

Ministry Paper /2015

Jamaica 4-H Clubs Interventions

1.0 Purpose

The matter for tabling is an update on the initiatives being undertaken in the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries through the Jamaica 4-H Clubs

2.0 Background

The Jamaica 4-H Clubs recognises the high level of youth unemployment that currently exists. In order to promote continued youth development the organization has undertaken several programmes to aid in the reduction of youth unemployment. Additionally, in assisting the GOJ to achieve its target of cutting the food import bill, the Jamaica 4-H clubs have assisted the youths in agriculture in becoming a part of major initiatives aimed at increasing local production of several highly imported agricultural produce.

The Jamaica 4-H Clubs has the mandate to establish School Gardens in all public schools. At present partnerships are established with other agricultural agencies and Corporate Jamaica to provide inputs and technical support to establish and maintain gardens. The Parish Development Officers visit and conduct workdays in the various schools on an ongoing basis. The Programme is used to encourage youth to choose Agriculture as viable career, to provide fresh produce for school canteens, encourage youngsters to eat what they grow and also used as a learning aid for students. School Gardens are the major supplies of fresh vegetables to the School Feeding Programme. They also provide tubers and chicken meat as additional sources of nutrition.

A few of these major initiatives undertaken by the Jamaica 4-H clubs are:

- Improvement in Membership Capacity Building
- Registration

- National School Garden Programme
- Empowerment Training Programme
- Rural Youth Economic Empowerment Programme (RYEEP)
- Youth in Agriculture Scholarship Programme
- Agro Parks Programme
- Irish Potato Expansion Programme

3.0 Achievements

Improvement in Membership Capacity Building and Registration:

- Provided 202,726 training exposures to members in areas such as Agriculture, Home Economics, Leadership, Environmental Skills, Healthy Lifestyle and Entrepreneurship
- 94,047 members were registered in 1101 clubs island wide.

National School Garden Programme:

- To date 468 gardens are registered and are being serviced. In addition 1,127 technical garden visits were made and 253 workdays were conducted. Approximately 109 hectares of land are currently under production with vegetables, root crops, permanent crops and livestock production.

Empowerment Training Programme:

- The Jamaica 4-H Clubs trained 659 youngsters through this Programme. The Programme was successfully implemented. A total of 233 persons were trained in Tractor Operation, 102 persons in meal preparation, 200 in housekeeping, 93 in apiculture and 31 persons were trained in small engine repairs

Rural Youth Economic Empowerment Programme (RYEEP):

- The Jamaica 4-H Clubs is currently conducting training with the first batch of fifty (50) youth at the Denbigh 4-H Centre in Clarendon. The participants were drawn from all fourteen parishes. This Programme is expanded with support from the public and private sectors. A total of 3,000 youth will benefit over the next three (3) years.

Youth in Agriculture Scholarship Programme:

- The Jamaica 4-H Clubs currently has one hundred and seven (107) recipients of the Rio Tinto Scholarship Programme, one (1) recipient of the Youth in Agriculture Programme; these recipients are currently enrolled in high, tertiary and vocational institutions where they are pursuing studies in Agriculture. There are also six (6) recipients of the Earth University Scholarship Programme tenable in Costa Rica.

Agro Parks Programme:

- A total of twenty (20) young persons were selected where they received training in Business Plan Writing and Onion Production. Infrastructural development is underway, however upon completion; the participants will each receive five (5) acre lots to commence production.

Irish Potato Expansion Programme:

- Through the collaboration with the Rural Agricultural Development Authority 130 beneficiaries received input and technical support to establish 65 acres of irish potato. Beneficiaries received planting material, fertilizer, pesticide and training

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