



THE BAMSI BLUEHOLE

NEW Executive Chairman focuses on the way forward

Quarterly Newsletter

Winter Edition

Critics of the Bahamas Agriculture & Marine Science Institute (BAMSI) might argue that the Institute had been left to languish in mediocrity after a stellar launch in 2014. Initially, the Institute soared, with laser-like focus, on an upward trajectory of success.

Experts across the field of agriculture and marine science were brought in to equip students, staff and farmers with technical knowledge in these areas, the academic arm held the first of successive graduations in 2016, international partnerships were formed that would benefit students and staff alike and bring a level of esteem to the Institute. Woven amongst these triumphs however, cracks, setbacks, and seemingly insurmountable hurdles arose. Combine these inefficiencies with

the impact in recent years of major hurricanes, a downturn in the economy and the loss of key personnel, BAMSI struggled with its identity and lost sight of its original mandate.

Under the leadership of newly appointed Chairman Tyrel Young, who assumed office November 1, 2021, the way forward for BAMSI is steadily and strategically being carved out and a return to the original objectives and mission statement seem assured.

"I want people to know that from day one, my priority was to understand the Government's plan for BAMSI and to carry out that mandate to the best of my ability, and with the full support of the staff. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to rage across the globe,

food security must remain at the top of our agenda. We must be able to provide at least the basic food items for ourselves on a consistent basis and we must be able to do that in a sustainable manner, so that future generations of Bahamians will be supported and have access to arable land."

Finding the farm in a disappointing level of disarray - this is one of the first areas Mr. Young turned his attention to. With almost 90 percent of the tractors down, Mr. Young had the machines quickly repaired so that production could ramp up to an acceptable level and also so the Institute could better support its Associate Farmers.



The wellbeing of the farm itself was quickly reasserted as a critical objective, as was identifying the essential crops and increasing production, research and training of farm staff.

"As we head into 2022, my goal is to see a steady increase in the types of crops grown by BAMSI, our partners in the Associated Farmers program and all farmers across the Bahamas. Part of BAMSI's job, as research Institute, is to provide critical information for the sector in terms of best practices, best variety for our environment, and healthiest options for our populace," he said.

"We want to balance supporting the business of farming – that is seeing farmers maximize their earning potential – with making the healthiest produce available to the widest spectrum of our citizenry...and available at a cost they can afford," Mr. Young said. "Persons living in the inner cities, the less fortunate, those living on the margins of society, they should all have access to healthy produce in their neighbourhoods and be able to actual include these items – fresh fruit and vegetables – in their grocery budget."

The academic arm also required greater support. Unlike many government departments, agencies and ministries, there was an immediate need to increase the staff compliment with educated, motivated and focused individuals who would assist in the training of young and not so young future agriculturalist and marine scientists.

A key component of the new mandate is driving enrollment levels up by widening the recruitment net and



**Above - Sweet peppers and Romaine lettuce are being planted.
Below - Chairman Young examines some of the farm equipment and receives a box of produce from Supervisor Tanya Phillips.**



making it easier for recent graduates and those interested in making a career change to choose BAMSI and work through the enrolment process quickly and smoothly, all while feeling supported by staff and administration.

"Just like UB and BTVI, the Government of the Bahamas is committed to providing free education to qualified candidates at BAMSI. We want students and parents to know that if you pass five BGCSE's, math and English included, the BAMSI Government Tertiary Education Grant is available to you. It covers a range of things from tuition and fees to textbooks. We want senior high students, especially those in grades 10 and 11, to start planning now to enroll in BAMSI. A beautiful campus along with a talented team of educators awaits you," Mr. Young said.

Other areas of BAMSI are also scheduled for revamping. The Distribution Centre, long a favourite amongst the Bahamian public, especially those who are focused on locally grown, healthy food items, will again showcase the best produce the nation has to offer. The \$20 produce box continues to be a much sought-after item.

Pulling all of these areas together, Mr. Young noted, the Institute is set to launch an aggressive marketing campaign to ensure that BAMSI becomes a household name in the best possible way...a leader in sustainable farming, a world-class academic institute in agriculture and marine science, a top regional research Centre, and a partner and stakeholder along with every Bahamian farmer. "My goal is that every Bahamian is aware of the full range of services and goods the Nassau/Andros-based Institute has to offer."

BAMSI'S CHAIRMAN VISITS LONG ISLAND

As part of the way forward, BAMSI Executive Chairman Tyrel Young, visited Long Island to hear from farmers, residents and concerned citizens on how the agency could best meet their needs. Mr. Young was accompanied by Executive Chairman of BAIC Leroy Major and the Executive Chairman of Water & Sewerage Sylvanus Petty.



Pictured above: the group arrives in Long Island. Below: they had the opportunity to worship at St. Paul's Parish in Clarence Town with Father Kari Xavier Marcelle. Top and bottom left: The group tours the Clarence Town packing house and area farms.



BAMSI EXPANDS ITS LIVESTOCK DIVISION

STUDENTS of The Bahamas Agriculture & Marine Science Institute (BAMSI) will have a special item added to the school's menu this Fall – eggs produced by chickens grown at BAMSI. Dr. Raveenia Roberts-Hanna, Executive Director of the Institute with oversight of the academic portfolio, said the newest addition to the farm's animal division will allow for an expansion of the syllabus and further enhance student knowledge and training in poultry science, as well bring a nutritious and tasty twist to the school's cafeteria offerings.

In May, BAMSI received 115 ISA Brown chicks from the Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resource's Layer Programme. ISA Brown chicks are the commercial variation of the Rhode Island Red and produce a brown shell egg.

"The addition of the layers will support the diversification of BAMSI's syllabus and training," Dr. Hanna noted. "We currently teach animal science and production, so it's now good to have all animals on the farm to support the practicals and hands on training."

The eggs will also be incorporated into the student meal plan for healthier and more economical meals.

"They won't have to purchase eggs for the cafeteria, plus the eggs provide students with an important niche for education, research and training," she added. According to Dr. Hanna, the eggs laid by the chicks will provide a sustainable supply of free-range organic eggs and allow students to witness the full growth cycle from chick to mature layer to egg production and also stay in line with a clear objective of the school, 'we eat what we grow'. Where there is an excess of eggs, she noted, they will be sold in the community.

The project at BAMSI evolved from the Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources distribution of egg producing poultry throughout the Bahamas. Assistant Director Andrew Pinder said, "One of the reasons we selected table eggs is because we wanted to expand a protein source that can be sustained.

The Ministry is looking at bringing in roosters so you can incubate eggs and complete the cycle, some farmers are already doing that – breeding eggs and hatching out those eggs. So, we hope that BAMSI will familiarize students with that process, purchase an incubator, breed hens and be a supplier of chicks to farmers in Andros and other islands. We want to see it get to the point where it is sustainable and see the full cycle, so we are also looking at bringing in hatchable eggs, and putting them in a hatchery.

The Ministry's role in the Layer programme, Mr. Pinder noted, is to facilitate the distribution of baby chicks (layers) to persons who are currently in table egg production, as well as persons interested in getting involved. The Ministry provides, at no cost to the participant, chicks, feed for birds up to 26-weeks of age, bedding, vitamins and electrolytes. A number of schools, including BAMSI, are currently participating in the programme and have also received feeders and special water jugs. The Ministry also provided technical assistance. Among those targeted for the programme were farmers, backyard gardeners and schools. The Ministry sought to expose students in general, and those on the Family Islands and in rural communities to layer production.

Lennie McDonald, BAMSI's Farm Administrator has been busy preparing for the arrival of the chicks. "A 60 x 20 chicken house has been constructed, and we are in the process of building some laying trays and getting ready to install the water bins for them to drink water – the free-flowing system will use five-gallon water bottles. We have also purchased four feeder boxes. "We had a lot of materials on hand, but we got a few more things to protect them from the rain, including a plastic ground covering that is used in the aquaponics centre.

According to Mr. McDonald, the chicks will likely only use about a quarter of the large building at first, before an increase in numbers fills out the space. He also noted that while some feed came with the birds, BAMSI has already sourced more feed to supplement and support the chicks as they grow.



The chickens have come home to roost at BAMSI's North Andros campus



FALL 2021 SEMESTER BEGINS ONLINE



Dr. Raveenia Roberts-Hanna
Executive Director, BAMSI Institute

Like every other educational institution around the world, the Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute (BAMSI) is faced with the question of how best to provide a quality academic journey complete with all the experiences – tangible and otherwise – that students, faculty and school administrations prior to the raging Covid Pandemic took for granted. Dr. Raveenia Roberts Hanna, Executive Director of BAMSI College, remains resolute however, in her goal to expose her students to every interesting and amazing facet of the world of agriculture, marine and related sciences as she can.

One of the things that has not changed during this time however, is the Government's commitment to educating persons in science-based fields and this is seen through its Government Tertiary Grant Programme. Any discussion on lowering the import food bill, increasing self-sufficiency and securing a greater level of food security must include discussions of academic preparedness, entrepreneurial readiness and initiatives, employment opportunities,

and the engagement of young Bahamians – all of which BAMSI provides. The Grant programme is one of the ways the Government continues to support the Institute in its mission to educate the populace and serve as a globally competitive research centre.

"We're grateful for the Bahamas Government Tertiary Grant Programme which affords qualified Bahamians opportunities for free studies at BAMSI. And we encourage more to apply and take advantage of this opportunity to better themselves and take gainful employment in the agriculture sector or become a successful entrepreneur in their field," Dr. Hanna said.

While classes, which started August 23, continue in a virtual environment, both new and returning students will have for the first-time access to a full-fledged Poultry unit. They will have the opportunity to research egg and poultry production. This unit adds strength to BAMSI's animal science division in terms of its academic potential and students and staff will also get to taste their efforts, after the eggs have been harvested.



A 60 x 20 chicken house has been constructed for the animals

According to Dr. Hanna, this October will bring with it an exciting array of new online courses and certificate programs. Among the offerings are Backyard Farming, Certificate in Agriculture, Flat Fishing and Soil & Water Management. In term of its online courses, BAMSI is pleased to announce that the school has some 20 online courses, including the college prep/ BGCSE equivalent classes in English, Math, Biology and Chemistry.

"Our online college prep courses allow students to further their academic endeavors in math, English, Chemistry and Biology," Dr. Hanna explained, adding that as BGCSE equivalent courses, it provides a second chance for those who may not have been as focused and on the plus side for many is they can cover course material from the comfort of their own home and environment.

Other initiatives that have been put in place to support a well-rounded education experience are a fully revamped and interactive website: www.bamsibahamas.edu.bs "You can pay your bills or any fees online. We have a chat bot and you can fill in forms for enrolment as well," Dr. Hanna said.

While classes have already started, the public should note that registration is still ongoing for those who want to start their academic journey in Fall 2021. For parents, students, family and friends, it is important to note that BAMSI has taken every precaution to maintain the integrity of its programs during this period of online classes.

"The integrity of our programs has not been compromised in a virtual environment. We've enhanced our environment by providing lab simulations for students, providing access through e-text, and an e-library with some 12,000 journals and publications. We have an e-tutoring program, and a robust learning management and student information system that provides ease of access of these offerings.

"Other interactive features on the platform include a research division. Both students and faculty are engaged in numerous research projects with other research stakeholders both within the Bahamas and the global community," she said.



Agriculture lecturer Deandra Deveaux poses with lettuce grown under her guidance at the student plots.

BAMSI's highly anticipated Flat Fishing certification course is expected to begin in virtual format this semester. Interested persons should contact the Admissions Department for more information: admissions@bamsibahamas.edu.bs

Looking forward, Dr. Hanna said she is hopeful of returning face to face for the 2022 Spring semester - once the Ministry of Education has given the all clear.



The BAMSI team constructed laying trays and installed water bins for the chickens to drink water. The free-flowing system will use five-gallon water bottles. Four feeder boxes were also purchased for the project.

At that time parents, students, staff and faculty should feel confident that BAMSI has adopted all safety standards and protocols for preventing the spread of Covid-19, including the implementation of sanitizing tunnels.

Beyond that staff has been trained in various sanitation protocols and procedures in the constant cleaning and sanitizing of all areas of contact, and safety drills are also being conducted for a safe return to campus.

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BAMSI 2021 GRADUATES



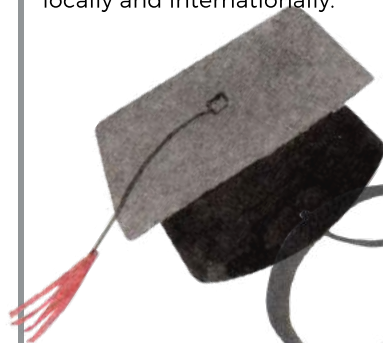
**FREDERICA DAMES
(SOUTH ANDROS, THE BAHAMAS)
2021 VALEDICTORIAN
ASSOCIATE OF SCIENCE -
AGRIBUSINESS (DISTINCTION)**

Frederica Dames received an Associate of Science Degree in Agribusiness. Frederica chose BAMSI so that she would be fully immersed in the agriculture community while studying. Being exposed to the experiential knowledge of BAMSI's diverse staff and agribusiness professionals in the North Andros community truly brought her educational experience to life. After graduation she plans to continue research into challenges faced by Bahamian agribusinesses and possible innovations that would benefit the future of the industry. BAMSI has prepared her for this journey by creating an environment that encouraged independent thinking, problem solving and development of soft skills. In her senior semester she was able to design and execute a research study that explored factors influencing consumer preference for eggs produced in The Bahamas. While completing this study, and the agribusiness program, she was required to interact with many individuals which helped her to further develop self management, time management and effective communication skills; all of which will be useful in her future endeavors.



**ANGELIQUE CARTWRIGHT
(LONG ISLAND, THE BAHAMAS)
ASSOCIATE OF SCIENCE -
AGRICULTURE (CREDIT)**

Angelique Cartwright is lovingly referred to as the Bougie Farmer by her BAMSI classmates. She gave up a long-standing career in the tourism industry to receive her Associates of Science in Agriculture through The Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute. She is now a registered farmer hired by The Abaco Neem Farm. She also assists with Blue Atlas, a non-profit hydroponic and aquaponics food sustainability program. She hopes to combine her passion for permaculture with her previous experience in tourism to create eco-tourism, agri-business and educational opportunities in sustainability, food preservation, alternative power and waste disposal to increase agri-business in The Bahamas locally and internationally.



Class of
2021



**MORIAH LIGHTBOURN
(NASSAU, THE BAHAMAS)
ASSOCIATE OF SCIENCE -
AGRICULTURE (CREDIT)**

After working alongside Expo 2020 at University of The Bahamas Moriah was inspired to go into a field with the future of sustainability in mind.

Now that she has completed her degree she has goals to further her studies in sustainable agriculture, start her own business and venture into blending her two passions together agriculture and visual arts. She is grateful for her time at BAMSI though it was short. It has opened her eyes to new ways of thinking, problem solving and has brought awareness to how significant agriculture and working with the environment is.

BAMSI 2021 GRADUATES



HENRY STORR
(NASSAU, THE BAHAMAS)
ASSOCIATE OF SCIENCE -
AGRICULTURE (CREDIT)



Marine Science students have the opportunity to become certified divers.



MAX TURNQUEST
(NASSAU, THE BAHAMAS)
ASSOCIATE OF SCIENCE -
AQUACULTURE (DISTINCTION)



Andros offers the perfect backdrop for BAMSI college, with its rich farm lands and diverse water ways. These students have unique experience second to none.

BAMSI DONATES TO FREEPORT AGRO CENTER



Seedlings arrive from BAMSI's farm in North Andros into Nassau, before being shipped to Grand Bahama.

The Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute (BAMSI) donated some 500 fruit seedlings to the Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources' Frobisher Agro-Village in Freeport, Grand Bahama earlier this week. The donation included 450 sugar apples seedlings and approximately 45 sour orange/citrus root stock.

"The plant donation is in keeping with BAMSI's mandate to increase this nation's ability to feed itself through sustainable measures, while also providing education opportunities, for young Bahamians in particular, to grow the agriculture sector.

"What we want to see are more Bahamian farmers growing native fruits and vegetables and using best practices to ensure that we have a ready supply of fresh fruit and vegetables throughout the year. The research work that we are doing in our greenhouse in Andros will go a long way in helping to provide farmers with essential information on "planting, harvesting, soil preparation, pest control and proper irrigation methods," the Chairman said.

The seedlings arrived in New Providence from BAMSI's North Andros greenhouse earlier this week and by Friday were on a boat to Freeport.

This donation reflects BAMSI's drive to build a healthy stock of local fruit seedlings that can help grow the industry. BAMSI Farm Administrator Stephen Adderley said to date the BAMSI farm is growing sugar apples, sour oranges/citrus root stock, tamarind seedlings sourced from Thailand, soursop and mangoes avocados and coconut trees that are resistant to the lethal yellowing disease. By early 2022 these seedlings will be ready to share with farmers across the Bahamas.

Also set to benefit from the increased activity in the greenhouse are BAMSI students. With the recent start of the new semester, students at the Institute will be able to get hands-on experience with budding, root tree propagation, and grafting. Beyond the greenhouse and the school's research plot, students will also get hands-on experience on the commercial farm – from the small ruminant section, the recently launched poultry production, open field production, and the hydroponics and aquaponics sections.

Mr. Adderley added that farm officials are looking to create an herb greenhouse where they grow ginger, garlic, thyme, rosemary and other herbs used in Bahamian cooking for the student cafeteria. He said also that he hopes to be able to share some of the ginger plants with the public to encourage home chefs to start their own herb gardens.

And all of this falls in line with the mission and objectives of the Frobisher Agro-Village, which was started April 2020. A multi-sector agricultural initiative that has achieved great success in other destinations, the Bahamas government and private sector and international stakeholders believe the agro-village will help significantly increase economic growth and employment generation in the sector. And will also lay the ground work for the construction of a sustainable food bank in Grand Bahama.

Facilitated through the Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources, Garnell Pelecanos, Strategic Development Consultant with the Ministry of Agriculture & Marine Resources, said the eight-acre village consists of a diverse, Bahamian-based array of edible live-scaping.



BAMSI donated 450 sugar apples seedlings and approximately 45 sour orange/citrus root stock to the Agricultural Village in Freeport.

"The Minister wanted to put in esthetically pleasing native fruit trees so we sourced fruit trees from all around. We approached Mr. Turnquest from BAMSI for a contribution and he made the arrangements for the donation. We thank BAMSI for its swift cooperation and generous donation and we look forward to your continued cooperation," she said.

Stakeholders for the project include the Bahamas Agriculture and Food Safety Authority (BAFSA), Department of Forestry, Local Government and the Grand Bahama Port Authority. Joining the operation are a number of international agencies including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).

A similar Agro-Village project was recently launched in New Providence on Gladstone Road.



Aware of BAMSI's role as a leading corporate citizen, newly appointed Executive Chairman Tyrel Young is committed to engaging with the community, particularly the less fortunate and marginalised, in a meaningful way. Pictured from left are Beverly Smith, Executive Secretary to the Chairman, Prophet Lawrence Rolle of International Praying Deliverance Ministries and Tyrel Young, Executive Chairman, BAMSI.

BAMSI GIVES BACK



BAMSI GIVES BACK...SOME MORE

is far healthier than items grown elsewhere, just from the transportation standpoint that a vegetable harvested yesterday in Andros could reasonably be served on your plate by the end of the week, if not within a day or two.

So, it is our hope that these provisions will be used to support the mental, emotional and physical health of our neighbours and the staff at these agencies, who work tirelessly to support those most in need."

Mr. Young also used the opportunity to thank the staff at BAMSI's Distribution Centre, who work tirelessly to ensure that



BAMSI tries to include sweet potatoes (pictured) and cassava as part of its charitable donations in an effort to help Bahamians understand the nutritional value of these roots and tubers versus the Irish potato and white rice.



produce remains at its optimum before it ends up in the hands of the public. Going forward and as much as possible, BAMSI intends to make a weekly donation to a charitable agency or front-line entity in a move to provide full support during this time.

A multi-pronged project, 'BAMSI Gives Back' helps BAMSI maintain a level of accountability and transparency as it stems the tide of wastage by redirecting wholesome, healthy and locally grown fruits and vegetables to Bahamians who need it the most. As part of its mandate, BAMSI routinely donates quality surplus to agencies and charitable organizations that are on the front lines in the fight against hunger.

The outreach effort is also a way for the Institute to help employees connect the dots between the work they do and building a stronger, food secure community. Ultimately, the hope is that the experience will help build a more productive and engaged workforce as they recognize that their job within the Institute plays a critical role in feeding persons and creating access to a wide variety of healthy produce.

The outreach effort is also a way for the Institute to help employees connect the dots between the work they do and building a stronger, food secure community. Ultimately, the hope is that the experience will help build a more productive and engaged workforce as they recognize that their job within the Institute plays a critical role in feeding persons and creating access to a wide variety of healthy produce.

While the epidemic that is Covid-19 has forced the global community to at times narrow its focus on only the most essential ingredients necessary for survival, the Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute (BAMSI) remains committed to its outreach, called 'BAMSI Gives Back, of meeting the local community where they are most vulnerable and supporting their food and health-related challenges as much as possible.

Having launched the 'BAMSI Gives Back' initiative in 2018, the Institute continues in its role as a community leader, this past week donating approximately 100 cases of Bahamian-grown produce, including butternut squash, sweet potatoes and papayas, to Sandilands Rehabilitation Centre, Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH) and Great Commission Ministries and International Praying Deliverance Ministries.

Tyrel Young, Executive Chairman of BAMSI, said each of these agencies have had their resources stretched to capacity as the Corona Virus pandemic continues to hit the nation hard and the marginalized the hardest. As essential services however, they each must continue to fulfill their directives by providing the public with critical services and care. And this is where BAMSI can step in, Mr. Young said. "We already know that produce grown in the Bahamas



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“Eat More Produce”

HELPING IN THE FIGHT AGAINST BREAST CANCER

BAMSI ECOURAGES A HEALTHY DIET

Cancer is the abnormal, uncontrollable, continuous replication of cells which inevitably leads to the formation of a tumor. Breast tumors are either malignant (cancerous) or benign (non-cancerous). This month is Breast Cancer Month and BAMSI is joining the fight!

Factors associated with Breast Cancer risks includes gender, age, genetics, family history, alcohol and a poor diet, among others. This month **BAMSI** is encouraging



Bahamians to switch to a more balanced diet by incorporating more fruits and vegetables in their daily routine.

Following a healthy diet on a consistent basis helps in the fight against breast and other cancers. The **BAMSI** Farm located in North Andros produces a variety of vegetables that are packed with healthy benefits.

If you eat more plant-based foods you may lower your chance of getting cancer. Eating fresh fruits and vegetables several times a day are an important part of your overall wellness, which may help to lower your weight, maintain moderate calories and prevent several other health problems in addition to breast cancer. The Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute each week brings a variety of fresh, locally grown produce to market.

PUMPKINS. A low-calorie, rich source of fiber, beta-carotene and antioxidants, that protects the body against free radicals that harm cells. Pumpkins lower the risk of obesity, a major factor in breast cancer. Pumpkins can be enjoyed as a soup, puree (great for adding to smoothies), curried, roasted, boiled or paired with many other recipes as a cancer-fighting ingredient.

SWEET POTATO Diets high in the antioxidant Beta-carotene aids in reducing the risk of cancer. Orange vegetables such as sweet potatoes also have high contents of folate, vitamin C, and fiber. BAMSI carries both the orange sweet potato as well as the purple-fleshed sweet potato, which is packed with anti-cancer properties that studies shows hinders the growth of specific cancers. When it comes to cooking, the best part is that you can blend, mash, roast or bake it.



OKRA. Another low-calorie choice, filled with Vitamins A and C that help to support the immune system, fight cancer with its antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory properties, removing

toxins from the body. Enjoy okra and tomatoes as a side dish, okra and quinoa as a healthy starch replacement and of course our good ole Bahamian okra soup.

BAMSI recognizes that a plant-based diet plays a vital role in helping to lower the risk for breast cancer. As we continue the fight, we encourage Bahamians to stay active, eat a low salt and low-fat diet, and limit alcohol and smoking. We will continue to bring to the Bahamas each week, a nutritious line of fresh fruits and vegetables that also includes, **cabbage, leafy greens, eggplants, cucumber, watermelons, cantaloupe, coconut, papayas, bananas** and many others. Contact our office today for a complete listing of all our selections. “**Eat more produce**”!

“A healthier you begins with the little changes you make today.” **Diane W. Turnquest** – M.ED., M.Sc.



HEALTH AND WELLNESS

The Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute (BAMSI) recently launched a 13-week Health and Wellness Fitness Program for staff. Along with group exercise, trying out new recipes and sharing weight loss tips, the group also started a competition to see who would lose the most weight. The winner would get the pool.

The weight loss competition was implemented to help employees rid themselves of the excess pounds that may have been gained during the lockdown period. The motivation to return to the size that she was pre-quarantine is what drove Mrs. Sharmaine Griffin, BAMSI's Assistant Manager, Human Resources Training & Development, to start the program.

Mrs. Griffin shared that the fitness program has influenced her and other group members to stay healthy by encouraging the use of healthy food recipes, make healthy choices when it comes to snacks, using detox drinks to better control calorie intake, and sharing motivational tips with each other via their WhatsApp group chat. up. For anyone looking to get started on their own Health and Wellness journey, it is important to just get started. There is never a right or wrong moment to begin.



The motivation to return to the size that she was pre-quarantine is what drove Mrs. Sharmaine Griffin, BAMSI's Assistant Manager, Human Resources Training & Development, to start the program. Mrs. Griffin is pictured (in cap) with other participants.



Knowing that their team members are working just as hard as them to lose the weight has kept the team motivated, and in the end the fitness program influenced them to stay healthy by encouraging a regular regimen of exercise and building a healthy lifestyle.

Once you start with the right steps, you will see that you're already halfway there. When asked how her colleagues received the new mandate, Mrs. Griffin commented that they were very accepting of it. Many of them now limit their sugar intake and while also increasing how much water they drink. They are all just excited about the results they are receiving.

Mrs. Griffin shared that it is important to get cardio in while exercising. Weight loss is considered eighty percent (80%) what we eat and twenty percent (20%) workout. Therefore, if you are having trouble in the beginning getting up and working out simply pay attention to the foods that you eat. Limit the amount of carbs and sugar that you eat. Some great alternatives can be salads, vegan foods, etc. Some advice that she gives to people who are having trouble getting started is to know exactly what you want. Picture yourself how you would want to see you. That should keep you motivated to start your journey.

The competition aspect makes Mrs. Griffin and her colleagues even more committed to the program. Every week each participant gives \$10 and at the end of the month, the person with the most progress receives the prize money. Everyone likes to win so it keeps them motivated that one day they will be the next winner. Mrs. Griffin added that she is very happy and excited that the program was implemented and their slogan is "If You Lose, You Win"