

## A QUARTERLY UPDATE OF KEY ACTIVITIES OF THE AGRICULTURAL COMPETITIVENESS PROGRAM IN SURINAME

### Contents

*Editorial---p.1*

*Background of the Project ---p.2*

*The battle against the Carambola Fruit Fly ---p.2*

*Upgrading ADRON-lab to boost innovation and food safety within rice sector---p.4*

*Quiz---p.4*

*Awareness activities on animal welfare in schools---p.5*

*Contract signing Cluster Laboratory LVV---p.5*

*Demonstration plots for the cultivation of markoesa---p.5*

*Veterinary training for staff Livestock in Dominica---p.6*

*National Animal Tagging System to improve disease monitoring ---p.6*

*Efforts to Strengthen Border Controls---p.7*

*Combatting the excessive use of pesticide---p.8*



### **Editorial: Minister of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries (LVV), Ing. Parmanand Sewdien**

I am pleased to be associated with the production of the First Newsletter and share with you some of the key highlights from activities under our Agriculture Competitiveness Project SU-L1020, which is financed through an agricultural investment loan facility from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and a complimentary non-reimbursable financing Grant from the European Union-CIF. *(Continue on p.2)*

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) is collaborating with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries (LVV) and the Ministry of Finance to execute this exciting project. This project which is aimed at strengthening the export readiness of Suriname's agricultural sector, focuses on establishing key agricultural health and food safety systems and installing critical laboratory infrastructure to support the sector. This makes the project opportune primarily for two main factors amongst others: firstly, the Government of Suriname has targeted the agricultural sector as a priority sector to accelerate the country's economic growth; and secondly, Suriname is identified as one of the key countries to support CARICOM to meet its target of reducing regional food imports by 25% by the year 2025 (25 by 25). SU-L1020 is therefore allowing us to implement key activities such as improvement in the systems to make Suriname agricultural products more competitive on regional and international markets, while at the same time increasing income earning opportunities of farmers and agro processors through increased exports, strengthening of our human resource capacity at the LVV to service the agricultural sector and support the implementation of key governmental programmes, training for our farmers to make them more adaptability to good on farm practices and strengthening their resilience to natural and economic shocks. The Ministry of LVV wants to assure all that it will continue to promote its interventions undertaken through this project and other initiatives to foster the expansion of the agricultural sector and increase its viability and overall contribution to the development of Suriname's economy.

## **Background Article Agricultural Competitiveness Program**



One of the main challenges for the agricultural sector in Suriname is overcoming its low productivity and competitiveness. With support of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), in 2013 the Government of Suriname embarked on a process of policy and institutional reforms to improve the agricultural sector.

The Agricultural Competitiveness Program (SU-L1020) aims at increasing the competitiveness of the agricultural sector through the improving the capacity of animal health, plant health and food safety and agricultural innovation. The program is funded through loan Agreement between the Government of Suriname and the Inter- American Development Bank (IDB) with complementary funding support by the European Union non reimbursable financing agreement and implemented by the LVV, under the fiduciary and project management support of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).

## **The battle against the Carambola Fruit Fly**

*Suriname will have little chance to export fruits if the presence of Carambola Fruit Fly (CFF) is not eradicated. To increase the competitiveness within the agricultural sector, it is very important to manage and take steps to eliminate fruit flies.*





The Mango Fruit Flies Prevention Management project therefore aims to establish and maintain a Pest Free Area (PFA) through a System Approach (SA) and to inform all stakeholders about the PFA/SA project for the export of mango from Nickerie.

The project started in 2019 in response to the tightened phytosanitary legislation of the European Union (EU). Several activities, such as staff training and information sessions for farmers, have been conducted. To guarantee the absence of fruit flies traps (Jackson and McPhail trap) have been placed in the Nickerie District for the monitoring, detection and delimiting survey. In collaboration with trained information officers from District Nickerie, these traps are serviced twice a month. In addition, the Entomology Department of the Research Directorate pays a monthly visit to Nickerie and checks the trap inserts and McPhail trap content for the recording of results.



## Upgrading ADRON-lab to boost innovation and food safety within the rice sector

*The laboratory of the Anne van Dijk Rice Research Centre (ADRON) will be fully modernized to conduct better research into diseases and pests within the rice sector.*



Modernization of the ADRON laboratory in the Nickerie District will also result in better quality of Surinamese rice and the improvement of the Suriname's competitive position on the world market.

According to LVV's Minister Parmanand Sewdien, the improvement of the laboratory facilities comes at the right time when there is a lot "ado" about pesticide residues and other toxins in food from the Nickerie district.

The upscaling of the ADRON lab is one of the major milestones of the Agriculture Competitiveness Project, in which a total of 4 laboratories will be expanded and/or set up. The largest of these is LVV's Cluster laboratory, which is expected to be completed early 2024.



*The plaque was unveiled by LVV's Minister, Ing. Parmanand Sewdien, and Ms. Geraldine St Croix, Project Manager, Agriculture Competitiveness Program.*



**1. Pesticides can be stored anywhere in the house because it is not harmful.**

**2. Pesticide containers must never be reused for another purpose.**

- A. 1 and 2 are both correct
- B. 1 is correct, and 2 is incorrect
- C. 2 is correct, and 1 is incorrect
- D. 1 and 2 are both incorrect

**The answer to the quiz will appear in the next newsletter.**

### **Awareness activities on animal welfare in schools**

The Animal Husbandry Directorate of the Ministry of LVV has held various awareness activities in schools related to the Animal Welfare Act. The Directorate took steps to address



the issue of animal suffering and the existence of few rules to tackle the suffering of animals. An Animal Welfare Act was approved in 2017 to provide protection to vulnerability of animals. The Livestock Breeding Directorate employees delivered 3 presentations, during which the students learned about the needs of animals and their likes and dislikes; what to watch out for when keeping animals; and about the behavior of the animals.

### **Contract signing of the LVV Cluster Laboratory**

***The European Union supports the government of Suriname to complete the physical infrastructure of the Cluster Laboratory of the Ministry of LVV.***



The completion of the laboratory is an important step for improving food safety and increasing the export possibilities for Surinamese agricultural products. The aim is to have the Cluster Laboratory operational by 2025. This facility can be seen as a "cluster" of laboratories with various research responsibilities such as soil, seed and crop protection research as well as mycological and entomological research. The completion of the construction is part of the Agriculture Competitiveness Project in which a total of four laboratories are expanded or rehabilitated. Together with the Residue Laboratory, the Veterinary Laboratory and the Plant Health Laboratory, the Cluster Laboratory will serve as a reference facility for the region. In the presence of representatives of the IDB, EU and IICA, four contracts were signed with local contractors by the Minister of LVV, His Excellency, Parmanand Sewdien.

**Demonstration plots for the cultivation of Passion fruits  
(markoesa)**



In the context of setting up demonstration plots for the cultivation of Passion fruit locally known as markoesa in Suriname and the implementation of an associated Farmer Field School (FFS), numerous stakeholders' meetings were held in various districts. Plotting the demonstration area and the implementation of the associated activities of the FFS are among the main activities of the Minor Fruits project, which aims to increase the production of markoesa through the application of technology and innovation. The Minor Fruits project is one of the specific agricultural innovation projects of the Agricultural Competitiveness Program.

Staff of LVV will be trained in the field together with (potential) markoesa growers and other interested agro-entrepreneurs by sharing knowledge with each other about markoesa cultivation. During the research, the production will also be measured and monitored.

The stakeholders in all districts were given the opportunity, after the information sessions, to participate in the selection of their acreage for setting up the demonstration plot. After that forms have been filled in per district and submitted in order to be eligible for the selection of a demo plot. The area must meet a number of preconditions for the cultivation of this fruit crop.

Another activity within the Minor Fruits project is the "Bugs Trial" or the "Bug research program". The bugs are a common pest in the markoesa plantings. The bug research is an attempt to experimentally investigate how the bugs can be controlled.



## **Veterinary training for Livestock Unit staff in Dominica**



Three officials from the Livestock Directorate are in Dominica undergoing a four-year veterinary training. The CARICOM Secretariat advertised notification online of the availability of a study programme in veterinary medicine for students from the region, including Suriname. The CARICOM Secretariat provided a grant, of 75% the total cost of tuition per student. The Surinamese Government paid the remaining 25% with support from the project loan funds. The Ministry of LVV encourages its staff to enhance their capacity to improve the gap in the shortage of technically personnel.

## **National Animal Tagging System to improve disease monitoring**



The Animal Husbandry Directorate of the Ministry of LVV intends to carry out ear number registration nationwide for cattle, sheep, goats and pigs. This means that the owners of livestock farms and the breeding locations will be registered. In addition, the farm cattle, sheep, goats and pigs will be identified with a unique ear number. The ear number will only be applied to one animal and is only released after 5 years.

The intention is that with the data obtained, the herd projection can be improved.



## **Efforts to Strengthen Border Controls**

As of May 2022, the Border Post Surveillance Department of the Livestock Breeding Directorate is once again active at the Zorg en Hoop airport. Every arriving flight from Guyana and French Guiana is checked together with custom officers. There are daily flights from the neighboring countries Guyana and French Guyana at Zorg en Hoop airport.



The Border Post Surveillance Department of the Livestock Breeding Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (LVV) conducted a border inspection pilot at Checkpoint Stolkertsijver. The import and sale of animal products (meat, meat products, eggs, dairy, feathers, skins, etc.), Veterinary medicines (vaccines, antibiotics, etc.), Animal-related objects (bird cages, etc.), in accordance with the Meat and Other Animal Products Inspectorate Act (SB 2017

no. 17) and the Animal Disease Prevention and Control Act (GB 1954 no 23 as last amended by S.B. 1986 no. 70) is prohibited. Importers require a valid Veterinary Import License issued by the Veterinary Service of the Ministry of LVV to be able to import such products into Suriname.



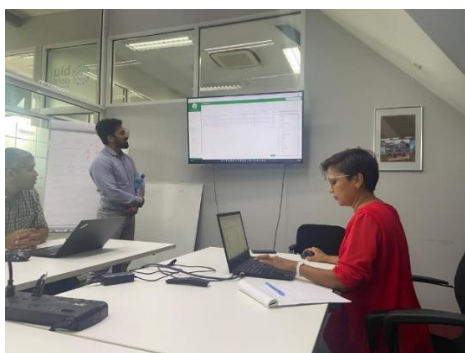
After about twelve years, the operationalization of the Border Post Surveillance Department of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (LVV) has recommenced. The Border Crossing Surveillance Department will monitor the application and compliance with the laws and regulations regarding the import or transit of live animals,

products of animal origin, veterinary medicines, feed and animal-related products, in order to prevent the introduction of animal diseases, pests and zoonosis in Suriname.

## Combating the excessive use of pesticide



Regarding the pesticides that are used in the agricultural sector, the Pesticides Department of the Ministry of LVV has a clear policy that should ultimately lead to pesticide-free products and a healthy environment. The import of pesticides is regulated according to the legislation, whereby every legally imported pesticide is only allowed after an in-depth preliminary investigation carried out by the Pesticides Department.



chemicals can also be monitored with this data.

Blu-Dots Technologies is developing an online database system for pesticide management in Suriname to improve agricultural food safety. All pesticides will be traced using this database; from import, application to waste management. With the help of this data, policy can be made for example the elimination or limited use of pesticides that occur in the event of frequent incidental pesticide poisoning. The accumulation of expired

The Pesticides Department provides a training in Safe and Responsible Use of Pesticides. To register for this training, candidates can contact the Ministry of LVV, Pesticides Department, or go to the nearest LVV resort office. This training is not only intended for farmers, but for anyone who comes into contact with pesticides in any way.



An operational manual, with guidelines, is also being developed for the Pesticides Department. These guidelines will help to implement a clearer policy in the control and monitoring of pesticides.

**This publication has been made possible by the Agricultural Competitiveness Program (SU-L1020) which is funded through loan facility of the IDB and co-funded by Non- reimbursable European Union Financing agreement.**

