

Priority Programmes

The Ministry's priority programmes are planned and developed in accordance to the National Development Plan - Vision 2030 Jamaica; Public Sector Transformation Programme; Social Development Goals 2030; Medium Term Economic Programme (MTEP), Medium Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework 2015 - 2018 (MTF) and the Economic Growth Agenda - "5 in 4" Plan. Of great importance and acknowledgement is the Government's strategic priority of *Inclusive Sustainable Economic Growth and Job Creation*. Under the Ministry's Policy and Legislative Development Framework, MICAF's supporting priorities respond to two major strategies - the *Development and Maintenance of an Enabling and Facilitating Business Environment* and the *Promotion of Industrial Development and Export*. The supporting priority programmes of the Ministry are:

STRATEGY 1: DEVELOPMENT OF AN ENABLING AND FACILITATING BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

SUPPORTING PRIORITY 1: STRENGTHENING OF THE NATIONAL QUALITY INSTITUTIONS

This programme seeks to create a strategic framework for the National Quality Infrastructure (NQI) in Jamaica through the strengthening of its institutions and regulatory framework. It seeks to facilitate the implementation of programmes geared towards meeting international standards and quality via **standards development, accreditation, and certification**; and is implemented chiefly through three (3) public bodies under the ambit of the Ministry namely, the Bureau of Standards Jamaica (BSJ), the Jamaica Agency for National Accreditation (JANAAC), and the National Certification Body of Jamaica (NCBJ).

One of the major strategies to strengthen the NQI was the separation of regulatory and standards development functions of the Bureau of Standards. This led to the formation of the National Compliance and Regulatory Authority (NCRA). MICAF will continue to revise the functions of the NCRA to ensure enforcement of mandatory standards (public safety) parallel to the transformation of market standards (best practice) from mandatory to technical (voluntary).

SUPPORTING PRIORITY 2: AGRICULTURAL HEALTH & FOOD SAFETY SYSTEMS PROGRAMME

The AHFSS is a sub-programme of the National Quality Infrastructure programme and aims to promote the development and implementation of a strategic framework for Agricultural Health and Food Safety in Jamaica that includes the strengthening and harmonizing of the existing local plant and animal health standards, food safety standards for production, consumption and trade in food products. This programme is executed by the Food Storage and Prevention of Infestation, the Veterinary Services and the Plant Quarantine Divisions of the Ministry.

SUPPORTING PRIORITY 3: AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT & INNOVATION PROGRAMME

The Research, Development and Innovation Programme is an integrated element of the wider developmental process that increases available knowledge and uses this knowledge to devise new applications. These will supply improved and scientifically validated technologies to farmers to address production constraints and hence improve productivity, and efficiency and support agro-industrial development. The core function areas are Animal Breeding and Husbandry; Crop Research and Development; Plant Protection and Apiculture; and Post Entry Quarantine.

SUPPORTING PRIORITY 5: MODERNIZATION AND TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME

The Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries is always seeking to raise its bar on performance, especially regarding the delivery of first-class service to its clients. The Ministry is, therefore, in a continuous cycle of development and enhancement of itself as a regulator and a service delivery entity. Consequent on other recent initiatives, the Ministry is focused on the restructuring of critical Divisions and facilitating the strengthening of the institutional capacity of the Ministry. Thus, the Ministry will embark on the following initiatives under this programme:

- i. Implementation of ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System (QMS) across the Ministry and its Departments and Agencies;
- ii. Accreditation of select laboratories;
- iii. Institutionalization of the Jamaica Agricultural Commodity Regulatory Authority (JACRA);
- iv. Restructuring of critical Divisions and entities, including mergers;
- v. Rationalization of the Department of Cooperatives and Friendly Societies and the Agricultural Credit Board
- vi. Restructuring of the National Compliance & Regulatory Authority (NCRA)

The main challenges and issues facing the Ministry are inadequate budget which has resulted in an ad hoc roll out of major changes; and inadequate human resource skills. Nevertheless, the key initiatives for 2017– 2021 will include developing and implementing improvement programmes under Business

Continuity Planning; Change Management; Service Delivery; Performance Management; Knowledge Management and Business Processes; and customer service.

SUPPORTING PRIORITY 6: PRAEDIAL LARCENY PREVENTION COORDINATION PROGRAMME

The Praedial Larceny Prevention Coordination Unit was commissioned into service on March 2, 2015. The Unit is collaboration between the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries (MICAFA) and the Ministry of National Security (MNS) to curtail the theft of agricultural produce across the length and breadth of Jamaica. The Unit comprises of an administrative arm which is housed inside of the MICAFA and an enforcement arm led by the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF).

Partnering with the Ministry of National Security (MNS), Jamaica Agricultural Society (JAS), the Rural Development Authority (RADA), Ministry of Health (MOH), Crime Stop and other stakeholders, the Praedial Larceny Prevention Coordination Unit's main objective is to curtail praedial larceny and other farm theft across the island. With the Jamaica Constabulary Force leading the Anti-Praedial Larceny charge, the unit can mobilise members of the Jamaica Constabulary Force and civil society through farmers groups, agencies and organizations to significantly reduce the theft and illegal distribution of farm produce. Agriculture is a strategic asset to Jamaica's development and in order to ensure the sustainability of the sector, praedial larceny must be reduced, if not eliminated.

STRATEGY 2: PROMOTION OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND EXPORT

SUPPORTING PRIORITY 7: PRODUCTION & PRODUCTIVITY PROGRAMME

The Production and Productivity Programme (PPP) has as its mandate the promotion of the production and productivity of select industries in agriculture, manufacturing and service sectors through research, marketing, good agricultural and manufacturing practices, and public private partnerships as well as to improve efficiency and effectiveness of these select areas. The Programme was designed to increase the production and productivity of these industries using incentives. The Ministry plans to target the following select sub-sectors/activities:

Agricultural/ Fisheries Industries

- Sweet Potato
- Yam
- Sugar
- Ornamental fish
- Ginger
- Mangoes
- Small Ruminant (sheep and goats)
- Strawberry

Manufacturing and Service Industries

- Cannabis
- Bamboo

Moreover, the Ministry recognizes the large market potential for local fruits input for value added product, such as fruit juice extract. The Ministry will therefore be revitalizing its fruit tree programme through the promotion of planting select economic fruit crops and provision of seedlings and technical advice on fruit tree management. The initiative does not replace targeted initiatives to drive orchard production, but will be a complement.

The programme will also be complemented by a SATT Programme which will build sustainability, and enhance accountability, traceability and transparency of the agriculture sector.

SUPPORTING PRIORITY 8: AGRO-PARKS & AGRICULTURAL ECONOMIC ZONES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Agricultural Economic Zones (AEZs) will be an extension of the Government of Jamaica's Agro-Parks Development Programme. It is an area of intensive agricultural production which seeks to integrate all facets of the agricultural value chain from pre-production to production, post harvesting and marketing creating an Agricultural Economic Zone. The Agro Park sites were selected based on the need to fully utilize existing infrastructure and contiguous acreage of under-utilized lands as well as to conform to the changing nature of agriculture/agribusiness development. All these activities are being executed within the framework of a tripartite partnership involving the Government, the farmers/investors and marketing entities.

In FY2016/17, the Ministry through its IDB-funded Agricultural Competitiveness Programme (ACP) is in the process of operationalizing five (5) Agro-parks: (1) Yallahs Agro-Park, St. Thomas; (2) Spring Plain/Ebony Park, Clarendon; (3) New Forest/ Duff House, St. Elizabeth; and (4) Hounslow, St. Elizabeth and (5) Hill Run, St. Catherine. The ACP will provide the necessary infrastructure works such as roads, water channel access ways, irrigation and post-harvesting facility; marketing linkages and cluster group dynamics training. In addition, the Ministry and its Departments and Agencies will continue to provide extension service (technical advice) to the nine (9) Agro-parks including the four (4) Agro-Parks established under the Agro-Investment Corporation (AIC), an entity under the Ministry responsible to economic growth and job creation.

Within the medium-term, the Ministry will seek to certify all Agro-Parks as Global GAP as well as extend and expand the Agro-Parks concept across the Island. In so doing, areas will be surveyed to extend select Agro-parks into Agro-Economic Zones while simultaneously expand the amount of Agro-Park-like spaces established on the Island. In 2018/19, five (5) of the nine (9) established Agro-Parks, namely, Plantain Garden River, Ebony Park, Spring Plan, Duff House/New Forest, and Yallahs will be GLOBAL GAP certified under the ACP.

**SUPPORTING PRIORITY 9: COMPETITIVE PRODUCTS DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMME**

This programme is a sub-programme of the Ministry's Production and Productivity Programme. It focuses on building the framework for facilitating the increased production and productivity of select crops and livestock through research, marketing, good agricultural practices, and public private partnerships. Crops and livestock are categorized in terms of their export potential, import substitution and commodity profile within the context of crop adaptability to climate smart management and agronomic practices.

It explores opportunities for competitive advantage and export promotion for targeted Jamaican crops. In the Medium term, the Ministry will be focusing on obtaining and maintain 100% self-sufficiency in tabled Irish potato and 40% self-sufficiency in onion production; and increase in export production of sweet potato and yam.

**SUPPORTING PRIORITY 10: MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISE (MSME)
& ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMME**

The intention of this programme is to facilitate the expansion, productivity and sophistication of the Micro Small and Medium Sized Enterprises in Jamaica by building out supporting mechanisms directed at improving the performance of the sector and fostering inclusive growth. The potential linkages among MSMEs, in manufacturing services, agriculture, tourism and craft are highly transformational. The MSME & Entrepreneurship Programme spans a series of activities aimed at improving financing opportunities and options for MSMEs, increasing access to markets inserting MSMEs in supply and value chains and providing business development support through, *inter alia*, a Small Business Development Centres (SBDCs) Island-wide, fostering and promoting a deep-seated culture of entrepreneurship and social value creation.

SUPPORTING PRIORITY 11: FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The Fisheries Division is responsible for the sustainable development and management of the capture fisheries and aquaculture subsectors. The fisheries sector contributes to direct and indirect employment of over 40,000 persons and contributes to the local economy of many fishing and fish farming communities. The sector makes indirect contribution to the livelihoods of over 200,000 persons. Similarly, fisheries play an important role in local food security, and given the existing resources, have the potential to increase its role in ensuring the availability of nutritious, affordable and accessible source of food.