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## PRESS RELEASE

### CERC PROJECT PROGRESSES

Contingency Emergency Response Component (CERC)

The Emergency Agricultural Livelihoods and Climate Resilience Project-EALCRP, Ministry of Blue and Green Economy Agriculture and National Food Security has so far expended approximately eight hundred nineteen thousand, six hundred and eighty-six EC dollars (\$819,686.00) to facilitate the Contingency Emergency Response Component (CERC) project.

For the Cash Support Grant \$408,000.00 has so far been disbursed to 204 project farmers for meeting their labour and other direct costs. Under the Livestock component, \$276,022.00 for procurement of feed and chicks and the Micro- Garden \$135,664.00 for purchase of seeds and potting soil.

On March 20, 2020, the Government of Dominica requested the World Bank to utilize **US\$3.6 million** from the ongoing Emergency Agricultural Livelihoods and Climate Resilience Project (EALCRP), to address the challenges related to agriculture production, food security, and public health issues caused by the coronavirus crisis. The funds were reallocated to the Contingency Emergency Response Component (CERC) of the Emergency Agricultural Livelihoods and Climate Resilience Project. (This allows countries to access resources rapidly to meet current priorities).

**US\$1.5 million** is allocated for Strengthening of the National Agricultural Productive Base and Food Security and **US\$2.1 million** for Strengthening of National Health Systems to address the COVID 19 Crisis.

The Project Implementation Unit of the Emergency Agricultural Livelihoods and Climate Resilience Project developed an Action Plan. The CERC Action Plan is the strategic execution tool for response to the threat of COVID 19 Virus.

Its' main objectives include strengthening the capacities of the agriculture sector in addressing food security problems caused by the covid-19, and ensuring availability and accessibility of feed to livestock producers for their continuous supply to domestic markets.

The Government of Dominica recommended a stimulus package to encourage agricultural production and marketing. This include distribution of inputs to farmers, which are outside the scope of the EALCRP to receive inputs for crops and livestock; and to provide cash grant to farmers approved under the EALCRP for covering their labour and other direct costs.

The key Interventions under the CEREC component are: Support to Micro- farmers and backyard Gardeners; Strengthening Cropping Systems in the form of Cash Grant Support and Strengthening Livestock Systems and Centralized Production of Vegetable Seedlings.

**Under the component for Support to Micro- farmers**, beneficiaries are receiving an essential package of inputs, which include key quality seeds, organic fertilizers, tools and agro chemicals in the amount of EC\$500/per household. This component is targeting 500 *micro-farmers* with land space of 3,000 square feet to 10,000 square feet. The total amount under this subcomponent is estimated at approximately EC\$250,000 or US\$93,000. Applications are being done online and via printed forms.

The packages consist of vegetables seeds and herbs (chive, garlic, carrots, peppers, basil, cauliflower, cabbage, lettuce, sweet corn, beets etc.) The main requests are seasonings -chive, parsley. A typical package consists of seedling tray, potting mix, vegetables seeds, organic fertilizer and small tools.

As of August 21, 2020, the project has received 367 applications, has prepared 103 packages and has delivered 45 packages. Delivery of packages began on Monday August 17, 2020.

Delivery of packages is continuous and packages are sent to the Agricultural regional offices, where, beneficiaries will be contacted to collect packages. Beneficiaries from the South and Central Regions will collect packages at the DAPEX warehouse on Mondays from 8:30 am

### **Cash Grant Support**

The CERC provides a cash grant support to individual crop farmers approved under the EALCRP towards meeting their labour and other direct costs. Two thousand and five hundred (2,500) beneficiaries are targeted to receive CASH support. The total budget for this subcomponent is estimated at (EC\$3.5 million). Small farmers are provided with a cash package of EC\$700 per beneficiary; Medium farmers provided with a cash package of EC\$1,400 per beneficiary and large crop farmers entitled to a cash package of EC\$2,800 per beneficiary.

As mentioned earlier, as of August 21, 2020, about 204 farmers have received cash grant, with a total payout of 408,000.00 paid out

The grant is being transferred through individual account with information provided on the Cash Grant Application Form. In order for fees to be processed, applicants MUST show a national identification and MUST sign the form. To receive the cash grant, beneficiaries must have signed their beneficiary agreement and must have collected inputs.

Once the beneficiary is approved under the EARLCRP as a commercial farmer, he/she is entitled to the cash grant. In the case of no land authorization by existing and new farmers applications:

- a) proof of farming activity is required either through his/her name appearing on the before and after list of a reputable organization such as Dominica Export Import Agency (DEXIA); or verified by the Agricultural Team Leader or Banana and Plantain Unit attached to the Ministry Agriculture as an active farmer; and
- b) A valid produce seller license for the past twelve (12) months is required which MUST also be verified by the Team leader of extension.

**In Strengthening Livestock Systems**, the Ministry of Agriculture and National Food Security realized the need to secure animals' protein during the Covid-19 pandemic. Its focus is on pork and poultry production to enhance the production of protein for the population in Dominica. Eighty-five (85) livestock producers are targeted. This include 45 poultry (broiler) producers and 40 pork producers.

Funds allocated to the livestock CERC component total ECD257,500.00 (95,370USD), primarily in the form of feed.

So far, the project has received 38 applications for broiler production, and has approved 20. A verification process has to take place before approval. On August 17, 2020, the project received its first batch of 3,000 chicks from Barbados, with a second batch of 3,000 pending for August 27, 2020.

The successful applicant will raise the birds for a five-week period with an expected weight gain of 5lbs per bird. The total expected chicken production for this operation is 61,740lbs (dress weight) an average of 10,000lbs per month. Birds will be weight at the abattoir and farmers will be paid through the existing arrangement between the farmers and the Ministry.

**Pig Producers** must have 6 or more finishing pigs. Must have a proper waste disposal system and must will to sell to the abattoir. Feed will be distributed through a voucher system where farmers will collect feed from local merchants. Each Beneficiary is expected to sign an agreement which will outline the terms and agreement to be kept while raising the broilers.

Pork generated from the feed support program to pig producers will be approximately 10,500lbs (carcass weight) After the grow out period, the farmers will be paid a fee of \$1/lb live weight per bird and \$0.5/lb less than the original price.

So far, the project has received 26 applications and approved 17. Also, a verification process has to take place before approval. 15 agreements with pig producers have been signed.

The management of the Abattoir will purchase all broilers and pigs under the livestock CERC program for slaughter and subsequently sale to consumers.

The implementation period of the agricultural component will run from June - November, 2020

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