Situations and demands for vegetable production in the West Indies

Opportunities for organic agriculture

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Missions in the OECS

- Missions were done by Christian Langlais
- Saint Lucia, 2003
- Dominica, 2005
- Antigua, 2005
- Grenada, 2004 and 2005

Objectives: previously exposed by E Wicker
- quick diagnosis of the vegetables productions (pests and diseases, varieties and phytosanitary products, technicity, quantities and markets...)
- Ways to improve the productions (farmers education, technicians training, research programs)
Saint Lucia – Aim and situation

- **Aim**
  - To evaluate the needs in technical assistance for the farmers involved in greenhouse vegetable cultivation

- **Situation**
  - Needs to improve nurseries
  - Needs to do soil analysis to adapt fertilization
  - Needs to improve management of climate under greenhouses
  - Important pressure of bacterial wilt on tomato
Saint Lucia - proposal: establishing an extension service for greenhouse producers

- Datas recording: this Service will have to record datas on the use of the greenhouses

- To train MoA Technicians
  - there are 6 vegetables technicians, 5 tubers technicians in the different zones and 2 coordinators. These technicians need training in greenhouse management.
  - These trainings can be organized on 3 sessions of 4 days each
    - Building a greenhouse (session 1)
    - Knowledge on insects and diseases (session 2 and 3)
    - Knowledge of Integrated Pest Management (session 2 and 3)
    - Managing greenhouse (rotation, opening sides, place of the nursery, choice of varieties) (session 2 and 3).
  - Managing a demonstration greenhouse. The greenhouse can be
    - in place inside the schools after negotiation with the Ministry of education
    - farmers greenhouse after negotiation with the farmer
Dominica – Aim and situation

- **Aim**
  - Diagnosis on the vegetable productions

- **Situation**
  - About 130 greenhouses in Salisbury (all not used) but production not sufficient to cover the needs of the island
  - Lack of knowledge to identify pests
  - Broad range insecticides used
  - Lack of fertilization (hydroponic and open field), little use of manure
Dominica – Proposal : training high level future technicians

- Two scholarships could be offered for training student in the field of agriculture for two years in Martinique or Guadeloupe. A selection of the student will be made according to the requirement of the french agricultural school.

- Main demands concerned
  - Trainings
  - Technical booklets
  - Documents adapted to tropical conditions

Extension Officers asked for a training journey for growers Martinique, to discover the greenhouse growers of French West Indies. They were advised thus to do a journey to Guadeloupe, where greenhouse production is more developed than in Martinique

- One main suggestion would be to stay in contact for the development of organic agriculture
Antigua - Situation

- Agriculture in Antigua represents only 3.5% of GLP
- Major part of food is imported (20,000 pounds of lettuce produced, 1 million imported)
- Systematic application of pesticides but no complaint from Eurogap certification
- Difficulties to see what could be the field of cooperation
- Demand from MoA
  - Technical assistance to set up lettuce producing units with high technology
  - No particular interest for organic agriculture
Grenada – Aim and situation

- **Aim**
  - After the hurricanes (2004 Ivan; 2005 Emily), to evaluate the needs for greenhouses and diagnostic open field production problems

- **Situation**
  - Greenhouses funded by USAID and FAO coming or waiting to be erected after 2 major hurricanes
  - All farmers visited use pesticides and chemical fertilizers, some use organic matter
Grenada – proposal: many fields of training

- **Fields of training**
  - Management of greenhouses seems the most important point
  - Sensibilisation to organic agriculture
  - Management of soil borne diseases

- **Trainings should be done in two ways**
  - Training of technicians in Martinica
  - Training of technicians and farmers in Grenada by Cirad experts
Conclusion

- Following the situations two types of demands
  - Constant demand for technical training for greenhouses vegetables
    - Choice of structures, management of climate
    - Substrates or rotations, fertilization
    - Prophylaxis, IPM, soil borne diseases
  - Emerging demand on organic agriculture
    - Dominica, Grenada and....Dominican Republic
    - Demand for training and, from another part 15 years of experience in Cuba on organic vegetables
Projects : running or under preparation

- **Grenada**
  - 2 training sessions for 2007
    - Vegetables under greenhouses (climate, fertilization, IPM) - 8 days
    - Organic agriculture - 5 days

- **Organic agriculture (vegetables) project (DEVAG)**
  - Associating Martinica, Cuba and Dominican Republic
    - 1st part : training session in Cuba (2007-2008)
    - 2nd part : research project for biological management of pests and diseases around tomato production (agroecological methods introducing service plants, recycling organic wastes...)

ECS sub-regional dialogue on agriculture and rural development  
November 2006, 7th and 8th
Thanks for your attention!