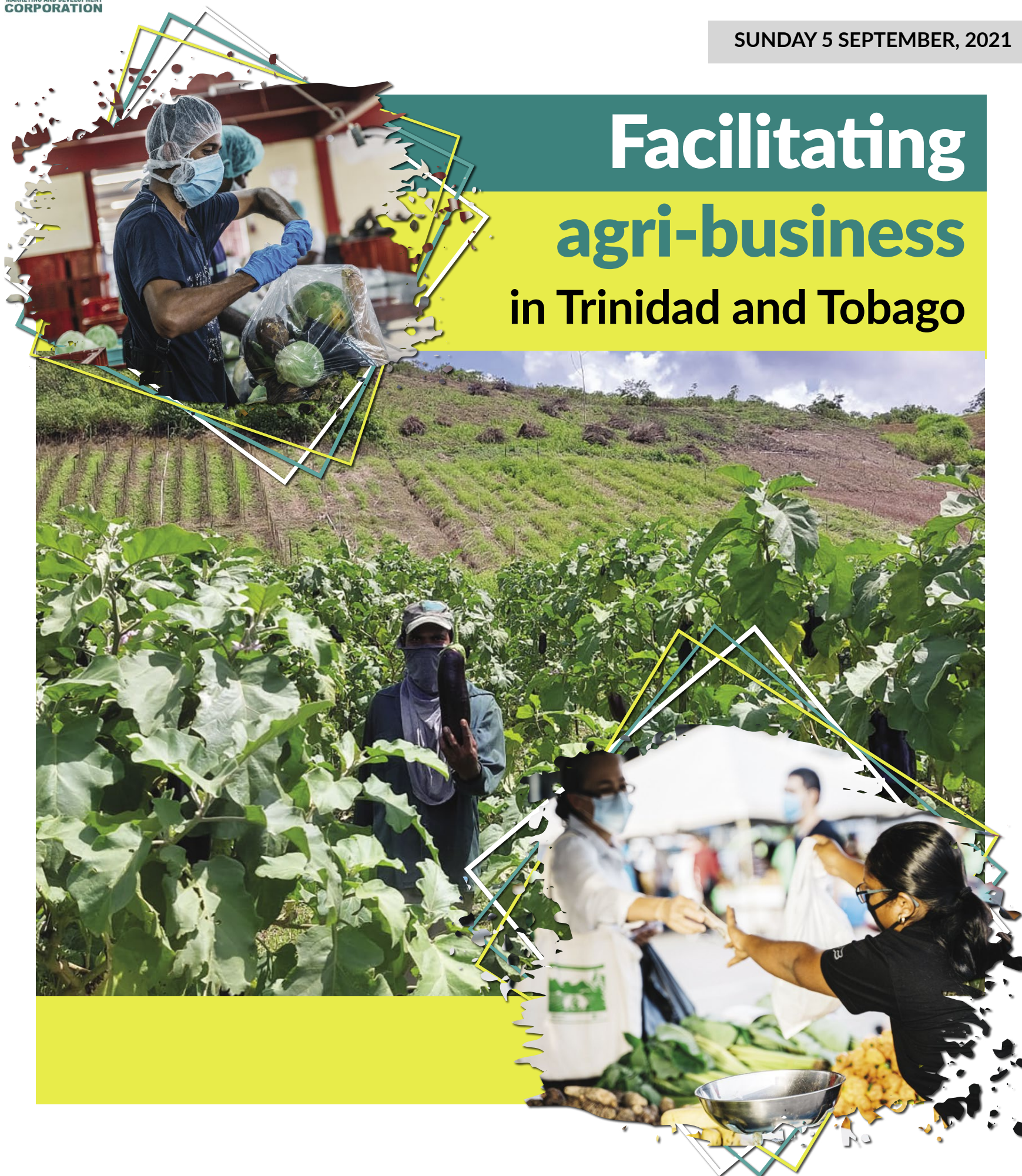


The National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation (NAMDEVCO)

SUNDAY 5 SEPTEMBER, 2021

Facilitating agri-business in Trinidad and Tobago





Who are We?

The National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation (NAMDEVCO) is a statutory body created by Act of Parliament No. 16 of 1991 with a mandate "to create, facilitate and maintain an environment conducive to the efficient marketing of agricultural produce and food products through the provision of marketing services and the stimulation of business investment in the agro-industrial sector of Trinidad and Tobago".

Our Vision

Leading Trinidad and Tobago in agricultural marketing and agribusiness solutions that will contribute to the social and economic well-being of all our stakeholders.

Our Mission

Committed to the growth and sustainability of Trinidad and Tobago's agricultural sector by offering agribusiness and marketing solutions through commercial partnerships and linkages with key stakeholders in order to produce high quality primary and value added food products at fair and competitive prices to targeted markets.

Our Services

Our services include:

- Farm Certification and Monitoring
- Packinghouse Operations
- Providing Market Intelligence
- Business Development
- NAMDEVCO Farmers' Markets
- Export Support Services
- Managing Wholesale and Retail Markets; Fish Markets
- Supporting Agro-Processing Industries

Head Office

Head Office 3 1/4 mm S.S. Erin Road, Debe, Trinidad and Tobago

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Websites: www.namdevco.com & www.namistt.com

Email: contact@namdevco.com



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BEYOND COVID-19

REMARKS

SENATOR THE HONOURABLE CLARENCE RAMBHARAT, MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, LAND & FISHERIES



The world, particularly the world of food has changed in the last 20 months. To our credit, in Trinidad and Tobago the predictions of both glut and starvation have not come to pass. We are grateful to our farmers for leading the way.

In the first version of the COVID-19 regulations/restrictions, agriculture was declared an essential service. Our farmers took it from there; food was grown, harvested and sold; markets remained open; and consumers continued to be fed.

To its credit also, NAMDEVCO was one of the first entities in Trinidad and Tobago to put in place COVID-19 personal hygiene and customer safety

measures at all its facilities, including the vital Farmers Markets. By doing that NAMDEVCO's markets have flourished. In a time of lockdowns and contractions, NAMDEVCO commissioned two new Farmers Markets - one at the Larry Gomes Stadium in Malabar and one at the UTT Campus in Tarouba. That Malabar market instantly became a portal for the Brasso Seco/Paria/Morne La Croix farming communities to supply all their produce in a branded section of the Farmers Market. It lifted the communities and works in tandem with the final stages of a long process to regularize the occupation of State lands by over 50 farming families in those areas.

At the same time on behalf of the Government, NAMDEVCO has provided local food support to over 200,000 families impacted by COVID 19 restrictions, in three programs in 2020 and May-September 2021. This 2021 program has already reached 150,000 families in four months; supported over 300 farmers; brought over 5 million pounds of produce to the tables of those most in need; brought a million pounds of local chicken to local tables; and put critical capital in excess of \$30 million in the hands of farming families, their workers, their communities and various suppliers around the country.

NAMDEVCO has learnt some critical lessons along the way. First - every food producer is vital to our survival, not only in a pandemic. The pool of suppliers was expanded but that works with a reliable farm and farmer certification program. Second - the 2020 launch of a voluntary Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) standard and program is being aggressively promoted, particularly so that it impacts those who do business at NAMDEVCO markets. Third - NAMDEVCO is taking a further step in the infrastructure it provides for farmers and for 2021/2022 NAMDEVCO will venture alongside the Ministry into the development of a Greenhouse Park model specifically for younger farmers, with the production aimed at the restaurant and supermarket trade. Fourth - NAMDEVCO has made significant strides in finally putting some of its incomplete infrastructure to work. The Woodford Lodge facility is the centerpiece of the COVID-19 veggie box program that has serviced over 150,000 families. It will remain prominent as we go forward. And finally: our Human Resources. Steps are being taken to make the NAMDEVCO structure more appropriate to post COVID-19 needs. Less paper, more technology, more action in the marketplace.



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries

*The **Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries (MALF)** congratulates the Management and Staff of the National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation (NAMDEVCO) for establishing a dynamic environment that promotes and markets the agricultural produce of our nation's farmers.*

As the line Ministry responsible for NAMDEVCO's operations, MALF recognizes the outstanding achievements of the organization, its overall commitment to stakeholders and by extension the national community.

**The MALF therefore wishes
NAMDEVCO
continued success in moving forward.**

Website: agriculture.gov.tt



REMARKS



The emergence of the COVID-19 virus certainly caused an upheaval, to life as we knew it. The rapid expansion of the global devastation, projected a gloomy outlook for economies across sectors and nations. The agricultural industry was one such

sector that grappled through these unprecedented times, especially as the impacts of a global pandemic was vastly becoming a reality. At NAMDEVCO, we recognized that deviations from our usual operations were necessary, as we now had to alter and adapt to variations within our immediate, medium and long-term goals.

One such alteration, occurred through the Government of Republic of Trinidad and Tobago's response, to the prevailing circumstances, by way of implementing a national COVID-19 Food Relief Initiative. As our operations were deemed an essential service, Team NAMDEVCO accepted the challenge of procuring, sorting, packaging and distributing of fresh, high quality, local produce, throughout Trinidad and Tobago. To date, over 100,000 market boxes have been delivered to all 41 MP offices, to assist the vulnerable impacted by the pandemic. Approximately 6,000,000 lbs kgs of fresh produce has been supplied by farmers since May 2021 and more than 350 farmers have supplied the Government's food support programme.

Team NAMDEVCO, continues to meet the demands of this initiative while commendably ensuring business continuity and enhancement of our overall operations.

WAYNE INNISS, CHAIRMAN, NAMDEVCO

Our goal of linking farmers directly to consumers, has persevered as our operations at our nine Farmers' Markets has certainly reinforced the needs of our domestic value chain, as it makes fresh, high quality, local produce readily available and more affordable. Throughout our nine Farmers' Markets, an average of 365 farmers, 650 vendors, inclusive of artisans and agro-processors participate on a weekly basis, supplying over 6000 patrons. Particularly, the development and scope of our Farmers' Markets has also created an outlet for revenue, for many of our farmers and agro-processors, many of whom were negatively impacted by pandemic-related measures.

In addition to successfully navigating pandemic-related challenges throughout 2020 and in keeping with our corporate vision, we remain steadfast in our efforts to stimulate and facilitate marketing opportunities for our farmers, on a local, regional and international scale. As many would have noted, the success of our recent partnership with Subway, has demonstrated that we have the facilities and capabilities, for further expansion in our future endeavors, as it relates to agro-processing and agri-business development.

We are on the cusp, of one such venture, that would soon enable local produce to be exported throughout the Caribbean, alongside the largest operator of membership warehouse clubs in Central America and the Caribbean; PriceSmart Clubs Limited.

We are also currently engaged in providing technical services for product development, to be exported within

North America, in addition to providing fresh, local, safely procured produce to both local and international franchises. Preparations are also afoot to provide assistance, within the technical development phase of unique varieties of fruits and vegetables, which are inherent to Trinidad and Tobago. Technology packages are also being developed for specific commodities at our Piarco Packinghouse facility. Tech Packs as they are often called, usually contain detailed information, including product specification, regulatory requirements, raw material selection, and postharvest handling considerations. Thus far, Tech Packs for hot peppers and pineapples are underway, to be introduced to the local and international market.

The future of the Corporation looks quite promising, as our team's collective efforts, has demonstrated that we can deliver remarkable results, despite the ongoing challenges.

We as the executive are incredibly proud of the support Team NAMDEVCO has provided in the Government's COVID-19 food support relief programme and other overall achievements. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I take great pleasure and satisfaction in extending thanks, to our valued stakeholders and our employees. NAMDEVCO's accomplishments surely lends to the development of the agri-business sector and we look forward to further expansion of our efforts, beyond our local markets. Team NAMDEVCO remains unwaveringly dedicated, to a farmer-focused strategy for the years ahead. Together we will advance the future of agri-business within Trinidad and Tobago.

REMARKS

NIRMALLA DEBYSINGH-PERSAD, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, NAMDEVCO



As CEO of the National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation (NAMDEVCO), assuredly I can state that our obligation is dedicated to providing you, our fellow consumers of Trinidad and Tobago

with consistent supplies of high quality, fresh, nutrient rich, local produce derived from sustainable agricultural practices. We at NAMDEVCO, take pride in ensuring the availability of nutritious, local produce especially for the positive physical and mental health and well-being of our nation's children. Our involvement in projects such as the School Feeding Program and the ongoing Market Box initiative, play a significant role in promoting local produce and ensuring that all segments of our population can access wholesome meals, especially during the pandemic.

COVID-19 empowered us as a team to ensure that food safety and food quality, remained our priority. It once again demonstrated the critical importance of monitoring and certifying our nation's farms, whose production practices are currently being guided by Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), as we move towards the implementation of the first National GAP Certification Programme - Nation Standard TTS 648:2020, (GAP) – Fresh Produce – Requirements, approved by the Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards. We say thank you to the Ministry of Agriculture Land and Fisheries, IICA, TTBS, Ministry of Health, EMA, CARIRI, FAO and all other collaborators who played a key role in

the formulation and establishment of this crucial standard.

Food safety begins on the farm! In addition to the development of the GAP Standard, in December 2020, NAMDEVCO initiated the creation of a GAP Model Farm, a project that received praiseworthy support from PowerGen. The objective of this model farm is to educate and demonstrate to farmers, by using a total quality management approach to safe agricultural practices on-farm, as more buyers are demanding verifiable assurance that foods in all food chains are verifiably safe for consumption in a globally competitive market. The techniques introduced to farmers will provide the necessary framework to ensure and maintain GAP Certification of individual farms or farm clusters/cooperatives, towards greater penetration into permanent local and export markets.

Our alliances with the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services Food Box distribution program, supplied over 30,000 food boxes to Food Card recipients within all 41 constituencies, during May to July 2020. In November 2020, the Ministry of Education, joined by the National School Dietary Services Limited, piloted the second phase which targeted 79,000 recipients of the School Feeding Programme. These initiatives are mutually beneficial, as it connects our farmers with viable markets, whilst our consumers are provided with safe, high quality fresh produce from farms monitored by NAMDEVCO's Field Officers.

We have also recognized the need for continuous improvement within the agri-business sector. Work is

currently in progress alongside the TTBS, to develop a Fresh Produce Label Standard which would assist in creating an enabling environment to market locally grown foods, to ensure sustainability of markets and marketing opportunities.

Another aspect of improvement that supports our operational development is technology. We have incorporated a digital, cloud-based platform for our farmers and vendors, who utilize our prepaid system. This has already improved our revenue collection process. We also have begun the implementation of real time information collection and dissemination supported by data analytics from NAMDEVCO certified farms, to support decision makers, policy makers and agri-entrepreneurs in their daily activities.

The core of our achievements, as a Corporation, remains our employees. The effort of each employee, in ensuring not just business continuity but also consecutively meeting the demands of the Market Box initiative, despite the pandemic has resulted in the distribution of over 200,000 fruit and veggie bags carefully procured, sorted, graded, packaged and distributed while also ensuring operations at all other markets and processing facilities are uninterrupted and available to stakeholders. The commitment and work ethic of each employee is unparalleled and as your CEO, I commend each and every member of Team NAMDEVCO. Your efforts have propelled me and demonstrates our tenacity and dedication to the advancement of the agri-business industry and to our great nation.

LOCAL FOOD BASKETS - COVID-19 FOOD SUPPORT INITIATIVE

With the Government's ongoing effort to bring relief to those persons who have had prolonged loss of livelihoods, a number of relief measures were introduced including the Food Support Programme. Coordinated and implemented through the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries, the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services and the National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation (NAMDEVCO), the programme has brought relief to approximately 140,000 families across all 41 constituencies, since May 2021.

Each recipient would have received food baskets containing sweet potato, dasheen, cassava, plantain, squash, pineapple, citrus, pawpaw, cucumbers, bodi, sweet pepper, hot pepper and tomatoes (with slight variations). In addition, each recipient received a package with two locally processed chickens and 1/2 dozen eggs.

Prior to this initiative, through the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services, NAMDEVCO coordinated a project to distribute fresh produce hampers in May 2020 to selected recipients identified by the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services. Fresh, high quality, local produce sourced from farms registered with the Farm Certification and Monitoring Programme, was minimally processed and distributed by NAMDEVCO's Piarco Packing House. Over the three month period, a total of 21,704 fresh produce hampers were distributed.

Additionally, in December 2020, the National Schools Dietary Services Limited, through the Ministry of Education and in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services, approached NAMDEVCO to coordinate the procurement, packaging and distribution of fresh

produce baskets to families whose children are recipients of meals on the School Nutrition Program. Approximately 15,000 fresh produce baskets were distributed during this phase of the project.

NAMDEVCO's CEO Nirmalla Debysingh-Persad stated, "Our farmers are in continuous production. So far, we have not had any reports of any farmer's inability to produce, so we do not anticipate any shortfalls. Our production capacity can sustain the current demand of the programme and the current demands of our market".

Over the past three months, more than 350 farmers have supplied over 6,000,000 lbs of produce for this initiative. Additionally, over 30,000 families have received frozen chickens and soup packs through distribution from their elected Councillors. As the NAMDEVCO team continues to work assiduously to supply food relief to our fellow citizens, notably, several Members of Parliament have expressed commendations upon receipt of these food baskets; such as the Members of Parliament for Toco/ Sangre Grande, Mayaro and Arima. Many NGOs as well echoed similar sentiments; such as the Trinidad Unified Calypsonians' Organisation (TUCO), who officially articulated their heartfelt gratitude via a letter of thanks.

Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries Clarence Rambharat, noted that "The food box programme goes from May to end of September 2021. Parliament has just approved \$57 million for the programme. Based on current estimates, we will reach 125,000 families through the 41 MPs; 50,000 families through 139 Councillors and 12 THA assemblymen with frozen chicken and peeled and frozen provision packs. We will also be able to reach another



10,000 families via NGOs, CBOs and individual requests".

While the pandemic continues to impact the local and global economy, NAMDEVCO remains committed to working with the nation's farmers to supply high-quality, fresh, safe and nutritious food from farmers, for this initiative and beyond.

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PROVIDING AGRO-PROCESSING SERVICES TO THE AGRI-BUSINESS SECTOR

NAMDEVCO's Piarco Packinghouse offers to any exporter the opportunity to receive, temporarily store, process, package, and ship produce bought from certified farms. By using this facility, an exporter can ensure that its products are in compliance with various requirements from importers, such as food safety standards, environmental and fair trade practices and other critical requirements to access foreign markets. The close proximity of the facility to the airport and its good road linkage with the major seaports, 30-45 minutes away, makes the location of the facility attractive for exporters in particular.

SERVICES PROVIDED AT OUR PIARCO PACKINGHOUSE

Agro-processing services for the agribusiness sector:

- Washing / Trimming
- Sorting and Grading
- Dehydrating
- Postharvest treatments
- Weighing
- Packaging/Vacuum sealing/Impulse sealing
- Storage
- Blast Freezing
- Plant Quarantine Inspection point
- Other services

PROVIDING MARKET FACILITATION WITHIN THE AGRI-BUSINESS SECTOR

NAMDEVCO's Market Facilitation department is responsible for Market Research and Data Collection within the agricultural sector. Our programmes and services are designed to enhance the competitiveness and value of the sector through the identification, development and promotion of domestic and international market opportunities. Via our Buyers and Sellers forum, we create linkages between stakeholders locally, regionally and internationally.

EXPORT SERVICES SUPPORT

At NAMDEVCO, we offer a range of support services for persons seeking to export fresh produce.

- Technical advice on the stages and documentation required for the exportation process.
- We provide linkages to buyers within the regional and international markets.
- Compilation of trade statistics on the various ports of entry. For example, we can indicate the landing price of hot pepper in the Miami and New York Terminal Markets.
- We assist with sourcing of fresh produce from our certified farmers.
- We can package for export at our Piarco Packing House.
- Linkages to support mechanisms such as freight forwarders, airlines, brokerage and other agencies for support.

CREATING STRATEGIC ALLIANCES

NAMDEVCO remains committed to all commercial users of agricultural commodities, as we continue to foster working relationships with major supermarket chains, hotels and restaurants. Caterers, specifically those who provide meals to the National School Feeding Programme, continue to work with the Corporation in the procurement of fresh produce for the preparation of meals to the nation's children. Institutional Buyers such as the Defense Force and Regional Health Authorities have also engaged the Corporation for the procurement of fresh produce.

The Market Facilitation department can be contacted via the following:

- BUYERS AND SELLERS HOTLINE: +1 (868) 485-1103
- Email: contact@namdevco.com
- Telephone: +1 (868) 647-3218 ext 501, 502, 504, 507, 526



NAMDEVCO Piarco Packinghouse

NAMDEVCO FARMERS' MARKETS, COMMUNITY CENTREPIECES



The NAMDEVCO Farmers' Markets were introduced approximately fifteen years ago, in an effort to make fresh produce and agro-processed goods readily available and more affordable to consumers. Today, trips to our Farmers' Markets have been customarily integrated into our weekend recreational activities, after an early Saturday morning stroll around the Queen's Park Savannah or after attending religious services on a Sunday morning.

These Farmers' Markets are a 'one-stop-shop', as they provide an avenue for the sale of fresh locally grown produce and other commodities, including plants (ornamentals, seedlings and fruit trees); craft (woodwork, crochet, soft furnishings, leather items and beaded jewelry); body products (soaps, oils and creams); food (pastries, cakes, bread and other local cuisine); drinks (cane juice, milk, coconut water and fruit juices); eggs and meat (chicken, duck, rabbit and fish).

An average of 365 farmers participate at our nine (9) Farmers' Markets and overall there are approximately 650 participants, including plant vendors, agro-processors and other artisans. On a weekly basis, approximately 6000 patrons visit our Farmers' Markets and data collected by our Farmers' Market Unit, indicate that on average 288,444 units, 37,975 bundles and 101,926.7 kilograms of produce is sold monthly at the nine Farmers' Markets. Units include commodities such as lettuce, hot peppers and ocho; bundles include bodi, calaloo bush and spinach; while kilograms include tomatoes, sweet peppers and cassava.

Deemed an essential service, our Farmers' Markets have remained open throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and we have focused on providing a safe environment for accessing fresh goods from our farmers and agro-processors. Now more than ever, we see the importance of our local food systems through the work our farmers are doing to keep us nourished and healthy.

FARMERS' MARKET LOCATIONS

Point Fortin	Every Friday 7:00 am - 2:00 pm	Corner Guapo Main and Reid Road
Rio Claro	Friday (fortnightly) 7:00 am - 1:00 pm	Koskeros Pan Yard, Naparima-Mayaro Road
Chaguanas	Every Saturday 7:00 am - 1:00 pm	Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries, Corner Narsaloo Ramaya Marg Rd and Soogrim St Endeavour
San Fernando	Every Saturday 7:00 am - 1:00 pm	UTT Campus San Fernando, Gopaul Drive, Tarouba
Queen's Park Savannah	Every Saturday 7:00 am - 1:00 pm	Queen's Park Savannah, Port of Spain
Diego Martin	Every Saturday 7:00 am - 1:00 pm	Corner Wendy Fitzwilliam Blvd and Jasper Ave
Couva	Every Sunday 7:00 am - 1:00 pm	Gilbert Park, Corner Atlantic Ave and Southern Main Road, Couva
Macoya	Every Sunday 7:00 am - 1:00 pm	Norris Deonarine Northern Wholesale Market
Arima	Every Sunday 7:00 am - 1:00 pm	Larry Gomes Stadium Northern Car Park



TESTIMONIALS



Suraj Ramnarine (Farmer) – "I have been certified with NAMDEVCO's Farm Certification Programme for almost twenty years. I feel blessed to be able to supply melongene, squash, cucumber and sweet potato for the Market Box project. I believe it's a "Win – Win" situation for us as farmers because this initiative has given us a guaranteed market for our produce, especially in these challenging times. So I want to say thanks to NAMDEVCO for considering us as farmers".



Micah Hinds (Farmer) – "I registered with NAMDEVCO since the inception of their Farm Certification Programme and I felt humbled when asked to assist with the supply of produce for the School Feeding initiative, last year. For this project, I supplied sweet pepper, tomato and melongene. I think it's a nice project from the Government because it supports farmers while also assisting the lower income households and the unemployed as well".



Nikkita Bhagwandass (Farmer/Vendor) – "I have been vending at the Point Fortin Farmers' Market for the past four years and through NAMDEVCO I have grown so much as a farmer. I am truly grateful because they provide the facilities for us as farmers to ply our trade and because of this my customer base has increased greatly. When I started I only had three crops but through the Farmers' market, I now sell a variety of ground provisions, seasonings, coconut, squash and more! I love what I do, I love my customers as well as meeting new customers at the market. Thank you to NAMDEVCO and to my Field Officer. With God, all things are possible.



Ramragie Ramsawak (Farmer/Vendor) – "I sell at NAMDEVCO's Southern Wholesale Market, Debe. I have been here since the market opened as a wholesale market and I'm still here at 101 years old because I enjoy being in the market and being with my loyal customers, who over the years have become my friends, so I always look forward to going to the market".



Rosanna Hayde (Farmer/Vendor) – "I have been selling at the NAMDEVCO's Norris Deonarine Northern Wholesale Market in Macoya, for well over ten years. It's nice to have the assurance of an assigned spot at the market and as a female farmer, I feel safe due to the security and police presence, on the market compound.



Krystianne Wong (Agro-processor/Vendor) – "I'm a newcomer and I am an agro-processor/artisan at NAMDEVCO's Queen's Park Savannah Farmers' Market and I must say that I have enjoyed my experience, thus far. I am truly grateful for the opportunity that NAMDEVCO has given me, especially since the pandemic halted my regular operations. The Farmers' Market has afforded me the opportunity to increase my customer base because my products attract diverse palates. I produce home-made preserves, jams, chutneys and sauces with whatever local commodities that are in season, from melongene to pineapple. NAMDEVCO definitely provided an avenue for me at such a volatile time and for that I'm grateful.



Tamika Taylor (Agro-processor) – "BWANA Business Incorporated is operated by myself and my business partner, Kerwin Craigwell and we currently utilize NAMDEVCO's Piarco Packinghouse facility. We use local produce to process cassava, dasheen and sweet potato into cubes and fries, in addition to our 'Melting Pot' – soup packs. Our experience at the Packinghouse has been exceptional! The services we utilize are processing, storage and even technical guidance and I must say that staff are always ready and willing to assist. In the initial stages of our business, we really wanted an easy transition in our manufacturing process and at the Packinghouse there is machinery, manpower and technical expertise. They can definitely guide potential entrepreneurs to improve their products, in addition to products being GAP and HACCP compliant, which can definitely improve your chances of success at retail opportunities".



Annil Harry (Fisherman/Vendor) – I have been vending at NAMDEVCO's Orange Valley Wholesale Fish Market for 25 years. The amenities at the facility are very convenient as I don't live nearby and thankfully, I'm able to rent a locker room for storage. The facility is clean, there is ample space to sell, tables, potable water and security on site. There is a net shed, so you don't have to go home to repair your net. The facility has electricity and sufficient parking, so it's very useful for us as fishermen. I am thankful for this facility because both my father and grandfather were fisherman and back then, we had to sell in a shed by the roadside, so it's a good contrast in terms of progression.

QUALITY FROM FARM TO TABLE



Quality management and assurance are at the core of NAMDEVCO's operations. Our Quality Assurance Department is responsible for the development and verification of adherence to quality management systems (QMS) in the food supply chain(s), for activities which are under the remit of the Corporation.

One such QMS is the Farm Certification and Monitoring Programme (FCMP) which ensures that farmers are compliant with all the relevant rules and regulations necessary for good agricultural production. These measures are executed through the expertise of our Field Officers, who are assigned to various zones, nationwide.

NAMDEVCO's Farm Certification and Monitoring Programme provides the following benefits:

- Technical assistance is readily available for making informed decisions
- Produce is of a higher quality
- First preference for new and existing markets (Local and Export)
- Training programmes based on needs assessment

Interested in becoming FCMP certified?

You can contact our Quality Assurance Department at 647-3218 ext. 511, 512 and 513

IMPROVING QUALITY CONTROL FOR FRESH PRODUCE

The rising demand for safe high-quality fruit and vegetables has meant that Quality Assurance systems based on Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs), must be in place to satisfy domestic consumption and capture new markets. Good Agricultural Practices, as defined by FAO, are a "collection of principles to apply for on-farm production and postproduction processes, resulting in safe and healthy food and non-food agriculture products, while taking into account economic, social and environmental sustainability".

The Trinidad and Tobago Standard for Good Agricultural Practices - Fresh Produce Requirements (TTS 648:2020) was developed by a Specification Committee for Good Agricultural Practices lead by the Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards (TTBS) and chaired by Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture - Trinidad and Tobago (IICA-TT). The Specification Committee also comprised of organisations such as the Division of Food Production, Forestry and Fisheries - Tobago House of Assembly, Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Inspectorate - Ministry of Health, Environmental Management Authority, Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries, Caribbean Industrial Research Institute, NAMDEVCO, Food and Agriculture Organization, Agricultural Society of Trinidad and Tobago, Certification and Standardization Divisions - Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards.

The Trinidad and Tobago Standard for Good Agricultural Practices - Fresh Produce Requirements (TTS 648:2020) was published in 2020 and is available for purchase both in the e-copy and print via the TTBS website and Standardization Office.

It is expected that compliance with the requirements for GAP will not only assure consumer health and safety but will enhance the international reputation of Trinidad and Tobago, for producing high-quality and safe, fresh produce. The application of GAPs can subsequently have a positive impact on the trade and competitiveness of the country's primary agricultural products. It is incumbent on the owners of farms and other types of primary food establishments to demonstrate leadership and commitment with respect to the establishment, implementation and maintenance of GAPs.

Print copies of the published GAP Standard available for purchase at the Standards Information Centre.

The Centre's opening hours are Monday - Thursday, 8:00am - 4:15pm and Friday 8:00am - 4:00pm.

Please note however, that the cashier's opening hours are Monday - Friday 8:00am - 3:00pm.

Contact - Tel: (868) 662-8827 ext. 2033 | Fax: (868) 663-4335 | ttbs@ttbs.org.tt

E-copy is available at the TT Standards Store via the TTBS Website: <https://gottbs.com/product/tts-6482020-good-agricultural-practices-gap-fresh-produce-requirements/#.YEtoOmKjIU>



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POWERGEN DONATES TO NAMDEVCO GAP MODEL FARM PROJECT IN SUPPORT OF SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

The Power Generation Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (PowerGen) has made a donation to the National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation (NAMDEVCO) in support of sustainable agriculture towards the Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Model Farm Project. This donation was formalised by a Memorandum of Understanding signed in December, 2020.

The goal of the model farm is to educate farmers on best practices in agriculture, with a focus on food safety on the farm. The training for farmers will focus on sustainable methods of irrigation and environmentally safe pesticides, open field cultivation, protected and semi-protected cultivation technologies and on-farm composting technologies. Other intended learnings will be the introduction of new and emerging cultivation technologies that reduce the cost of production, nursery production, grow-box farming and hydroponics. Farmers will also be exposed to crop rotation principles.

Once the project is initiated and begins to produce crops, NAMDEVCO has agreed that the produce from the PowerGen-sponsored project would be donated to the underprivileged for a period of three months.

Nirmalla Debysingh-Persad, CEO of NAMDEVCO, says that "against a background of limited resources, innovative public-private partnerships that bring together businesses, in this case PowerGen and Government are increasingly important for improving productivity and making an impact. The model farm will allow research and learning opportunities that can result in tangible progress in the quest for sustainable agriculture."

In affirming his company's commitment to the project, PowerGen's General Manager, Mr. Surindranath Ramsingh stated, "The socio-economic impact of the pandemic has called upon us to care for each other more than ever. Our donation to NAMDEVCO is part of our "We Care for our Country" campaign.

We targeted sustainable agriculture as an area of support as food security and environmentally sustainable farming practices will be an integral aspect of ensuring our nation will have healthy and locally grown food options in the future. A part of our partnership, we plan to donate the first crops yielded from the GAP Model farm to families in need."

PowerGen commends the Management and staff of NAMDEVCO for the work they continue to do to ensure food security, by supporting and educating our nation's farmers on best practices in sustainable agriculture and creating opportunities for farmers to market their produce.



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NAMDEVCO PARTNERS WITH SUBWAY TO SUPPORT LOCAL PRODUCE

With an objective to creating marketing opportunities for agricultural stakeholders primarily farmers, NAMDEVCO hosted a Buyers Consultation on the 10th June, 2020. This forum was aimed at establishing stronger linkages with key players within the food industry and to discuss any concerns surrounding the marketing of local agricultural produce.

Emerging from this consultation was a pilot project with one of the largest restaurant management companies in Trinidad and Tobago, Prestige Holdings Ltd. The Subway chain, being a major consumer of fresh produce, was selected to begin the first phase of the project. Farmers on NAMDEVCO's Farm Certification and Monitoring Program (FCMP) were provided with the opportunity to supply fresh produce to the restaurant chain. Commodities selected

initially included lettuce, tomato, cucumber and sweet peppers. In the pilot phase, which began in October 2020, five stores in the East Cluster Arima (Broadway), Omera, Piarco, Sangre Grande and Trincity, were supplied with fresh produce from our farmers.

Based on the success of the pilot project and the ability of our FCMP farmers to consistently meet the food chain's quality and safety standards, two additional clusters were included in February 2021 – Port of Spain and West clusters. Farmers on the FCMP now had a larger pool of Subway stores to supply, through the services provided by our Piarco Packing House – processing and delivery of the farmers' produce. The number of outlets have now increased to 18, with the introduction of San Juan, Barataria,

Independence Square, Queen & Edward Street, Henry Street and Frederick Street in Port of Spain; Movie Towne, Ariapita Avenue, St. James, Maraval, Diego Martin and Glencoe in the West Cluster and the inclusion of Tunapuna in the East Cluster.

To date, several farmers on NAMDEVCO's FCMP have been able to reap the benefits of direct market access to these Subway outlets, through the facilitative efforts of NAMDEVCO. The Corporation thanks Subway for their commitment to locally-sourced, farm fresh produce that not only supports our farmers but also reduces the carbon footprint of the supply chain.

TESTIMONIAL



Devon Oudit
Vice President,
Subway,
Prestige Holdings Limited

NAMDEVCO has been a significant partner of Prestige Holdings Limited (Subway) in the procurement and supply of local vegetables for use in 19 of our restaurants within the last year.

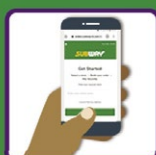
NAMDEVCO, through its farm inspection programs, has played an integral part in developing relationships with local farmers who comply with the highest food safety standards in the growth and harvesting of their products. We feel great comfort in the knowledge that these farms are frequently visited by Food Quality Inspectors who ensure that these standards are continuously maintained. The NAMDEVCO Packing House has also served a vital quality

inspection tool, as all goods are inspected, washed, sanitized, reweighed, and rebagged prior to delivery to our restaurants, thus ensuring products of the highest quality and yield.

Given the prevailing economic conditions, it is also comforting to know that we have an ally who can help us localize the content in our restaurants, while maintaining the high quality and food safety standards that our brand is known for.

I look forward to the relationship between Subway, NAMDEVCO and our local farmers to continue to thrive in the near future as we build upon the strong platform laid within the last year.

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SUBWAY

NAMDEVCO MARKETS

Norris Deonarine Northern Wholesale Market, Macoya	Monday to Friday: 6:30am - 2:00pm; Farmers and Vendors entry: 6:30am; Buyer's entry: 7:00am
Southern Wholesale Market, Debe	Wednesday (Wholesale): 6:30am - 1:30pm; Wednesday (Retail): 10:00am - 6:00pm Thursday (Retail): 6:30am - 6:30pm; Sunday (Retail): 6:30am - 1:30pm
Orange Valley Wholesale Fish Market	Tuesday - Sunday: 6:30am - 10:00am
POS Wholesale Fish Market	Sunday - Sunday: 6:30am - 10:00am
Valencia Farmers' Retail Market	Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday: 6:00am - 6:00pm

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