

9 DECEMBER 2021

Session n°4:

Ensuring food quality and safety in
the Caribbean :
the key role of SMEs and businesses



Caribbean Agrifood Business Series ...



CARIBBEAN AGRIFOOD BUSINESS FORUM

9 DECEMBER 2021

CARITA JAMAICA LTD.



RITA HILTON - CEO CARITA JAMAICA LIMITED

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Rita Hilton is a lady of multicultural background, born in Kenya with Kenyan and Jamaican heritage. She is the owner of Carita Jamaica Limited, and has revolutionized the agro-processing industry for Jamaica and the Global markets. Her company has achieved many export awards and was named Best Import/Export Company at the ActionCOACH Regional 2018 Business Excellence Forum Award. (ActionCOACH is a world-class business coaching firm which honors “the best” results in small and medium sized businesses from around the world, and showcases exceptional results for business owners, entrepreneurs, teams and companies.)

Carita Jamaica Limited is an exporter of fresh products and processed foods from Jamaica. Carita not only grows produce for export, it also sources produce from farmers across Jamaica, thus supporting local rural communities.

Rita has made a name for her company in the export industry in Jamaica and globally, mastering the process and systems from order to sourcing to delivery in the short time required for fresh produce export. Her passion has also led her to branch out into the industry of Product Development and Innovation.



FOOD SAFETY

[Home](#)[About Us](#)[Our Produce](#)[Our Products](#)[Grandmas Rita's Satdeh Market](#)[Contact Us](#)

Fresh Jamaican Produce

[Shop Our Produce Boxes](#)

ENSURING FOOD QUALITY AND SAFETY IN THE CARIBBEAN

FOOD SAFETY

- *Access to sufficient amounts of safe and nutritious food is key to sustaining life and promoting good health
- *Unsafe food causes more than 200 diseases-ranging from diarrhoea to cancers.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE 2020

World Health Organization (WHO) estimated the following:
1 in 10 person falls ill after eating contaminated foods
33M Healthy life years lost
40% of food bourne disease burden carried by children
US\$ billions lost to unsafe foods

CARITA FOOD SAFETY RESPONSIBILITY/JAMAICAN PRODUCE

All brand owners, product manufacturers, importers are 100% responsible for food safety.

- * Know and comply with applicable in-country requirements and processes
- * Know and comply with requirements of the countries to which you export.

As a Food Business that is subject to US Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), CARITA is responsible for:

- * Food is safe and meets the regulator requirements
- * Food is of a nature, substance and quality that complies with compositional and grade requirements, and food is labelled, advertised and presented in a way that is not false or misleading and meets the regulatory requirements for both local and international standards.



Negro Yam



Sweet Yam



Sweet Potato - Yellow Belly



Renta



Yellow Yam



Sweet Potato - Quarter Million



Dasheen



Coco

CARITA FOOD SAFETY CERTIFICATIONS

CARITA has the following certifications to ensure best quality and safe products:

- * Regulator requirements - Jamaica Bureau of Standards (BSJ) - Good Manufacturing Practices Certification (GMP)
- * Jamaica Factory's Act (JFA)
- * Final stages of Hazard Analysis - Critical Control Point (HACCP) certification

The next level: CARITA to upgrade the food safety standards accreditation.

- * Global Food Safety Initiative (GSFI) certification.
- * Safe Quality Foods & British Retail Consortium (BRC)
- * Food Safety System Certification (FSSC) (USA certification)



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CARITA'S EFFORTS - DELIVERING QUALITY

Our products, our markets, our customers:

Carita Jamaica Limited is the premier provider of fresh grown produce from Jamaica. As a 100% family-owned and operated company, our focus is delivering fresh produce to the customer. From farms throughout Jamaica, Carita is a year-round supplier of the very best fresh fruits and vegetables to the United States, Canada and the UK. Celebrating thirty years in business, Carita is expanding its product line beyond fresh produce to include frozen items, soups, and Jamaican natural teas, under the “Carita Premium” brand.

The majority of Carita Jamaica's business is with the **US, Canada, and the UK and in diaspora markets**. We are looking to expand to the EU as well as to domestic and Caribbean markets..

CARITA'S CHALLENGES

- * **Issues relating to food safety will impact on agricultural production and agro processing**
- * **Logistic**
 - * high cost accessing farmers
 - * cost monitoring food safety regulations
 - * accountability of records/produce on demand
 - * managing threats from Covid disruption
 - * rapid turnover staff/training of personnel
 - * funding issues
 - * environmental changes - food contamination
 - * change in customer preferences
 - * accessing rapid changing food safety regulation systems

- * **Government intervention in the Agro-sector**
 - supporting farmers - practical sustainable level
- * **Global collaboration regionally & locally**
 - across sectors within government and across borders when combatting serious Food Safety Issues

A VARIETY OF CARITA PROCESSED PRODUCTS



CARITA /CONTRACT CANNED & OTHER PRODUCTS



NEW PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT VALUED ADDED



NEW PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT VALUED ADDED



EFFECTS ON COVID-19

The COVID pandemic has proven that CARITA will maintain the following and encourage others to comply:

- Deliver safe and healthy food to our customers
- Strengthen food safety systems and increased awareness amongst businesses of what it entails and how much it cost
- Support SMEs to comply with standards and SPS standards referred to EU controls
- Collaborate and network amongst the value chain actors to support safe food delivery
- Support the smallholders in producing better, safer and more sustainably

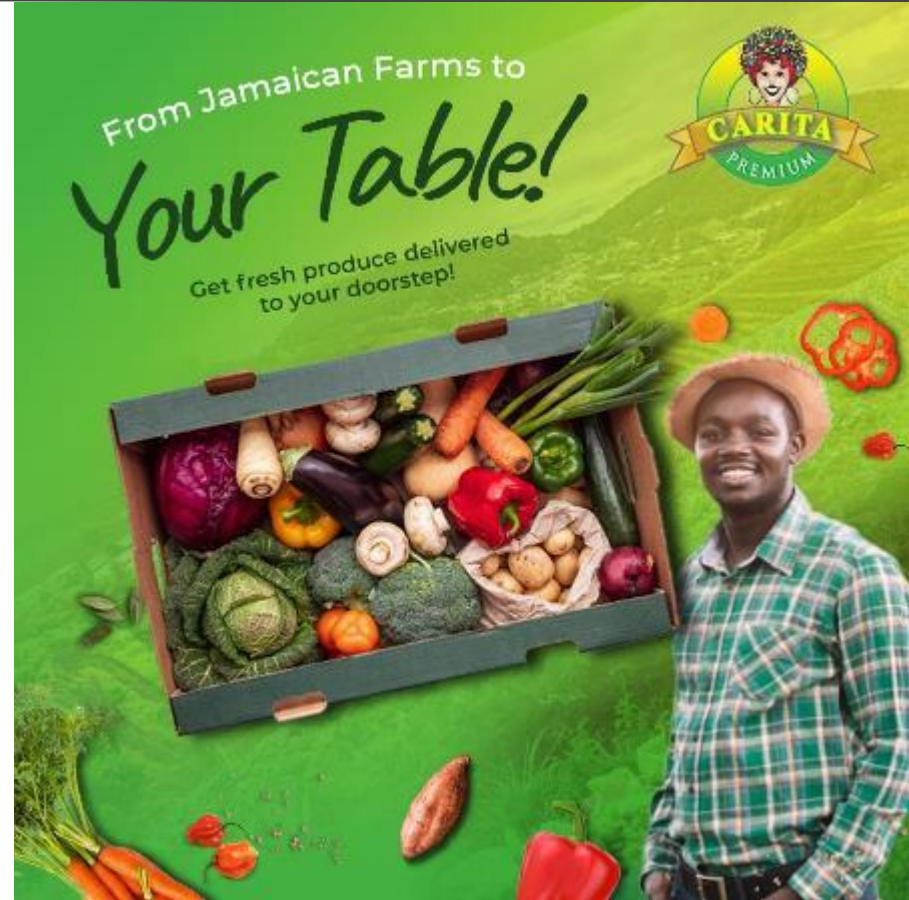
CARITA'S NEXT STEPS 2022 & BEYOND

For the coming years, **CARITA** plans to:

- **Expand Markets** - Local & Global Markets
- **Product Diversification** - Value Added
- **Invest in innovation** - Promotion & Ecommerce

CARITA REQUIREMENTS:

- Financial funding for raw materials/equipments
- Technical assistance/Funding
- Business to business meetings - Access EU markets and to increase Regional Reach via Market studies, awareness & information campaigns



RITA HILTON – CEO CARITA JAMAICA LIMITED

Food safety is a global issue because food borne as well as waterborne diseases are major causes of illness and death around the world.

Food safety and food hygiene are important to CARITA and we ensure that the food we handle and produce is safe for consumption.

Food borne illnesses associated with microbial pathogens or other food contaminants are a serious health threat for both elderly and children in developing and developed countries.

I am reaching out to all stakeholders involved in the food chain that implementing an effective food safety plan is critical not only to safeguarding the health and well being of people, however fostering economic development and improving lives by promoting access to both local and global markets,





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Thank you

