

Foreword

One hundred years ago on 30 August 1921, the West Indies Agricultural College (WIAC) was formally established at St Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago. In 1924 WIAC was renamed as the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture (ICTA) and in 1960 ICTA became part of the Faculty of Agriculture at the newly formed St Augustine campus of the University College of the West Indies. This faculty is now known as the Faculty of Food and Agriculture at The University of the West Indies (UWI).

The faculty is organizing a number of activities to celebrate this centenary including this special issue of Tropical Agriculture. Tropical Agriculture (TA) was first published in 1924 and this issue contains republications of 20 of the papers published since the first issue.

With nearly 5,000 articles published in TA over the years, choosing 20 for publication here was not an easy task. To help the editors sought the assistance of three retired distinguished Caribbean agriculturalists who gave many years of outstanding service in their fields. These persons are:

Dr Patrick Alleyne, former posts included Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Head of Mission, Barbados and Eastern Caribbean and FAO Head of Mission, Tanzania; also Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Trinidad and Tobago.

Dr Dunstan Campbell, former FAO representative for Jamaica, Belize and Bahamas and UWI Outreach Lecturer for the Windward Islands.

Dr Samuel Howard, former Associate Professor, University of Trinidad and Tobago and Director of Research, Ministry of Agriculture Trinidad.

The criteria for choosing the papers to be republished was that the articles should have been ground breaking when published with emphasis on (but not completely comprising) Caribbean work. It was decided to include two papers from each decade from the 1920s up to the 2010s. The 20 articles chosen are published in the pages to follow, **in their original formats**, although it must be pointed out that there were dozens of other papers which could have made the final selection.

The first paper published in this special issue is a republication of the first article in the first issue of TA; the second paper reminds us that the principles of biological control were known to the earliest humans. These two papers are followed by description of some early efforts to control Witch's Broom and then the studies in West Indian soils by Professor Frederick Hardy was one of the few unanimous choices by the selection panel.

The 1940s were times when plantation export crops were still the mainstay of West Indian economies and this is reflected by the works on sugar cane and banana improvement. Two tree crops, coconut and mango, were selected for the 1950s. The 1960s articles republished are on soil surveys and ticks affecting cattle.

In the 1970s the late Professor George Sammy pioneered research into value addition in Trinidad and there is another paper on the work of the breeding of sugar cane in Barbados. The 1980s are represented by a paper on modern methods of commercial fruit production and an interesting review of the status of cocoa research in Jamaica.

Another paper on cocoa is published as an example of the 1990s, together with a review of farming systems work which came to the forefront during the last 20 years of the last century. A further paper on small farming systems leads the articles chosen from the current century and this is followed by a detailed study on the management of soils in high rainfall situations.

The last two papers are on breadfruit and yam, emphasizing perhaps the shift from working on export crops to food security crops and the need for tropical populations to increase consumption of tropical crops in preference to imported produce.

Frank Bruce Lauckner
Editor In Chief