

Economy

# Stakeholders discuss agro-tourism

**KEY PLAYERS** in both the agricultural and tourism sectors met here for a two-day workshop Mar 19 and 20, aimed at developing a policy framework for the establishment of an agro-tourism industry here.

The workshop was a

collaborative effort involving the Ministry of Agriculture, etc., Ministry of Tourism, etc., the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation, and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).

### Benefits of a merger

Ena Harvey, Agro-tourism expert for IICA, in making a presentation on Opening Day, spoke of the benefits of merging the two sectors, e.g. direct benefit to individuals in the rural communities, in that they retain a higher

percentage of the money earned; the overall contribution it had to food and land security, and the overall economy of the country.

But before a country looked to benefit from an agro-tourism industry, she said, there were some key things a country needed to remember: to understand why they were involved in tourism and who should benefit from it; local communities cannot be an afterthought or a

means to an end to protect tourism investment; tourism cannot be successful without a sustainable food production sector.

The facilitation, coordination and growth of an agro-tourism sector as a distinct economic activity, required the emergence of institutions and partnerships that can coordinate, plan and manage events together, Harvey proffered.

It was anticipated, she added, that some of the big projects identified during the workshop will go into the 'basket' for access under the 11th EDF funding provided by the European Union.

### Linkages

George Alcee, speaking on behalf of the OECS, cited the practical example of the emerging medicinal marijuana industry as having the ability to be transformed into something larger, with the potential to positively impact tourism.

"The investment opportunities go beyond producing food for local hotels," Alcee said, adding food tourism, festivals and parks, all create memorable

experiences for visitors.

The OECS Representative advised that to achieve this vision meant having to acknowledge that tourism and agriculture can have benefits.

### Agriculture and Tourism

Minister of Tourism Cecil Mc Kie acknowledged that SVG's economy was once dominated by activities in the agriculture sector.

Today, agriculture and now tourism have become the driving forces in the economy, and are major contributors to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), McKie continued. He admitted that

visitors were now moving towards something called experiential travel, i.e. a desire to connect with a destination's history, people, environment and food.

"Agro-tourism is one

such industry that enables visitors to experience this authentic way of life," McKie said.

### From concept to reality

Minister of Agriculture, Sabote Caesar spoke about the process of moving from a concept to reality.

"We cannot only come and speak about it, but we have to do it," Caesar said.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines, if he was asked, needed to move from subsistence agro-tourism to commercial.

"But there is something very important for the sustainability of any business," he said, and

proceeded to explain that if there were no customers, then there will be no viable business, and if there was no market, "you will realise that you will not be able to create the



George Alcee of the OECS referenced the medicinal marijuana industry has having the potential to positively impact tourism.

livelihoods that you envisioned."

Raising capital for the development of a commercial agro-tourism industry was also crucial, Caesar said.

The concept of agro-tourism was an excellent one; however, Caesar

cautioned that unless people remained devoted to it, and accepted that the development of such a sector was not going to happen overnight, then they will not be able to reap the rewards. (DD)



Ena Harvey, Agro-tourism expert for IICA, showed the workshop how a merger of agriculture and tourism could be beneficial.



Workshop participants were expected to propose some 'big projects' for consideration.

IN THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN SUPREME COURT  
IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE  
SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

SUIT NO: 39 of 2019

FIRST PUBLICATION

**NOTICE**

In the Estate of **ATTILAH PHILLIPS** - deceased

TAKE NOTICE that an application has been filed by **EDWIN PHILLIPS** of Choppins in the State of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines for Letters of Administration by the applicant who is the Administrator of the Estate of the deceased, the deceased having died on the 8th May 2016

Any person having any objection to the Grant of Letters of Administration to the applicant shall file an objection within 14 days of the publication of this Notice

Dated the 11th day of March, 2019

Filed by: *Sylvester Raymond-Cadette*  
**Sylvester Raymond-Cadette**

whose address for service is:

White Chapel  
Kingstown  
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

General Employees Co-operative Credit Union Ltd  
(GECCU)

**NOTICE**

Members of GECCU are asked to note that scholarship application forms for the 2019 Caribbean Primary Exit Assessment (CPEA) are available at GECCU's Kingstown, Georgetown, South Rivers, Bequia, Canouan and Union Island offices.

Completed application form along with a copy of the candidate's birth certificate should be returned to any of GECCU's offices on or before **April 5, 2019**.