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**AGRICULTURAL EXPORT SERVICES PROJECT:  
SOCIAL SOUNDNESS ANALYSIS**

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## INTRODUCTION

The social groups involved in agricultural export include: small and medium farmers, investors or weekend farmers, big farmers (often part of a corporation), intermediaries in the marketing chain, commodity boards, co-operatives, producer marketing organisations (non-profit), individual exporters, trading houses, government officials, overseas officials, overseas wholesalers/retailers and consumers. These numerous and varying groups must function together in order to activate the process successfully.

In order to encourage and stimulate agricultural exports in Jamaica, it is necessary to motivate and assist target groups that are unable or unwilling to increase and improve the sector. Two factors that are prevalent throughout are: the lack of information regarding the overall process (horizontal) and the lack of information related to specific requirements for the individual's subsector (vertical). This situation is aggravated by general constraints in the agricultural area and diverse, often conflicting instructions throughout the system. A topical example is the problem of acceptable chemicals (herbicides, pesticides, fertilisers) for the United States' market. As experience and information spreads out into the farming community, dissonance and confusion cause farmers to regard exporting as problematic and counter-productive.

Another predominant condition at this time, is the lack of distinction by most farmers between export and domestic markets. Their decisions rest mainly on the highest price they can get for their produce and the requirements of the most beneficial purchaser. "Earning foreign exchange to assist the national economy" is a concept that is beyond their sphere, and one that is regarded with suspicion and cynicism. The extrapolation of benefits to them, their families and communities appears to be a long-term, complicated formula worked out by government officials to rationalise certain programmes. But to increase agricultural exports, it is necessary to involve groups of small and medium farmers who are already contributing to some export commodities and have positive growth potential. For example, cocoa is a small farmer crop. So are yams and pimento. Small farmers contribute 20% of the overall coffee crop, while they produce approximately the same portion for bananas. Non-traditional crops are now grown largely by small farmers, despite a surge of large farmers during 1984-1986.

There is at present an active movement in the agricultural sector to increase production and improve quality. If agricultural exporting can be added to this thrust, it would provide an additional benefit that would motivate some key participants and provide a multiplying effect. Effort must be

made therefore:

- To stimulate the production of export crops by new producers, and expand product of farmers already involved.
- To support key public and private sector groups that service the producers or exporters, and have a sufficiently good track record.
- To identify areas needing technical assistance, especially those dealing with modern agricultural technologies and management practices.

## METHODOLOGY

The overall purpose of the proposed Agricultural Export Services Project is to increase "the exports of selected non-traditional and traditional products" from Jamaica. Based on this aim, and in keeping with the Statement of Work for the Social Soundness Analysis, it was necessary to:

- (a) Select the most important target groups
- (b) Identify their sociocultural context
- (c) Investigate the direct and indirect beneficiaries
- (d) Describe the constraints or problems of these groupings
- (e) Based on the findings, recommend strategies to encourage and assist the priority groupings, and
- (f) Ensure the participation of local groups already involved with agricultural exports.

The team of specialists did a preliminary analysis of crop production and export earnings to define the parameters of the research project. By investigating those areas that had most potential in growth and stability and by reviewing existing institutions and social groups, they were able to refine the focus for research. The corresponding production sector was divided into traditional and non-traditional crops, and the linkages in the export process were categorised as:

- Production
- Post-harvest
- Marketing
- GOJ Procedures
- Overseas Procedures
- Overseas Marketing

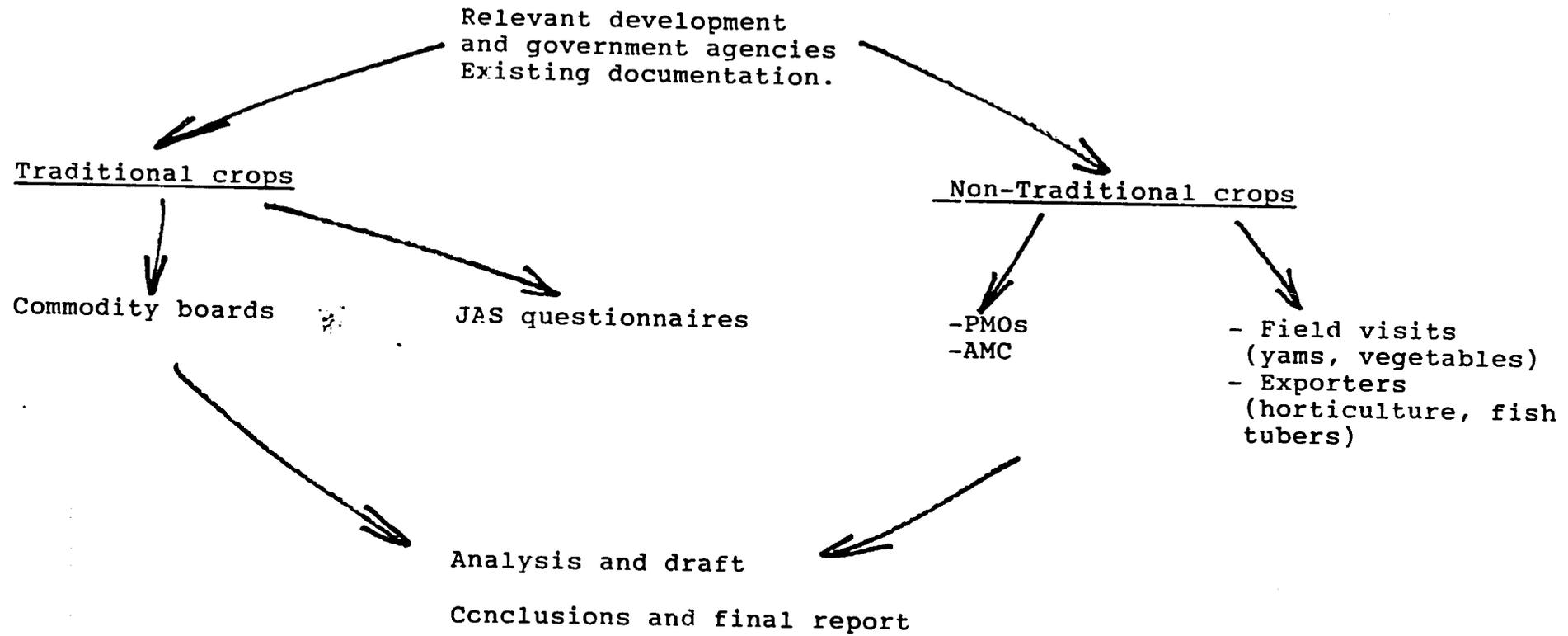
By identifying the groups with crops that had most potential for agricultural export, further refinement was given to the sociological investigations. This ensured that both the secondary data collected and firsthand interviews conducted had specific content and produced valid results. A significant amount of information on farmers in traditional crops was available in commodity boards, development agencies and some government departments. Firsthand interviews and participatory observation were undertaken to collect information on groups in non-traditional crops, including farmers, intermediaries and exporters.

The final selection of priority groups for the Social Soundness Analysis produced the following:

1. Small and medium farmers (traditional crops)
2. Small and medium farmers (non-traditional crops)
3. Investors/"Gentlemen" farmers
4. Intermediaries (higglers, exporters, agents of trading houses, trading houses)
5. Women
6. Commodity Boards and related Co-operatives, and
7. Producer Marketing Organisations (PMOs).

AGRICULTURAL EXPORT SERVICES - SOCIAL SOUNDNESS  
DATA COLLECTION PLAN

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PERSONS INTERVIEWED

Clarence Franklyn	-	Ministry of Agriculture
Dudley Irving	-	Ministry of Agriculture
Winston Hall	-	Ministry of Agriculture
Valerie Roberts	-	Ministry of Agriculture
Norman Pendergast	-	JAMPRO
Brenda Robinson	-	JAMPRO
Aaron Parke	-	JAMPRO
Florence Duncan	-	JAMPRO
Jan MacDonald	-	IICA
Vivan Chin	-	IICA
Ian Maxwell	-	JADF
Sen. Courtney Fletcher	-	JAS/Coffee Growers Federation
William Morgan	-	JAS Coffee Co-operative Federation
Sydney Litchmore	-	JAS Cocoa Growers Co-operative Federation
Leslie Thomas	-	JAS Cocoa Growers Co-operative Federation
Miss Chang	-	AIBGA
John Pickersgill	-	Coffee Industry Board
Lloyd Wright	-	Projects for People
Paul Davey	-	Projects for People
Karl Binger	-	UDC
Frank Ross	-	Jamaica Aquaculture Limited
Garfield Thomas	-	Manchester Packers
Colin Williamson	-	Omni International
Fay Allen	-	Omni International
Thomas McNair	-	McNair Limited
Deryck Tapper	-	Agro-Export Centre (AMC)
S. Ghaaznavi	-	Global Exports

67 JAS Member Farmers (Annual General Conference)

17 Yam Farmers (Manchester and Trelawny)

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Small and medium farmers growing traditional export crops regard this as a marginal activity. They make little distinction between the export and domestic markets.

These groups relate mainly to the co-ops and commodity boards that control pricing, collections, export and limited extension services.

Investors or "weekend" farmers are more likely to go into non-traditional crops that are high-risk, high returns, and need new technologies and a knowledge of the overseas markets.

Intermediaries in the marketing network are important in the export chain - especially in non-traditional crops - taking information to the farmers and sometimes undertaking informal extension services.

Women are more involved with post-harvest product preparation and higglering than with the initial stages of production and farming.

The Commodity Boards, Co-ops and PMOs, though erratic and sometimes inefficient, reach a large portion of farmers and have credibility in the farming communities.

Lack of information about the export process is prevalent throughout the groups involved with export.

Jamaican Government procedures and overseas requirements relating to exports are perceived as hindrances to the export of non-traditionals by investors and producers who wish to export directly.

In order for agricultural exporting to increase and succeed in Jamaica, there is a need for the organisations and groups involved to co-ordinate activities and to commit themselves to cohesive action that will be more sensitive to overseas market demands and responsive to the needs of the farmers and intermediaries.

## SOCIAL GROUPS AND POTENTIAL BENEFICIARIES

### Small and Medium Farmers

The traditional classification of Jamaican farmers in reports and documentation had been based on acreage, as follows:

- Small farmers (1-5 acres)
- Medium farmers (5-20 acres)
- Big farmers (over 20 acres)

This system of categorisation was supported by official data, including the last Farmer's Census (The Farmers Registry, Data Bank, Ministry of Agriculture) published in 1978, and based on the assumption that Small Farmers (estimated 150,000) were all subsistence farmers, barely scratching out a living, with limited resources and initiative. Experience in agricultural export has defied the original categorisation according to acreage, since recent price surges in the domestic market and some export-oriented crops have made small farms successful financial entities. Here too, the so-called Medium Farmer merges in with the first group, since he/she often has similar problems, systems, and markets. The fact is that small and medium farmers contribute significantly to agricultural exports. Their participation, though sometimes erratic, is one of the most important areas of expansion in the export sector, and their potential as direct and indirect beneficiaries multiplies project benefits substantially. Added to this, the spin-offs for the farm family, labourers and women could be positive.

The small and medium farmers are:

- on average 50 years old
- have a few years primary school education
- rely on other occupations and/or remittances from relatives abroad
- often support an extended family of 6-8 persons
- have a tendency to prefer hired labour (rather than family members)
- depend largely on higglers and traders to dispose of their produce
- practice mixed farming as a deterrent against bad times, low market demands or natural disasters.

Their main sources of information are: other farmers, radio, agricultural offices, JAS branches, newspaper and MacDonald's Almanac.

## The Sociocultural Context

Recent research (LeFrance 1986, 1982, McKenzie 1985, Mitchell 1984) has shown that the population of Small Farmers is not a homogenous group and has varying characteristics according to crops, zones and sociocultural environment. The most important characteristics according to these studies have been: high degree of dependency on purchased food, prevalence of mixed farming and large quantities of idle land. Although there are some general problems regarding ownership/control of land, access to credits and inputs, when reviewing export possibilities, it is clear that Small Farmers in particular stick to production for the domestic market and have little market intelligence - relying heavily on intermediaries for guidance and assistance. There is a high degree of skepticism and cynicism towards government and government officers. Contrary to previous beliefs, there are research findings (Le France 1986, Royes 1987) that indicate that the Small Farmers are interested in and receptive to new ideas and practices, but that economic and technical requirements prevent them from participating.

With regard to export crops, distinctions must be made according to farmers producing traditional or non-traditional crops, as well as between farmers who are "fulltime" or resident farmers, and those who are investors or gentlemen/weekend farmers. Farmers in traditional crops, as seen from data collected at the Annual General Meeting of the Jamaica Agricultural Society (Appendix A), still dispose of most of their produce to higglers (38%) or in the market (37%). Results indicated that exporting of crops among small farmers remains a relatively marginal activity, and that if involved with export crops, they prefer low risk, traditional crops such as coffee, cocoa, pimento and yam. But 70% of those not in export did express an interest in getting into the area. The major problems perceived by those already in export were: transportation, uncertain markets, bad roads (listed separately), then poor water supply and pricing.

## Traditional Crops

In a breakdown of agricultural crops for export, the context and problems of farmers in the traditional and non-traditional crops are different. For example, farmers involved with pimento for export produce pimento as one of the many Tree Crops on their farm. There are over twenty types of Tree Crops found on the small and medium farmers' holdings, and there is a strong tendency to produce the crops that have been traditionally produced in the area. Most small and medium farmers are members of a church. Religion is an important component of community life in most Pimento Growing Areas. Farmers are often members of a number of

agricultural associations. As on the small holdings, there are a number of different crops grown. Some farmers are only part-time on their farms, as a high percentage of their income comes from skills such as carpentry, masonry, tailoring, shoe-making or butcher.

The reaping of pimento is oftentimes a family activity, with boys climbing the trees, breaking the branches and the other family members picking the pimento from the branches.

The large estates have used the JAS' facilities for fanning and cleaning the pimento. But in some cases such as Drax Hall, the volume being produced can support facilities on the estates for bagging, fanning and cleaning. Due to the strength of lobbying the Government for support to the Pimento Industry, the large growers operate in affiliation with JAS. The government supports the industry by marketing and operating of nurseries for supply to the farmers.

Problems: The small and medium farmers producing pimento, see this crop as a subsidiary crop and not a principal crop on their holding. Volume produced is normally insufficient to justify large farm equipment. Some farmers have barbecues on which the pimento is dried by the sun. The scale of operations makes it necessary for support services from the JAS and the Ministry of Agriculture. When the JAS does not purchase pimento, and the small and medium farmers are left to the mercy of the produce dealers, the price they receive is often below the Government's stipulated price. By operating a collection service through JAS branches, the JAS is able to assemble volumes which are economic to transport, fan, clean and bag for export. Farmers are hard-hit by Preadial Larceny in the Pimento Industry. This is because the pimento fetches a good price and there is difficulty in tracing its origin. Farmers in the small and medium categories often complain about the difficulties experienced in getting planting material. Research into the agronomy of pimento has been done through the years, but there is still a great deal of ignorance about the agronomy of the crop. Small and medium farmers are still lacking in basic knowledge about pimento. Drying of pimento has provided problems for small and medium farmers.

In the area of bananas, though largely responsible for the creation of the industry, small and medium banana producers with one to twenty-five acres, lost ground in the industry for many reasons, and at periods had difficulties in marketing their bananas. This situation was responsible for the creation of the Jamaica Banana Producers Co-operative. As banana offered a regular cash flow to the small and medium farmers, since it was bought every week, many small and medium growers regard it more as their regular salary. The local market for bananas has traditionally been supplied by the small growers. These small and medium banana growers are an independent, proud and vociferous segment of the industry.

Through their leaders, they maintain contact with the extension services, forming a powerful lobby, utilising church, citizen associations and other social groupings to maintain their influence. The communities from which the small and medium independent banana growers operated were normally vibrant and progressive. In the past, weekly cash flow from the sale of bananas maintained activities year round and more planning for personal development could be observed. The fact that banana is used as shade for cocoa and coffee also means that the banana growers inter-relate closely with the coffee and cocoa co-operatives and boards. The banana grower planning for his retirement sees coffee and cocoa as easier crops to deal with in his old age. Banana is used to establish coffee and cocoa, so often the banana grower is also a coffee and cocoa producer.

Problems: During the 1970's, the small and medium banana grower had problems with grading, quality procedures, and prevailing prices. Most of their banana farms were allowed to run down. They are presently in need of: planting materials for new varieties, financing for in-puts to support agronomic practices to return standards capable of export. The influence of the large growers in the industry has greatly increased. There is the tendency in the industry to regard the re-entry of the small and medium banana grower, as a return to the bad old days of more politics than enterprise. Transportation of the bananas of small and medium growers represents a problem that has to be realistically attended to for a viable return of the small and medium growers. Most of the co-operative boxing plants have been closed and so there is also the need for an entity (whether private or public) to collect, grade and box the fruit of small and medium growers. Small and medium banana growers also market their bananas through higglers who helped with the large amounts of rejects they suffered during the days of difficulties. These small and medium growers receive crop lien loans through the A.I.B.G.A., and face the temptation of supplying bananas to the higglers in spite of contractual arrangements. This temptation will be extremely strong if the quality standard results in a large amount of rejects for the farmer to be marketed on the local market.

Coffee exports provide one of the most encouraging areas for expansion. There are 18 coffee co-operatives in which over 60,000 coffee growers are organised. These coffee co-operatives for the most part operate as collecting agencies on behalf of the Coffee Board. They are organised into a JAS Coffee Co-op. Federation. Coffee is grown in most of the parishes in Jamaica. Small and medium farmers are presently major producers. The organisation of the coffee industry was done by the JAS and this organisation still services the coffee co-operatives.

Daily Gleaner

## The Farmers Weekly

SATURDAY, JULY 29, 1989

PAGE TWENTY-SEVEN

## Roundup on Farming

by Sylvia Lee

**Lowland coffee down**

WHILE every farmer in the coffee business was made painfully aware on the morning after Hurricane Gilbert on September 13, that the industry had been knocked literally flat, no one quite knew how much the damage was. Of estimates and guesses there were many, but facts were few on those bleak days following the hurricane. Even in instances where the trees did not appear to have been badly damaged by the storm, they subsequently began to fade and eventually died.

And last weekend, the Coffee Industry Board revealed some facts on the result of the devastation in lowland coffee plantations. From an output of 322,587 boxes by groves in these areas, last year, production was slashed by two-thirds to a mere 105,897 boxes this year. It was hardly unexpected that, along with the cut in production has come a reduction in the price received by lowland coffee farmers. Where last year, they received \$80 per box, this year these farmers will get \$78 a box, and while the \$2 reduction might seem insignificant to some, to a small farmer whose production has been cut by two-thirds, the further blow of \$2 less per box must be hard to ride with.

But these farmers in the areas around Aenon Town, Maggotty, Clarendon Park, Trout Hall and Bog Walk, are even now working hard to resuscitate and re-plant their coffee groves. So while their production might be down, the trees having been laid low by Hurricane Gilbert,

these farmers are by no means out; and coffee production from these areas is expected to begin to improve come next crop.

The small or medium coffee grower is almost always a member of the Coffee Co-operative and also a member of the Jamaica Agricultural Society. Recently there has been an influx of professionals such as doctors and lawyers going into coffee. The traditional coffee growers own their farms, although in most cases, titles are lacking, and evidence of ownership may be fragile. More likely than not, coffee is a crop his father before him produced, and he is continuing the tradition. The majority of coffee farmers rarely attend their co-operative meetings; and depend for their information primarily on friends and "trend setter" farmers in the district. The farm is normally planned to produce food for the family, and cash to meet the predictable expenses. Most often, the farmer resides on the farm with his family, and dries and uses some of the coffee for himself and family. The major influence on the farmer is almost always his pastor, and sometimes the teacher in the district. Recreation is often the church and its social activities, and sometimes the occasional drink at the village grocery. The educational level of the farmer is normally low, with most having had at least one year elementary schooling, and few may have attended school for the full eight years and taken pupil-teacher examinations.

Problems: The small and medium coffee farmer is in need of training and orientation if productivity increases are to be achieved. His institution, the coffee co-operative, must be made capable to reach him with services that will stimulate his participation. The extension service of the Coffee Industry Board, though active, falls short of the requirements of the modern coffee industry. A coffee co-operative that operates as a business entity is needed to effect a revolution in the industry. Pricing of the coffee by the Coffee Industry Board is set by the Board through the Minister. The coffee farmer needs to be able to have his prices relate to the prevailing market situation. This will create more consciousness of the real world of trade and business. Extension expenditure in each area should be related to the production expected or being achieved. Preadial larceny has recently become a concern of the small and medium farmers. Inputs are also critical to the increased productivity drive such as fertilisers and chemicals. Transportation of inputs to farmgate is needed. Leasing of sprayers should be introduced to ensure that the small and medium farmers are able to implement crop production measures.

Cocoa is grown by the older, more traditional farmers. There is a strong religious tradition evident at cocoa co-op meetings and, almost all farmers are members of a church. Most cocoa farmers live on their farms with their families, who help in the harvesting, drying and transporting in the wet form to the fermentary. The cocoa farmer almost always

farms on owned lands rather than leased lands. As with the coffee farmer, more likely than not his title to the land and documentary evidence of ownership may be fragile. The environment within which the cocoa farmer operates, is dominated by the pastor, teacher, and agricultural extension personnel. The teacher in the district is sometimes the secretary of the Cocoa District Group and most often the secretary of the JAS District Group. The cultural environment of the cocoa farmer is comprised of his church activity and an occasional outing to agricultural related meetings. If he is drinker, the village bar or grocery could be his regular point of socialising. Family sizes are almost always over five. Bigger children are expected to assist with the farm chores.

Problems include: the lack of extension services and the farmers' inability to secure cocoa plants when needed. Delays in receiving their bonus payment is also often a complaint. Recently, the structure of the Cocoa Industry Board and the performance of the co-operatives have been raised as issues for attention. Cocoa co-operative meetings are usually dominated by issues related to the price paid for the cocoa and bonus to be received and the timing of its receipt. Productivity levels in the industry are extremely low and this according to the cocoa farmer, is a result of the lack of effective extension services. As with coffee and banana and other crops, the farmers all complain of the lack of Crop Insurance protection. A major problem for the older farmers is to acquire skilled farm labour at rates they can afford. One often hears complaints of the lack of labour for chores on the farm. The control of rats in cocoa industry is also a major concern of the grower. Control of rats is a community undertaking since if the grower takes all the precaution and his neighbour takes no precaution, then the farmer's effort will be negated. There is always agitation for the Cocoa Board to ensure that all farmers are taking steps to control rats. Pre-adial larceny is another major problem for the cocoa farmer. Transportation of the cocoa to the fermentary is another vexed issue that surfaces at Cocoa Co-operatives meetings. Contentions surface between the collectors of the cocoa and the cocoa farmer on the method of measurement of the cocoa.

### Non-Traditional Crops

Farmers in the priority non-traditional crops (yams, tropical fruits, vegetables, herbs and spices) are primarily small and medium farmers - with a few large farms e.g. in mangoes. Yams are a steady, lucrative export mostly grown in North Manchester and South Trelawny. A report done on that area for this study (Appendix B) revealed that these farmers are unusually well informed about exporting and the overseas markets. They grow round-leaf yellow and negro yams; in some areas, they grow yams exclusively for export. Most of the farmers interviewed (17 total) were in their forties and thirties. They spoke of the high rate of migration to urban areas and nearby bauxite plants. The average amount of land available to these farmers was 10.3 acres and the average yield was 8,000 lbs per acre per annum which they considered low.

Problems for these yam farmers included (from their perception) lack of land space. Land had to be leased or rented a great distance from home and often in areas only accessible by donkeys and mules. Another problem was lack of finances to purchase fertilisers, acquire more and better land, hire labourers and purchase yam sticks. There was also the problem of over-fertilisation and erosion of land due to the traditional manner of laying out yam fields especially on hilly terrain. Problems related to export were: unstable prices; buyers' requirement of 25 lbs extra per 100 lbs to compensate for spoilage and rejects; and the high rejection rate. According to the report, an average of 30% of yams prepared for export is rejected by buyers. Rejects are bought by higglers at half the price offered to exporters.

The report mentioned the lack of education among yam farmers regarding more cost-effective ways of cultivating yam and preparing the fields (e.g. to prevent erosion and maintain necessary nutrients).

Vegetables produced for export include callaloo, pumpkins, peppers and some specialist types at sporadic times. Many of these are grown in the southern part of the island and are more recent exports. One particularly productive area for vegetable exports is the St. Catherine/Clarendon area. A "1987 Feasibility Study on Farmers in the Old Harbour Area" done for the Jamaica Agricultural Development Foundation revealed that these farmers were somewhat younger (mean age 42.8 years) than farmers in traditional crops. The average household size was 4.7 persons (also lower) and that 43.5% of the farmers listed farming as their main occupation - so that 56.5% had other main occupations with farming as a sideline.

Main problems identified were: inadequate irrigation, limited financing and praedial larceny. This group would be similar to the vegetable farmers in nearby Church Pen, Bushy Park, Thetford, Gutters, Bodles, Spring Village, Salt River and Sandy Bay. This includes a potpourri of socioeconomic groups, ranging from former sugar labourers to new investor farmers, some traditional farmers and a few big farms operated by corporations. There is a PMO, St. Catherine Vegetable Producers' Association, financed by a CARE/USAID grant and operating for six years.

Fruit, like herbs and spices, have been popular but erratic exports due to seasonal supplies and the fact that most - especially mangoes and thyme - are not cultivated deliberately but harvested at random from wherever they grow wild. Thus, the exporter of thyme must wait for a good harvest from the plains of St. Elizabeth, brought in by the higglers. Mangoes are now being grown by two or three large farmers, and are being cultivated primarily for a new export thrust into U.S. market - dependent on the outcome of the proposed "hot-water treatment" plant. Fruits, herbs and spices are grown or collected throughout the island by a variety of farmers in a haphazard way. According to exporters who are keen to collect more of these crops to satisfy growing overseas market demands, the main constraints are: erratic supplies, erratic quality, small amounts available and U.S. requirements regarding fresh fruits or plants (herbs).

There is an increasing interest in non-traditional crops for export by investors or "weekend farmers" - businessmen or professionals who want to cash into hard-currency markets. This group has different socioeconomic characteristics than other farming groups. From indications suggested by agencies they deal with (JAMPRO, JADF), they are:

- upper middle level income earning
- other fulltime occupations
- high education levels
- absentee farmers with managers or "headmen" on site
- more access to credit, financial institutions, modern technology, information
- more receptive and able to adopt new technologies
- usually involved directly with export and marketing procedures
- patronise government and development institutions

Their problems include: lack of agricultural knowledge and stability in the specific area, communications problems with manager/headman, praedial larceny, GOJ export procedures, and marketing problems overseas. This group tend towards experimentation and high-risk, high-return crops for export, and therefore, need technical assistance to reduce the risk factor.

### Intermediaries (Non Traditional Crops)

Investigations revealed that an important link in the export chain is the group of intermediaries that purchase non-traditional crops for export. This consists of: higglers, agents of trading houses, trading house operators and individual exporters. In the area of non-traditional crops, they are the most influential contact with the farmers, setting prices, giving out contracts and acting as two-way channels of communication regarding information related to export. A comparison between the JAMPRO lists of Active Agricultural Exporters for 1987 and 1988 reveals 77 active exporters in 1987, while the number drops dramatically to 43 in 1988 (pre-hurricane count). Most of the exporters are in fruits, yams and vegetables, and supply the ethnic markets of London, New York, Toronto and Miami.

### Trading Houses

The business of exporting non-traditional agricultural crops is concentrated among the following companies:

- JETCO
- McNair's Trading
- R.S.T. International
- Jimex International
- Global Marketing
- Mignott Food Packaging
- International Agro Products
- Fruits of Jamaica
- Spices International
- McNair's
- Pottingers
- Garfield Thomas Manchester Packers
- Omni International

While some have their own operations including packing houses others operate out of the facilities provided by a statutory body - AGRO EXPORT LIMITED, on Spanish Town Road (the AMC Building). The field was more crowded in the past with many individuals and small groups getting into export because it was viewed as highly lucrative. This initial stage was marked by a large number of small farmers trying to get a piece of the action. It was a period of much distrust and dishonesty between small farmers, buying agents and export houses with complaints by each against the other. Now that many of the transitory types have left, business has settled down with a better relationship between the various groups.

### Individual Exporters

There is a growing group of individual exporters who maintain packing houses in rural parishes (Thomas in Mandeville, Williamson in Christiana, Pottinger in Montego Bay) and send their agents around a wide radius with vans, to collect produce - usually yams and other tubers, peppers, melons, mangoes (for the U.K.), pumpkins and callaloo. These people have a good grasp of what is happening out in the fields, as well as the overseas markets. They often provide information for the farmer on exporting requirements, overseas regulations (pesticides, chemicals allowed) and overseas market requirements (size, colour, variety).

Garfield Thomas, for example, has been working out of his packing house in Mandeville since 1974. He deals with about 5,000 farmers in total and services specialised Markets mostly in the U.K. and Canada. Collection problems and U.S. Federal requirements for fresh foods prevent him from expanding in the U.S. His experiences in yams and other tubers has made him one of the leading sources of information for both farmers and government agencies. Omni International located in Christiana, on the other hand, has been in business for five years and hoped to service the Miami Market, but they have been forced to reduce business drastically because of the rejection of a large shipment of yams by the FDA.

### Higglers and Agents

A potourri of higgler and small-time agents are part of the marketing mix for export. They will buy at the lowest prices and resell or deliver on commission. In some crops like thyme, ginger and coffee, they might turn over small quantities to Informal Commercial Vendors (ICVs) who use them overseas (Miami, Cayman, Haiti, Panama) to barter for consumer goods. This system, though informal and erratic, does have a direct link to the well established higgler system that pervades the agricultural sector and the domestic market. The flow of products from rural areas to towns, and especially to Kingston, is ensured by thousands of higgler and their assistants.

According to the IICA study of "Marketing of Agricultural Produce in Jamaica" (Locher 1977):

"The intermediaries who channel produce from cultivator to consumer also channel information from consumers, urban centers, regional markets, etc., to the producer. They play this double role as carriers of both produce and information to both their own and the producers' respective advantages. They act as cushions which absorb the temporary fluctuations in supply and demand thereby preventing the worst aspects of either a glut or a shortage on the market. If Jamaica has full employment, a perfect transportation

system and sufficient storage facilities, the traditional market system would more likely be unnecessary. The reality, however, is one of fluctuating employment - and, therefore, fluctuating demand and buying power - as well as a shortage of modern transportation and storage facilities in relation to the level of production. "It would appear that small-scale agricultural production is functionally related to the prevalent marketing arrangements, and that in turn, both are related to the demand situation." (Mintz, 1955: 242).

"The interrelatedness of all sectors of the agricultural economy means that business activities of all kinds are of a very complex nature. The faulty speculations and planning which can easily occur in this situation often mean disaster for those involved. Both producers and intermediaries, therefore, have chosen diversification as the best strategy for the avoidance of such risks. Higglers will never invest their entire capital in one product. Farmers will invariably produce a variety of any single product. Furthermore, many of them produce simultaneously for export, domestic consumption, and their own subsistence."

### Identified Constraints

Interviews conducted with representatives of the export companies and individual exporters identified the following constraints:

a) Inconsistent quality goods. While quality has improved over the years, with farmers themselves aware of the kind of quality goods needed for export, the situation is far from satisfactory. Although some of the exporters provided training for farmers, especially those with contractual arrangements, there is need for on-going programme of training and education for small farmers interested in embarking in the export arena.

b) Poor Farmer Loyalty. This manifests itself in farmers making firm commitments to supply a particular exporter with their crops. Upon reaping they make other deals at higher prices with other exporters, or higglers supplying domestic market. Some farmers contact exporters seeking a contract to supply produce, then used it to obtain credit and other facilities, after which they often do not fulfil the original orders.

c) Erratic Supplies. The number of farmers involved in production for the export market remains low. This compounded with the seasonal nature of production for some of the crops leads to continuing periods of short supply and high prices, followed by gluts that again cause shortages in a never-ending cycle. In the case of yams, one of the more popular non-traditional export crops, the price has moved from 70 cents per pound six months ago to J\$5.00 per pound presently. It is clear that at such rates, the price and sales performance of the product in the export market will be seriously affected much to the deriment of the local farmers, the exporters and the country. Jamaican pumpkins for example, though superior in quality are now landing in the US market at US\$20.00 as against US\$12.00 for the product from Costa Rica.

d) Transportation. This is a recurring problem that needs urgent attention. In many instances, produce is brought in pick-up vans, exposed to the ravages of the weather. All exporters cited the need for refrigerated trucks to collect perishables and suggested that assistance be provided for this purpose. This will not do away with the need for smaller vans to carry out this function, since there are certain crops and areas for which they are more suitable. With available transportation, the exporters feel they would be in a better position to provide vital extension and training services to the farmers contracted to produce for them. The transportation problems were also referred to by the farmers.

e) Operating Costs. These constraints are noticeable in many ways. Exporters have to pay farmers for their produce as collected or accepted. At the sametime, exporters have to wait anywhere between four to six weeks before being paid by the principals abroad. During this time, spoilages occur, rejections, etc all of which they have to absorb. The time lag leaves most exporters particular vulnerable as they have to carry vital operating costs at high commercial rates of interest. Costs for chilling rooms (for those using the facilities on Spanish Town Road) and electricity are regarded as burdensome on the sector. Exporters have to pay J\$350.00 per day for use of the chill rooms.

f) Security and Preclearance Procedures. These vital functions were for the most part trouble-free, except for minor complaints about the time taken to complete procedures and the shortage of personnel from time to time. The airport security checks for example, must be done at least four hours before a flight and often perishable goods already out of the refrigerated trucks, are left at the mercy of the weather. While supporting of the use of FDA agents to do pre-clearance, exporters felt regulations were at times too rigid and varying so that crops certified locally could end up being refused entry upon arrival in the United States. It was even suggested that some of the checking procedures could be done early in the morning example, 4 or 5 a.m. , when it is cooler. No chilling facilities exist at the airports which exporters can use until time for their cargo to be checked by security and loaded onto the plane.

g) Freight Costs. Availability of space on flights and freight charges force many exporters to move their produce out of the island to Miami and then use road transportation to get into their principal market, New York. Going this route its more cost effective. At the same time, there is no guarantee that the goods will get aboard a particular flight and often it is necessary return with them or another occasion.

h) Services at the Export Centre. These were highly regarded with the exception of minor aspects such as the ventilation system in the packing area, which can affect product quality. Among the other services offered are produce inspection, issuing of Ministry of Agriculture certificates, documentation, cold storage and preclearance.

i) Product Disposal in the Overseas Market. Many exporters use brokers. But there is the problem that they are handling hundreds of products from different countries and not likely to have interest in the welfare of or particular Jamaican exporter. Many of the local exporters have to perform this vital task themselves, necessitating constant travel and the attendant consequences on business management and local control. There is obvious need for an overseas agency to handle product exports of all these companies. This could be a small holding company but one which has the interest of the exporter and could in addition to handling clearance procedures. Could serve as the link between local exporting houses and retail outlets. Collections would be an important part of the function.

## Women

The overall unemployment/employment rates for women in Jamaica have not been positive, although trends show a slight increase in employment for women. According to the Labour Force Statistics (Statistical Institute of Jamaica) published October, 1983, the unemployment rate for women was 39.4% compared with men at 16.5%. Younger women (14 - 24 years) had a particularly high rate of 65.2%. This tendency has been found in agricultural activities, with few women owning or controlling land, participating in land preparation, planting or crop management.

This must be viewed against decades of urban migration by rural women - (Gordon 1980) the largest single source of recruitment for domestic and other work in urban areas. The dominance of women in the migration stream relates to the social mobility pattern for the last 20 - 30 years (Le Franc 1987) which shows women moving up through the ranks faster than men. On the farm, women in control or owning land are still confined to very small plots. The female small farmer seems to be older than her male counterpart, having been either left behind by the family, widowed or occupying "family land". Generally speaking, younger women are not in farming which is still very much a male-oriented activity.

There are two areas of agricultural activity however, in which women are dominant. They are: post-harvest preparation (sorting, grading, washing, packaging) and higglery. Higglery is an essential part of agricultural marketing, primarily for the domestic market but with some "spill-over" into export marketing. A detailed description of higglers and their various categories can be seen in Appendix C. For agricultural exports, the higgler affects the situation by: offering competitive prices, sometimes providing more regular collections than export traders, providing important links for inaccessible areas. Last but not least, country higglers are often members of farming families or have strong personal connections in rural areas. Their influence is much stronger than outside sources, their presence is continuous and permanent.

Post-harvest preparation of agricultural products for export has become a female dominated section. Sorting, grading, washing, packing - especially of non-traditional crops - are now done by women. A high percentage of women are also involved with the harvesting and processing of coffee. An increase of agricultural exports would therefore, stimulate an increase in the employment of women in the agricultural zones of Jamaica.

Problems related to women in agricultural exporting are:

- Traditional exclusion from decision - making roles in production
- Few "grassroots" co-operatives or agricultural groups aimed at assisting/including women
- Low salaries, even in the area of coffee harvesting and product preparation
- Dependence on urban areas for skills training or upward movement
- No involvement in established co-operatives, PMO's or commodity boards.

## PMO's, CO-OPS AND COMMODITY BOARDS

"One important consideration is the sustainability of project benefits. A World Bank study of this question found that of 25 completed agricultural projects it had financed, only 12 appeared to be achieving long-term net benefits. The projects most often demonstrating sustained improvements in productivity were those that developed or strengthened institutional capabilities for beneficiary participation in management."

"Promoting a Strategy of Assisted Self-Reliance"  
by Norman Uphoff, ECONOMIC IMPACT, USIS,  
Washington D.C., 2/1989.

The proposed Agricultural Export Services Project links back through priority crops to several types of loose networks that service the export sector. Their performance has been erratic and often inefficient, but their contact with the farming sector at the grassroots level is next to that of the district's church and school in many cases. The rural penetration and reach of these groups are far greater than any agency of Central Government, while their credibility among farmers is certainly more effective than the cynicism extended to Kingston-bound officials.

From the previous descriptions of Commodity Boards that relate to traditional crops, it is evident that some boards function better than others (e.g. coffee) due to the vital role they can play in a lucrative overseas market. The AIBGA, on the other hand, has had its peaks and troughs - related mainly to the downturn of the banana industry in the late 1970's. On the other hand, the Cocoa and Pimento Boards limp along, assisted by the JAS and Ministry of Agriculture, not motivated sufficiently to take an offensive posture in the marketplace. These two are almost entirely reliant on the output of small farmers, and therefore, must deal with the most ingrained problems of the production sector, while incorporating ineffective management through officers who are nominally involved with the export sector or elected due to community or family traditions.

Most of the commodity boards were established by the JAS in co-operation with the Ministry of Agriculture. Members of the boards are appointed by these two organisations, with the Minister of Agriculture as the final authority. The boards then set price, organise collections, selection of produce, transportation and sometimes post-harvest preparation. Extension services are offered by those that can afford it. Marketing and shipping are also the board's responsibilities.

The relationship of the farmers (of all kinds) to the boards are through the related co-ops (co-operatives) that have a large paying membership, although attendance at meetings and participation in decision-making sessions is extremely poor-except when there are problems or complaints. The membership of the co-ops is usually a haphazard situation with registered or paying members comprising an impressive list, but active members consisting of a small minority of the total. Meetings are therefore, taken up with contentious issues or problems that concern the farmers.

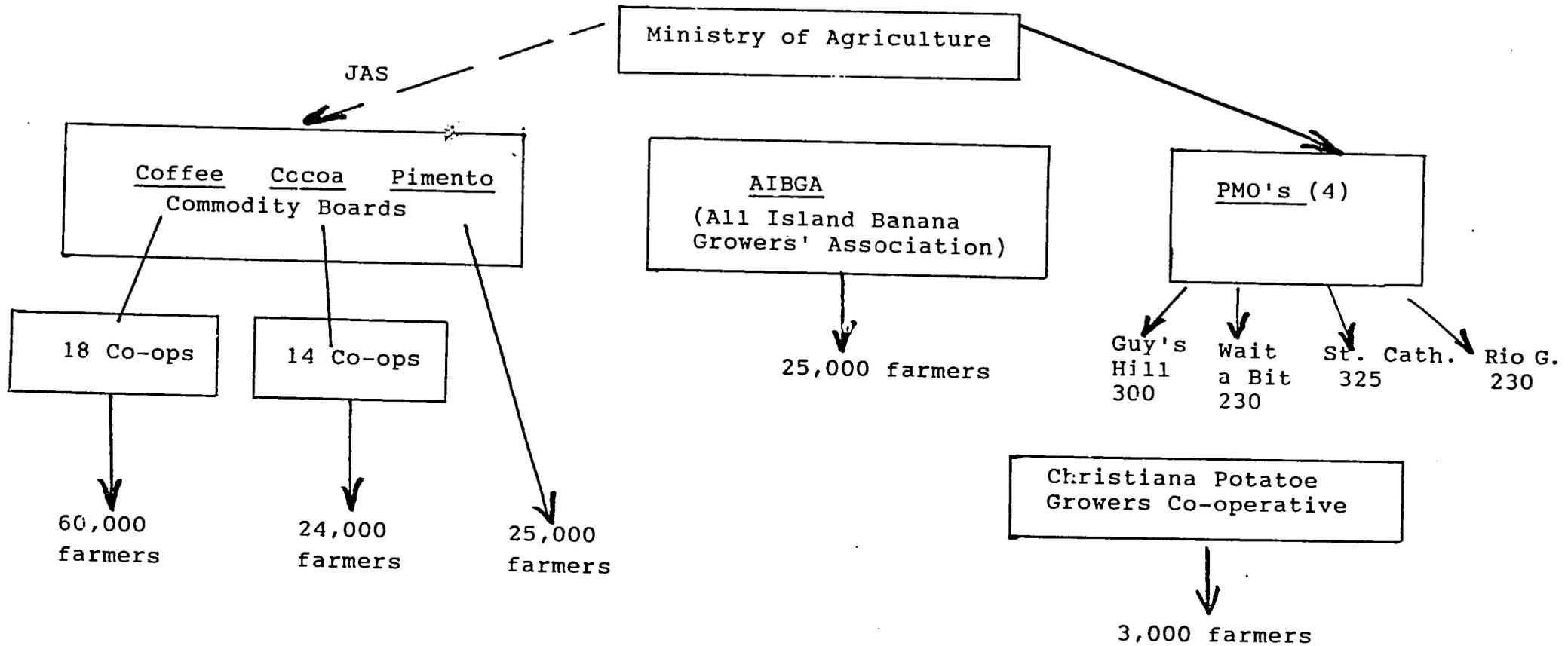
In 1985, USAID and Ministry of Agriculture initiated a project to establish 25 PMOs in Jamaica. Seven PMOs were actually initiated, and of those, the following four are still in operation:-

- St. Catherine Vegetable Producers
- Rio Grande
- Guys Hill
- Mason's River

These organisations (which were not to be called co-ops) were to be user-owned and democratically controlled, assuming responsibility for their own operations. They were aimed primarily at providing representational organisations for farmers in non-traditional crops such as; vegetables, fruits etc. The short life-span of the PMOs has reflected problems in their financial viability and ability to operate efficiently. A 1986 Report on the PMOs submitted to USAID by Consultant Roy Schaal indicates that there was "the need for member involvement in development of capital and member equity....."

The Christiana Potatoe Growers Co-operative and the All Island Banana Growers Association fall into the category of PMO, although these have been in existence for many years, are much more structured and effective. Despite problems in bananas and potatoe for small farmers, these two organisations have provided an effective national lobby in their subsectors.

DIRECT BENEFICIARIES OF PROPOSED USAID AGRICULTURAL EXPORT SERVICES PROJECT  
 (Farmers' Membership of PMO's, Commodity Boards and Co-ops)



Data Sources: Commodity Boards and  
 Ministry of Agriculture Marketing Division.

TOTAL = 138,085 farmers - 27,611  
 (20% cross over membership) =  
110,474 farmers

## GENERAL CONSTRAINTS TO AGRICULTURAL EXPORTING

As can be seen from the crop breakdown there are specific constraints according to commodity. These are mainly in the areas of production and harvesting. From the secondary data on traditional crops and firsthand interviews with farmers and exporters in non-traditional crops, general constraints and some solutions were identified. Lack of labour, water, transportation and fluctuating prices still haunt farmers generally. But other specific constraints have been categorised according to the stage in the export procedure i.e. production, post-harvesting, marketing, export procedures (local), overseas requirements, overseas markets.

### 1. Production

- Need for improved crop management and technology, including basic implements.
- Lack of information regarding exporting, export requirements for overseas markets and relevant economies of scale.
- Need for co-ordination of collections, pricing and quality control.
- In some crops, proper storage for improved quality and reduced praedial larceny.

### 2. Post-Harvesting

- Mode of collection. Whether commodity board or trading house, collecting products for export is a problematic stage across the board.
- Quality control. This is a source of contention for almost all groups, due largely to lack of communication about requirements. This includes selection of variety, handling, weighing, grading and, in some cases, packing.

### 3. Export Procedures

- These are more a problem for individual exporters than for large companies that have sufficient volume and regularity to satisfy officials. But ganja searches are still problematic for all exporters.

- Paperwork for several government departments makes export onerous and confusing for those interested in exporting. According to JAMPRO's Export Promotion Division, there are over seven stages of bureaucratic requirements necessary.
- Storage facilities for agricultural commodities waiting to be exported during this period are often not suitable and can cause deterioration of products.

#### 5. Overseas Requirements (Official)

- These do not appear to be clear nor are they transmitted properly to farmers, exporters and trading houses.
- The problem related to chemicals and chemical levels acceptable to the U.S. market is a bottleneck for many exports and potential exports.
- Responsibility for negotiating with or relating to U.S. Federal Agencies involved with agricultural imports does not seem clear on the Jamaican side.

#### 6. Marketing

- Knowledge of overseas markets their movements and futures are constraints for commodities with less sophisticated support systems (pimento, cocoa), and for individual exporters and trading houses dealing with high-risk, high-return crops - such as vegetables, fruits and ornamental horticulture.
- Promotion and representation in overseas markets are becoming expensive necessities that individual exporters cannot afford.
- Collecting from overseas wholesalers and retailers is erratic and risky for some exporters.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Small and Medium Farmers:

- Improve extension services through commodity boards, co-operative and PMOs.
- Disseminate information about agricultural export and especially market requirements through the most effective channels (face-to-face, community meetings).
- Upgrade technology by assisting farmers in specific crops (coffee, bananas, cocoa, yams) to utilise tested methods of production.
- Centralise transportation, marketing and storage facilities in non-traditional crops that have limited shelf life.

### Intermediaries:

- Encourage the formation of a committee of agricultural exporters and trading houses to deal with general problems, such as government procedures, overseas representation and access to credit.
- Establish an effective two-way marketing communication system to collect information in the field about harvesting, post-harvest preparation of crops, availability of products, collection schedules, farmgate and wholesale prices, overseas market requirements etc.
- Provide credit facilities at reasonable terms to individual exporters and trading houses that take the financial risks, including erratic collections overseas.
- Streamline government and pre-clearance procedures for agricultural exporters in order to facilitate paperwork and to decrease vulnerable "damage and decay" time to products.

### Investors/Weekend Farmers:

- Promote use of improved technology since this group will be most receptive and able to adopt new technologies.
- Encourage access to land and credit that will motivate new investors and keep others in agricultural exports.

- Assist this group to plant demonstration plots with several varieties, sizes and types of export crops - both for their own benefit and research, and to demonstrate to small farmers in their area how to get increased yields, required product and control chemicals.

Since this group often exports directly, they will also have similar problems to Intermediaries.

#### Commodity Boards, Co-ops and PMOs:

- Train suitable individuals already involved with above groups in basic management skills, such as accounting, reportkeeping, communication techniques, relevant management systems, to improve the operations of these groups.
- Assist them with extension services in specific technical areas according to crops, including: planting, harvesting, post-harvest preparations, disseminating market requirements, ensuring quality control.
- Purchase suitable vehicles for collection of product and to enhance extension services.
- Upgrade storage facilities at centralised collection points to maintain quality and reduce spoilage.

#### Women:

- Ensure the involvement of women in suitable projects through local organisations such as JAS, the co-ops, commodity boards and PMOs.
- Select women with leadership potential to be involved with training for extension services.
- Initiate public education/information campaigns about agricultural exports aimed at female workers in the post-production and processing stages of agricultural exports (e.g. about quality control, overseas consumers etc.).

APPENDIX A: RESULTS OF 1989 JAS SURVEY

## ANALYSIS OF FARMERS QUESTIONNAIRES

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One of the data sources used in compiling this study was the distribution of questionnaires to farmers attending the Annual Conference of the islandwide membership of Jamaica Agricultural Society, JAS, in Kingston, July 11-12, 1989.

A random selection of farmers were interviewed and a total of 67 questionnaires were completed, representing about 20 percent of those in attendance.

The main findings from analysis of the questionnaires are presented in the following tables.

TABLE 1 - METHOD OF DISPOSING OF CROPS

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Method	No. of Responses	Overall %
a) Middleman	9	12%
b) Higglers	29	38%
c) Direct to Retailer	2	2.5%
d) Wholesaler	7	9%
e) In the Market	28	37%
f) Cooperative	1	1.5%
		-----
		100%

NB: The number of responses exceed total questionnaires as several methods

of crop disposal were indicated in most instances.

*3/2*

TABLE 2: MAIN CROPS EXPORTED

CROP	No of Responses	Overall %
Coffee	9	23%
Cocoa	9	23%
Pimento	5	13%
Yams/dasheen	5	13%
sweet potato	4	10%
sugar cane	2	5% #
hot peppers		
pumpkins		
plantain		
onion		
citrus		
		13%
		100%

# SUGAR CANE was listed though not a non traditional export crop.

TABLE 3: MAIN PROBLEMS BEING EXPERIENCED BY THOSE EXPORTING

a) Transportation	-	26%
b) Bad Roads	-	17%
c) Uncertain Market	-	22%
d) Poor Water Supply	-	13% (irrigation problems)
e) Pricing	-	13%
f) High Labour Cost	-	4.5%
g) Climate	-	4.5%
		100%

TABLE 4: CROPS GENERALLY GROWN

Avocado	Papaya *
Cocoa *	Flowers *
Sugar cane	Oranges
Banana *	Pimento *
Pumpkin *	Hot peppers * *
Yam *	Thyme *
Corn *	Calaloo *
Peas *	Mangoes *
Coffee *	Cho-cho *
Sweet potato *	Cassava
Irish potatoes	Tomatoes
Pineapples	Cucumber *
Coconut	Peanuts
Turnip	Sorrel
Onion	Carrot

\* Among the principal non-traditional crops exported.

TABLE 5: AVERAGE ACREAGE CULTIVATED

Category	No of Respondents	Overall %
1 Acre or less	14	22%
2 - 5 Acres	32	51%
6 - 10 acres	9	14.2%
Over 10 acres	8	12.8%
		100%

NB: The largest holding mentioned was 25 acres while the smallest was 1/4 acre.

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TABLE 7: EXPORT INTEREST BY PARISH

PARISH	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	NOS EXPORTING	CROPS EXPORTING	NOS INT. IN EXPORTING
Trelawny	3	-	-	2 (67%)
St Andrew	8	2	coffee	4 (50%)
St Catherine	2	1	coffee cocoa sugar cane	- (0%)
Manchester	9	3	sweet potato yam cocoa	6 (67%)
St Thomas	10	5	cocoa coffee pimento	5 (50%)
St Ann	1	-	-	1 (100%)
Clarendon	12	4	citrus pimento cocoa sugarcane	5 (42%)
St Elizabeth	2	1	yams hot peppers pumpkins	- (0%)
Westmoreland	1	-	-	1 (100%)
St Mary	3	3	cocoa pimento plantain dasheen	-
St James	5	-	-	3 (60%)
Hanover	10	1	cocoa	8 (80%)
Lincoln Dist?	1	1	sweet potato cocoa/corn	

NB: PERCENTAGES RELATE ONLY TO THOSE INTERESTED IN GETTING INTO EXPORT

APPENDIX B:  
REPORT ON 17 YAM FARMERS IN MANCHESTER AND TRELAWNY

All these communities produce yams for export, with Craighead and South Trelawny producing exclusively for export. Yam is the main export crop. It is sold to agents who come in, place an order and collect in trucks. It is then transported to Kingston to be exported.

The average amount of land at the disposal of these farmers is 10.3 acres, the range being between 1/2 acre and 36 acres. The average amount of this land used for yam production is 1.8 acres. The highest acreage in yams by any one farmer is 4 acres. This farmer has 4 1/2 acres in other crops such as peas, bananas, irish potatoes, coffee and livestock. These are cash crops and liquid assets on which the farmer depends when yam is out of season. This is the pattern for all the farmers, the scale being dependent on the amount of land he farms. The above-mentioned farmer sells 70% of his yam crop to the exporters, his yield being an average of 8,000 lbs. per acre. This yield he considers to be low as in good years he gets up to 16,000 lbs per acre. This year's production for all farmers, is particularly low due to the devastating effects of hurricane Gilbert in September 1988.

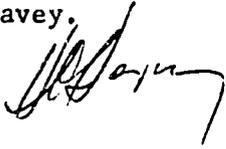
#### PROBLEMS AFFECTING PRODUCTIVITY:

Like anywhere else where farming is done, the weather is one of the major factors that affects productivity. This is evident by the fact that since the hurricane in September, some farmers have still not recovered. One farmer interviewed lost his entire field of negro yams, heads included, and will have to start all over again. He will also have to consider relocating his field since all his top soil was washed away.

Some farmers suffer from a lack of land space. Land has to be leased or rented at great distances from home, and sometimes in areas not accessible by any kind of vehicle, except donkeys and mules.

July 20 - 27, 1989.

Prepared by Paul Davey.



The following districts were visited: Malton, Robins Hall, Harry Watch, Good Intent, Norway, Craighead, Warsop, Christiana and Coleyville. They are located in Northwest and Northeast Manchester and in South Trelawny. Seventeen farmers were interviewed. Traditionally these areas are known for their production of yams, namely round leaf yellow yams, negro yams, and they have a reputation for producing the best yams in the country as far as shelf life and taste are concerned. For these communities, farming is the main source of livelihood.

Most of the communities mentioned have the traditional rural infrastructure. They seem to be adequately served by schools, churches, libraries. Domestic water supply is not a problem except in times of severe drought. Water is piped into the area but most farmers have their own water tanks. Except for two remote districts, electricity is also available.

The majority of the working people in these areas are self-employed, the main source of employment being farming. The average age of the farmers is forty four (44) with ages ranging from twenty four (24) to seventy nine (79) years. This relatively old age of farmers is due mainly to the younger people not wanting to become involved in farming as farming is not seen as a viable economic activity. There is a very high rate of migration to urban areas to seek greener pastures. A small minority of young people remain and some have managed to find jobs in Mandeville, Spauldings, Christiana and Albert Town. Some find jobs in the Bauxite industry and other industries outside the areas. Within the areas, there are no factories, no special projects and the migration to foreign countries like Cayman, Canada and the United States of America (the latter two by means of the Farm Work Programme) is also significant.



The overwhelming deterrent to production however is lack of financing. Big farmers and small farmers alike express the desire to produce more but need money to be able to: (a) purchase fertiliser; (b) acquire more and better land; (c) to hire labourers; and (d) to purchase yam sticks.

It is one farmer's opinion that his land is suffering from over-fertilisation. He has had to use the same plot of land repeatedly, because of lack of land room to rotate his crop and this one plot of land has now become too acidic.

In all the areas visited, there are no lending agencies like P C banks. There are no other government agencies either so that farmers are on their own.

#### PROBLEMS RELATED TO EXPORT:

The farmers seem happy enough to have the export outlet for their crops. It is a sure and dependable market and they have come to rely on it. They nevertheless voiced certain short-comings to the operations:

- Unstable prices:

Buyers significantly drop prices without prior warning, usually at collection day when yam is already prepared.

- Too much over-weight:

Buyers want farmers to give as much as 25 lbs on each hundred pounds of yams sold.

- High rejection rate:

(a) An average of 30% of yams prepared for exporters is rejected by buyers, often for no valid reasons. (Farmers complain that these same rejected yams are begged for by buyers and helpers on the truck and then sold in the markets in Kingston).

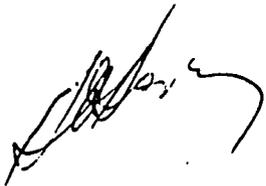
(b) Rejects are bought by higglers at half the price that is offered by the exporters.

(c) Rejected yams are not true rejects but are not accepted by buyers in order to facilitate the operations mentioned in 3(a) above.

OTHER:

The following problems could also be considered as hindrances to productivity. There is a lack of education about new developments in agriculture. The land used for yam production in most of the areas visited is hillside and consequently steeply sloping lands. This makes it difficult for farmers to maintain their top soil. They could therefore benefit from more information about terracing.

This type of terrain makes it difficult for irrigation systems to be put into place. Farmers could benefit from knowing about the mini-sett programme which would reduce dependence on regular rainfall. They could benefit from knowing that it is not necessarily an expensive venture as various covering media can be used. There was only one farmer in the area who is actually involved in this experimentation at the moment and he is pleased at the progress of the experiment.



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APPENDIX C:

DETAILS OF HIGGLERING IN JAMAICA  
(EXCERPT FROM "ECONOMIC ROLES OF WOMEN IN THE CARIBBEAN,  
WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO HIGGLER WOMEN, JAMAICA"  
PREPARED FOR UNESCO BY GLORIA KNIGHT AND ALICIA TAYLOR,  
UDC, NOVEMBER, 1984)

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vegetables, as well as the items mentioned above. Towards the end of the 18th Century, poultry, cattle and small stock were added to the list of products. All these items were sold at the slave-dominated Sunday markets, and this is where the practice of higglering began (the Jamaican word for hawking and peddling). In the early days, higglering was practised by both men and women. By the time Edith Clarke wrote "My Mother Who Fathered Me" in 1957, it had become mainly a women's precinct. She noted that the women higglers spread their trays of fruits and vegetables for sale on the pavement outside the grocery stores. Nevertheless, some men continued to be involved, and are still involved in this type of trading. Margaret Fisher Katzin (Social & Economic Studies Vol. No. 4, December 1959) confirms that as this practice grew, the products entered into "all three levels of the distribution system - subsistence, internal exchange and export". She also noted that it was "customary for a woman of the household to take the goods produced for local sale to market and sell it". Thus, the contact between the rural small farmers, many of them in relatively inaccessible areas originally occupied by freed slaves, and the urban people is the country higgler, who collects not only her own produce but buys other produce from surrounding farms and then sells in the market wholesale and/or retail. Thus, higglering still plays a very important part in the economic system, in spite of attempts by Government at large scale marketing by the Agricultural Marketing Corporation.

At this time, a typology of higglers would be as follows:-

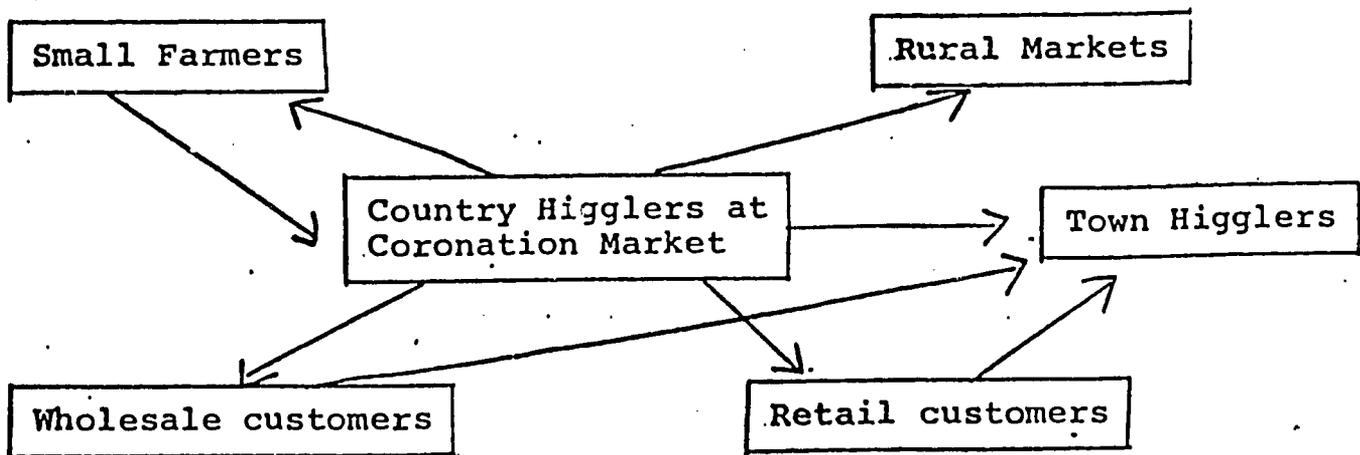
1. country higglers
2. the city higglers
3. haberdashery higglers
4. itinerant vendors
5. informal commercial importers
6. the craft vendors

42'

The country higgler collects foodstuff from her area as described by Katzin. Without the country higgler who use the markets and their environs in West Kingston, a high proportion of the population of the City of Kingston would starve. The main focus of this trade is the Coronation Market in West Kingston. In Trinidad, the Indians have taken over the higgling of fruits and vegetables which are generally grown by themselves. In this case, men predominate. In Barbados, both men and women are higgler but there, as in Jamaica, women predominate.

The country higgler are dependent on two sources. Firstly, they do not control transportation which is a key requirement. Secondly, they cannot tell the small farmers what to plant. Thus, sometimes there is a glut in one product and scarcity in another. Therefore, to protect themselves, they try to get a wide variety of fruits and vegetables, and this fits in with the small farmer who tends to grow a little bit of everything. These higgler are a link between relatively inaccessible rural areas and the market place. Indeed, they are at the centre of a network of persons through whom they provide 80% of the foodstuff grown in the island, which is then sold not only in Kingston but also in rural areas. Figure 1 below indicates their role.

Figure 1: Network for sale of Foodstuff in Jamaica



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When questioned, the country higgler emphasize the fact of economic independence as being important to them in their choice of occupation. These higgler are very much like those seen in West Africa and particularly Ghana and Nigeria from which so many slaves came to the West Indies. In Jamaica, they pay good prices at the farm gate and will, if necessary, after agreeing a price with the farmer, reap the crop themselves, thus substituting labour for capital. In this way, they sometimes profiteer on the small farmer, because the prices from the farm gate and those at the Coronation Market show a considerable difference. Thus, to emphasize the essential links between town and country, the country higgler:-

1. takes supply and distribution chains into remote areas
2. is dependent on but also can help or hinder the small farmer
3. in setting up a reciprocal credit arrangement, she makes it possible for the rural farmers, especially in remote areas, to participate in the cash economy
4. helps the process of integration between rural and urban areas
5. is an important communication link between rural and urban areas not only in selling foodstuff, but also in carrying messages and packages to family and friends of people in the rural areas and vice versa
6. is at the core of employment creation for drivers, cartmen, market staff, etc.

The City Higgler generally lives in Kingston, the primate city of Jamaica, and goes to Coronation Market early on Thursday, Friday, and sometimes Saturday to buy wholesale or retail foodstuff from the country higgler, which she sells at a price which allows a fair, indeed sometimes unfair, margin of profit. She may be an all-week higgler at the Coronation Market or she may be a week-end higgler at the smaller neighbourhood markets. She usually deals with the same country higgler each week, thus cementing the network pattern. Indeed, Katzin notes that often she pays the country higgler on Saturdays after she has made some sales. Thus, there is an element of trust between the city and country higgler, and between the country higgler and the small farmers.

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