



Session 20:

Financing Caribbean agrifood entrepreneurs: strategies to access investment

Tuesday 31 March 2026 – 14:00-16:00 UTC / 10:00-12:00 AST

BIODATA OF SPEAKERS

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

Allister Glean is the Representative 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.



Jeremy Knops – General Delegate, COLEAD

Jeremy Knops holds a master's degree in business engineering from the Solvay Brussels School of Economics and Management. 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 was appointed as General Delegate of COLEAD in June 2019.



Wilmot Garnett – Special Affairs Coordinator for the Caribbean, IICA

Wilmot Garnett is the IICA Representative in the Guyana and Liaison for CARICOM actions in the Caribbean. Serving on the Board of Directors of the Guyana National Agricultural Research and Extension Institute. He holds a Master of Science Degree in Soil and Plant Sciences from the California State Polytechnic University, Pomona USA. Formerly, he chaired the Belize Biosafety Committee in Belize, and helped to develop a Biosafety policy and supporting legislation. He also managed the Central America Red SICTA projects in Belize, focusing on improved appropriate technology for small grain producers. He also chaired the regional PROCICARIBE fruit network, and developed technical packages for selected fruits/orchard management.



Nina Desanlis-Perrin – Project Officer, COLEAD

Nina Desanlis-Perrin is a Project Officer in the Networks and Alliance Department at COLEAD, where she develops and coordinates global partnerships to support entrepreneurship development and sustainability in the agrifood sector across the Global South countries. She co-organises agrifood webinars aimed at showcasing innovations of farmer-led businesses and SMEs with key international partners such as IICA. Nina holds an MSc in Environmental Science for Sustainability from King’s College London, and a BSc in Public Administration from Erasmus University Rotterdam. She is an advocate for sustainable development, international cooperation, and climate justice, working to promote resilient and inclusive solutions for communities and food systems worldwide.



Bevon Chadel Charles – Founder, Akata Farms, Grenada

Bevon Chadel Charles is a Grenadian entrepreneur and agricultural innovator driving sustainable farming and inclusive economic growth. As Founder and CEO of Akata Farms, she combines climate-smart practices, digital tools, and land management to empower farmers and strengthen rural economies. She developed AkataGrow, a platform that helps farmers track and improve operations while expanding access to finance. With a background in international business, AI, and sustainability, her work bridges agriculture and innovation. Beyond business, Bevon advocates for youth leadership, gender equality, and climate resilience, representing Grenada in several regional and international networks.



Gordon Shallow – Founder, The Plant Doctor, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

Gordon Shallow is a Phytopathologist with over fifteen years of experience. His interest in agriculture began in high school through hands-on gardening and farming, earning him a Double Award from the Caribbean Examination Council for excellence in crop and animal sciences. In 2005, he earned a B.Sc. in Phytopathology from National Chung Hsing University. Returning to St. Vincent and the Grenadines, he served as Extension Regina Supervisor at the Ministry of Agriculture and later as Curator at the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Botanical Gardens, the oldest botanical garden in the Western Hemisphere. He also helped establish the Caribbean and Central America Botanic Gardens Network (Botanical Bridges). In 2022, Gordon developed organic agricultural products, including bio-pesticides and bio-fertilizers, securing grant funding from the Global Green Growth Institute and winning awards for best pitch and most outstanding product idea.



Nelfi Altagracia García – Founder, Chocolala, Dominican Republic

Nelfi Altagracia García is a social worker, founder of several community groups in her municipality, and a tireless advocate for community causes. She founded the artisanal chocolate factory Chocolala and participates in various initiatives that promote the integration of women in all areas of society, as well as their inclusion in decision-making related to the development and progress of the municipality and the Dominican Republic. She has completed technical studies at the INFOTEP Professional Technical Institute and has a background in Business Administration.



Wayne Elliott – Manager, Technical Programmes, Caribbean Export Development Agency

Wayne Elliott is a development professional from Barbados who serves as Manager, Technical Programmes at the Caribbean Export Development Agency, where he leads initiatives aimed at strengthening the competitiveness and sustainability of Caribbean businesses. With a strong background in project management, economic analysis, and research, he has significant experience implementing multilateral development programmes that support private sector growth, innovation, and regional integration into global value chains. His work focuses on advancing sustainable economic development, fostering entrepreneurship, and enhancing climate resilience across the Caribbean. Elliott holds a Master of Science with distinction in Financial and Business Economics from the University of the West Indies and is recognized for his analytical, strategic approach to driving inclusive growth and development in the region.



Perrine Duffaure – AgriFI Investment Officer, EDFI Management Company

Perrine Duffaure is an impact investment professional with over 14 years of experience in climate finance, agrifood value chains, and renewable energy. She currently serves as Senior Investment Officer at EDFI Management Company, where she contributes to the AgriFI initiative supporting sustainable agriculture and smallholder integration in emerging markets. She also sits on the Board of the Fairtrade Access Fund, which finances agricultural enterprises committed to fair trade. Prior to this, she built extensive experience in renewable energy and project finance, including roles at Total Eren and Ernst & Young. With a strong combination of financial expertise and field experience across Africa, Latin America, and Europe, she focuses on structuring impactful investments that support sustainable and inclusive growth.



Weiting Yao – Project Manager, COLEAD

Weiting Yao is a sustainable finance and development professional working at the intersection of access to finance, agribusiness, and impact investment. She is currently Project Manager for Access to Finance at COLEAD, where she supports agri -MSMEs and smallholder farmers across Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific in strengthening their investment readiness and connecting with financing opportunities. With a background in environmental engineering and international business, and a graduate of HEC Paris and the CEMS programme, she brings a multidisciplinary approach to sustainable development. Her work focuses on fostering inclusive and sustainable growth by bridging financial actors and agrifood enterprises, while promoting capacity building and innovative financing solutions.



This event has been created with the support of the Fit For Market Plus programme is implemented by COLEAD within the framework of Development cooperation between the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), and the European Union (EU).

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the EU and the OACPS. Its contents are the sole responsibility of COLEAD and can under no circumstances be regarded as affecting the position of the EU or the OACPS.