

Session n°23:
Smart food production and digitization: how Caribbean agrifood entrepreneurs can use data and technology

Tuesday 17 November 2026

HIGHLIGHTS

About IICA-COLEAD Caribbean Agrifood Business Series

In June 2021, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and COLEAD launched the Caribbean Agrifood Business Series to showcase the innovations and successes of Caribbean farmer-led businesses and small and medium enterprises (SMEs). This series is part of the IICA-COLEAD collaboration aimed at developing a more sustainable and resilient agriculture sector in the Caribbean region.

The session n°23 explored smart food production and digitization. The event featured 4 accomplished entrepreneurs, from Jamaica, Barbados and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The discussion also showcased supporting organisations and academic experts. The session drew 267 registrants from across continents.

Programme, biodata, presentations and recordings of the session are available on Agrinnovators.

Key points discussed

- **Digitalisation can strengthen Caribbean food production**. Data and technology offer opportunities to improve productivity, competitiveness and climate resilience, while supporting the region's efforts to reduce dependence on food imports.
- **Agricultural data must support practical decisions**. Collecting information on crops, livestock, production, costs and market demand can help farmers and agribusinesses plan better, manage operations and respond to buyers' needs.
- **Precision technologies can improve farm efficiency**. Tools such as drones, sensors, digital farm records and automated irrigation can help monitor crops, identify problems and reduce the waste of labour, water and other inputs.
- **Better market connections are just as important as increased production**. Digital platforms and farmer networks can help organise supply, identify buyer requirements and connect farmers with commercial opportunities.
- **Technology needs to be adapted to Caribbean realities**. Solutions must take account of the scale of local farms, affordability, energy costs, connectivity and access to technical support. Tools should also work offline in remote areas and be simple to onboard, with farmers keeping ownership of their data.
- **Skills, training and partnerships are essential for adoption**. Farmers need guidance and ongoing technical assistance to use new technologies effectively. Collaboration between entrepreneurs, universities, institutions and development partners can help address these needs.

- **Access to finance and viable business models are key to scaling innovation**. Agrifood entrepreneurs need clear business plans, reliable financial information and investment-ready projects to attract funding and develop sustainable solutions. Grants can help build a business but should not become the business model itself.

Key insights from panellists

Krystal Crumbie – Founder, Farm FWD Logics, Jamaica



Krystal presented Farm FWD Logics, an agricultural intelligence and trade-readiness platform connecting farm-level data, production planning and market intelligence. She explained how reliable information can help farmers and buyers make better commercial decisions, improve supply readiness and identify market opportunities. She also highlighted the importance of validating technology solutions and ensuring that their development and maintenance costs are commercially sustainable.

Tereta Ames – Founder and Lead Developer, One AgriCo Ltd, Barbados



Tereta presented One AgriCo's digital solutions for livestock and farm management, including OneHerd. The platform helps farmers manage animal health, breeding, feeding, records and traceability. She highlighted how digital records can improve farm management and support access to finance, insurance and export markets, while stressing the importance of developing technology that responds to Caribbean farmers' needs.

Garnett Harris – CEO, SkyCrop Solutions, Jamaica



Garnett demonstrated how drone technology, multispectral imaging and precision agriculture can help farmers monitor crop conditions, identify stress and improve the application of inputs. He explained how these tools can reduce labour and resource waste, while highlighting practical approaches to affordability, including pay-per-acre services, shared equipment and farmer training.

Wesley Mofford – Founder and CEO, WindBlow Inc, St Vincent and the Grenadines



Wesley focused on improving farmers' access to markets through digital platforms and organised farmer networks. He presented solutions that support communication, production tracking and connections between farmers and buyers. He emphasised that farmers need better information about market demand, prices and required quantities before making production decisions. He also stressed that technology must give farmers practical value every day for them to keep using it,

Tashi Browne – Programme Coordinator, Caribbean Climate Smart Accelerator



Tashi presented support available to help Caribbean entrepreneurs strengthen their projects and become investment-ready. She introduced resources such as the Innovation Fund Caribbean and the Beautiful Basics Resource Library, highlighting the importance of financial planning, business models, project preparation and demonstrating potential returns to investors.

Dr Ruel Ellis – Senior Lecturer, University of the West Indies



Dr Ellis discussed the role of engineering and locally adapted technology in addressing agricultural challenges across the Caribbean. He shared examples of equipment and solutions developed to support food processing, irrigation and controlled-environment agriculture. He also highlighted the need for technologies that are appropriately sized, energy-efficient and easier to maintain locally, and encouraged entrepreneurs to engage with UWI to explore technical solutions.

Resources

1. Reports, articles and studies

Caribbean Issues. 2026. "CARICOM 25×25: The Caribbean Food-Import Reckoning."

CARICOM. 2026. "Food Security Initiative Delivering Tangible Results – CARICOM Assistant Secretary-General."

Commonwealth Secretariat. 2022. *The State of Digital Agriculture in the Commonwealth.*

IICA. 2024. *The Key Role of Women and Youth in Digital Technology Adoption in Rural Areas of Latin America and the Caribbean.*

IICA. n.d. "CARICOM E-Agriculture Strategy." Observatory of Public Policies for Agrifood Systems (OPSAA).

JAMPRO. n.d. "Plentiful Harvest Farms: A Hydroponic Farm Investment in Jamaica."

World Bank. 2021. *What's Cooking: Digital Transformation of the Agrifood System*

World Bank. 2021. *What's Cooking: Digital Transformation of the Agrifood System*

World Bank. 2022. "AskWBCaribbean: Talking Energy, Finding Solutions."

2. Webinars

COLEAD-IICA Caribbean Agrifood Business Series:
https://agrinnovators.org/session_region/caribbean-iica-colead/

3. Trainings

COLEAD e-learning platform: https://training.colead.link/

IICA training: https://seed.iica.int/

CARDI Digital Agriculture Initiatives: https://www.cardi.org/bringing-digital-innovation-to-caribbean-agriculture/

FAO E-learning Academy: https://elearning.fao.org/

ITC SME Trade Academy: https://learning.intracen.org/

4. Learning resources

Climart Smart Accelerator. Beautiful Basics Hub:
https://caribbeanaccelerator.org/knowledge/beautiful-basics