

THE BLUE HOLE

BAMSI NEWSLETTER



CONGRATULATIONS



The Bahamas
Agriculture & Marine
Science Institute



**BAMSI CELEBRATES IT'S
THIRD CO-HORT OF
GRADUATES**

DONATION
of plants from
BAMSI to NAD

ALIV
Backyard Farming

AGRI-
Business Expo

BAMSI
Expands into The
Tiplapia Market

PARTNERSHIP
With BAMSI and
Western Air



BAMSI GRADUATIONS

BAMSI celebrates it's second and third co-hort of graduates



The Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute celebrated two graduation events in 2018. Students who completed their Associates Degrees were recognized for their achievements during a special programme held February 1st. Also, graduates from the Institution took part in a ceremony held May 17th at the Institute's North Andros Campus.



DONATION OF PLANTS TO NAD



The Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute (BAMSI), in a move to bring greater awareness of its mission to build a food secure future for this nation, has partnered with the Nassau Airport Development Company (NAD) to shine a spotlight on native trees with a donation last week of 12 fruit trees-- the guava, soursop, and mulberry trees. The partnership also brings the added benefit of an anticipated increase in brand awareness-- the agricultural agency is now exposed to a new audience of some 3.3 million visitors that pass through the Lynden Pindling International Airport (LPIA) annually. Calling NAD a pacesetter in the country's economic and corporate landscape, Minister of Agriculture and Marine Resources Michael Pintard said he hoped the message of planting Bahamian fruit trees, led by NAD and BAMSI, would catch on and that «more corporate citizens would collaborate with the government of the Bahamas by way of BAS and its other organs, in terms of following this same initiative.

BAMSI President Tennyson Wells said building a food secure future for The Bahamas stood at the heart of the donation to NAD. The twelve trees will not only enhance the green space but also provide a bridge between the agriculture industry and corporate Bahamas, allow visitors to the country to connect with the Bahamian culture and culinary landscapes in a unique way, and astly, help to create a beautiful enviroment.

He said the donation came at an appropriate time as BAMSI is currently planting the same trees, the guava, soursop, and mulberry, at its farm in North Andros. Looking beyond the potential reverberations the donations could have on a wider business community, Mr. Pintard, who was on had to plants one of the trees in LPIA Garden C - located just past the US Departure Terminal- was inspired to see ornamental plants in the area, seeing this as an exciting opportunity for Bahamians to explore. While the Government of The Bahamas remains focused on creating a strategic path to food security, the ornamental plant industry provided a lucrative opportunity for Bahamian farmers and entrepreneurs who are looking to expand their product line beyond fruits and vegetables. «We would like to be a part of facilitating Bahamian growers providing both ornamentals as well as fruits and vegetables to Bahamians and to others who reside in The Bahamas and have commercial enterprises.»



ALIV BACKYARD FARMING

ALIV joins the backyard movement



ALIV and BAMSI partner for the backyard movement.

Expanding its position as the 'go-to' corporate citizen for community support, ALIV has entered the backyard farming gardening territory, partnering with the Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute (BAMSI) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources for a test pilot project in Long Island. The initiative, initially launched in March, is expected to impact the lives of some 45 families in Long Island by driving down the cost of foods and increasing the amount of healthy options brought to the Bahamian dinner table, Minister of Agriculture Michael Pintard said during a press conference on Monday. Mr. Pintard used the opportunity to highlight his ministry's role in the sector, saying that the Ministry of Agriculture would take the lead in building capacity- introducing educational initiatives, gaining community wide support, identifying and drafting technical reinforcements- in an effort to reduce food imports, in particular of identified and widely used crops.

Mr. Pintard also identified homeowners and residents as the lead producers, adding that the backyard farming programme is a strategy that can be embraced by every segment of the Bahamian community- resulting in families eating healthy food, reducing household expenditure, and also the creation of entrepreneurial opportunities that will provide additional income. As the sector increases, there are also opportunities for pop-up markets and other community positive initiatives. The Minister also acknowledged that the backyard farming programme being driven by the ministry was first launched under former Minister of Agriculture Larry Cartwright.

It was also noted that following the initial launch in Long Island, the innovative project is set to expand to Cat Island and Exuma in the short term before spreading to other islands.

ALIV CEO Damian Blackburn said ALIV's involvement in the backyard project came about when the telecommunications company launched its services in Long Island earlier this year. Island Administrator Cleola Pinder approached the company, he said, voicing her passion for the agricultural movement and her desire to see more people get involved in backyard farming. After reviewing her proposal, the ALIV team agreed to support her project and some 45 families signed up to participate.

Mr. Blackburn said that ALIV is committed to providing monetary resources, financial and technical support and creating digitized channels to have the official backyard farming handbook, and other important information, quickly and easily disseminated. ALIV's connection between healthy foods and a healthy lifestyle.



AGRI-BUSINESS EXPO

As one of the largest vendors at the 2018 Agri-Business Expo, the Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute (BAMSI) put on a tremendous display of locally grown fruits and vegetables, also highlighting Bahmian manufacturers and agri-processors. With thousands of persons in attendance at the event, held on Gladstone Road agricultural grounds, Chief Executive Officer of BAMSI Alaasis Braynen said the institute was able to showcase what can be grown and successfully harvested in The Bahamas at a rate that is suitable for the needs of retailers and wholesalers. Beyond featuring local produce, Mr. Braynen explained the Expo provided the institute with an opportunity to promote its Associated Farmer's Programme (AFP) and capitalize on a general upswing in public interest in backyard, urban and organic farming.

Evidence of the importance of the programme was reflected in the abundance and variety of items that were available for sale. While a limited number of produce came directly from BAMSI's own research and demonstration farm in North Andros, the bulk of the fresh produce came through the AFP. Still in its early stages, the AFP represents the centerpiece of BAMSI's Outreach/Extension unit and stands as the catalyst for its Food and Nutrition Security Plan. It is comprised of a national network of stakeholders, with members engaging in farming, food processing, and agro-industrial enterprises to enhance and expand the agricultural sector in this nation's drive to self-sufficiency. According to Mr. Braynen, the institute's marine and aquatic sciences division was also represented at the Expo.



A wealthy harvest of lettuce and other greens were available, all grown at BAMSI's aquaponics shadehouse. As part of its showcase at the national event held last month, the Institute presented Deputy Prime Minister, Peter Turnquest and former Minister of Agriculture and Marine Resources, Renward Wells with baskets filled with items that were grown, processed, and manufactured in the Commonwealth of The Bahamas. Representing the Institute in his newly appointed capacity as the Chairman of the Board and President, Tennyson Wells made a special presentation during the opening ceremonies. Senior Admissions Officer, Jarenda Rahming was also among the presenters at the three-day event. She shared with the audience the incredible opportunity the BAMSI academic arm provides for young Bahamians interested in the agriculture industry for Marine Science.



BAMSI EXPANDS INTO THE TILAPIA MARKET



Some 3,000 Tilapia fingerlings were brought to Andros.

Some 3,000 Andros-grown tilapia are being prepped to hit The Bahamas retail market in early 2019. The farm raised fish will help fill the demand left after the closure of the Nassau Grouper season, a senior official at The Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute (BAMSI) announced on Monday. The addition of the tilapia to BAMSI's product offering also marks the beginning of the institute's planned venture into aquaculture.



The fingerlings go through the acclimation process.

Minister of Agriculture and Marine Resources Michael Pintard said his primary interest is in the institute's ability to utilize this enterprise as a research initiative which would provide scientific data to Bahamians who may be interested in commercial aquaculture. Secondly, Minister Pintard encouraged the BAMSI team to aggressively explore opportunities for public private partnerships so the project could benefit from private funding and expertise which could catalyze the growth and profitability of the venture.

The all-male Nile Tilapia were introduced to the Institute's aquaponics facility in North Andros earlier this month, and are expected to be ready for harvest in six months.

The launch of the locally grown/farm-raised fish into the Bahamian economy falls in line with the Government's commitment to support sustainable fisheries, and invest in critical components needed to push the nation toward a food-secure future, Alaasis Braynen, Chief Executive Officer of BAMSI said. He noted further that the first consumers of the tilapia will be BAMSI's own students. «BAMSI has the mandate, 'we eat what we grow', then commercially it's part of the strategy to reduce BAMSI's financial dependence on the Bahamas Government. It's really going to increase our revenue thereby reducing the government's subvention,» he said.



A netting material covers each of the holding tanks to prevent birds and other predators from attacking the fish.



BAMSI STAFF CONTINUES TO EXCEL



Heneka Rolle- Executive Assistant to the Chairman

The management of BAMSI is very pleased to highlight Heneka Rolle, Executive Assistant to the Chairman, for obtaining her certification in Project Management. This professional milestone will go a long way towards supporting BAMSI in its push to achieve a national level of self-sufficiency and sustainability. Since becoming the Executive Assistant, Ms. Rolle has sat in meetings with the chairman discussing BAMSI's ongoing projects.

These meetings made her realized that she was not fully equipped to consult and give advice to the chairman about these projects, which prompted her to pursue a Certificate in Project Management (CIPM).

According to Ms. Rolle, the certification will be beneficial to her life because it is recognized internationally which will allow her to use her knowledge not only within BAMSI, but where-ever her journey takes her. "BAMSI is still a project, there are a lot of buildings to go up, facilities of such to come about and I truly believes that with this certificate, I will be a great asset to BAMSI in terms of consulting and advising the president of such."

Ms. Rolle has a Bachelor's Degree in Management and Accounting, a Master's Degree in Finance, and a Master's Degree in International Relations. She's also bilingual, speaking both English and Mandarin. Some of her work experience includes, Eugene Dupuch Law School, Deloitte, Bimini Sands and Gekabi Chub Cay.

Aside from her job, she owns and operates her own boot camp called Island Fitness Connection and aspires to obtain a certification in fitness (CTP). Over the next 10 years, Ms. Rolle sees herself as a Certified Professional Accountant (CPA), because of her experience in Accounting, and also a business woman in North Andros. She is very family oriented and extends gratitude to her parents and sister for always supporting her and pushing her to be the best she can be.

BAMSI is extremely proud to have her as a member of our team and we look forward to being able to utilize her enhanced skills and knowledge for the betterment of BAMSI.



'ARE YOU IN' STAFF APPRECIATION



The Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources hosts it's first 'Are You In' Staff Appreciation Campaign.



TASTE EXHIBITION/ POP-UP



Bamsi host it's first ever Taste Exhibition/Pop-Up to showcase the different Bahamian brands and also to get the public familiarized and comfortable with these brands.



WESTERN AIR PARTNERS UP WITH BAMSI

Building Community...Growing Together: BAMSI flies high with Western Air

The Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute (BAMSI) and Western Air, two titans of economic development and community buildout in North Andros, announced last week that they are partnering with a purpose. The two organizations intend to drive community initiatives and, in particular, support outreach efforts that focus on education, economic empowerment for youth and global training opportunities.

Dr. Raveenia Roberts-Hanna, BAMSI's Executive Director, said the partnership was an exciting one because while both agencies represents a different industry perspective, the two have found common ground in their desire to see North Andros flourish and the youth of the community have an expanded pool of opportunities from which to choose.

Shandrice Woodside-Rolle, Vice President & COO of Western Air, also expressed her excitement for the new partnership, saying the airline was formed to serve the North Andros community and falling in line with that, the new initiative with BAMSI will propel the mission into even wider areas. As an androsian herself, the strength and stability of the North Andros community is of great importance to her, both personally and professionally, and this initiative and others like it will help ensure the community continues toward positive development.



Pictured from left to right are Dr. Raveenia Roberts-Hanna, Douglas Turnquest, Shandrice Woodside-Rolle, Tennyson Wells and Donald Symonette

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Brought to you by BAMSI's Office of Information and Communications

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