



GUYSUCO Reader

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GUYANA REPRESENTED AT 29th W.I.S.T CONFERENCE

-GUYSUCO sends five

Five members of the Corporation's senior management and technical staff of the Agriculture Research Centre and Factory Operations Department represented Guyana at the 29th Conference for West Indies Sugar Technologists in Jamaica.

The local representatives were Agriculture Research Director, Dr Harold Davis; General Manager Technical Services, Mr Yusuf Abdul; Quality Assurance Manager, Mr Sharma Dwarka; Manager, Soils and Plant Nutrition, Mr Anton Dey, and Pest Agronomist, Claudette Haynes.

Dr Davis reported that one of the highlights of the four-day conference was the address of Dr Kushia Haraksingh who reminded technologists of the necessity of looking beyond sugar in order to survive and prosper. Senior technologists from Jamaica, Barbados and Guyana also participated in a plenary panel discussion on the steps being taken in the region towards developing a truly viable sugar cane industry given the multiple industrial uses of the sugar cane plant.

Guyana's contributions included information sharing on the anticipated benefits to be derived from future technological innovations in the Skeldon Sugar Modernisation Project (SSMP); the strategic plan for the sugar industry and progress made regarding the commercialisation of sugar cane for energy, fuel and chemical industry.

Of the 13 research papers contributed by GUYSUCO's technical team, two were presented as posters and reflected developments made in the areas of Environment, Soil Engineering and Soil Management, Variety Development, Weeds and Pest Management, and Plant Physiology.

FIRST CROP PRODUCTION HASTENS PAST 60,000 TONNES



Sugar production at the end of March reached 61,357 tonnes and in the remaining ten weeks of grinding, locations are expected to bring in the remaining 35,000 tonnes that is targeted for the First Crop.

While the industrial relations climate has been relatively stable in the first three months of the year, production was severely hampered by the effects of La Nina weather phenomenon which caused unseasonal rainfall to prevail way into the month of March.

By March end the Skeldon Estate had recorded 6,905 tonnes of sugar, the East Berbice Estate 22,043 tonnes and Blairmont Estate 8,310 for the Berbice locations. In Demerara, Enmore delivered 6,904 tonnes and its sister location 5,106 tonnes. For the West Demerara Estates, Wales netted 7,437 tonnes and Uitvlugt 4,653 tonnes of sugar.

The close-to-10,000 tonnes of sugar recorded in week ending March 22 indicated a turn-around in performance and shows the industry's determination to significantly affect the overall economic development of the country.

The Marketing & Trade Department meanwhile, anticipates an increasingly challenging year compared to last year when the Corporation was able to meet all of its EU and US bulk sugar commitments supplying 181,357 tonnes and 12,500 tonnes to these markets, respectively.

In addition, some 60,000 tonnes of direct consumption bagged and packaged sugars were exported and sold locally, with new markets developed for packaged sugars in St Croix, Suriname, Barbados and St Kitts and for bagged sugars in Australia and New Zealand.

While we anxiously await the commissioning of the new state of the art factory at Skeldon this year, the upgrading of the Enmore factory and construction of a new packaging plant are among capital projects to be started. This comes following the release of funding from the EU in 2007 and will serve to expand the Corporation's capacity for the production of high quality direct consumption sugars.

It is necessary for workers to adopt responsibility by improving on work behaviours, concentrating on increasing efficiencies and production as we aspire to make the Corporation more productive and viable.

HR SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT WELCOMED

The computerization of the Human Resources Department operations in May will make a positive impact on the record-keeping of employees' data on estates and at Head Office locations.

According to Assistant Personnel Manager – Planning and Performance, Mr. Rudy Amerally, the Human Resources Information System (HRIS) is another component of the Oracle – e-business suite and will also serve to improve timeliness of responses to queries and ensure accuracy and accessibility of information where necessary. The programme will also host information on every level of staff in GUYSUOCO, such as employees' biodata, their job descriptions and medical records. Leave and salaries records, career management and recruitment are some of the other features of the software.

Since the commencement of the programme at the end of 2007, significant progress has been made, and the Project is assisted by employees of the Payroll section of the Information Systems Department along with overseas consultancy services.

"This move is much appreciated and signals the Corporation's determination to embrace technological advancement. Following adequate preparation, users of the HRIS will be more confident in the goals of improving efficiencies in record keeping and retrieval, in accuracy and accessibility where necessary," Amerally confirmed.

So far, GUYSUOCO is the largest license-holder of the Oracle e-business suite in Guyana. The software suite acquired some few years ago was introduced in the Finance Department and will also accommodate other applications in Inventory Control, Order Management, Marketing, Agriculture and Factory Operations.



CANE FARMERS TO PLAY MORE VISIBLE ROLE IN LOCAL SUGAR INDUSTRY OPERATIONS



Three of the Private Cane Farmers at Wales Estate

With the contribution of cane farmers to the local sugar industry on an upward swing, there is promise of even more involvement of this group of stake holders in the daily operations of the company.

This optimism of National Cane Farming Liaison Manager, Mr Walter Persaud, is supported in the Corporation's move to resuscitate and develop a closer relationship with cane farmers through the reestablishment of the National Cane Farming Department in 2006 and subsequently, the appointment of Cane Farming Liaison Managers at locations to ensure that farmers' interests are represented and increases in the agriculture component of their business made a reality.

In the last quarter of 2007, the farmers who participated in the Agriculture Research Centre's Open Day got first hand insight into the contribution of the Central lab to production. They also visited the Breeding and Selection section to learn more about the process. The soil and plant nutrition of the cane and efforts in pest and disease management also complimented the information session of the tour.

Following this, their initial and formal introduction to research activities, cane farmers are now participating in agriculture training in similar topics facilitated by both Estate and Head Office personnel. Water Management, Crop establishment and Occupational Health and Safety are also part of the modular programme which involves both class room session and field work.

Apart from training and guidance, GUYSUCO provides farmers with labour, machinery, planting materials and transport where necessary to the estate factories.

Cane Farmers are expected to make a contribution of 21,619 tonnes of sugar this year and included in the plan of activities, the Corporation's Cane Farming Department will intensify farm visits to ensure best practices and to approach officials of regional administration and central government to solicit their influence in the improvement and maintenance of drainage and irrigation systems.

The societies of cane farmers are currently within the Skeldon, Albion, Rose Hall, Enmore, LBI and Wales areas.

MEDEX SEMINAR AT BLAIRMONT

Medex and Estate Medical Officers industry-wide are now more proficient in the execution of their duties following their involvement in a seminar aimed at improving interpersonal relationships and communication between staff and management on March 28 at Blairmont Training Building.

According to Chief Medical Officer, Dr Kisson, the outcome of the one-day retreat will also serve to improve the record of clinical data so that the quality of care can be assessed and proper health interventions planned. A protocol for management of common emergencies is another likely outcome.

This year's event attracted Estate Medical Officers and Medex of 12 health care facilities from estate communities and former estate locations.

“Inspiration comes to us slowly and quietly...prime it with a little solitude.”

— Brenda Ueland

DEVELOPMENT & ASSESSMENT CENTRE TO BE ESTABLISHED

The Training Unit will become more aggressive in the establishment of a Development and Assessment Centre which would inform the Corporation's intervention for the development of employees identified for senior management and other executive positions. The activities of the Centre will align the talents, skills and behaviours of the Corporation's leaders to the future needs of the Corporation.

Training of users is likely to begin shortly.

SECURITY AND YOU

-Mr Dindyal William



As individuals and groups it is incumbent upon us to implement and sustain security measures and engage in security practices that will serve as a deterrent to would-be perpetrators.

In order to rekindle our security awareness. Here are some basic security measures that we should employ to assist in our personal safety and security.

1. At all times ensure your premises is secure by keeping all external doors locked even when you are at home. Keep keys in a safe place away from the door, where you can find them quickly in the event of any emergency. Some persons have a tendency of leaving keys in door locks, it is a bad practice and should be avoided.
2. Use blinds or draw your curtains after dark. If you are alerted by a noise outside and you are worried that there may be an intruder, call the Police immediately. Please note that as part of the Guyana Police Force's Report Receiving Procedure, the Policeman/Policewoman taking the report is required to identify his or herself by name.
3. For great peace of mind and personal security, get into the habit of doing a security tour of your home before going into bed. Check that all doors and windows are locked, garage secured, turn off all appliances that are required to be off etc., you may be surprised how often you will find something requiring action.
4. Be observant at all times. On arriving home, look for anything unusual before entering the premises. If there are signs of a break-in, like a broken window or an open door, do not enter the premises, but call the Police from your mobile (cell) phone or a neighbour's phone.
5. For personal protection it is good to have a telephone extension or have a mobile phone at hand reach in your bedroom so that you would be able to call the Police without alerting the intruder.
6. As far as possible, do not keep excessive amounts of cash at home. Keep only an amount that is absolutely necessary. Likewise, if possible all small pieces of valuables such as jewels not used routinely can be kept at a safe deposit box at a bank. This facility can also be used to secure important documents.
7. A dog is very useful on premises to, at a minimum, serve to alert you of any intruder.
8. Never fail to alert the Police of the sighting of suspicious person(s) in your area, regardless what time of the day it is.
9. Do not admit Public Utilities personnel in your premises without properly verifying their authenticity at the gate. All such persons should have in their possession valid identification cards.
10. Grills to doors and windows do act as a deterrent and an additional line of protection for any premises.
11. Keep the area around your premises clean and clear of obstruction to have clear view beyond the fence and at the same time eliminate hiding places.
12. Secure ladders or any item that will assist in climbing, as well as tools that intruders/burglars can use to assist them to perpetrate their criminal acts.
13. Always mend fences and defective gates immediately. Intruders use these situations as opportunities to enter your premises.
14. In the past, Alarm Systems and Close Circuit Televisions (CCTVs) were prohibitive but are gradually becoming affordable. These are extremely useful tools for monitoring the security of your premises even when you are not at home.

In many instances, simple common sense actions and practices can deter major security breaches.