

\*PRESS RELEASE \*

**\*Changing the Agriculture Industry\***

The Agency for Reconstruction and Development (ARD), in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Forestry and Fisheries, has created three new information and evaluation tools that will help farmers to plan and manage their farming enterprises more effectively.

ARD Agricultural Planner Keith Owen presented a detailed outline to Minister of Agriculture, Lands, Forestry and Fisheries Hon. Gregory Bowen on Wednesday (July 5) at the ARD Board Room.

An Enterprise Database, a Farm Planning Module and a Loan Processing Facility comprise the new information and evaluation tools that will help to increase efficiency and production through better planning, as well as assist stakeholders in developing strategies, programmes and work plans that help support and promote further growth of the sector.

"I am appreciative of the work of the ARD in developing these facilities," Minister Bowen said.

The Minister said the current Workshops for Extension Officer Trainees should address these new initiatives.

"By the end of the two year programme, I envision that all of the 90 individuals being trained will know how to use the system," the Minister said.

ARD Agricultural Planner Keith Owen, in presenting the details for the Minister, explained the logic in developing the Enterprise Database, the Farm Planning Module and the Loan Processing Facility.

"We need to change the approach we take to agriculture; it is time we started treating the industry more as a business," Mr. Owen said.

The Enterprise Database, which has been set up in the Ministry, is a central location for compiling information from Extension Officers about crop yields, frequency of planting, planting technique and other information gleaned from farmers about their particular operations. The Database contains research information pertaining to farmer needs, which can help to determine future research requirements.

The Farm Planning Module draws on the Enterprise Database and helps generate Business Plans for specific farms and crops, as well enabling national planning in order to provide valuable information on future marketing requirements, labour, planting materials and other inputs in order to support the sector.

The Loan Processing Facility, which will be used to implement the Agricultural Enterprise Development Programme, is designed to establish suitable loan scheduling to suit the needs of various farming enterprises, and may also help to encourage integration of the commercial banking sector into the process.

Photo information: (l to r around the table) Hon Gregory Bowen Minister of Agriculture, Lands, Forestry and Fisheries; ARD Director of Economic

Recovery Richard de Lima; ARD Agricultural Director Alphonses Antoine;  
ARD Senior Projects Manager Robin Swaisland and ARD Agricultural  
Planner

Keith Owen

July 6, 2006

Agency for Reconstruction and Development Inc.  
Botanical Gardens, St. George's, Grenada  
Tel: 473-439-5606/07/08;  
Fax: 473-439-5609;  
Email: [mail@ardgrenada.org](mailto:mail@ardgrenada.org) <mailto:[mail@ardgrenada.org](mailto:mail@ardgrenada.org)>  
Website: [www.ardgrenada.org](http://www.ardgrenada.org)