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DOMINICA ORGANIC AGRICULTURE MOVEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF ORGANIC PRODUCTION IN DOMINICA

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CONTENTS

Executive Summary	1
Section I: Situation Analysis	4
Brief History	4
Government Involvement	4
Agriculture Sector.....	5
Retail and Processing Sectors.....	7
Other Agriculture and Business Initiatives	9
Section II: Dominica Organic Agriculture Movement (DOAM): Analysis and Recommendations	
Proposed Tasks for DOAM Coordinator.....	11
Components of DOAM Communication Plan.....	12
Components of DOAM Advocacy Plan.....	12
Buy Organic, Locally Grown Campaign.....	13
DOAM Services and Product Sales.....	13
Section III: DOAM Organic Standards: Analysis and Recommendations	14
General Approach	14
Review of Sections.....	14
Section IV: DOAM Certification Program: Analysis and Recommendation.....	18
General Overview.....	18
Dominica Registration Program.....	19
Other Approaches to Certification.....	20
Section V: Organic Market Opportunities: Analysis and Recommendations	21
Local and Caribbean Markets.....	21
Export Market Opportunities.....	22
Annexes	
Annex A: List of Contacts	26
Annex B: List of Influencers.....	27
Annex C: List of Reference Documents.....	28
Annex D: Recommended Resources.....	29

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An article that was published in 2004 about organic production in Dominica concluded with an assessment of the problems facing organic farmers included general skepticism regarding the possibilities of success, difficulties obtaining inputs and issues of certification, policy and regulation. Access to markets was noted as the greatest deterrent for farmers to engage in organic production. Since that time a number of steps have been taken to address these problems. The UNEP/GCOD report of February 2005, Transforming Dominica into an Organic Island provides a thorough analysis of why organic production is appropriate and essential for Dominica's environmental and economic goals. The National Organic Agriculture Enhancement Project report drafted in June 2007 provides a complete outline and includes budget projections for the Dominica Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and the Environment to implement a sustainable organic agriculture sector in Dominica. The creation of an Organic Desk in the Division of Agriculture and the official launch of the Dominica Organic Agriculture Movement (DOAM) organization are signs of progress towards these goals. Progress, though, must continue to implement the National Organic Agriculture Enhancement Project as well as build market opportunities for organic products.

The success in Dominica hinges on public and private participation in developing and expanding organic production. Relying on market forces and the private sector alone will not work. Not only because of the limitations in terms of the size of Dominica, scale of production and access to transportation but also because organic production is not just a market opportunity, it is a method to protect, restore and enhance the environment which requires government participation and commitment. The United States (US) and the European Union (EU) lead the world in organic production and organic market share as a result of over 30 years of public and private initiatives and investments. Active involvement of the farmers, businesses, citizens and government towards a common goal for organic will make a difference in Dominica.

Dominica is poised to move forward as the DOAM organic production standards near completion and move through the process for public review and approval by the Bureau of Standards. National legislation that includes organic as a good agricultural practice is being considered and may be the precursor to mandatory national organic standards and certification. The Division of Agriculture is receptive to increasing their involvement by providing information and advice to farmers on organic production methods as good agricultural practices regardless if the farms fully convert to organic. Other services such as regional compost operations or cooperative composting near farm areas with multiple individual farm plots and restoration of traditional animal breeds help support expansion of organic production and the Division of Agriculture should be encouraged to expand their work in these areas.

DOAM is the hub of the public/private partnership and needs continued support to build their capacity to promote organic production and standards. Bringing together Dominica's organic activities, initiatives and opportunities is the core role for DOAM. At the present time DOAM operates as a volunteer organization and therefore there will

be only incremental gains towards their goals. A volunteer coordinator, empowered by the members, must be identified or step forward to manage a business, communication and advocacy plan. As funds are available the position should transition from volunteer to paid staff which will accelerate the development of organic agricultural production. But regardless of the pace, there are viable activities that will sustain forward movement. This report proposes components of a communication and advocacy plan for DOAM including a Buy Organic, Locally Grown campaign that will promote awareness and educate the public and media about organic agriculture and its benefits. Recommendations are made to develop a diverse base of funding for DOAM including government funds, foundation or non-governmental organization grants, business initiatives such as organic farm supply sales, fees for membership, organic certification or registration.

Based on an analysis of the current capacity and the resources required to establish an organic certification program, it is recommended that a simple registration program be initially implemented that includes DOAM and the Division of Agriculture. By having a registration program Dominica would be serving organic farmers and processors in several ways – reducing costs to organic entry, encouraging the adoption of organic practices, building capacity in DOAM and within the government, preparing producers and processors for organic certification requirements and eliminating the need for two (or more) certifications for export products. Ideally the Bureau of Standards would take up the certification and inspection for organic when mandatory national organic legislation was in place. Group certification and a regional organic certification and inspection program are presented as alternatives to a Dominica certification program.

Revisions to the DOAM standards are proposed based on the approach that the organic standards should reflect the unique situation of Dominican producers and consumers, and be oriented towards stimulating both organic production and marketing. Dominica's standards should be established for internal markets, but compatible with both US and EU so that producers and handlers who might be interested in export markets should be able to obtain the applicable certifications. The standards should first of all serve an educational function, and therefore are proposed as relatively simple and readily understood. The proposed standards do not attempt to encompass all possible sectors of organic production and processing, especially those that are minimally developed for non-organic agriculture on the island. The livestock standards are intended to be attainable by small producers who sell to local markets only.

Local market opportunities exist for Dominica since much of the fresh fruits and vegetables purchased by the local population and by retail stores, hotels, restaurants and resorts is locally grown and with no strident opposition to purchasing organically grown at a reasonable price, there is a ready market, especially for the eco-tourists that come to Dominica because it is the Nature Island. For fresh organic produce the neighboring Caribbean islands, especially those with Green Globe certified hotels or eco-tourist resorts, are a prime opportunity for Dominica. Competition and lack of infrastructure limit other export markets for fresh organic fruits and vegetables. But processed organic

products may be able to find access to US and EU, as well as other neighboring islands markets.

The consumers that drive trends are shifting their attitude from an interest in anything organic to craft, artisan or unique products that are also organically produced. This is the niche for processed or preserved organic products from Dominica. Organic medicinal or herbal teas, dried fruit specialty products (fruit leathers and roll-ups), rum, ornamental flowers, and cocoa are recommended for further exploration and development.

Partnerships with entrepreneurs, US or EU companies and other development initiatives, such as COTS Business Support Component and the New Orleans: Dominica/OECS Trade Initiative must be pursued in order to break down technical, financial and market barriers.

There is success to be found for Dominica in organic production, however it requires enthusiasm and persistence and willingness to move beyond the comfort zone.

SECTION I: SITUATION ANALYSIS

Brief History

In an article published in 2004 by the *Ecology and Farming* magazine of the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) the history of organic farming in Dominica is traced back to Andrew Royer on Anronat Farm over 40 years ago. The ESPWA, a Dominica non-governmental organization, was active from 1998 until 2005 and helped launch a number of initiatives to advance knowledge of organic production including a compost project, production of pesticide-producing plants, organic seeds of acclimatized crop varieties and a video about Andrew Royer. Other initiatives were the Youth Employment Services (YES) Corps training program in organic agriculture and the Bellevue Chopin Organic Farmers Movement. At the time that this article was written there was the expectation that with support from the Minister of Agriculture an Organic Centre would be established. The Organic Centre would cater to farmers' needs for seed and plants, and provide a library, internet access, computer skills training, a farmer to farmer school, resource centre, and demonstrations and trials.

The article concluded with an assessment of the problems facing organic farmers in Dominica including general skepticism regarding the possibilities of success, difficulties obtaining inputs and issues of certification, policy and regulation. Access to markets was noted as the greatest deterrent for farmers to engage in organic production. Since that time, a number of studies have been done that outline the way forward, the government of Dominica has publicly announced a vision for Dominica to be an Organic Island by 2015, and a non-government organization, the Dominica Organic Agriculture Movement (DOAM) has officially been launched.

Government Involvement

There is an "Organic Desk" in the Dominica Division of Agriculture under the Ministry of Agriculture. Al-Mario Casimir is the staff person for the Organic Desk and has solely or as part of a team written documents 1, 4, and 5 in Appendix C. The National Organic Agriculture Enhancement Project draft is an excellent document and plan. Every effort should be made to garner political and financial support to implement this plan.

The Director of the Division of Agriculture (Mr. Oliver Grell) is very supportive of expanding organic production in Dominica and assigned 4 other staff in the Division to informally support the Organic Desk. Mr. Grell noted that there is a draft piece of legislation about organic production and labeling but this may be a reference to the national standard for good agricultural practices that was brought forward by the Bureau of Standards. DOAM should stay informed about this legislation and become involved in its drafting and passage. It would be helpful also if the COTS office followed the progress of this legislation. Mr. Grell suggested that the field staff/agents could provide guidance to farmers on organic production. He sees their role as providing information and training rather than inspection.

The Bureau of Standards Director (Steve John, PhD) is also very supportive of the development of organic standards for Dominica and the adoption of organic practices.

There is a protocol for submitting voluntary standards which he has promised to supply. DOAM must follow up and obtain a copy of the protocol and when the DOAM organic standards are complete, DOAM must begin the process of implementing the public process for approval. Dr. John is willing to take the standards up the chain to get recognition of a private-sector organic standard. Although the Bureau is responsible for certification and inspection of mandatory national standards, his position is that DOAM should do certification until that time. The Bureau is involved with the compulsory standard for good agriculture practices based on organic principles that is being drafted. The outgoing Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and the Environment Colin McIntyre made note of these good agricultural practices and support for organic production. This standard will help transition agricultural practices to organic and “pave the way” for a mandatory national organic standard.

Both Mr. Grell and Dr. John openly expressed their opinion that DOAM advocate for the government to stand behind their statements about organic and allocate resources to make organic a priority. Although Colin McIntyre’s ministerial position has changed he can remain a good ally for DOAM as he expressed both understanding and support for organic agriculture as the future for Dominica. In his new position as Minister of Trade, Industry, Consumer Affairs, Private Sector Relations, CARICOM, OECS and Diaspora Affairs there are many policy areas under his oversight that could assist in advancing trade in organic products, consumer protection through truthful labeling of organic products, and regional collaboration on organic production, trade and certification

Al-Mario Casimir and Keian Stephenson (Division of Agriculture, Team Leader Central Region) plus two others have taken Independent Organic Inspectors Association (IOIA) Inspector Training. They are also in contact with Jamaica Organic Agriculture Movement (JOAM) and knowledgeable about organic activity and policies in the other Caribbean Islands. They are planning on training other Division of Agriculture extension agent on organic production. The Division of Agriculture can provide great service to farmers by providing information and advice on organic production methods as good agricultural practices regardless if the farms fully convert to organic.

DOAM was officially launched last year in a public ceremony and press coverage. They have 50 members including farmers, agricultural businesses, and individuals. This official launch is considered by government as a step forward in implementing their Organic Island Initiative. The organization is all volunteer-based although Al-Mario Casimir and Keian Stephenson are both on the executive committee and their time working on DOAM activities is accepted as part of their Division of Agriculture responsibilities. DOAM grew from the EPSWA activities and to fill in the gap left when EPSWA left Dominica.

Agriculture Sector

The farmers in DOAM are not the only farmers on the island using organic practices. There are currently no certified organic farms. There had been a five acre farm of bananas certified organic by the Soil Association in the recent past. The absence of a certified handling facility was the barrier to shipping the organic bananas to Sainsbury’s in the UK therefore there was no incentive to continue certification. The farmers are

fairly knowledgeable about organic production and are honest about what they are or are not doing that complies with organic practices. Any misconceptions about organic production are based on “stricter” perceptions of organic requirements. For instance, there is the assumption that no pesticides, even garlic and hot pepper preparation, would be allowed. And, there is a great concern about drift and contamination from other farms plots although there are only a few areas where organic and non-organic farm plots are in close proximity. Another concern is the lack of organic seed availability, in particular non-GMO seed although there is no production of canola, soy or field corn. There is some awareness of the use of compost, crop rotation, cover crop and green manure for soil building. There is use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides both in larger commercial banana operations as well as on other farms. Hurricane Dean Recovery plans included distribution of chemical fertilizers to get banana production restored. On the island is a Fair Trade banana project that is not organic and does not have plans to phase out chemical use. Price of fair trade bananas is comparable to price for organic bananas so there is little incentive to convert to organic. [It seems that they have been phasing out chemicals even if they never got to 0%](#)

Al-Mario has been involved with two compost projects on the island, one at an agriculture field research site and the other at the Fair Trade banana project. Both operations are small in scale although the Fair Trade site was designed for a large scale operation but is currently under utilized. The Fair Trade site was built with a grant (equivalent of about \$30,000 US) but was not completed – the bins were not built. Both sites have a concrete floor, open sides all around, very high ceiling, timber-frame construction and no bins constructed. The compost piles are piles on the floor, turned by hand, and the liquid from the piles is collected at the research site but not the Fair Trade site. Some farms also have compost piles near their fields although there are farms that do not want to spend time making compost. The Fair Trade compost project is selling their compost but there is little demand because of the cost to nutrient value ratio perceived by many farmers. The compost sells for half the price of a chemical fertilizer mix but is not labeled with NPK analysis and is seen as less effective. Also there is little distinction made by the farmers between compost and bagged manure which is also sold [at a much reduce cost](#). The island has an endless source of bio-mass but somewhat limited sources of manure because there are few commercial animal operations. Being an island there are resources that might be harvested from fishing wastes or seaweed. Regional compost operations or cooperative composting near farm areas with multiple individual farm plots would help support expansion of organic production.

Dominica does not have a prominent beef or dairy sector because it is not part of the food culture. Goats, chickens, pigs and rabbits are raised for meat production because they are more suited to the island topography. [There are some small herds of beef or dairy cows but mostly individuals or farms have one cow that is tethered by the side of the road. they feel there is no ned to be so specific hihihi](#) Converting animal production on Dominica to US or even EU organic standards will be difficult. Animals are generally confined for several reasons: traditional practice, protection of crops, minimizing loss from “wandering” or theft, and lack of space. There are few predators, except humans [and dogs](#), on the island. Livestock feed is imported from Granada, Trinidad, and Barbados.

Dominica has limited capacity to grow feedstock except legumes. [It seems that the truth of the matter is that there are crops developed but never commercially](#) Animals are fed fruits and vegetable waste/byproducts from the farm. The farmers want fast growth and don't see pasture-fed production as viable. The traditional breeds that would respond better to pasture and by-product/waste product from fruit and vegetable production are disappearing but there should be efforts made to maintain and restore traditional breeds.

The soil varies from clay to volcanic and from rocky to deep deposits of soil. Potassium levels in the soil were identified as a problem but there is a unique solution developed to overcome this problem. Wood vinegar which is liquid product from the condensation of water and smoke from wood burning is collected and used as a soil amendment. There's plenty of clean and basically unpolluted water because it's a tropical rainforest and has 365 rivers. The parrots and tropical birds are pests for fruit production. No one spoke of wild animal problems [but they do exist](#). There are pests and disease, particularly on bananas which are the most extensive commercial production on the island. The pest damage observed on vegetable production was aphids and leaf borers. Weed control is a big problem because of how quickly every thing grows and only hand weeding and small hand tools work on these small farm plots. Whatever land is used for production is intensive – land holdings are small, usually less than 5 acres and generally surrounded by native vegetation or rainforest. Some farmers were using black plastic for weed control and to maximize plantings on their plots. Farm laborers, if used, come from Haiti [they feel this is nto accurate that Dominicans work on farms](#) The number of farmers in Dominica is decreasing and few young people are farming or working on farms.

Retail and Processing Sectors

There are three main grocery stores on the island – Brizee's Mart, Astaphan and Whitchurch. There are people selling fresh product on the street of Roseau, the capital city and every Tuesday and Saturday (begins on Friday night) there is a farmer's market. The market has many vendors all with the same products but most sell every thing they bring to the market because this is where people go for their fresh produce and also everyone eats/likes the produce that is available: Cabbage, lettuce, peppers, cucumbers, herbs, plantains, bananas, mangos, papayas, pineapple, coconut, watermelon, oranges, tangerines, breadfruit, guava, avocado, pumpkin, squash, carrots, celery, beans, and tomatoes. Also, Lemongrass, bay, cinnamon and vanilla grow under cultivation or are wild harvested. Consumers, like everywhere, are price sensitive but in Dominica have ready access to low-priced local produce and food products. There is a culture of concern about how food is grown though and that could be cultivated to support organic products, especially the commercial customers (businesses) who service tourists as well as those who live in Dominica.

There is a small agro-processing industry on the island. The major locally produced and processed products are: dried fruit, hot pepper sauces, jelly, cocoa, juices, coffee, herbal teas, noni and sea moss (agar) energy drinks, soaps, bay lime (used for cologne, perfumes and as an antiseptic), beer and rum. Dominica is the world's largest exporter of bay leaves used in the perfume industry. Coffee, cocoa and pineapple production is limited. There is only one organic producer in the Dominica Pineapple Association. Cocoa production has been semi-abandoned for the past 15 years but there is an initiative to

bring it back but using conventional farming practices. Dominica supplies the other islands with coconuts. There is a long tradition of medicinal herbal preparations made for home use for humans and animals. There are only a few shipping companies and custom brokers. The Dominica Export Import Agency (DEXIA) is a public/private agency that handles most fresh shipments and some finished food products. Their facilities are ISO 9000 certified and have HAACP plans. DEXIA had little knowledge about organic requirements but expressed interest in certification if there were demand from exporters.

The following agro-processors were interviewed:

PW Bellot & Co., Ltd produces the most diverse number of products and they have been in operation since 1938 although under different ownership since 1987. The majority of the ingredients used in their products are from the island. The company does private label and special formulations for customers in addition to their brand name, Bello, products. About 60% of their products are exported today which represents a 25% reduction since 2001. They are a HAACP certified facility and Mr. Peter Dominique, the Managing Director, was somewhat knowledgeable about the requirements for organic certification. There have been customer requests for organic products. In the past there was a project, funded by Taiwan that explored fruit drying as a new product line. The project was not implemented because of the need to invest in new equipment. If market opportunities were identified and sufficient organic ingredients available on the island, the company would likely introduce organic products. The company makes a product called guava treat (or cheese.) This is a dried fruit product that would be unique to US or European markets.

Dominica Essential Oils & Spices Cooperative has been organized since 1968 and currently has 560 member producers. Dominica is the world's largest supplier of bay rum and the cooperative is the island largest producer. There have been customer requests for organic versions of their product. Both the production and processing are simple and could easily comply with organic requirements. Because they are a cooperative and the crop is the same for all the member producers, it is possible that they could be certified as a group rather than individual producers. The cooperative already has systems in place for managing and tracking production and output so it would be relatively easy to add organic requirements to their systems. The cooperative is a supporter of DOAM.

The Coal Pot and Natural Botanicals both produce soaps and are interested in the possibility of offering organic products. Sharon [Jones Young](#) of Natural Botanicals was a founder of DOAM and has attended organic inspector trainings. The Coal Pot is exploring the feasibility of fruit drying and they have begun to produce on a limited scale. Suzie LeBlanc plans on visiting their production site to view the drying operation.

Organic personal care products including soap are not regulated yet by any governments but there are private sector standards. This is a very fast growing sector of the organic market but quickly being occupied by large cosmetic and personal care companies such as Estee Lauder. Of course, organic ingredients for use by these major companies are an opportunity. And there is a strong consumer segment interested in artisan products also.

Shillingford Estates produces rum from sugar cane that is grown, fermented and processed on the estate. According to Mr. Yves Joseph, manager, this is the only agricultural rum produced on the island because they do not bring in commercial alcohol to add to the sugar cane. Mr. Joseph is an agronomist and was quite knowledgeable about organic production. Except for the use of Round-up™ for weed control the production appears to comply with organic standards. The processing is simple and small scale so would be relatively easy to ensure that it also complies with organic requirements. Organic rum is a very small segment of the organic market but that allows entry for an operation like Shillingford Estates.

Other Agricultural and Business Initiatives

There are other initiatives for Dominica under consideration that provide opportunities to expand organic production and are opportunities for market success:

COTS Business Support Component

This division focuses on building business opportunities and infrastructure. They may be interested in an organic project for the Carib Territory (native population.) Two possibilities to consider:

1. A brand of medicinal teas. Ed Fletcher of Strategic Sourcing, Inc. from North Carolina has been contracted for this initiative. Ed is knowledgeable about organic production and the organic market for herbal and medicinal teas. This is an excellent opportunity for a successful organic product from Dominica.
2. Dried organic tropical fruit. There is a consistent demand in the North American market for good quality dried tropical fruit, mainly organic pineapple rings and mango slabs (filets.) The key word here is quality. Both the variety and size drives market demand and price as well as good fruit dehydration processing. There are many competitors though. Sri Lanka provides low-priced organic dried tropical fruit, Mexico is the chief supplier to the US and also Peru although both countries have problems delivering consistent quality and quantity. India has the largest volume and also major investment in increasing production and processing capability. There is an option for Dominica to break into this sector – organic tropical dried fruit, in particular guava, roll-ups and fruit leathers. (See Section V)

The New Orleans: Dominica/OECS Trade Initiative

A task force that is working on the recovery of New Orleans from Hurricane Katrina has approached The Development Institute Ltd. which is working on restoration and recovery plans following the passage of Hurricane Dean in the Caribbean. The New Orleans: Dominica Initiative has been proposed in August 2007. Among the main features of the Initiative are:

1. Dominica would identify a range of goods and services that would be traded with the City of New Orleans
2. The emphasis would be on agricultural goods that are naturally grown and/or processed
3. The expectation is that certified organic products would be produced and traded in the future

4. Two critical conceptual pillars of this trade initiative would be the “wellness and Creole” links between Dominica and New Orleans that would make use of the over herbal and medicinal products that have been developed over the years in Dominica.

A local group that includes DOAM, DBPL, EDU and DEXIA has been assembled to discuss and participate in the Initiative. There are obvious reasons for DOAM and COTS to be involved in this Initiative and to participate actively. If trading contacts with buyers and suppliers in New Orleans and throughout the U.S. is facilitated by the New Orleans side of this Initiative, a major barrier to market entry is overcome. Dominica Banana Producers League (DBPL) was interested in the prospects of the organic banana market but indicated that they would need technical assistance to meet organic production and handling requirements and financial assistance for certification costs. The Carib medicinal tea project might fit well in this Initiative as well as the interest expressed by the agro-processors presented previously (P.W. Bellot & Co, Ltd, Dominica Essential Oils & Spices Cooperative, The Coal Pot, Natural Botanicals, and Shillingford Estates.) Atherton Martin of The Development Institute is the organizer of this Initiative.

Eco-Tourism

The National Tourism Policy Report states: “Dominica will re-position its tourism sector to expand market positioning from a nature destination to one that encompasses adventure and cultural tourism.” And also includes: “Dominica is far more advanced than most destinations in pursuing environmental protection through its significant national parks and protected areas program and the Green Globe designation. This progress needs to be matched by environmental practices of private sector operators.”

Two eco-tourism operators, Jem Winston of 3 Rivers Resort and Sam Raphael of Jungle Bay Resort & Spa, were interviewed. Both acknowledged that the direction expressed by the National Tourism Policy Report is a correct assessment of how to position Dominica to attract a larger tourist trade. For 3 Rivers it is the adventure and camping experience and for Jungle Bay it is the luxury and spa experience that attract visitors to their operations. The Green Globe 21 Destination Program that had been funded by USAID in the past has not been continued by many of the resorts and hotels since the project funding has ended. But both 3 Rivers and Jungle Bay are committed to sustainable (green) practices and policies in their operations including purchasing local and organically grown farm products. They reported that, in general, the island’s hotels, restaurants and resorts are ready to purchase local and organically grown farm products if consistent supply was available and delivery was reliable.

SECTION II: DOMINICA ORGANIC AGRICULTURE MOVEMENT (DOAM): ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There is wide-spread recognition of DOAM by the government, businesses, farmers and the tourism associations. Even more than recognition, there is the expectation that DOAM can and should do the advocacy and promotion work necessary to build and expand organic production in Dominica. This is a huge advantage for the organization because there is a greater probability for acceptance of activities and initiatives that they launch. These are great expectations for this organization but it can be done – one step at a time. Although the island’s population is small there appears to be little coordination and communication among those engaged in organic production or related activities on the island. DOAM can succeed by organizing and keeping the farm, business, tourism and government in communication about organic production, facilitating dialogue about policies and initiatives that will help develop organic farm and business opportunities, and creating the spark that will ignite change toward sustainable organic production island-wide.

A public-private partnership must be encouraged in order to bring together the resources necessary to achieve expansion of organic farming and increase the market for Dominica organic products. DOAM, the Division of Agriculture, the Bureau of Standards, COTS, and businesses all must be involved. An individual must step forward and assume the role of coordinator or DOAM must search for, persuade and then lend their assistance to a volunteer-coordinator. Progress will be made at a steady pace as long as there is someone who not only is placed in charge but takes charge. As funds are secured from services, grants or government programs, it should be a priority to begin to pay the coordinator for their work with a goal towards a full-time staff person. In other countries having a dedicated person does accelerate the development of the organic sector. The person, though, could be a Ministry of Agriculture staff assigned to promote organic production and standards in conjunction with DOAM.

The following is a recommendation for actions to be taken to move DOAM and organic Dominica forward:

Proposed tasks for the DOAM coordinator:

- Organize and make use of volunteers to implement activities,
- Do outreach to members and potential members, the media, government officials, businesses and other organizations,
- Implement a communications and advocacy plan,
- Identify and pursue sources of funds to support the organization and its activities.

Funding sources can include:

- grants and donations (financial and in-kind),
- government funding,
- membership fees, certification or registration fees,
- service fees such as non-member listing on website, advertisements on website, farm field days, training programs, and

- product sales such as compost bins, seeds, farm supplies, books, bumper stickers, etc. *
- Work closely with the Organic Desk at the Division of Agriculture to collaborate and coordinate activities, especially the adoption and implementation of the National Organic Agriculture Enhancement Project. The implementation of the Project will compliment and expand the work that will be done by DOAM.

Components of DOAM communication plan:

- Survey of “organic” producers on the Island– what is grown, how much is grown – is in progress and must be completed.
- Survey of restaurants, hotels and resorts about barriers to purchase of organic products.
- Organize DOAM members in one section of the farmers market clearly identified by the DOAM logo and/or banner
- Press releases sent out on all DOAM activities, set up interviews with reporters and talk-shows on radio or television
- Launch a “Buy Organic, Locally Grown” campaign. Use Massachusetts “Local Hero” campaign as a model. This would be the vehicle to promote awareness and educate the public and media about organic agriculture and its benefits. **
- Launch and maintain a website with:
 - Results of survey,
 - List of members with descriptions and contact information,
 - The DOAM organic standard, compliance forms and checklists
 - Descriptions of organic projects on the island, activities and events,
 - Information on composting, pest controls, benefits of organic production and products, etc.,
 - Government reports on agriculture,
 - The “Buy Organic, Locally Grown” campaign
 - On-line sales of farm supplies, seeds, etc.
 - Links to other websites such as IFOAM and other Caribbean Island organic organizations.
- Organize farm field days to demonstrate good organic farming practices, composting, seed-saving, etc.
- Identify key influencers – present or past government officials, religious leaders, musicians, Carib leaders, business leaders – and cultivate as spokespersons or advocates.

Components of DOAM advocacy plan:

- Adopt a final version of DOAM Organic Standards
- Implement procedures prescribed by Bureau of Standards to get government recognition of DOAM organic standards.
- Create a registration program and develop compliance forms and checklists
- Identify one or two agricultural policy changes necessary to support organic production and advocate for adoption. Use influencers and media.
- Collaborate with other Caribbean Island organic associations. Possible areas of collaboration: certification, inspection, training, market development

****The “Buy Organic, Locally Grown” campaign**

This proposed campaign is based on a campaign that is well-documented and has been successful in U.S. communities that are the same geographic and population size as Dominica. The Harvesting Support for Local Agriculture manual, which describes the campaign from its beginning forward with tips and templates for adopting the campaign, has been provided to DOAM but additional copies can be purchased from Community Involved in Sustainable Agriculture (CISA) at www.buylocalfood.com. In interviews with farmers, processors, and DOAM there was overwhelming and enthusiastic support for this type of campaign. The CISA organization and their “Buy Local” campaign had been funded for many years by the Kellogg Foundation. In addition, components of the campaign bring in revenue which is now supporting the organization. It is possible that in Dominica the campaign could be self-funding if managed and implemented by DOAM volunteers. CISA has been providing consulting services to other organizations that would like to launch similar campaigns. If funds were available it is recommended to contract with CISA for consulting services. Karen Sutherland of Roots Farm in Dominica knows this organization and the campaign and could be a liaison to CISA as a member of DOAM. It is possible that Kellogg Foundation would be interested in funding DOAM to initiate a “Buy Organic, Locally Grown” campaign. Efforts should be made to research and approach Kellogg Foundation for funding to advance sustainable agriculture and local and regional food supplies.

*** DOAM Service and Product Sales**

It is important that DOAM have a variety of funding sources because the island has a limited number of farmers and businesses that would contribute to the organization and its activities through membership, registration or certification fees. It is also not wise to rely on outside funding from grants or government, although with a variety of funding sources the organization will be even more attractive to foundations, non-governmental organizations (NGO) and governments for additional funds. Through a mini-enterprise selling farm supplies and seeds suitable for organic farms, DOAM would be providing access to supplies not readily available in Dominica, enabling farmers to succeed as organic farms, and bring revenue to the organization. DOAM would purchase in quantity and potentially at wholesale prices thereby reducing the costs of the supplies and the shipping. This should first be done as a collective pre-order by the farmers through DOAM to eliminate the need for initial funds to purchase the supplies. But a business plan could then be developed based on the response to the service and a loan secured from a bank or a NGO to purchase supplies and storage space. Another possibility would be to partner with one of the agricultural supply businesses in Dominica, for instance 4D Ag Center, to increase the availability of organic farm supplies and seeds with a small percent of sales going to DOAM.

SECTION III: DOAM ORGANIC STANDARDS: ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General Approach

The approach to organic standard setting taken in Dominica should reflect the unique situation of Dominican producers and consumers, and be oriented towards stimulating both organic production and marketing. Market considerations should extend to both internal and export markets. The standards should first of all serve an educational function, and thus need to be relatively simple and readily understood. They should not attempt to encompass all possible sectors of organic production and processing, especially those that are minimally developed for conventional agriculture on the island. As is true for any credible standard, they must be verifiable through a reasonable and inexpensive system of organic certification. DOAM standards should be established for internal markets, but producers and handlers who might be interested in export markets should be able to obtain certification to US and/or EU.

The draft standards that have been adapted from JOAM needed to be significantly rewritten for these reasons: Many provisions are both overly prescriptive and inappropriate to Dominica. Others are redundant, and in a few cases, internally contradictory. The language is opaque and difficult to comprehend, and the document needs a clearer organization. In each section, practices or materials that are specifically prohibited needed to be clearly identified in a single section, using consistent terminology. Some key aspects of organic production and handling, such as record keeping, are inadequately addressed. In general, when exceptions are made the criteria needed to be spelled out.

Following is a discussion and the suggestions for revising each section of the existing document that were presented to DOAM representatives Al-Mario Casimir and Vanessa Prevost prior to taking on the standards revision.

Review of Sections:

SECTION A: General Information & Scope

The scope is clearly stated; however, the language identified in 1.1A is unnecessary. The term “must” should replace “shall” throughout the document, and in many cases “shall” is used where “should” would be more appropriate. This will make it much less intimidating in tone.

Objectives and purpose should affirm a succinct definition of “organic agriculture,” and clearly relate to agricultural products (not just food). The objectives appear to be more akin to principles. A clear set of principles is especially valuable as a foundation for standards, which should relate back to specific principles. Purpose and scope should be consistent with the needs of Dominica. The reference to certification and inspection is very unclear.

No requirements are identified for record keeping or traceability. This is important to permit verification of production and handling methods.

Definitions should only be given for terms used in the standards, and that need clear and consistent interpretation. Significant revisions will be needed; for example, the definition of “natural hybridization” is inaccurate, and the term is not found anywhere in the body of the standards.

SECTION B: Organic Production, **Handling and Labeling** (insert) [Why did you leave this in yellow?](#)

- This section should be broken into separate sections for general requirements and organic ecosystems; crop production; animal husbandry; processing and handling; and labeling.
- Certification requirements should not be addressed in this document. An agency that is accredited by USDA and/or EU (ISO) should carry out certification according to those rules.

2. Organic Ecosystems

- Much of this language is unverifiable, such as “10 percent of the farm/production unit shall be part of a biodiversity program.” There is no provision outlining what is meant by “biodiversity program.”
- Much of the material here is more appropriate for sections such as soil and crop management, or water management and irrigation. For example, pasture management belongs in the section on crops and soils.
- There is no provision here addressing the requirement for crop rotations or the integration of perennial polycultures into farming practices.
- Genetic engineering or GMO prohibitions should be addressed in appropriate sections on crop propagation and livestock breeding, and for ingredients in processed organic products. Terminology (i.e., references to genetic engineering or GMO’s) should be consistent.

3. General Requirements

- This section belongs in front of land management provisions.
- Conversion requirements are very unclear. Different conversion times for different types of crop or livestock species are extremely cumbersome, and unnecessary.

4. Crop Production

- The requirements for use of organic seed and propagating material are unclear and may be very difficult to comply with or enforce. It is not necessary to list all acceptable breeding methods, just identify those that are unacceptable.

- Diversity in crop production is vague about what it requires, and fails to address perennial cropping systems. It appears to require removal of vegetative mulch from the field after harvest.
- Soil fertility needs significant revision—NOP composting requirements may not be appropriate here, and manure from any source should be freely allowed, so long as it is not mixed with toxic materials. Sewage sludge is not the same as human wastes, which are not addressed by the NOP.
- The requirements for mineral fertilizer use are contradictory and unclear.
- Pest management needs extensive revision. Avoiding contamination belongs in the section on ecosystem management, i.e., identification of boundaries and buffers. Production aids should be addressed in Appendices, as appropriate for Dominica.

5. Bee Keeping

- Specialty crops, including mushrooms and honey, should be addressed as the need arises.

6. Animal Husbandry

- If livestock products are unlikely to be seeking an export market, livestock standards should be adapted to practices in Dominica, and achievable by Dominican livestock producers. In particular, requirements for outdoor access, pasture vs. “carried fresh fodder,” and confinement allowances should be clearly identified.
- Detailed animal welfare-oriented standards are overly prescriptive and not strictly relevant to organic practices. Commitment to animal welfare should be included as part of organic principles. Section C is not appropriate as requirements, but may be useful for guidance.
- Conversion period requirements are totally confusing.
- Specifications for animal sources or origins are mutually contradictory and confusing.
- Allowing in conversion feeds requires certification as in conversion. This is too complicated, and all but impossible to verify.
- List of permitted feed additives belongs in the appropriate Appendix.
- Livestock manure requirements belong in the section on soil management, and protection of water quality.
- Detailed specifications for free range areas and housing are excessive and difficult to verify.
- How appropriate for Dominica are transport and slaughter requirements? Is there such a thing as an organic slaughter facility? Are animals ever transported off island for slaughter (i.e., over 8 hours)?

7. Processing and Handling

- Editing is needed for better clarity and organization, but overall reasonable level of detail.

- If multi-ingredient manufacturing is unlikely, standards should be limited to basic procedures with attention to sanitation, pest control and protection of organic integrity.
- Ingredients and processing aids should be kept as Appendices.

8. Labeling

- Provisions should be limited to those applicable to possible processing and labeling activities in Dominica. Products manufactured for export will have to comply with the importing country rules.
- In conversion products should not be included in this program.

9. Social Justice

- This material is appropriate for statements of principles. Verification of these practices is beyond the scope of most certification programs.

Appendices

- These should be reviewed for applicability to Dominica. Reference to EU and NOP inputs lists should be the baseline for products that may be exported.
- The procedure for evaluating local inputs should be feasible within the DOAM organization.

SECTION IV: DOAM CERTIFICATION PROGRAM: ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General Overview

The existing national laws and regulations and the Codex Guidelines for organic production, processing, labeling and marketing include requirements for certification and accreditation (approval of certification bodies to verify compliance to these national laws and regulations.) Certification bodies that operate under these national laws and regulations are expected to meet high standards of integrity and professionalism. Continuous training and improvement of staff and systems is necessary to meet these expectations. This results in ever increasing costs for certification bodies to maintain their status as recognized professionals. These costs are reflected in the fees charged by the certification bodies to the producers, processors and traders seeking organic certification.

Organic products that are exported to countries that have national laws regulating organic production and marketing must meet the requirements of those national laws and be certified by a certification body recognized by the national authority. Currently there are 38 countries that have regulations on organic production (the EU is counted as one although 27 countries comprise the EU) and there are 18 countries in the process of completing national organic regulations. In addition to the EU, there is one other example of a regional organic regulations and that is in East Africa and includes the countries of Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi. There are yet to be any equivalency agreements between nations so trade of organic products between regulated countries is based on compliance.

If DOAM was to establish a certification program, DOAM volunteers (or the coordinator) should attend certification training programs outside of Dominica or hire a consultant to come to Dominica to train and set up the systems, manuals, applications and forms required to effectively do organic certification. If training is not feasible, then there are IFOAM training manuals available to guide DOAM through the process. The following are provided as attachments:

- Guide to Develop Certification Documents
- Building Trust in Organics – Overview of certification programs, alternatives to certification, costs to establish certification programs and case studies.

The International Organic Inspection Manual is also recommended but must be purchased through the IFOAM website, www.ifoam.org/bookstore at the cost of 63Euro.

In addition to the DOAM members who have already attended training programs for organic inspectors, others (at least six) would have to be trained or arrangements secured with other Caribbean islands that have trained inspectors, such as Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago. Inspectors must be rotated periodically in order to reduce familiarity between inspectors and the certified operation and to prevent conflicts of interest.

Unless there is government or grant funding to pay the costs for certification and inspection, the farmers and processors/handlers seeking certification would pay fees that

were sufficient to support the program. On Dominica this will likely be an obstacle to participation in a certified organic program. The EU had a number of support programs to assist farmers with the cost of transitioning to certification and organic production. Even in the United States there are government funds that cover a share of the certification costs – limited to 75% of the cost of certification or US\$500.00. These support and cost share program has provided the incentive for many farmers and processor/handlers to not only adopt organic practices but to be certified and gain access to the organic marketplace.

Dominica Registration Program

Considering the situation that cost and record-keeping requirements would be a barrier to farmer or processor participation in a certification program and that there are costs to establishing DOAM as a professional certification body with sufficient number of trained inspectors, therefore it is recommended that initially a simple registration program is implemented. The registration program will serve as a transition time for DOAM to build its infrastructure and gain experience with organic certification procedures, and provide a transition time for farmers and processors to become familiar with the requirements of the organic standard and also the record-keeping necessary for organic certification. The registration program would lower the entry barriers such as cost and paperwork to organic farmers and processors without lowering the organic production standards.

The registration program would consist of:

- An application for participation in the DOAM organic program. A copy of the DOAM organic standard would be provided to the applicant.
- The application could be a checklist of the organic standard requirements or a written description of the farm practices or processing procedures that comply with the organic standard requirements.
- A visit from a DOAM volunteer or the DOAM coordinator or from the Division of Agriculture agents to observe the farm or processing operation and note any practices that should be corrected to meet the organic standard.
- The applicant would sign an affidavit, when their application is approved, that they will comply with the organic standard and follow the practices they have described in their application.
- The affidavits would be kept on file at DOAM and annual renewal of applications would be sent out.
- DOAM registered farmers and processors would be allowed to use the DOAM seal on their products.
- Organic production training programs, farm field days and visits from DOAM volunteers or managers or the Division of Agriculture agents would provide on-going technical assistance in organic practices, record-keeping and certification requirements.

If a farmer or processors wished to ship DOAM organic products to countries with mandatory national organic standards, a certification body approved by that country would be contacted for certification. This would be required even if Dominica had its own certification program. By having a registration program Dominica would be serving

organic farmers and processors in several ways – eliminating the need for two (or more) certifications, preparing those operations for the export market's certification requirements, and encouraging the adoption of organic practices. With trained inspectors in Dominica foreign certification bodies that were required to certify organic farms and products in Dominica could use these inspectors to do the on-site inspections which would save costs for the farmer or processor who had applied for certification.

If a mandatory national organic program is considered and approved then the requirement for certification should be included in that legislation. That's the best way to make it necessary and for people to transition to certification. But even without the legislation, if the production and market demand for organic increases, DOAM could begin to revise the registration forms so that they could transition into certification forms. At the appropriate time full certification would go into effect after previous notification to the participants in the registration program. Ideally the Bureau of Standards would take up the certification and inspection for organic when organic legislation was in place.

Other Approaches to Certification

IFOAM has also developed a system for group certification that has been implemented in developing countries around the world for the past fifteen years and is accepted recognized by the EU organic standard and the Japan Agriculture Standard for organic. The USDA National Organic Program is currently reviewing its criteria for group certification. Instead of each small farm applying for certification, keeping records, writing organic farm plans, and paying the certification fee, a group of small farms that produce the same organic crops organize as a single legal entity, such as a cooperative, and apply for certification. All members of the group operate under one organic system plan, record keeping system, and implement a system of internal controls to monitor that all members are in compliance with the organic standard. The organic certification is held by the group, the crops are sold by the group, and the annual inspection is done by sampling a number of farms in the group to ensure compliance and also to verify that the internal controls set up by the group are effective. Group certification is sought when farmers in developing countries are producing crops for export and are required to use foreign certification bodies and inspectors. The costs of certification in this way are shared by all the members of the group. If export markets develop for Dominica organic crops and products, then this is an excellent option. The following document included as an attachment describes in detail the group certification system:

- Smallholder Group Certification Training Curriculum for Producer Organizations and Guidance Manual

Another approach to consider is to organize the English-speaking islands of the Caribbean to develop a regional organic certification and inspection program. With a number of islands participating in one program, the volume of farmers and processors seeking certification would be sufficient to make the regional program cost-effective. This will take political will and a political leader to bring other governments and the individual organic organizations together. Dr. McIntyre could provide this leadership based on his interest in organic agriculture while the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and the Environment and in his new position as Minister of Trade, Industry, Consumer Affairs, Private Sector Relations, CARICOM, OECS and Diaspora Affairs. Since there is

not yet any Caribbean country with mandatory organic standards and certification programs and there are similar challenges in terms of resources to advance organic production, a regional initiative would serve the needs of many of the islands and provide an appropriate solution to the barriers to organic production and certification. The following is provided as an example, although the dominance by Latin American countries makes this initiative, perhaps, difficult for participation by Dominica and its neighboring islands:

The Inter-American Institute for Agricultural Cooperation (IICA) sponsored the First Annual Conference of Caribbean Organic Agriculture Officials in August 2007. The primary purpose was to agree on alternatives to rules set by the US and EU. Although named as a Caribbean conference the participants included top agricultural officials from Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, and Venezuela with Canada and the US attending as observers. Participants took the first step toward developing mechanisms that would harmonize organic production guidelines for participating nations. In addition, they set about linking quality standards to customs regulations in order to break down barriers to regional organic trade resulting from enforcement of inconsistent standards. The event highlighted regional rejection of the trend toward developing nations imposing standards that don't fit the level of economic development in the Caribbean and Latin America.

SECTION V: ORGANIC MARKET OPPORTUNITIES: ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Local and Caribbean Markets

Since much of the fresh fruits and vegetables purchased by the local population and by retail stores, hotels, restaurants and resorts is locally grown and with no strident opposition to purchasing organically grown at reasonable prices, there is a ready market, especially for the eco-tourists that come to Dominica because it is the Nature Island. Reasonable prices will come with adequate supply and efficient, reliable delivery systems. The "Buy Organic, Locally Grown" campaign is one way to increase consumer awareness of the source and growing methods of the food that they are purchasing whether that is at the farmers market, retail store, hotel, restaurant and resort. The campaign gives businesses a way to participate that does not require full commitment to purchasing all organic products. The campaign hinges on building farmer to buyer relationships throughout the island and uses public recognition of farms and business participating to build customer loyalty. A sense of pride about preserving and improving Dominica for Dominicans can be generated by the campaign. A prime opportunity exists to increase domestic and Caribbean consumption of Dominica organic crops, both fresh and processed, by tourists, businesses that serve the tourist sector, Westerners living in the Caribbean as well as the local populations of the islands.

The implementation of the organic standards through a registration program will make it possible for more farmers and processors to enter into organic production and participate in the campaign. Increased supply should help ease the delivery problems but efforts may be needed to organize a wholesale distribution system for fresh organic produce. Increased supply will open the possibility for Dominica to export organic produce to other Caribbean islands, especially those that are large tourist destinations with eco-tourist and Green Globe Certified resorts, such as Sandals on Antigua. Dominica can be the market leader in organic for these types of resorts with a DOAM and Ministry of Agriculture program to encourage increased organic production.

Export Market Opportunities

There are barriers to exporting fresh organic produce to larger organic markets such as the US or the EU, especially the limited capability to air ship perishable products. Also many other countries with the ability to produce similar crops organically and with an efficient delivery infrastructure already are already supplying these markets:

- Ecuador, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic and Peru supply most of the world's consumption of organic bananas
- Mexico, Paraguay, Ecuador, and to a lesser extent Costa Rica, Dominican Republic and Indonesia supply most of the world's consumption of tropical fruit.
- Mexico and Peru and to a lesser extent Indonesia supply most of the world with organic coffee
- Dominican Republic, Mexico, Ecuador, and Peru supply most of the world with organic cocoa

(The World of Organic Agriculture: Statistics & Emerging Trends 2007, IFOAM)

Although the market for organic products is expanding rapidly in the US and EU, the size of the organic market is small in sales and volume compared to the non-organic market. In the US the organic market is increasing at a rate of 20% a year, totaling \$17B in sales at retail in 2006, but represents only 3% of all the food products sold in the US. Taken as a whole the European market is growing at a rate of 10% a year but by individual countries the growth rate is higher with Germany and England leading in organic sales.(Organic Trade Association and Organic Monitor February 2007) The scale of the organic market still enables small volume producers an opportunity to garner space in the market.

In fact, the consumers that drive trends are shifting their attitude from an interest in anything organic to craft, artisan or unique products that are also organically produced. This is the market opportunity for processed or preserved organic products from Dominica. Investment, research and development for the following products should be encouraged:

1. **Guava and other tropical fruit roll-ups or fruit leathers.** In snacks, the trend is to look for healthier snacks and dried fruit products are benefiting from this interest. In particular organic dried fruit snacks sales have had a triple-digit growth rate in the past year bringing the organic share of total dried fruit snack sales in the US to 1% and totaling \$7.7M in sales. (AC Nielsen Trends February 2007) The convenience of fruit roll-ups or fruit leathers make these popular items

at school, work, hiking and other outdoor activities, or in the car. Tropical flavor varieties are new in this product segment even though tropical fruits are familiar and desirable to US and European consumers. These products will also appeal to domestic consumers and tourists who come to Dominica for outdoor adventure.

Mariani Packing Company (www.marianifruit.com) and Clif Bar (www.clifbar.com), are recommended for further contact to determine their interest in these types of products. They have the ability to contract with growers and possibly invest in development. Mariani Packing Company is a long-established dried fruit company with contract production around the world who is just launching organic products. Clif Bar is a company that quickly became the leader in the natural and organic snack bar sector with their product line designed for adult outdoor sports enthusiasts and now their product line is expanding to include snacks for children including dried fruit twists. Stretch Island Fruit Co. (www.stretch-island.com) was the original company that introduced fruit leathers to the natural foods market segment and now have two distinct lines – Stretch Island Fruit™ for non-organic and FruitaBu™ for organic.

2. **Rum.** Organic alcoholic drinks are an emerging sector in the organic industry. Although a very small segment of the total alcohol market there is market interest especially for products with an interesting story and produced in small batches or production runs. The product's appeal is that it is organic and unique. There are few agricultural rums (sugarcane fermented into alcohol) produced today because of the pressure to produce large volumes. Rum produced from organically grown sugarcane, fermented and distilled in a facility near the sugarcane fields, and perhaps with tropical herbs and spices added would command attention. This product can be exported through specialty distributors but it should also build its market demand through tourist shops, hotels, restaurants and resorts on Dominica. Examples of organic rums available today on the market: Papagayo Organic Rum in Paraguay benefits a group of 800 family-based sugar cane farms. Matraga's Organic White Rum and their gold rum are "fair-traded" from Capanema in southern Brazil. They are made in the traditional way directly from fermented cane, not from sugar industry waste. From the Caribbean, Rivers Royal Grenadian Rum in Grenada is also organic and comes from a 200-year-old tradition.
3. **Medicinal or herbal teas.** Consumers today are seeking a wellness lifestyle and look for products and activities that bring them physical and mental well being. (Hartman Group Wellness Report 2007) Among the products that benefit from this consumer interest are herbal and medicinal teas. Herbal bagged and packaged teas are in the number 10 position of the top 15 products in terms of dollar share at retail. They have a 12% share of the organic segment in dollars and 7% share in volume. (AC Nielsen Trends January 2007) Herbal and medicinal teas are now commonplace compared to 5 years ago when they could only be found in natural food or health food stores. In terms of market appeal the COTS project to develop an herbal tea product produced and harvested in the Carib territory and blended according to the traditional medicine culture of the

Carib tribe ranks extremely high. It has all the components for success: a wellness product, produced organically or wild harvested, linked to traditional tribal culture, generating a source of income for the Carib community and protecting the rainforest and natural beauty of Dominica.

The above products should be proposed to the New Orleans: Dominica/OECS Trade Initiative task force. They not only meet the criteria set out by the task force, they are exciting new products that could be offered to the New Orleans (and US) market to compliment the bananas, hot sauce and other typical Creole products being considered by the task force.

4. Organic Ornamental Flowers

Gerald Prolman, CEO, of Organic Bouquet has a strong personal interest and connection with Dominica. He visited the Island in the early 1990s when his business was organic fruit and vegetable sales and distribution. He met with Ms. Charles, the prime minister at the time, to discuss the possibilities of Dominica supplying the US market with organic fruit and vegetables. The concept of Dominica as an Organic Island is reported to have come from this meeting.

Organic Bouquet, www.organicbouquet.com, was the first on-line florist supplying organic and Veriflora™ flowers and gifts, and it remains the dominant business in this market niche. The Veriflora™ standards were introduced by Mr. Prolman to help farmers transition to organic because of the limited supply of organic flowers. Sales of organic flowers grew by 16% from 2005 to 2006, according to the Organic Trade Association annual survey. Because of continued strong growth, Mr. Prolman has indicated that his business is always seeking new supplies of organic ornamental flowers. The limited availability of air shipments are less of a barrier for organic flowers than for organic fruit and vegetables. Once a week shipments would be sufficient to provide a selection of tropical ornamental flowers to compliment and enhance the flower varieties offered in bouquets. Seasonal variations are expected in bouquets and flower substitution is accepted. Mr. Prolman might be persuaded to develop a program to support increased production and wild harvesting of organic tropical flowers in Dominica.

5. Organic Cocoa

Frederick Schilling has made it his mission to convert cocoa production around the world to organic production. To achieve his mission he sold his small chocolate company, Dagoba, to Hershey Company. His story is featured in the October 29, 2007 issue of *The New Yorker* magazine. Dominica would appeal greatly to Mr. Schilling sense of purpose especially if he was contacted to help “save” the island from non-organic cocoa production which has been proposed. He is already interested in the Caribbean and Central America and has begun working with farmer cooperatives in the Dominican Republic and Costa Rica.

Dagoba chocolates are unique because of the unusual ingredients blended into the chocolate, such as lemon-ginger, goji and currents, and chili peppers: www.dagobachocolate.com. Dominica's herbal tradition and tropical fruits might further inspire Mr. Schilling to take interest in investing in Dominica cocoa production.

Reaching out to entrepreneurs like Mr. Schilling and Mr. Prolman is uncertain and may be beyond the comfort zone but if engaged these types of individuals will bring the enthusiasm to organic projects and also the market influence and access. It's worth taking the risk and could be exhilarating for members of DOAM.

ANNEX A: LIST OF CONTACTS

- Dr. John Collin McIntyre, previous Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries & the Environment, now Minister of Trade, Industry, Consumer Affairs, Private Sector Relations, CARICOM, OECS and Diaspora Affairs
- Mr. Garner Eloi, Manager, Dominica Essential Oils & Spices Cooperative
- Mr. Peter Dominique, Managing Director, PW Bellot & Co. Ltd
- Mr. Parry Bellot, Dominica Eco-Tourism Association
- Mr. Yves Joseph, Manager, Shillingford Estates
- Vanessa Prevost, President DOAM executive committee
- Al-Mario Casimir, The Organic Desk, Division of Agriculture
- Keian Stephenson, Division of Agriculture, Team Leader Central Region
- Sharon Jones, Natural Botanicals, DOAM executive committee
- Jem Winston, owner/operator 3 Rivers Resort
- Sam Raphael, General Manager, Jungle Bay Resort & Spa
- Atherton Martin, The Development Institute, Ltd.
- Mrs. Avriel James, Managing Director, The Coal Pot
- Steve John, Ph.D., Director, Dominica Bureau of Standards
- Tiadora Anthony, DEXIA
- Mr. Oliver Grell, Director, Division of Agriculture
- Collins Lloyd, Gordon Royer, Roy Ormond – DOAM executive committee
- Karen Sutherland, Roots Farm
- Ed Fletcher, COO, Botanical Division, Strategic Sourcing, Inc.
- ESPWA
- U.S.-based importers of organic products: Multiple Organics, Inc., Marroquin International Organic Commodity Services, Sun-Ridge Farms, Global Organics, Ltd, Fine Dried Fruit International
- Gerald Prolman, CEO, Organic Bouquet, Inc.

ANNEX B: LIST OF INFLUENCERS

Influencers suggested by San Raphael:

Described as activists and work with the media, they represent a range of political interests and are all practical.

- Thomson Fontaine, Ph.D. Economist, lives off island, publishes The Dominican
- Anthony (Tony) Astaphan, lawyer, strong supporter of the government but will take up issues with government that he strongly supports such as Japanese Whaling Industry
- Bill Revere, lawyer and historian, PDM party – new political party, encourage him to include organic in his platform.
- Singoalla Blomquist-Williams, lawyer and activist, concerned about destruction of rivers
- Lorraine Bannis-Roberts, Minister of Community Development, Culture, Information and Gender Affairs, can appeal to grassroots.

Influencers suggested by Karen Sutherland:

- Rosie Douglas Family, former prime minister's family
- Dr. John Collin McIntyre, previous Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries & the Environment, now Minister of Trade, Industry, Consumer Affairs, Private Sector Relations, CARICOM, OECS and Diaspora Affairs
- Curtis Gonge, businessman (insurance company, import company, building company)

ANNEX C: LIST OF REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

1. Draft DOAM organic standards
2. Jamaica Organic Agriculture Movement (JOAM) standards –revised 2003
3. Dominica Bureau of Standards Act
4. National Organic Agriculture Enhancement Project (Draft 1) June 2007
5. Transforming Dominica into an Organic Island – UNEP Report Feb. 2006
6. Caribbean Islands Organic Input Study 2001
7. National Agricultural Development Policy for the Commonwealth of Dominica, 2006-2015, Parts I, II and III, August-November 2006
8. HSLA Manual: Harvesting Support for Local Agriculture
9. IFOAM Training Manual for Organic Agriculture in the Humid Tropics

ANNEX D: RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

- NOP Compliance Checklist for Producers, June 2003: www.attra.org/attra-pub/PDF/compliance.pdf
- Compliance Checklist for Handlers, November 2006: www.attra.org/attra-pub/PDF/organic_handler.pdf
- Preparing for an Organic Inspection: Steps and Checklists: www.attra.org/attra-pub/PDF/organic_inspection.pdf
- Organic System Plan: Templates for Certifiers: www.attra.org/attra-pub/PDF/osptemplates.pdf
- Forms, Documents, and Samples Letters for Organic Producers: www.attra.org/attra-pub/PDF/producerforms.pdf
- Organic Market Farm Documentation Forms: www.attra.org/attra-pub/PDF/marketforms.pdf
- ISEAL 2005 Managing Conflict of Interest in Certification: www.isealalliance.org
- Farm Plan Questionnaire: www.ioia.net/images/pdf/NOPfarmOfinal.pdf
- Organic Handling Plan Template: www.ioia.net/images/pdf/organichandlingplanfinal2002.pdf
- Organic Farm Plan Certification Update Questionnaire: www.ioia.net/images/pdf/NOPfarmcertificationupdateform.pdf
- IFOAM International Organic Inspection Manual: www.ifoam.org/bookstore
purchase price: 63.00Euro
- IFOAM Building Trust in Organic – provided as a PDF attachment
- IFOAM Guide to Developing Certification Documents – provided as a PDF
- IFOAM Smallholder Group Certification Training Curriculum for Producer Organizations and Guidance Manual – provided as a PDF attachment