



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES
SCHOOL FOR GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

THE UNIVERSITY OFFICE OF RESEARCH

Pro Vice-Chancellor Professor Dale Webber

**Statement from Pro Vice Chancellor, Graduate Studies and Research,
The University of the West Indies**

The University of the West Indies (The UWI) has benefited tremendously over the past decades from funding from international grant organizations. Specifically, The UWI School of Graduate Studies and Research has been the grateful recipient of funding for research and graduate programmes that has allowed the UWI to make meaningful contributions to the advancement of knowledge in areas relevant to the Caribbean Region, other tropical regions and the global environment.

This special issue of *Tropical Agriculture* comprises papers based on research findings from the project entitled: “Enhanced preservation of fruits using nanotechnology”. The project was a partnership among researchers at University of Guelph, Canada (Leader); Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, India; Industrial Technology Institute, Sri Lanka; University of Nairobi, Kenya; Sokoine University of Agriculture, Tanzania; and The University of the West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago.

Funding for the project was from the Canadian International Food Security Research Fund (CIFSRF), jointly funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and Global Affairs Canada. The UWI is grateful to the Government of Canada, for funding this project which allowed the collaboration of The UWI, through the Faculty of Food and Agriculture, with strategic partners. The UWI also wishes to express its gratitude to the University of Guelph, as the lead in the project, for its invitation to the Faculty of Food and Agriculture to partner with the other institutions.

The project demonstrated successful collaboration among researchers from diverse institutional backgrounds and with similarly varied resources, as they addressed a common research goal. It further demonstrated the importance of continuing scientific investigation in the area of plant physiology/post-harvest technology. Amidst increasing calls for the reduction in use of synthetic agro-chemicals, and where some may have mourned the loss of advantages gained such as increased crop production and extended shelf life, through their use, a natural product has been shown to be able to bring about positive changes that can be used to enhance shelf life, reducing postharvest losses and ultimately improving food and nutrition security. Most importantly, the potential of the research findings has been documented and the information has been released for future researchers to fine-tune the procedures as required for specific crops, cultivars and ecological zones.

The UWI is grateful for the selection of *Tropical Agriculture* for the publication of some of the research output from the project and for the funding of the publication of the Special Issue by the project. It is important to note that this issue is open access at the request of the funding agency - this is the first open access publication/issue of *Tropical Agriculture* and will mark the beginning of a new era for *Tropical Agriculture* as it seeks to achieve greater dissemination of research findings from tropical regions and to widen access to papers published in the Journal.

Dale Webber (Professor)