

# CAISNews

*"An electronic newsletter of the Caribbean Agricultural Information Service (CAIS) to support developing capacity in agricultural information management in the Caribbean Region"*

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## **Introduction**

Welcome to the fourth and final issue of CAISNews for 2003. At the CAIS Secretariat, we continue to support the development of the information and communications capacity of both networks and information services in the region. We affirmatively conclude that 2003 was productive and indeed a pleasure working with you. It is our anticipation that our working relationship would be strengthened in 2004 as we continue to work with you in implementing the key programmes identified as your priorities. Our deepest gratitude for your feedback and articles and we invite your continued contribution in 2004. Best wishes in this season of goodwill and a prosperous and productive New Year.

## **Successful re-organisation in the Caribbean**

In the hope of improving performance, many organisations are occasionally re-organised and re-focused. Dr Vasantha Chase, prepared an article on institutional re-organisation and is aware that various surveys of US businesses indicate that no more than one third of these organisations after undergoing re-organisation actually succeed at improving performance. However, the Environment and Sustainable Development Unit (ESDU) of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) has been re-organised and they are confident that they have successfully improved performance. Re-organisation is usually time consuming and in the case of the ESDU, it occurred over a seven year period. Key elements of their re-organisation included, recruiting and developing staff, creating a collective team-based approach in the work environment and finding the right leadership style. Further details are provided in the article by Dr Vasantha Chase at [www.capacity.org](http://www.capacity.org) Issue 19, October 2003.

## **Kit explores collaboration with CARDI/ CAIS**

Ms Margo Kooijman, Manager Front Office, Information Services of the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) visited CARDI between 4-10 December 2003 to explore developing a collaborative relationship with CARDI. KIT is a non-profit organisation established in 1910 as colonial institute for the study of the tropics, trade and industry in the former colonies. In their own words "KIT presents a variety of different faces to the world". It is based in Amsterdam and works in

the areas of **sustainable development, poverty alleviation and cultural preservation** and exchange. The services of KIT include advisory work/consultancy, information services (library, SDI; documents delivery etc) and training. Details on KIT can be viewed at [www.kit.nl](http://www.kit.nl)

Many persons may be familiar with KIT's database TROPAG, access to which has been supported by the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) to regional centres for some time now.

The potential areas identified for a CARDI/ KIT collaboration include

1. Training courses in communication and content development for publication and dissemination of relevant information
2. Training in preparing documentation in electronic formats for improved access
3. Support for increasing availability of Caribbean information on the Internet
4. Design and development of new information products
5. Knowledge communities/networking

The mission was indeed successful and further discussions at the institutional level will be agreed to and finalise the details of collaboration.

## Publications and Websites

### Publications

Appropriate Technology Magazine is a publication formed from a merger of *Appropriate Technology* and *International Agricultural Development*. The objective of the publication since its first issue in 2000 is to fully highlight the part that agriculture plays in the developing world. A sample copy of the magazine can be viewed at [www.appropriatechnology.com](http://www.appropriatechnology.com) and information on subscriptions should be sent to Research Information Ltd at [info@researchinformation.co.uk](mailto:info@researchinformation.co.uk)

### Websites

[www.col.org/copyright](http://www.col.org/copyright)

This website provides information on the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) conference and discussions on issues of "Copyright and the Web".

[www.edutools.info](http://www.edutools.info)

Information on EduTools, a web-based resource for the higher education community can be viewed at this website.

[www.fidamerica.cl](http://www.fidamerica.cl)

FIDAMERICA is a network which aims to improve the efficiency of microfinance projects supported by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The IFAD focuses on the elimination of poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean region. The website's home page is in Spanish and as such you will need to click on the **traductor** link for the English version of the website.

Caribbean Agricultural Information Service  
c/o CARDI  
UWI Campus  
St Augustine  
Trinidad

Tel. 868-645-1205/6/7  
Fax. 868-645-1208  
Email [ic@cardi.org](mailto:ic@cardi.org)  
Website [www.caisnet.org](http://www.caisnet.org)

#### **Disclaimer**

*The websites and publications listed are a service to our clients in the Caribbean region. It does not represent an endorsement or recommendation of the particular companies, agencies or institutions listed*

**Also available on the web at [www.caisnet.org](http://www.caisnet.org)**