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INVITATION TO PUBLIC LECTURE AND SYMPOSIUM ON FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY - FACULTY OF FOOD AND AGRICU (UWI)

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Rondell Liverpool

Invitation to Public Lecture and Symposium on Food and Nutrition Security – Faculty of Food and Agriculture (UWI)

Thu May 03, 2018 2:53 pm

INVITATION

The Faculty of Food and Agriculture, The University of the West Indies, invites all CAS members to attend their upcoming Public Lecture and Symposium on Nutrition Security carded for May 9th and May 10th 2018, respectively. Feature Speaker on both events will be Prof. Michael Clegg, former Co-Chair of IANAS (InterAmerican Network of Academies of Sciences).

Also, the recently published book "Challenges and Opportunities for Food and Nutrition Security in The Americas" in which there is a Caribbean chapter authored by members of CAS, will be launched during the Public Lecture.

Outline of events

- The Public Lecture takes place in FFA Lecture Room B at 5.00 pm on May 9th
- The Symposium takes place in the University Inn on May 10th with registration starting at 7.30 am and official opening at 8.30 am.

See below some background information.

Background. The current economic recession in Trinidad and Tobago is creating significant challenges in the country's agricultural and food sectors. Among the most pressing issues that hinder the sectors are: (1) poor food safety standards, (2) lack of institutional coordination across sectors, (3) insufficient human capital investment, (4) low levels of competitiveness and innovation and (5) poor agricultural practices. All these factors result in an overall low level of food nutrition security (FNS).

While food, in terms of calories, is generally in abundant supply for the majority of households, most of what we eat is imported. Furthermore, based on available evidence, the share of imported food on the average plate has been increasing over time. This over-reliance on foreign sources of food weakens our food security and also presents a national security challenge, as well as a burden on foreign exchange availability. In addition, changing consumer tastes and preferences, lifestyle choices and high incidence of overweight and obesity (relative to global averages) has led to extremely high levels of chronic non-communicable diseases (CNCDs). This worsening food and nutrition status will no doubt be detrimental to our development in the long term.

The **Public Lecture** is a unique occasion for key success stories of how countries in the Americas overcame challenges to improve their food and nutrition security levels. It is also intended to highlight lessons that Trinidad and Tobago can learn, based on these shared experiences. The Public Lecture will also bring together stakeholders from the health, education, trade, environment and agricultural sectors to share in their own best practices, observations of global, regional and local trends and identify ways to coordinate activities in strategic areas.

The **Symposium** will be an all-day event to continue the discussion from the Public Lecture but will focus on having deep engagement with the key stakeholders from the various sectors on priority action areas that are needed by Trinidad and Tobago in the short, medium and long term, to improve our food and nutrition security in an environment of local economic recession and increasing globalization. This discussion will be based around panel discussions of the key themes that have been identified (preliminarily) as key action areas.

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