



IICA-COLEACP CARIBBEAN AGRIFOOD BUSINESS SERIES

Session n°6:

High-end market opportunities for Caribbean agrifood products

Thursday 25th August 2022 – 10:00-12:00 EST

BIODATA OF THE SPEAKERS

Polina ARAUJO – CEO, Cosmos 2000, Dominican Republic



Dr Polina Araujo Geraldo is the President and General Manager of Cosmos 2000 International, a company founded in 2000 and specialised in the export of fresh fruits and vegetables, as well as coconut oil and different types of flours. She is also Director of Shipping 2000 International, a company based on the island of Antigua and Barbuda that imports dry goods from the Dominican Republic. Polina is also President of the Supervisory Committee of the Agricultural Cooperative and Multiple Services of producers, traders and affiliates of the Luz y Vida banana plantation.

In 2020, she was recognised by the Export and Investment Centre of the Dominican Republic (ProDominicana) in the category "High level of internationalisation" as the Dominican that exported to the most countries.

A year later, the European Union Delegation to the Dominican Republic awarded Cosmos 2000 International in the "Woman Exporter" category for the company's export volume and use of the trade agreements between the European Union and the Dominican Republic.

Polina holds a doctorate in medicine from the Autonomous University of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. She is the president of the Hermanos Jaquez Social Foundation, which carries out various social actions in poor areas of the country, such as medical operations to assess visual health, distribution of glasses and donation of medicines.





Isolina BOTO – Head of Networks and Alliances, COLEACP



Isolina Boto is the Head of Networks and Alliances at COLEACP, a non-profit association of private sector operators in the agrifood sector active in the European Union (EU), Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) regions. Isolina has more than 25 years of experience in agricultural development. She started her career with the European Commission and has also worked with various ACP embassies and NGOs in areas related to food security, rural development and trade. Before joining COLEACP, she was the Manager of the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ACP-EU (CTA) Brussels Office (2004-2020) implementing policy initiatives related to the ACP-EU cooperation in the field of the agrifood sector. She has led agribusiness projects in support of capacity development of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), entrepreneurs and farmers organisations across Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific and developed agrotourism aimed at linking agriculture and tourism sectors.

Derriann CHARLES – Legal Counsel, Kittitian Hill Hotel, Saint Kitts and Nevis



Derriann Charles is Legal Counsel of Kittitian Hill, as well as Company Secretary for the BRL group of companies. She was called to the Trinidad and Tobago bar in 2012 and the St. Kitts and Nevis bar in 2014. She has since practiced in the areas of family law, corporate and commercial law, civil litigation, probate, and real property matters.

Kittitian Hill is a pioneering community in the West Indies with a passion for sustainable living and 400 acres of organic tropical farmland. The hotel's slogan of sustainable luxury living is lived out in the manner in which it rolls out its operations, in particular, using the natural and human resources of the community. This includes the restaurant purchasing from the local farmers and fishermen and basing the menus on the catch of the day. Kittitian Hill also supplies fresh fruit and vegetables from several organic farms in St. Kitts, and partners with artisanal vineyards.

Allister Reynold GLEAN – Technical Specialist, International Trade and Regional Integration Programme / Representative in Barbados, IICA



Allister Glean is the Representative (Acting) of the Inter American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) in Barbados. He spent the last 5 years as the International Specialist in Agribusiness and Value Chains, stationed with the St. Lucia Delegation. Allister has worked extensively in the agricultural sector for over 20 years with experience working in agricultural research and development, agribusiness development, food and beverage processing as well as development financing for agribusiness.

Allister has lectured on a part-time basis at the tertiary level for over 16 years in the areas of marketing, strategic planning and business ethics. While trained in management and marketing, he also possesses post graduate qualifications in international relations and agribusiness development. He is also a qualified attorney at law. Allister tends to have a particular interest in governance, market development and trade facilitation.

Allister has a passion for working with micro, small and medium sized business with emphasis on women, youth and producer groups. In fact, he is himself also a small farmer producing food crops on a 2 1/2 acre plot.



Udo KARG – CEO, Suvveb NV, Suriname

Udo Karg is a key actor of the Surinamese fish and agrifood sector. Since 1990, he is the CEO of Suvveb NV (Suriname Visverwerking en export bedrijf NV, in English: Suriname Fish processing and export company NV), a fish company that processes fresh, frozen and dried fish (including shrimp and seashells) and supplies the local market, the Caribbean, Europe, the US and Asia. Since 2015, Udo is also the CEO of RocSu NV and, since 2016, the General Manager of Ocean Delight NV, a processing company producing fresh and frozen fish for the local and export markets. Udo further supports the local agrifood sector being the President of the Suriname Seafood Association (SSA) since 2003, as well as Board Member of the Federation of Surinamese Farmers (Federatie van Surinaamse Agrariërs, FSA) since 2020.



Jeremy KNOPS – General Delegate, COLEACP

Jeremy Knops holds a Master's degree in Business Engineering from the Solvay Brussels School of Economics and Management (SBS-EM). Prior to joining COLEACP in 2009, he was involved in Guatemala with the daily operations of a farmers' cooperative exporting loquats to the EU and the US. He started to work for COLEACP as an expert in charge of matters related to private standards and certification for ACP producers and exporters of fruit and vegetables. Jeremy is an accredited coach for leadership and professional development. He has been appointed as General Delegate of COLEACP in June 2019.



Theresa MARRYSHOW – Founder, Grenada Network of Rural Women Producers [GRENROP], Grenada

Theresa Marryshow entered the service of the Government of Grenada in 1977 after graduating from the Mirabeau Farm School, Grenada. She worked as a Junior Agricultural Officer attached to the Western District. In 1988 to 1990, she was afforded the opportunity to further her education at the Guyana School of Agriculture. Upon her return, she was transferred to the Southern Agricultural District, then to the Communications Unit where she visited farmers and prepared Agricultural scripts for Radio Programmes. In 1993, she became District Supervisor and was again transferred to the Northern Agricultural District. In 1998, her transfer again took her to the Western Agricultural District and in 2007 to the Eastern Agricultural District where she stayed until her retirement in 2015.

Theresa's personal motto is to empower rural women to improve their livelihood. In 2000, she founded the Grenada Network of Rural Women Producers (GRENROP). GRENROP has a current membership of 68 women and supplies agricultural produce to the three largest hotels of Grenada. Theresa works on affiliating local farmers' group with GRENROP by training the farmers in various agroprocessing skills to prepare new products for the hotels.



Elizabeth MONTANO – Director, Montano Chocolate, Trinidad and Tobago

Elizabeth Montano is an active professional with experience in various disciplines such as teaching, real estate, artist management, and business development and management. She worked as a teacher for more than 20 years and entered the entertainment industry in 1982, first as public relations officer and then as the manager of Xtatik Ltd., a Trinidad and Tobago music band led by Machel Montano. Elizabeth also manages the Machel Montano Foundation and some of the other Montano's Group of Companies, including Montano Chocolate Co. Ltd.



In 2018, at the age of 68, Elizabeth graduated from the University of the West Indies, Jamaica, with a Master of Philosophy Degree in Cultural Studies.

Elizabeth has been dedicated to teaching, working with young people, contributing to positive development, and-most of all, loving and caring for her family, community and nation. In 2022, she became a first time author.

Gorete PINTO TEIXEIRA – Sourcing Manager, Lilot Fruits Capexo, France

Gorete is Sourcing Manager at Lilot Fruits and Capexo. Founded in 1996, CAPEXO imports and markets exotic fruits and vegetables in France under the brand name Lilot Fruits. CAPEXO ensures a constant supply of very high quality of very high quality products in terms of taste and nutritional quality to wholesalers and wholesale markets, as well as specialised food supermarkets (Grand Frais, Métro, etc.) and general retailers (Carrefour, Casino, Monoprix...). Very close to its suppliers, through a common bond, CAPEXO selects origins that reveal origins that reveal all the excellence of the products. The company works closely with one of the most important cooperatives in Reunion Island. 60% of the air freight importing the island's fruit from the island is carried out by Lilot Fruits.



Ainsworth Riley – Agri-business Specialist, IICA

Ainsworth is an agricultural economist and has been working in the agricultural sector for more than 15 years in the areas of planning and policy, project development and management, export development and international marketing.



Ainsworth holds a Masters of Science Degree in Economic Development Policy and a Bachelor of Science Degree in Agri-Business management/economics, both from the University of the West Indies, Jamaica. He participated in a number of post graduating training courses with emphasis on international marketing, project management, food safety and sustainable development.



Umeeda SWITLO – Co-Founder and CEO, Naledo, Belize

Umeeda has enjoyed a successful career as a social entrepreneur that includes working as a marine biologist, concert promoter, artist manager, and executive director. She has served on numerous boards focused on the environment, culture, and pluralism. She is a community activist with more than 25 years of marketing and event management experience in both the private and non-profit sectors.



Umeeda was born in Uganda and moved to Canada by the age of 15. She first went to Belize to volunteer with the Belizean government through CUSO International to share her business skills with youth. She met there people of Indian ancestry and discovered how they cook with turmeric that grows wild on this land. Umeeda and her daughter Nareena decided to create Naledo, a social enterprise that would support growers to earn extra income, employ youth, improve health around the world, and produce products sustainably.