



## AGRINEWS



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### Sailing Week Update

The Marketing Team from CMC raised their sails (banners) and navigated their way out to English Harbour to participate as vendors in the Annual Sailing Week contest. This endeavour was an attempt to secure new markets whereby the Corporation can further promote the purchase of locally produced fruits, vegetables and processed food items. Working under the theme “Buy Fresh, Buy Local”, members of the yachting community were able to purchase reasonably priced fresh fruits and vegetables. There were also a host of locally processed goodies such as jams, jellies, marmalades, hot sauce, chutney, drinks and Johnny cakes. Sweet delectable local delights like sugar cake, peppermint sticks, fudge, sugar baby, and peanut brittle were also available.

CMC undoubtedly left a “sweet” impression on the shores of the 47<sup>th</sup> Edition of Antigua Sailing Week. Next year promises to be even better; Farmers and Processors please keep this event in mind and let’s give the “yachties” the best Antigua has to offer.



## EDITORIAL

### Antigua & Barbuda Market Information System

The Ministry of Agriculture Housing and the Environment recognizes the importance of maintaining sound information. Several attempts have been made in the past to establish an effective and efficient system; however, these have been unsuccessful. The Ministry is now collaborating with the Inter American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).

IICA will contribute to this venture by providing the necessary training as well as the hand-held devices that will be utilized to capture and upload production related information that will subsequently be disseminated to the public.

Easy access to agricultural information is an absolute necessity if this sector is to thrive and flourish. Many agricultural institutes and sectors have developed websites to aid farmers and the consumers along the agricultural chain and this initiative has played a positive role in the sectors’ development.

The key benefit to be derived from the implementation of this system is the stimulation it will provide to the local economy. Having vital information readily available makes for more informed decisions as it relates to the issuance of import licenses of commodities that can be sourced locally.

All stakeholders in the sector should be desirous of seeing the day when Agriculture in Antigua and Barbuda is taken to such a level. As such, all are encouraged to contribute whenever and wherever possible.

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Comments or suggestions please write or call: (268) 462-1491 ext. 239; email: [promis@cmcantigua.org](mailto:promis@cmcantigua.org); Kentish Road, St. John’s Antigua



## FARMERS' DEPOT Product of the Month



If you are a serious farmer who is interested in great weed control, then **Basta** is the product you need. It will clean up around the crop while giving it maximum protection. **Basta** is very effective on over 80 species of broadleaf and grass weeds and has a high level of crop safety. Now that you know what to use let me tell you where to get it. **CMC Farmers' Depot** has the lowest guaranteed price!

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## LOCAL PRODUCTION STATUS REPORT

### ADC Production

Agricultural Development Corporation (ADC) was established in 1979 to diversify agriculture in Antigua and Barbuda. ADC or Diamonds as it is commonly known produces a wide variety of crops on 120 acres of prime farm land. However, four major crops produced at that Government Station are Sweet Potato, Onion, Carrot and Tomato.

The following table shows the planting schedule utilized at ADC for these crops:

Crop	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.
Sweet Potato	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Carrot	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Onion	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Tomato	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	

Three and six month varieties of Sweet Potato are planted every ten (10) days from October to June. This cycle ensures the crops availability year round.

The intense drought experienced over the past months has severely hampered production; as a result, this crop will be unavailable at ADC during the period June – August.

Under normal circumstances, an average of 2000 lbs of Sweet Potato is harvested weekly, however, a mere 200 lbs was the weekly result from a 2 acre plot.

The 1.5 acre plot of Carrot being harvested at present yields approximately 300 lbs weekly, this will be finished mid to late June; however, the follow-up crop is ready for harvesting and will produce until September.

An estimated 20,000 lbs of Onion was produced on 2 acres, of which 400-600 lbs of small Onions remain in storage and can be purchased from ADC at significantly reduced rates.

Harvesters will be out to reap from 4

acres in the upcoming weeks; the yield is yet to be determined as the drought may affect the expected 40,000 lbs.

ADC produced an average of 1500 lbs of Tomato weekly during the month of May. Production of this crop has been steady from February of this year and will continue thus until the year's end barring any insurmountable challenges.



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## RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

### Central Cotton Station



In 1945 the Central Cotton Station was established primarily to select, multiply and conserve the genetic purity of the Sea Island Cotton grown in the Leeward Islands. Today, under the guidance of the Senior Research Officer Ms. Maudvere Bradford, research is conducted to develop appropriate technologies in the cotton industry, and provide training and technical support to cotton producers for the purpose of improving production practices including pest management, plant nutrition and yield improvement.

In recent times, there has been a decline in the number of farmers who are engaged in cotton production across the region. This poses a major threat to the national treasure and heritage that this cotton represents, however, high production costs make it a less than ideal economic venture.

The Japanese market is the primary consumer of the cotton grown in the region and at present, they offer US\$10.00 per pound. As appealing as that may appear, farmers receive only EC\$4.00 per pound; after harvesting, the cotton has to be taken to the Ginnery for cleaning and this process results in a further reduction of the initial weight.

Although the cotton is produced in several neighbouring islands, the cotton produced in the Northern and Eastern sections of Antigua is said to be of the very best quality.

## CURRENT PRICES

### Month Ending May 2014

ITEM	TYPE	FARMGATE	PUBLIC MARKET	RETAIL
Beet	Local	---	\$4.50	\$3.98
Beet	Imported	---	---	3.67
Cabbage	Imported	---	\$3.00	\$2.45
Carrot	Local	\$3.00	---	\$3.75
Carrot	Imported	---	\$4.00	\$3.06
Cucumber	Local	---	\$4.00	---
Cucumber	Imported	---	---	4.75
Eggplant	Local	\$3.00	\$4.25	\$4.20
Eggplant	Imported	---	---	4.95
Onion	Local	\$2.00	\$4.50	---
Onion	Imported	---	---	3.01
Pumpkin	Local	\$2.00	\$3.50	\$3.67
Sweet Pepper	Local	---	\$5.50	---
Sweet Pepper	Imported	---	---	8.26
Sweet Potato	Local	\$3.00	\$4.50	\$4.99
Sweet Potato	Imported	---	---	4.20
Tomato	Local	\$3.00	\$5.00	\$4.23
Tomato	Imported	---	---	\$5.54
Cantaloupe	Imported	---	---	\$4.61
Pineapple	Imported	---	---	\$6.63
Watermelon	Local	---	\$3.75	\$3.38
Watermelon	Imported	---	---	\$3.75

## VEGETABLE IMPORTS

ITEM	2011		2012	
	Net Weight (lb)	CIF* (EC\$/lb)	Net Weight (lb)	CIF (EC\$/lb)
Tomato	385,917.51	\$2.78	355,087.46	\$2.56
Onion	791,115.82	\$1.62	1,056,257.47	\$1.42
Cabbage	372,577.88	\$1.81	359,598.05	\$1.77
Carrot	401,568.79	\$2.03	485,163.82	\$2.05
Beet	28,715.02	\$2.23	29,102.30	\$2.23
Cucumber	7,838.27	\$4.01	13,200.99	\$3.20
Sweet Pepper	388,610.02	\$2.93	416,629.62	\$2.91
Zucchini	100,503.52	\$3.26	102,054.88	\$2.95
Okra	375.78	\$3.47	-	\$ -
Pumpkin	51,595.28	\$1.06	115,224.63	\$0.86

\*CIF – Cost Insurance Freight

Source: Statistics Division, Min of Finance, the Economy and Public Administration, 12<sup>th</sup> May, 2013.

The CIF value indicated above is a term used to refer to the price invoiced or quoted by the seller and includes the actual cost of the goods, the insurance, shipping and all other related charges up to the named port of destination.

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## ANTIGUA BARBUDA AGRI-CLIMATE



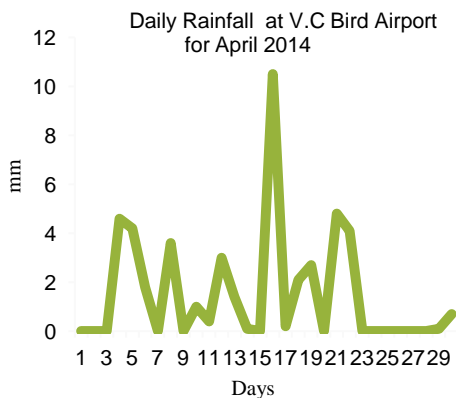
By: Keithley Meade - *Director*  
Antigua & Barbuda Meteorological Services

Climate is the most important factor influencing the sustainability of crops in any geographic region. The meteorological drought which started September 2013, to date poses a major threat to local farmers as it significantly reduced production levels.

During the month of April, periods of instability and transportation by the trade winds of shallow pockets of moisture resulted in periods of cloudiness with brief scattered showers across the islands.

The recorded rainfall for the month of April at V.C Bird Airport was 45.3 mm (1.78 in.) which is below the monthly average of 67.1 mm (2.64 in.).

The average air temperature was near normal at 25.9°C while the average relative humidity for the month was 71.2%.



## THE FARMER'S VOICE A Prayer for Rain

Have you tried prayer? “Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not upon the earth by the space of three and one half years. And he prayed again and the heavens gave rain, and the earth brought forth fruit.” James 5:17-18.

During a drought many years ago a preacher called his church together to pray for rain. On the day they gathered to pray, the preacher suddenly announced that they may as well go home. When asked why, he replied, “we gathered to ask of God for rain; however, I noticed no one has brought an umbrella.”

God longs to do great things for us, our part is to pray and believe. When difficulties arise, look not to humanity for help. Trust all with God. “For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, my blessing upon thy offspring.” Isaiah 44:3

Our Father who art in heaven, Holy is Your name. Dear Lord, the Earth and its fullness belongs to You and that is why we come to You with our need for rain.

Potworks Dam is dry, water catchments across Antigua and Barbuda are dry, the earth is cracked and there is a call to ration the little water that is available.



You oh Lord are a God of abundance and You have promised to supply all our needs according to Your riches in glory. **Jesus we need rain.** Your word declares that the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous avails much and so we make this request in the name of your son Jesus. Amen.

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