour. The Commission was mandated to investigate the condition and prospects of the West Indian sugar colonies and to recommend measures for the maintenance of their prosperity.

The Commissioners met in London and gathered evidence from select witnesses between 31st December 1897 and 7th January 1898. They then travelled to Guyana, Grenada, St. Vincent, Barbados, Trinidad, Tobago, and St. Lucia, Dominica, Montserrat, Antigua, St. Kitts/Nevis and Jamaica. On their return to England they interviewed some additional witnesses. Altogether information was obtained from three hundred and eighty (380) witnesses in forty-five (45) formal sessions.

Thereafter the Commission recommended the establishment of a department of Economic Botany to handle the agricultural concerns of the West Indies and, for agricultural instruction to be given in all schools (P.145)¹. The duties of the Agricultural Department were to report on and extend the work of the Botanic Stations and to start an industrial school where the training of boys in agriculture would take place.

Generally, the recommendations included the teaching of scientific agriculture in the elementary and secondary schools through the Botanic Departments and Botanic Stations with financial support from the British government for ten (10) years. (P.66)¹ Greater emphasis was placed on agricultural development which encompassed the production of a wider range of crops than previously cultivated and reduced the dependence on sugar alone. But even those engaged in the production of sugar needed to be versed in the desirable agricultural practices (p.19.)¹. The Commission recognized that “a system of training in agricultural occupation is much needed” in the region (p.19)¹ in order to teach the best means of cultivating tropical plants. It was convinced that

“Agriculture in one form or another, must always be the chief and the only great industry in the West Indies, but a system of training in other industrial occupations, on a limited scale, is desirable, and would be beneficial to the community” (P.19)¹.

¹ The NORMAN Commission

It also recommended the diversification of agriculture into fruit cultivation for export.

In his subsidiary report, Dr. Desmond Morris, Assistant Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, noted the almost entire dependence on one industry in the region which he deemed “dangerous agriculturally.” He identified the pressing need to increase production, and suggested that the strategy to achieve this was

“...to stimulate the intellectual activity of all classes by suitable education and training and by being led to believe that regard agricultural pursuits as offering at least equivalent advantage to those of other callings, improved means of communication are necessary not only between the colonies themselves but with outside markets, and judicious aid is needful to be given, where suitable conditions exist, for starting other industries.” (P.82)¹.

He recommended that the people should be educated in the right methods of growing, pruning and manuring plants so that the best use could be made of the land and that this education should begin at the elementary schools. [Speaking about Jamaica. P.143]². This provided the stimulant for a new approach to Caribbean Agriculture which was now moved out of the private domain of planters into the public sphere which was a characteristic of agriculture in the 20th century Caribbean.

In addition there was an increased involvement of professionals in the region’s agriculture as both plantation owners and state agencies sought to embrace more scientific agricultural practices in their operations.

Twentieth Century Forces

Of greater importance was the increased presence of professional agriculturists who served as officers in the various imperial and colonial departments of agriculture. The Imperial Department of Agriculture (IDA) was established in Barbados in 1899. It was soon overwhelmed with the demand for various agricultural services and recommended to the imperial government that those territories, like Jamaica, Guyana and Trinidad which could afford it, be given Departments of Agriculture of their own. These Departments began to address the overall concerns of agriculture in their respective countries while the IDA concentrated on those in the remaining territories. Although they did focus on the plantation section, attention was given to food production and related matters. Most

² Desmond Morris’ Subsidiary Report

significant at the time was the increased presence of trained agriculturalists in the region and the attention they began to give to a wide range of agricultural problems. A burgeoning of specialists was evident in fields such as entomology, mycology, soil science, crop science and plant and animal disease. The IDA took a regional approach to agricultural problem-solving and this pattern became fully entrenched as the officials contributed articles to regional journals and lectures at various fora. A marked feature of this period was the institution of a regional agricultural conference to provide the forum for such discussions. The main ideas receiving support at these conferences included the need to increase agricultural production, produce more food in the region and stimulate greater profitability in agricultural enterprise.

The Regional Agricultural Conferences

The continuation of problems facing the major export crops across the 20th century and the eternal wrangling for favorable trading arrangements which beset the sugar industry, in conjunction with the two World Wars and the world-wide Depression of 1929, forced an even greater focus on local agriculture, especially food production. The presence of the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture assisted this thrust. Staff at the College became involved in a number of research programmes that were of regional significance and they gave lectures and public speeches on topics of local interest. They were major contributors to the regional conferences which dealt with a range of general matters including agriculture. In 1955 the Regional Research Centre (RRC) was established to focus on food crops, plant breeding, herbicides, statistics, storage and the main export crops. The RRC was transferred to the University College of the West Indies and later, the University of the West Indies, when it was formed in 1962. Consequently, the need for more specialist concentration on particular issues was felt.

THE PRECURSOR

The first West Indies Agricultural Economics Conference was organized by the Department of Agricultural Economics and Farm Management at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago, then under the direction of Professor David Edwards. The conference series was initiated by the Department in 1966 to provide a forum for the discussion of regional agricultural problems. The first conference was not based on any specific theme but however attracted twenty (20) overseas participants and twenty-four (24) local participants. Such was its success that it was agreed that future conferences should be held annually.

According to Edwards, the formation of the conference series was stimulated because the “formidable problems of the Agricultural Industry in the area required much greater application of the economic approach than they have hitherto received” (Proceedings of the First Agro-Economic Conference; 1). It was clear that the organizers possessed a vision for the establishment of the enterprise but the practicalities of its operation were worked out over time. The initial vision was that the society would be a gathering of practicing economists who would address the problems of the region. The impracticality of this approach was soon realized from the experience of the first conference. At this conference the attempt to discuss the wide range of issues that beset the region created serious time challenges, hence it was agreed that in the interest of more detailed treatment, select topics should be identified for each conference in the future. This decision was reflected in the 2nd conference hosted at the St. Augustine Campus of the University of the West Indies, which covered four topics:

- The Economics of Root Crops
- The Banana Industry,
- Land use and Planning Policy and
- The Social Aspects of Agricultural Development

The initial proposal that the conference should be an exclusive forum for those working on the economics of agriculture in the region was recognized as a serious limitation. The gathering took a decision to make the conferences more inclusive and accept persons who were closely concerned with the economic aspects of the problems of agriculture even though they may not have received professional training in economics (Proceedings of First Conference:1).

Organized in collaboration with the Tropical Root Crops Symposium which was held simultaneously, the 2nd conference began with its first two (2) sessions devoted to examining the economics of root crops via combined meetings with the Tropical Root Crops Symposium. At the 3rd conference in Jamaica, it was decided to adopt the format of stating a formal theme for each conference which is reflected in all subsequent conferences. This practice was modified as the society embarked on a new multidisciplinary approach that was more functional in its orientation. Focus was to be placed on examining specific agricultural problems of the host country and seeking interdisciplinary solutions. Conference themes thus were to be selected from subjects of concern to the host country and a main country paper was to be prepared from field work in which stake holders from the host country were involved.

The second conference in 1967 was held in conjunction with the International Root Crop Society and it focused on a narrower range of topics. The 3rd conference was held in Jamaica on the theme “Agricultural Development and Planning in the West Indies.”; in collaboration with the Institute of Social and Economic research. The 4th conference took place in Barbados in 1969 with the theme “Diversification, Import Substitution and Regional Economic Integration in West Indian Agriculture.” At this conference it was decided to shape the conference in two important ways: to include a session which examined the case of the host territory in relation to the conference theme and, to include a tour which closely illustrated the theme. Such was the success of these innovations that it was decided to make these a part of future conferences. In addition to attracting a record number of persons, the conference received invitations from the governments of Dominica and Guyana to host the 5th and 6th conferences respectively in their countries. The 1970 conference was held in Guyana on the theme “The Prospect of Agricultural Development in the Smaller Territories and the Role of Small Farming in the Commonwealth Caribbean.”

The 6th conference was based on the theme “The Role of Marketing in Caribbean Agricultural Development” attracted sixteen (16) papers with five (5) focused on the host country, Guyana.

The 7th conference in Grenada in 1972 addressed the issue of “Land Reform and Financing Agricultural Development in the Commonwealth Caribbean” and featured presentations from both Sir Arthur Lewis and Professor George Beckford. It examined land reform programmes in Mexico and Cuba and also included a public forum on land reform in Grenada, which was attended by over three hundred (300) people.

Addressing the theme “The Impact of Britain’s entry into the European Economic Community on Caribbean Economics and the Scope and Progress of Rationalization in Caribbean Agriculture,” the 8th conference returned to the St. Augustine campus in 1973. The highlight of this conference was a session at the headquarters of the Trinidad and Tobago Island-wide Cane Farmers’ Association on “Is Trinidad’s Agriculture Ready for Diversification?” Thus a pattern of conferencing was established and stake holders in the region were both expecting and depending on the academic fraternity for guidance and direction, and more so for solutions to their problems. It is out of this tradition that the Caribbean Agro-Economic Society emerged.

CHAPTER ONE

THE CARRIBBEAN AGRO-ECONOMIC SOCIETY IS BORN

The Caribbean Agro-Economic Society was created at the 9th Agricultural Economics Conference held in Jamaica in 1974. At the business meetings of the conference organizing committees, concerns were expressed regarding the longevity of the series and the need to establish a mechanism to be responsible for the planning and execution of the conference in the long term. In this process, significant contributions were made by the innovative team which was responsible for spearheading the formation of the society. The pioneers were: Dr. Medford. N. Alexander, Dr. George Beckford, Mr. Lloyd Best, Dr. Suresh Birla, Mr. Hadyn Blades, Professor David Edwards, Mr. Ken Leslie, Dr. Curtis Mc Intosh, Dr. John Mayers and Dr. Lloyd Rankine³. Discussions between participants at the end of this conference led to the formation of an interim committee chaired by Dr. Bernard Yankey, which developed a constitution for the society. At the 10th conference, elections were held and the first executive of the organization was installed. Dr. Bernard Yankey of the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) was elected as the first president with an executive that included Dr. Lloyd Rankine of the University of the West Indies and Mr. Darcy Boyce of the CDB.³

The Organizational Structure of the Society

Officially known as the Caribbean Agro-Economic Society and headquartered in Barbados (refer Appendix II for Memorandum and Articles of Association of the CAES), the Society is structured to execute its business which is determined at the annual business meeting of the Society, held at its annual conference. Its objectives are to provide a forum for the examination of all agricultural systems, institutions, policies and practices in the region, to improve economic efficiency by focusing on the problems facing regional agriculture, to facilitate the exchange of ideas between individuals and institutions of agriculture, to disseminate information throughout the region, to develop a regional approach, to facilitate a closer working relationship between the public and private sectors in agricultural production and marketing and, to publish material for the benefit of the region. The Society is run by an Executive which is responsible for planning, administration and the execution of policies and programmes of the society.

³ Information provided by Dr. Curtis McIntosh

The Executive Committee

The original constitution of the Society provided for an Executive Committee. This consists of a maximum of twelve (12) officers including the President, who is the principal fund raiser. The Vice President is responsible for liaising with the country representatives in addition to other assigned duties. The General Secretary covers meetings, keeps records and minutes and facilitates coordination of the Societies' activities. There are four (4) Deputy Secretaries, each with specific functions, as follows: the publication of conference proceedings, newsletters and other publications of the Society; to serve as conference coordinator at the local level; to coordinate conference activities with respective host governments and to coordinate Society activities with the CARICOM secretariat. The duty of the Treasurer encompasses all financial matters pertaining to the Society.

Two types of membership are possible in the society - executive membership and ordinary membership. Executive membership is made up of the members of an executive committee of country representatives from each participating country, campus representatives, and representatives of each regional body each with an alternate and from whom officers will be drawn. The executive interprets the constitution.

Ordinary or general membership is comprised of participating territories, regional institutions and other interested persons or institutions which in the latter case, has to be approved by the Executive committee. Dues of \$EC 10 per year are payable at the annual conference with an entrance fee for members' admission after the 10th Conference. For the organization of the annual conference, a special conference committee is constituted in addition to a local organizing committee.

CHAPTER TWO

A SOCIETY IN ACTION

The Conferences

Since its formation, the Society has organized annual then biennial Conferences, each in a different country of the region but with a focus on the Anglophone Caribbean. The broadened vision of the society continues to be a feature of its organization.

The Caribbean Agro-Economic Society since its organization has had in its membership a broad spectrum of practitioners and stake holders in the region. The Society thus has been successful in its attempts to involve a wide range of participants in its conferences. At the academic level the Society can boast of an honor roll of distinguished Caribbean academics, including Sir Arthur Lewis, George Beckford and Lloyd Best among its more noted contributors. The conferences have also been well supported by technocrats from various government organizations especially the Ministries of Agriculture. This has enhanced the image of the Society and facilitated the achievement of some of its goals.

Achievements

The Society has been hailed for the consistent participation of graduate students from different universities in its conferences; the participation of academics from Cuba and Puerto Rico and from universities in the USA and Canada. The responses suggest that the initiation of the country profile has significantly contributed to making the Society perform a meaningful role in the agricultural development of the region. There are concerns however, that the Society should (a) become more involved in assessment of the performance of the agricultural sector of the member territories, and provide advisory services, (b) work with CARICOM developmental issues (c) bring professionals and practitioners closer together and (d) initiate development research of a macro nature. It is the view of some that the Society has achieved some of its goals especially with respect to the 1976 Dominica conference which produced a report that was subsequently used as the basis for funding for a project to develop the very same area. The Society played a significant role in Caribbean Agricultural Development with its focus on a range of issues including food, nutrition and health that has laid the groundwork for the development of regional food and nutrition strategies. Also, the conferences have served as a forum for the development of human resources in food and nutrition related fields.

Weaknesses

The Society is not institutionalised and does not have a permanent structure and an appropriate location. It should become more involved with member countries, expand its membership and place information on a website. It should also develop more of a regional profile to be a source of information and provide advisory and consultancy services and have activities between conferences.

In addition there is the inability to attract financial support and to influence agricultural decision making at the highest level of government in the region and CARICOM.

The notion exists that the Society has become too academic and that it fails to recognize what agricultural development is all about and focuses too much on constituent elements and not enough on integrated systems.

APPENDIX I

List of Past Presidents & Past Executive Committees

List of Past Presidents:

- ❖ Dr. Carlisle A. Pemberton 2006- Present
- ❖ Mr. Bruce Lauckner 2004 - 2006
- ❖ Dr. Carlisle A. Pemberton 2000- 2004
- ❖ Dr. Ranjit H. Singh 1997 - 2000
- ❖ Dr. Carlisle A. Pemberton 1994 – 1997
- ❖ Dr. Carlisle A. Pemberton 1990 – 1992
- ❖ Dr. Ranjit H. Singh 1988 – 1990
- ❖ Dr. Carlisle A. Pemberton 1984 – 1988
- ❖ Dr. Hayden Blades 1982 – 1984
- ❖ Dr. Hayden Blades 1980 – 1982
- ❖ Dr. Basil Springer 1976-1980
- ❖ Dr. Bernard Yankey 1974-1976

List of Past Executive Committees

- ❖ Executive Committee for 2015 – Present is:
 - President – Carlisle A. Pemberton
 - Vice President – Erecia Hepburn
 - Secretary – Hazel Patterson– Andrews
 - Assistant Secretary – Afiya De Sormeaux
 - Treasurer – Isabella Francis– Grandson
 - Director of Publications – Govind Seepersad
 - Elected Members – Ermanno Affuso, Winston Ramautarsingh, Claude Gerald, Carel Ligeon, Edward Evans, Arnold De Medonca

- ❖ Executive Committee for 2013 – 2015 were:
 - President – Carlisle A. Pemberton
 - Vice President – Nkosi Felix

- Secretary – Hazel Patterson– Andrews
- Assistant Secretary – Afiya De Sormeaux
- Treasurer – Edric Henry
- Director of Publications – Govind Seepersad
- Elected Members – Mr. Winston Ramautarsingh, Dr. Ronald Gordan, Dr. Carel Ligeon, Dr. Wayne Ganpat, Mr. Bruce Lauckner

❖ Executive Committee for 2011 – 2013 were:

- President – Carlisle A. Pemberton
- Vice President – Edward Evans
- Secretary – Hazel Patterson– Andrews
- Assistant Secretary – Sarojini Ragbir
- Treasurer – Edric Henry
- Director of Publications – Neela Badrie
- Elected Members – Winston Ramautarsingh, Ronald Gordan, Carel Ligeon, Wayne Ganpat, Bruce Lauckner, Govind Seepersad

❖ Executive Committee for 2009 – 2011 were:

- President – Carlisle A. Pemberton
- Vice President – Sarojini Ragbir
- Secretary – Hazel Patterson– Andrews
- Treasurer – Edric Henry
- Director of Publications – Neela Badrie
- Elected Members – Bruce Lauckner, Carel Ligeon, Edwin Joseph, Wendell Parham, Wayne Ganpat, Edward Evans

❖ Executive Committee for 2006 – 2009 were:

- President – Carlisle A. Pemberton

- Vice President – Neela Badrie
- Secretary – Sarojini Ragbir
- Treasurer – Edric Henry
- Director of Publications – Sharon D. Hutchinson
- Elected Members – Bruce Lauckner, Hazel Patterson–
Andrews, Edward Evans, Curtis Jolly,
Edwin Joseph

❖ Executive Committee for 2004 – 2006 were:

- President – Bruce Lauckner
- Vice President – Ramesh Sarabjit
- Secretary – Sarojini Ragbir
- Treasurer – Andrew Jacque
- Director of Publications – Carlisle A. Pemberton

❖ Executive Committee for 2002 – 2004 were:

- President – Carlisle A. Pemberton
- Vice President – Ramesh Sarabjit
- Secretary – Sarojini Ragbir
- Treasurer – Bruce Lauckner
- Director of Publications – Ranjit H. Singh
- Elected Members – Edward Evans and Wendel Parham

** Prior to 2002, Elected Members were termed as “Committee Members”*

❖ Executive Committee for 2000 - 2002

- President – Carlisle A. Pemberton
- Vice President – Govind Seepersad
- Secretary – Alvin Seereeram
- Treasurer – Joseph Seepersad
- Director of Publications – Ranjit H. Singh
- Committee Members – Edward Evans & Sherry Ann Ramsook

❖ Executive Committee for 1997 - 2000

- President – Ranjit H. Singh
- Vice President – Govind Seepersad
- Secretary – Alvin Seereeram
- Treasurer – Joseph Seepersad
- Director of Publications – Carlisle A. Pemberton
- Committee Members – Edward Evans

❖ Executive Committee for 1990 - 1997

- President – Carlisle A. Pemberton
- Vice President – Lloyd B. Rankine
- Secretary – Trevor Murray
- Treasurer – Charlene Henderson-Brewster
- Director of Publications – Sabrina Wong-Mottley
- Committee Members – Ranjit H. Singh

❖ Executive Committee for 1988 – 1990 were:

- President – Ranjit H. Singh
- Vice President – Lloyd B. Rankine
- Secretary – Trevor Murray
- Treasurer – Foster Bissessar
- Director of Publications – Carlisle A. Pemberton

❖ Executive Committee for 1984 – 1988 were:

- President – Carlisle A. Pemberton
- Vice President – Compton Bourne
- Secretary – Ranjit H. Singh
- Treasurer – Yvonne Moses– Grant
- Director of Publications – Lloyd B. Rankine

❖ Executive Committee for 1980 - 1984

- President – W. Smith
- Secretary – O. Henry
- Treasurer – W. Phillips
- Director of Publications – L. Rankine

❖ Executive Committee for 1976 - 1980

- President – Basil Springer
- Vice President – Ronald Baynes
- Secretary – Donald McDonald

❖ Executive Committee for 1974 - 1976

- President – Bernard Yankey
- Vice President – Basil Springer
- Secretary – Suresh Birla, Hadyn Blades

APPENDIX II

**Table illustrating the Year, Order, Location and Theme of the
West Indies Agricultural Economics Conferences**

Year	Venue	Conference	Theme
1966	Trinidad	1 st	Economic Development, Marketing
1967	Trinidad	2 nd	Root Crops, Banana, Land Use Planning
1968	U.W.I. Mona, Jamaica	3 rd	Agricultural Development and Planning in the Caribbean
1969	U.W.I Cave Hill, Barbados	4 th	Diversification in West Indian Agriculture
1970	Roseau, Dominica	5 th	The Prospect for Developing Agriculture in the Small Caribbean Commonwealth Territories
1971	Georgetown, Guyana	6 th	The Role of Marketing in Caribbean Agricultural Development
1972	Grand Anse, Grenada	7 th	Financing, Agricultural Development
1973	Hilton Hotel, Trinidad and Tobago	8 th	[1]The Impact of Britain's Entry into the European Economic Community on Caribbean Economies [2] The Scope and Progress of Rationalization in Caribbean Agriculture
1974	New Kingston, Jamaica	9 th	The Relationship between Agriculture and Other Sectors with Particular Reference to the Competition for Resources in the Commonwealth Caribbean
1975	Georgetown, Guyana	10 th	Maximizing Regional Self Sufficiency in Food in the Commonwealth
1976	Roseau, Dominica	11 th	This conference departed from the nature of previous conferences and dealt with a Case Study Working Document
1977	St. John's, Antigua	12 th	Implementing Food Production and

Year	Venue	Conference	Theme
			Marketing Programs in a Developing Tourist Economy
1978	Basseterre, St. Kitts	13 th	Focus on the Agricultural Sector of the Host Country
1979	Grenada	14 th	Government Farm Programmes
1980	Trinidad	15 th	Food and Nutrition
1982	Trinidad	16 th	Changing Perspectives in Caribbean Agriculture
1984	Trinidad	17 th	Agribusiness – The Way Forward for Caribbean Agriculture
1986	Jamaica	18 th	Incentives and Support Systems for Food Agriculture
1988	St. Kitts	19 th	Agricultural Diversification: Policies and Strategies
1990	Tobago	20 th	Economic Development through the Revitalisation and Modernisation of Agriculture
1992	Belize	21 st	Sustainable Agriculture and Economic Development in the Caribbean
1993	USA	Special One	Challenges to Achieving Sustainable Agricultural Development in the Caribbean (with AAAE)
1994	Trinidad	Special Two	Advances in Tropical Agriculture in the 20th Century and Prospects for the 21st (with Tropical Agriculture)
1997	Barbados	22 nd	Trade and Economic Liberalization- Implications for Agriculture and the Environment in the Caribbean and Latin America
2000	Bahamas	23 rd	Focus on Trading Issues being faced by the Region
2002	Grenada	24 th	Agriculture, Trade and the Environment in the

Year	Venue	Conference	Theme
			Caribbean and the Americas
2004	Suriname	25 th	Agricultural, Natural Resources and Environmental Challenges under Emerging Trading Regimes
2006	Puerto Rico	26 th	Food safety and Value Added Production and the Marketing of Tropical Crops.
2007	Belize	27 th	Improving Marketing and Sustaining Natural Resource Systems in Latin America and the Caribbean
2009	Barbados	28 th	Food Security, Investment Flows and Agricultural Development in the Caribbean
2011	St. Vincent & the Grenadines	29 th	Agribusiness as the Path to Sustainable Agricultural Development in the Caribbean
2013	Trinidad	30 th	Agribusiness Essential For Food Security: Empowering Youth and Enhancing Quality Products
2015	St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands	31 st	Mitigating Climate Change Effects to Ensure Food Security