



# PRESS RELEASE

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND LANDS

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## **Ministry of Agriculture formulates Mitigation and Response Plan amidst Coronavirus Pandemic.**

**Ministry of Agriculture & Lands – April 08, 2020** – The Ministry of Agriculture empathizes with the entire tri island state, as this country contends with the effects of COVID-19, and wishes to inform the public of the formation of its COVID-19 National Food Security Mitigation and Response Plan, geared at bringing a level of relief to farmers and other stakeholders in the Agricultural Sector and by extension the entire population.

This plan, which is a collaborative effort by the Ministry, MNIB and other stakeholders, highlights the impending impact of COVID-19 on the country's food security and mitigation efforts to increase production and productivity within the Agricultural Sector.

As a result of this pandemic, food security has become a major priority as consumers have recognized the need for a more secure domestic food supply, and a food supply chain that is less reliant on imported food.

As such, the COVID-19 National Food Security Mitigation and Response Plan will provide relief through the following activities:

- The implementation of a restructured Farm Labour Support Programme to establish 200 acres of staple food crops and vegetables, in collaboration with commercial farmers.
- Provision of agriculture inputs for small-scale and backyard farmers.
- Guaranteed market access through the Marketing and National Importing Board (MNIB).
- Provision of support to livestock farmers to stabilize costs of production.
- Provide support to fisherfolk and exporters.
- Provide support to Agro-processors.
- Provide support to the GCNA, GCA and other Farmers' Organizations and Associations to protect farmers' livelihoods.

***Major outcomes would include:***

- Provision of a sustainable supply of fresh produce and agro-products
- Development and implementation of an Agricultural Produce Pricing Policy
- A reduction in the food importation bill
- Creation of short-term employment over the implementation period
- Development of a collection and data sharing framework among Sector Stakeholders

***NB: Given the protocol governing social distancing, the Ministry will be rolling out an online application process shortly. Individuals without such access, will be provided with the necessary assistance.***

The Ministry of Agriculture and Lands remains committed to the successful implementation of the COVID-19 National Food Security Mitigation and Response Plan.

***Ministry of Agriculture...ensuring food and nutrition security for all***