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Increasing Access to Climate-Smart Agriculture

INMED Caribbean led its first training workshop to help vulnerable smallholder farmers, women and youth launch climate-resilient aquaponics enterprises in Jamaica. This pioneering program is a collaboration of INMED with multilateral banks, the government of Jamaica and the College of Agriculture Science and Education (CASE).

Since the launch of INMED's Increasing Access to Climate-Smart Agriculture (IACA) in Jamaica last fall, our team at INMED Caribbean has been working tirelessly behind the scenes to develop training and outreach activities to help small-scale farmers launch aquaponics enterprises as a means of making their farms climate-change resilient, improve food security and increase income generation.

"Small- and medium-scale farmers are among the most vulnerable to the current and future effects of climate change, because they lack the technology, knowledge and financing to implement adaptive measures," says INMED International Programs Director Kristin Callahan. In Jamaica, climate-related events have been identified as major threats to the agricultural sector, which represents about 7 percent of GDP and employs about 18 percent of the country's population.

IACA is unique in that it provides a full circle of support for aquaponics farming entrepreneurs, including access to:

Training: The project will equip farmers with the technical knowledge and basic business planning and management skills needed for commercial farm operations. Step 1 is an interactive online module focused primarily on aquaponics technology and implementation, understanding financing and loans, and developing business plans, followed by comprehensive workshop training with classroom interaction and hands-on demonstration in the aquaponics technology and business operations.

Finance: INMED is working with a group of financial institutions to provide specialized loan products with affordable interest rates and appropriate repayment terms for farmers who have completed the online prequalification training.

Markets and value chain/coordination building: INMED is working with a group of selected buyers, such as hotel chains, supermarkets, restaurants, agro-processors and aggregators to

create a guaranteed market for aquaponics produce. The market for fresh fruits and vegetable among Jamaican hotel operators alone is estimated at US\$52 million annually.

In March, INMED Caribbean beta-tested the online training/loan prequalification program and provided the three-day technical workshop for a group of extension agents with the Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA). INMED received high marks on our initial efforts and will deliver another workshop for additional RADA agents and other trainers in May. A rollout of the IACA program to emerging farmers is scheduled for early June.

IACA is made possible through partnerships with the Inter-American Development Bank-Multilateral Investment Fund, Caribbean Development Bank, Jamaica's Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation and Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries, as well as the College of Agriculture, Science and Education (CASE), where an INMED demonstration system is being constructed.

Learn more about this program at <https://inmedcaribbean.org>.

