

Barbados, Argentina to work together in key areas

Barbados has signed a technical cooperation agreement with Argentina that will see the two countries collaborating in three areas.

Argentine Ambassador Gustavo Martinez Pandiani and Barbados' Minister of Foreign Affairs Maxine McClean signed the document at Accra Beach Hotel on Wednesday ahead of the start of a two-day Argentine-Caribbean regional cooperation workshop.

While outlining several projects that Argentina will be organising in Barbados over the course of this year, Pandiani pledged the agreement would not be mere words.

The two countries established diplomatic relations in 1968, and an Argentine Embassy was reopened here in 2013 and there have been continuing efforts to advance the relationship.

Commitment

McClean said yesterday the government of Argentina continued to exhibit "an unwavering commitment to providing technical assistance to Barbados in the area of agriculture, especially in the fisheries and the dairy sectors". She also said it was critical to enhance the language skills of Barbadian children and citizens by improving the quality of Spanish training offered in schools and institutions.

The emphasis is on agro-industry, the teaching of Spanish as a second language and development of the small and medium-sized enterprises in the participating countries.

Representatives from Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, St Lucia, St Kitts and Nevis, St Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago are participating in the workshop.

Pandiani explained this was part of Argentina's efforts to contribute to the sustainable development of the region in general and to consolidate the relationship between the Caribbean and Latin America in the long run.

To share knowledge

He said considering his country's historic roots in agriculture, in these times when food security was a global concern, Argentina was "more than willing to share the knowledge we have acquired during the last two centuries".

Three Argentine experts are sharing their knowledge in creating micro, small and medium enterprises.
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Minister of Foreign Affairs Senator Maxine McClean (left) and Argentine Ambassador Gustavo Martinez Pandiani signing a technical cooperation agreement between the two countries at Accra Beach Hotel on Wednesday.
(Picture by Christoff Griffith.)



WIBISCO reaps early success

The West India Biscuit Co. Ltd. (WIBISCO) has made some great strides in its Food Safety and Export Development strategy within the first few months of 2018.



The WIBISCO Food Safety Team after a successful Food Safety Preventative Control Inspection.

Last week, the Company successfully completed a U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) Food Safety Preventative Control Inspection of its production facilities. This inspection formed part of the verification process to ensure that food items being supplied to the U.S. are produced in a manner that meets applicable U.S. food safety standards. This is in alignment with the U.S. Food Safety Modernisation Act (FSMA) and Foreign Supplier Verification Program (FSVP).

WIBISCO General Manager, Lorenzo Roach, expressed his thanks to the WIBISCO team for their hard work and he also committed to upholding the high food safety standards for which the Company is known, as it also prepares for the British Retail Consortium (BRC) Food Safety certification audit later this year.

EXPORT GROWTH

In its bid to penetrate Central America, WIBISCO launched its flagship Shirley and Tea Time biscuits in Panama in January 2018. WIBISCO Export Manager, Lisa Murray, credits this progress to the Company's participation in the Panama EXPOCOMER trade exhibition over the past 3 years, and thanks the Barbados Investment Development Corporation (BIDC) for its continued support.

WIBISCO appointed the well-established Panamanian company, Tagaropulos SA, which has over 100 years of experience. Tagaropulos' General Manager, Mr. Roberto Agüero, noted that "WIBISCO's products are a promise of great quality and good value, which are key characteristics of any brand that we represent. We

therefore look forward to working with the WIBISCO team to successfully develop the Shirley and Tea Time brands in Panama."

Successful re-entry in the Belize market followed in March 2018, with focus again being placed on the popular Shirley and Tea Time brands. Miss Murray expressed satisfaction that the product launches in both Panama and Belize have been going very well and looks forward to continued growth for the WIBISCO brands.



LISA MURRAY, WIBISCO Export Manager visiting the Panama trade with Arnulfo Alvarez, Sales Manager of Tagaropulos.