



IICA-COLEAD Caribbean Agrifood Business Series

Session n°13:

Opportunities in local and regional markets for Caribbean entrepreneurs

Thursday 23 May 2024 – 14:00-16:00 UTC

10:00-12:00 AST (time in Barbados) | 16:00-18:00 CET (time in Brussels)

BIODATA OF THE SPEAKERS

Isolina Boto – Head of Networks and Alliances, COLEAD

Isolina Boto is the Head of Networks and Alliances at COLEAD, 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 COLEAD, 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.



Ingrid Brathwaite – Managing Director, Jays Enterprises Inc., Barbados

Ingrid Brathwaite brings a wealth of experience to the table, with a proven track record of success and a commitment to excellence. She is a trusted advisor and thought leader in her field of 20 years in finance, sales, marketing, and manufacturing. Whether consulting with companies or working vigorously on her brand Superb Blend, she continues to make a meaningful impact on the organisations and individuals. Ingrid has been recognized for her contributions to the industry, receiving accolades such as awards, certifications, and honours from various organizations such as IICA, FUNDACCESS, BMEX, EXPORT CARIBBEAN and so much more. She is actively involved in professional and community initiatives, where she contributes her expertise and leadership to drive positive change.



William Castro – Associate Programme Officer, International Trade Centre (ITC)

William joined the International Trade Centre (ITC) in 2018 to coordinate projects in the Caribbean, including Alliances for Action programmes promoting public-private partnerships for agribusiness and sustainable food systems. Before ITC, he worked at the Market Access Division of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), and prior to that he worked for 7 years at the consulting firm DASA.



William has a degree in Economics from Madre y Maestra Pontifical Catholic University (PUCMM) Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, with a Master's degree in International Economic Policies at Sciences Po Paris, France.

Sandiford Edwards – Program Director, Improving Economies for Stronger Communities (IESC)

Sandiford Edwards has over 20 years' experience in the field of trade and business development having served in senior leadership positions in both the private and public sectors. He led the analytical work for the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Private Sector Organization in determining opportunities for food import displacement as part of the 25% by 2025 Plan. He also was the lead write for the CARICOM COVID-19 Agri-Food Risk Management Plan.

Sandiford is now the Program Director for the USAID Funded Caribbean Agricultural Productivity improvement Activity implemented by Improving Economies for Stronger Communities (IESC). Sandiford remains passionate about solving some of the most pressing challenges for smallholder farmers and producers, especially their integration in regional and global value chains.

Sandiford holds a Master's Degree in Development Finance from the Frankfurt School of Finance and Management, Germany, a Master's Degree in business administration from Oxford Brookes University, England, and is a Certified Chartered Accountant.

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.

Jeremy Knops – Délégué Général, COLEAD

Jeremy Knops holds a Master's degree in Business Engineering from the Solvay Brussels School of Economics and Management (SBS-EM), Belgium. Prior to joining COLEAD 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 COLEAD 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 COLEAD in June 2019.



Judith Punch-Wafe – Centre for Business Innovation Manager, Republic Bank Limited, Trinidad and Tobago

Judith Punch-Wafe is a Consultant with Republic Bank Limited (RBL) in Port of Spain, Trinidad. Her work is centered within the bank's Center for Business Innovation, a crucial hub dedicated to enhancing financial solutions for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs). Judith's consultancy efforts primarily involve crafting and implementing innovative products tailored to the diverse needs of the SME spectrum. After dedicating over four decades to RBL, Judith recently retired from her role as Manager of the Centre for Business Innovation. Throughout her banking career, she navigated various roles, units, and initiatives, all of which enriched her understanding and passion for bolstering financial services across diverse landscapes. With a background in accounting, Judith brings a wealth of knowledge and a steadfast commitment to advancing initiatives aimed at fostering financial empowerment.

Kimberly Salloum – Managing Director, Half Moon Vegan Ice Cream, Trinidad and Tobago

Kimberly Salloum is the founder and managing director of Half Moon Vegan Ice Cream. Originally an occupational therapist, Kimberly began making vegan ice cream during the COVID-19 pandemic. What started as a fun hobby soon became a thriving business. Kimberly's passion for highlighting local Caribbean flavours has been one of the key factors to the success of the business. When she's not developing new flavours, she enjoys hiking and exploring the forests of Trinidad.

Wouter Tjeertes – Co-founders, Pure Chocolate Jamaica, Jamaica

Wouter is the co-founder of Pure Chocolate Jamaica. The company purchases cocoa beans from local farmers and creates 100% Jamaican hand-made chocolate. Direct trade is a core value. By paying their farmers above market price for their crop they can take better care of their farm and we get the best beans possible. At PURE they ferment, dry and roast their cocoa beans the old-fashioned way to safeguard high standards and by doing so create employment opportunities for Jamaica's inner-city communities. PURE chocolate products provide a canvas for young professional Jamaican artists to promote their art to the world. The company helps by promoting their work to their fans and hope they will become theirs too.

Alexis Williams – Founder, Funky Fungi Mushrooms, St. Lucia

Inspired by observing mushrooms growing on the roots of a mango tree, Alexis William, co-founded Funky Fungi Mushrooms with his wife Shonel William in 2011. Self-taught in mycology, Alexis has developed the skills to produce oyster mushrooms using locally-available and low-cost techniques. To date, he has cultured and experimented with the cultivation of over 20 edible mushroom strains with oyster mushrooms being his primary area of focus. Funky Fungi Mushrooms caters for all costumes on a local basis, hotels, restaurants and the general supermarkets. The company also supplies their mushroom grow bags to farmers. Having co-founded The Mushroom Collective, a local association supporting the development of the local mushroom industry in Saint Lucia, Alexis is active in training new mushroom growers and developing hybrid strains of mushrooms.



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