



Caribbean Agro-Economic Society

NEWSLETTER

JUNE, 2005

CAES COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVES ON THE MOVE

Two of the Caribbean Agro Economic Society's country representatives have organised activities for this year. Donald Palmer, the CAES representative for Jamaica is organising a seminar on the topic: "The Impact of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME) on the Jamaican Agricultural Sector". The seminar will take place on July 30th at the Brown's Town Community College. Speakers at the seminar will include Donald Palmer and Dr Ballayram of CFNI. The CAES Executive has agreed to give financial support to this seminar.

In Trinidad and Tobago, CAES country representative Edric Harry is planning a number of activities for 2005. These will commence on June 17 with a visit to the new flour mill which Nutrimix Feeds has just opened on the Point Lisas estate. Edric is also planning a lecture series in September entitled "A Framework for Agricultural Insurance"; Speakers are lined up from two insurance companies and Carlisle Pemberton, the current CAES Director of Publications and our past president will also be speaking. Amongst other activities planned for Trinidad and Tobago are a fund raising dinner and a membership drive.

Are any of the other country representatives ready to follow Donald and Edric and organise some activities? If you require any financial support just let our secretary (Sarojini Ragbir) know.

Of course members do not have to wait on their country representatives to act first. Why not contact your representative first if you have an idea? You will find a list of CAES representatives and their contact addresses on our website (see below).

HAVE YOU SEEN OUR WEBSITE?

Have you visited www.caestt.com yet? That is the address of the new CAES website. This is a simple but attractive site containing a home page, four other main pages and some other material.

On the home page you can click on links to access the information on becoming a member.

The other main pages are a photo gallery (only three pictures so far, but take a look you might see yourself!), about us, an archives page (newsletters, conferences, communiqués and a list of conferences) and a page with contact information.

Take a look and let us know what you think. Also if you have any relevant material to post, let Sarojini Ragbir know and, if we have space and it is relevant, we will post it.

UPDATE ON THE CAES CONSTITUTION REVISION

The Constitution of the Caribbean Agro Economic Society was approved in Jamaica at the conclusion of the Ninth West Indian Agricultural Society Business Meeting on April 8 1974.

Not surprisingly, after 30 years, it needs revision. In fact strictly speaking we are operating unconstitutionally. The headquarters of the society should be in Barbados, the Executive Committee (which should comprise a number of positions and representatives which have not been in existence for many years) should be banking in Barbados. There should be an annual Business Meeting at the East (sic) Indian Agricultural Conference and our subscriptions should only be EC\$10 per annum.

Before anybody challenges our current operations, Ramesh Sarabjit and Carlisle Pemberton have been drafting the appropriate revisions. These have met with the approval of the Executive and the draft revised constitution has been sent to a lawyer for scrutiny.

The final draft of the revised constitution will be put to members at next year's Business Meeting in Puerto Rico.

CONFERENCE THEME

Next year's joint conference (CAES and Caribbean Food Crops Society) will focus on food security. The CAES Executive has proposed the following theme to the CFCS Board:

“Tropical Food Crops and their Contribution to Food and Nutrition Security in the Caribbean”

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Please send (if you have not already done so) your 2005 CAES subscription (US\$25) to Dr. Andrew Jacque, c/o CARDI, P.O. Pox 212, UWI Campus, St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago (andrew.jacque@fao.org.tt). Andrew is accepting the equivalent in any currency negotiable in Trinidad and Tobago. Trinidad and Tobago members can pay TT\$150, Barbados or Belize Bds or Bze\$50, OECS EC\$65. If sending a cheque, contact Andrew first so that he can advise on how to send a cheque which will avoid currency conversion charges.

CAES TRAINING WORKSHOP

A number of members have responded to the questionnaire which asked whether members were interested in running training courses. The response from Ministries to whom the training will be directed has been a bit slow. This isn't surprising, as most ministries have to circulate to many staff for comments. If any members can help with this identification of training needs, please get in touch with Andrew Jacque or Bruce Lauckner.

PROPOSAL FROM TROPICAL AGRICULTURE

As members undoubtedly know, our Society produces two regular publications: the Proceeding of the Meetings of the West Indies Agricultural Economics Conferences and the Journal- *Farm and Business*.

Before embarking on the production of *Farm and Business*, the Society had approached *Tropical Agriculture* with respect to some type of collaboration with respect to the publication of papers of Society members in *Tropical Agriculture*.

However at the time, *Tropical Agriculture* did not express any interest in such collaboration.

Recently, however, *Tropical Agriculture* has been making a determined bid to expand its subscription base and it has modified its editorial policy to encourage the publication of a wider range of papers including papers which are socio-economic and environmental in nature. *Tropical Agriculture* has thus approached the Society by letter seeking to collaborate with the Society in two areas:

(1) Incorporation of *Farm and Business* into *Tropical Agriculture* by the publication of its papers in one or several issues annually of *Tropical Agriculture*; and

(2) Production of the **Proceedings of the West Indies Agricultural Economics Conferences**

With respect to the second issue, this may be more of a business arrangement to facilitate the publication of the Proceedings. Currently the Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension (DAEE) carries out the editing and printing of the Proceedings at a cost of the Society. The Society can therefore consider on offer from *Tropical Agriculture (TA)* which is just another section of the UWI St Augustine.

There may be some advantages to the Society of *TA* handling the proceedings, but staff of the DAEE has already signalled that they appreciate the business provided by the Society.

The first area the incorporation of *Farm and Business* into *TA* is a more strategic decision, as it will mean the end of *Farm and Business* as a separate publication. I will try to set out the pros and cons of such a move.

The advantages of publication of paper by members in *TA* may be as follows:

(1) Members will have the opportunity of publication of their papers in an internationally recognized journal *TA* (one of only two published by UWI). Unfortunately *Farm and Business* has not developed the stature or publication record of an international journal.

(2) *Farm and Business* has remained tied to publication almost solely of technical papers from the West Indies Agricultural Economics Conferences. Thus it has not had many volumes or issues over its life. *TA* will provide members with a regularly

published journal and thus afford members of the opportunity to increase their publication efforts.

(3) The Society will be assisting in the survival of one of the few truly independent, first class, Third World journals. *TA* desperately needs to increase its subscription base, as well as the number of high quality articles that are needed for its publication. The Society's membership can contribute immensely in both of these aspects. As was noted above also members may be able to add greatly to the journals articles of a socio- economic and environmental nature.

But there will be some disadvantages of the incorporation of *Farm and Business* into *TA* as follows:

(1) Members may be expected to pay a higher membership fee. Like most international journals *TA* is expensive. However the Society would be expected to negotiate a special rate for its membership and to include receipt of *TA* in the annual membership fee as is now the case with *Farm and Business*.

However if they receive *TA*, for their membership fees, members will receive regularly a highly valued journal which would greatly increase the benefits of their fees.

(2) The Society will lose its independent journal. However there is a definite trend towards mergers and closures among journals.

Bottom Line

The views of members of the Society are being solicited on this issue. The basic question is – should the Society merge its journal *Farm and Business* into *Tropical Agriculture* and if yes under what terms and conditions?

Send in your comments urgently.

Carlisle Pemberton
Director of Publications
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EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

Know your Executive Members. Send them an e-mail. Here are the details.

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HELP US

Does anyone have any e-mail contact with the following CAES Country Representatives?

Desmond Kentish (*Antigua and Barbuda*)
Randolph Mark (*Grenada*)