



NRWPTT at CARIFESTA in Suriname

Three members represented the Network at the recently *concluded* CARIFESTA XI: "Culture for Development" held from August 16th – 25th, 2013.

President Gia Gaspard-Taylor along with members Valerie George and Nolana Lynch arrived in Paramaribo on Monday 19th August at 1:00am. The network, supported by the Ambassador to Suriname, Her Excellency Fidelia Graand-Galon, was invited to two radio interviews later that day. Our one hour long interview at Radio Shalom 94.5, a faith-based station started at 10am with the Ambassador and Pastor Margo Saling. Here we discussed the network's history, the mango festival and mango products along with the network's presence in Suriname. Our second interview, allowed for two half hour sessions held at noon at Radio Koyeba, a Maroon Radio Station, geared specifically towards members of that rural community, focussed on these challenges, for better growth.

The members all agreed that strength in numbers allowed for better growth and development as a group. Later that day we attended the Grand Cultural Market of the CARIFESTA at the Chamber of Commerce and were honoured to see fellow members of CANROP in Suriname and our Surinamese Member Manga who participated in

the 2012 mango festival. She presented her fashion offering for 2013. Also performing that day were representatives of the Trinidad and Tobago delegation.

We were later invited to establish a display at the Presidential Palm Gardens in Paramaribo, where the Network presented our items for the remainder of the week. Mr John King, IICA's Director in Suriname visited us, accompanied by Mrs King, this allowed us to express our gratitude to him and staff for all courtesies extended during our stay. The day before we left the country Mr King's Secretary visited us at the apartment where we were able to present her with some of our locally produced items as a gesture of our appreciation.

Attending CARIFESTA provided us the unique opportunity to test

the international and regional market, as there were about 12 large countries outside CARICOM region who purchased our items, repeatedly returning and bringing others, asking where and how they can get our products. The visitors were also very well received by the Surinamese people. Additionally, with Gia's friends Ms Betty Burgos and Ms Judith Dijks of the American Embassy we were able to visit the neighbouring district of Commewijne to observe CARIFESTA celebrations, here we met with the District Commissioner or Mayor of Commewijne Ms. Ingrid Karta-Bink, a rural woman herself, happy to know of our work and wanted to be included in our twinned arrangements.



Members of the NRWPTT: Nolana Lynch, Gia-Gaspard-Taylor, & Valerie George at the entrance to CARIFESTA, Suriname.

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 Publication Concept: Lisa Harrynanan
 Layout: Lisa Harrynanan & Gia Gaspard -Taylor
 Photos: IICA & NRWPTT
 Printer: CTP Services
 Publication of NRWPTT Trinidad & Tobago 2013

NRWPTT at CARIFESTA in Suriname continues.....

We were able to connect with our Suriname sisters in a time of sweet fellowship and sharing of experiences. These sisters who visited and conferred on Mr Rawlins, the IICA Trinidad & Tobago Representative, "Chief" and returned for the 2013 mango festival were quite disappointed Mr Rawlins did not make the trip as they had planned an all-day event to honour him as their "Chief".

During our period there, we received great news of the approval of the Memorandum of Understanding between NRWPTT and the Maroon Rural Women of the district of Para, from our Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This was great news that marked the end of a very successful mission.



Above left: From L to R: Valerie George, Gia Gaspard-Taylor, Nolana Lynch, Mayor of Commewijne Ms. Ingrid Karta-Bink and a representative from the US Embassy.
Above right: NRWPTT Booth at CARIFESTA



NRWPTT HIGHLIGHTS 2012/2013

2012 ended on a very high note for us, the highlights being:-

- ◆ An invitation to give an address at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women CSW56, at UN Headquarters in New York on the "Priority theme: "The empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenge"
- ◆ Invited to participate in the Organization of American States, Forum on Sustainable Development in Washington DC
- ◆ Being named two of the 24 women as Commonwealth "Agents of Change"
- ◆ Letter of invitation to visit Suriname to sign a Memorandum of Understanding between the Maroon Women of Suriname and the Network of Rural Women Producers Trinidad and Tobago, supported by the District Commission of Para, and the Member of Parliament, and Her Excellency the Ambassador of Suriname to Trinidad and Tobago
- ◆ Media: Print and electronic- five members were interviewed for the TV programme Market 2 Market during the Mango Festival. These interviews are continuing as the TV house are visiting members business places to give more prominence to the mango business as we gain support for the development of a mango industry in Trinidad and Tobago.
- ◆ Hosting the 1st Mango Conference Theme: "From Seed to Table" in collaboration with IICA, University of the West Indies and the Ministry of Food Production.
- ◆ Membership in Associated Country Women of the World, with UN Status
- ◆ Memorandum of Understanding between the **All India Mango Association** and NRWPTT for the development of the Mango industry now in its second stage having received comments and feedback from the legal officers.

Meetings:

4 General meetings held during the 2012/13, plus 12 events planning meetings

Training:

CARIRI – Sponsored One Week training for 16 members in Food Safety Management, Sauces Preparation, Ham Curing, Christmas Drinks, Pickles, Chow, Cordials, Ponche De Crème.

ICATT - Financial Accounting and Reporting for NGO's in collaboration with the Institute of Chartered Accounts of Trinidad and Tobago

NRWPTT - Sponsored One Training Workshop 25 members in Customer Relations, Department, Display and Marketing Tips

CANARI -Sponsored over a four month period 3 members in Climate Change and environment, Small Business Management, Human Relations, Customer Relations, Public Speaking, Marketing and Packaging, One Day Orientation meeting with Sponsors and funding agencies. On graduation all participants were given \$1,000.00 US Dollars to support their businesses.

IICA/NRWPTT - Sponsored Training for 27 members in Labelling, Packaging, Marketing, Food and Drugs Requirements for labelling, display and advertising.

IICA /CARIRI/NRWPTT -Training for 18 members in the following: Food Safety Management, Sauces, Drinks, Measurements, Bottling, ICT Training

ICT/CARIRI - NRWPTT signed a memorandum of understanding with Caribbean Industrial Research Institute for training of our members and the establishment of a commercial website, ICT project funded by inter- American Development Bank.

Market Opportunities...Members participate in markets weekly, monthly and annually:-

Uptown Market – Woodbrook Port of Spain Capital City West; Green Market – Santa Cruz – Urban Community; Outlet Market - St. Ann's, Port of Spain North; NADEVCO Market: Macoya: East.

Minister of Finance Invitation: Receiving an invitation from the Minister of Finance to attend a pre-Budget 2012/13 discussion provided us with an opportunity to advocate on behalf of rural women and gender budgeting. We were again invited to Post Budget discussions where we were given the opportunity to share our views as it related to rural women. This dialogue continued with the Minister who later invited us to meet with other Ministers namely Minister of Trade, Minister of Gender Affairs, and requested a budget for us for the development of the Mango Industry in Trinidad and Tobago. Edric Harry, IICA Planning and Policy Specialist, a representative from NAMDEVCO and President of the NRWPTT with support from members, worked on the document and presented a two million dollar project, to the Minister. Meetings with senior staff of the Ministry continues, with strategic plan being development, as we move into 2014.

International Meetings: Both Susan and Nolana attended the UNDP entrepreneurial development forum for women in Barbados. Rose and Sylvia attended the Associated Country Women of the World Conference, in Chennai, India..

Ministry of Planning, two Conferences on Sustainable Development and the Economy afforded the opportunity to contribute to the six follow-up meetings and advocated for rural women.

Ministry of Gender Affairs, Youth and Child Development: we were invited to join the advocacy mounted by the ministry on five different rural communities, in addition to workshops where we were allowed to display and hand out promotional material.

Conferences International, Regional and National

NRWPTT received an invitation again this year to participate in the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women CSW 57, at UN Headquarters in New York, Theme: ***“Elimination and Prevention of all forms of Violence against Women and Girls”*** where we made a presentation on behalf of Violence against women and girls in rural communities. Three extra days in New York were allowed for participation in a workshop hosted by the Commonwealth Foundation on Women in Enterprise; we shared the mango festival and it's growth over the four years

An invitation were received from the Commonwealth Foundation to attend the Commonwealth 10 Ministers of Women Affairs Meeting (WAMM10) in Dhaka, Bangladesh to present the “mango festival” as a case study.

Hosted our fifth Mango Festival and Second Mango Conference

Invitation from the Caribbean Tourism Association to do a twenty minutes presentation at the Caribbean Tourism Conference Hyatt Regency Agri-Festival as a tourist attraction

Invitation to present a paper on the Mango Festival at the First Community Development Conference, hosted by Ministry of Community Development at Trinidad Hilton.



Three members attended CARIFESTA hosted in Suriname. We were fortunate to be interviewed on one radio station for a one hour programme, followed by two half hour programmes on another radio station.

Did you know that this doll dress, hat & accessories was made totally out of paper? You may have seen it at the Mango Festival. For more information contact the network at

<http://www.nrwptt.net>

UN International Day of Rural Women

Recognizing the critical role and contribution of rural women UN General Assembly adopted resolution 62/136 on 18 December 2007, through which the **International Day of Rural Women** was established. ***Marked annually on October 15, the International Day of Rural Women is intentionally celebrated on the eve of World Food Day to highlight rural women's role in food production and food security. Both of these days precede the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty on October 17.***

As global leaders meet at the UN General Assembly in New York, UN Women, the agency which leads the UN's efforts towards women's empowerment and gender equality, will call for inclusion of and investment in women's rights and gender equality in order to bring transformative change in women's lives.

Building on these dialogues and through a series of high-profile events, UN Women will ensure women's concerns and voices are at the foreground and advocate for women's rights and gender equality to be central to all discussions on the future development agenda.

Key contributors to global economies, rural women play a critical role in both developed and developing nations — they enhance agricultural and rural development, improve food security and can help reduce poverty levels in their communities. In some parts of the world, women represent 70 percent of the agricultural workforce, comprising 43 percent of agricultural workers worldwide.

Gender inequality and limited access to credit, healthcare and education, however, have posed a number of challenges for rural women. Further, the global food and economic crisis and climate change have only aggravated the situation. It is estimated, for instance, that 60 percent of chronically hungry people are women and girls. Yet, the Food and Agriculture Organization estimates reveal that productivity gains from ensuring equal access to fertilizers, seeds and tools for women could reduce the number of hungry people by between 100 and 150 million.

The BEAT

PEOPLE FASHION

BOOKS HEALTH LIFESTYLE RECIPES MUSIC ART

Mango Festival

attracts hundreds of visitors

By RALPH BANWARIE

THE NETWORK of Rural Women Producers (NORWP) in collaboration with the University of the West Indies, Ministry of Food Production, Sangre Grande Regional Corporation and Inter American Institute of Corporation and Agriculture held its Mango Festival and competition at UWI Field Station, Mt Hope last Sunday.

Hundreds of people visited the festival to sample and buy mango products, and learn about the different varieties of mangoes available in Trinidad and Tobago.

Gia Gaspard-Taylor, president of NORWP welcomed all exhibitors and participants, and encouraged them to continue producing mango products.

She said soon mango products will fill the shelves of the supermarkets and groceries in TT. Taylor said the Mango Festival is growing every year and attracting more and more people.

There were all types of mangoes and mangoes products on display and for sale which included edible items and cosmetics.

The day's event culminated with tassa drumming and distribution of prizes. Rachel St Rose received the prize for the most innovative product while the booth by Collen Malwah AQUI was judged the best.

© MANGOES continues on Page 3B



COLLEN MALWAH AQUI (right) receives the prize for best booth from Gia Gaspard-Taylor, president of The Network of Rural Women Producers at the Mango Festival held on Sunday at UWI Field Station, Mt Hope.



RIA SOOKOO receives the prize for 'Best Mango Chow' from Rose Rajbansee of NORWP.



MANGO PRODUCTS on display at the Mango Festival.



VISITORS at last Sunday's Mango Festival take a look at mango infused body products and other items made with the fruit by Rachel St Rose.

FESTIVAL

NEWSDAY SECTION B Wednesday July 10, 2013 Page 3



THESE producers takes time off from their stalls to dance to tassa drumming.



BATH and body products and scented candles by Sharline Alcide.



NIKNAK'S Sweet Snack attracted both young and old with mango infused cookies and other sweet treats.



MEMBERS of Agricultural Society display mangoes and mango products.

Rachel St Rose wins most innovative product prize

● MANGOES from Page1B



AYESHA CAREW and Elaria Turton of Modern Equator receive the prize for Mango inspired products from Gia Gaspard-Taylor, president of NORWP.



GIA GASPARD-TAYLOR (left) president of NORWP presents the prize for most innovative product at the Mango Festival to Rachel St Rose.



MANGO JUICE being made at the Mango Festival. This product sold out.



Top L to R: NRWPTT Booth; Network members; Member with products for sale; Giveaways to children at IICA booth

Bottom L to R: Patron views a booth at Festival; Gregg Rawlins & Visitor Margaret McMillian from Ireland [a member of Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW)] at IICA booth; Body care products; Products from mango wood.

Mango Conference 2013

Mango Conference 2013, took a different route this year as the event was staged at The Chancellor Hotel in Port of Spain with the theme *From Seed to Table* with the support of the Ministry of Food Production (MFP), the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and the University of the West Indies (UWI).

Minister of State in the Ministry of Food Production Honourable Jairam Seemungal in his feature address stressed the need for all stakeholders working together to establish the mango industry, and to include all fruits under the fruit festival.

Gregg Rawlins pledge IICA's continued support in the development of the industry while placing emphasis of the leadership of the NRWPTT President in leading this initiative now in its fifth year.

We were very happy to have in attendance Margeret Mc Millian from Ireland a visiting member of Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW), and three members of the Maroon Women from Suriname, participating for the second year.

The Ambassador of Suriname Madam Fidelia Graand-Galon, brought greetings from the government and people of Suriname.



Top left: Minister of State in the Min of Food Production Jairam Seemungal meet the Delegates from Suriname exhibition at the Mango Conference

Top Right: Min of Food Production views the mango items on display at Mango Conference

Bottom Left: Mr. Gregg Rawlins, IICA Representative giving remarks at the Mango Conference

Bottom right: Cross section of the audience at the Mango Conference, held at Chancellor Hotel, POS



Mr. Gregg Rawlins, IICA Representative in Trinidad and Tobago flanked by a group of women which includes the visiting members of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ambassador of Suriname Madam Fidelia Graand-Galon, Margaret Mc Millian from Ireland a visiting member of Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW) and members of NRWPTT.

All Natural Hand-Made Skin & Hair Care Products

Eco-Truffles is an eco-friendly and sustainable line of hand-made, all-natural and organic skin and hair care products manufactured using the best of Caribbean-based and indigenous ingredients. From body butters to shampoos, from body truffles (soaps) to facial masks, our line caters to your every skin and hair care need.



Nolana Lynch showcases her environmental eco friendly skin care products

The beauty of the line comes in its aromatherapy features, which combine some of our most comforting and stress-relieving Caribbean fragrances to relax and transport you to your paradise destination while pampering your every strand and skin cell. Our blends include infusions of chocolate, almonds, vanilla, mangoes, coconut, turmeric, shea and other decadent tropical aromas and flavours. Additionally, we provide detailed skin and hair consultations to our customers ensuring that they receive the best in personal care products that addresses their skin and hair needs. We take great pride in producing a quality product that our customers love. This, along with our great customer service is some of the major attributes to our company. Eco-Truffles believe in the development of rural women, and as such purchase ingredients directly from rural women producers throughout the Caribbean, ensuring that we support the development of women-owned enterprises. Additional-

ly, we donate our proceeds to projects that focus on disaster-relief and the sustainable development of women and children throughout the Caribbean. For more information on our products and services, please feel free to visit our website www.ecotruffles.com and our Facebook page www.facebook.com/ecotruffles



Winner of the National Youth Awards 2013 Environmental Category

Nolana Lynch, youngest member of the Network or Rural Women Producers, Trinidad and Tobago emerged as the National Youth Award Winner 2013 for her inspirational and effective impact on environmental advocacy and preservation. Nolana has great passion for the environment and has been a climate change and environmental sustainability advocate for over 6 years. She served as an Environmental Education Officer of the Wild Fowl Trust (2007 – 2009), National Coordinator of the Caribbean Youth Environment Network (2008-2012) and a member of the board (2010 – 2012), Alternate Youth Advisor for the United Nations Environment Programme TUNZA (2009-2011), Climate Expert in the Commonwealth Youth Climate Change Initiative (2010-2011), to name a few. She is presently completing her PhD in

Tropical Earth and Environmental Science. Her thesis topic is "Assessing the impact of sea level change on the ecosystem and economy of the Caribbean". Her research will greatly impact the implementation of adaptation strategies in Trinidad and Tobago and the region. Her love for the environment spurred her to start an eco-friendly, all-natural skin and hair care line; **Eco-Truffles** (www.ecotruffles.com) in June 2012. From facial masks to shampoos to Beauty bars, she creates them. Her small business includes online operations with low carbon emissions in production, strategic eco-friendly delivery service and an in-house recycling program. Nolana understands the importance of balancing environmental stewardship with social entrepreneurship, she ensures that her company uses sustainable raw materials from rural woman producers throughout Trinidad and Tobago and the region, particularly Haiti and Jamaica. Her commitment ensures those rural women's enterprises flourish; thus producing an income for their families and children to gain a sustainable education. Her

company provides daily motivational features encouraging citizens in sustainable, eco-friendly living and includes a campaign for young women to embrace natural beauty, be environmental stewards and achieve their dreams. Nolana and Eco-Truffles have been creating a stir with recent features in the TV6 News **"Inside Business"** Feature, CNC3, CNMG News, WINTV, the Express WOMAN and Newsday newspapers.



Nolana Lynch with her trophy 2013

- The Network takes an integrated approach to women's empowerment, drawing on local, regional and international partnerships to deliver developmental opportunities to the women
- The NRWPTT is a member of the Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW)
- NRWPTT participates annually in local events to commemorate: international Women's Day (Mar 8); World Biodiversity Day (May 22); International Rural Women's Day (Oct 15); World Food Day (Oct 16)
- The NRWPTT's flagship annual event is the Mango Festival and Conference, which focus on exploring the innovative and entrepreneurial possibilities of this well-loved commodity

Training for Network Members

Preparing and Marketing Foods the Safe Way

On Thursday May 9, 2013, the office of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) in collaboration with the Network of Rural Women Producers (NRWPTT) hosted a 1-day workshop for members of the Network. The workshop themed *"Preparing and Marketing Foods the Safe Way,"* was planned and coordinated by IICA to provide information to the micro entrepreneurs in producing quality and safe products with appropriate labelling and packaging materials intended to provide enhanced visual appeal in the market place. The workshop was conducted at the IICA Office and attracted 32 participants among them 3 men.

The workshop featured four informative and interactive sessions: **Preparing Food Products- the Food Safety Approach** presented by Sharon Peart-Rose, Food Technologist with the Caribbean Industrial Research Institute (CARIRI); **Labelling Regulations**, presented by Wayne Watts, Food Inspector with Chemistry Food and Drug Division, Ministry of Health; **Packaging- Improving your sales through visual appeal** presented by Devonne Jeffers, Graphic Artist with Print on Demand; and **Marketing Tips and Tricks for Small Business Entrepreneurs** by Kathryn Duncan of Karibgraphics Ltd. This training was specially planned through a request by the President of the NRW for improving the food safety standard and sales and visual appeal of products displayed at the annual mango festival.



Participants at the IICA-led workshop on *"Preparing and Marketing Foods the Safe Way,"* at IICA Office, St. Augustine.

Network of Rural Women Producers (NRWPTT)
The Annex, #10 Austin Street., St. Augustine,
Trinidad & Tobago, WI
Web: <http://www.nrwptt.net>



IICA Supports members of Women's Network in Agro-processing

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) assisted five (5) members from the Network of Rural Women Producers (NRWPTT) in the form of partial scholarships for attending a 2-day workshop on seasoning and sauces at the Caribbean Research and Industrial Institute (CARIRI) on May 22-23, 2013. The persons partially sponsored were women actively engaged in agro-processing and were - Kandice



Toussaint, Merlyn Howell Richardson, Rose Rajbansee, Patricia Dalrymple representing the Stacia Women's Group; and Valarie George representing the North Manzanilla Farmers Group.

On September, 2013, the IICA Representative for Trinidad and Tobago, Mr. Gregg Rawlins presented Certificates of Participation to all the participants, those partially sponsored by IICA and those that were self-sponsored. He indicated that IICA saw the need to assist the NRWPTT members in building capacity in agro processing in an effort to afford the women an opportunity to learn the art of seasoning and sauces and to improve the production, preparation, distribution and handling of food products. The presentation of certificates was witnessed by the President of of NRWPTT, Ms Gia Gaspard-Taylor and members of the executive along with IICA staff.



Gregg Rawlins, IICA Representative addressing the participants of the NRWPTT who attended the CARIRI training



NRWPTT Participants & members receiving their certificate of participation from Gregg Rawlins

NRWPTT:
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