

Hague Agricultural and Livestock Show 2015
Senator Norman W. Grant
Jamaica Agricultural Society President's Message

On behalf of the Jamaica Agricultural Society and its board of management; we are enthused that the Trelawny Association of Branch Societies carries the mantle of staging the 59th Annual Hague Agricultural and Livestock Show scheduled for February 18, 2015. The show continues to hold the theme 'Empowering Youth in Agriculture' in keeping with the JAS Eat Jamaican Campaign slogan "Grow What We Eat..... Eat What We Grow".

The Hague Show aims to showcase agricultural produce and livestock focusing on farmers in Trelawny and surrounding areas; highlighting their continuous hard work and labour of love that they put in to the agricultural sector where the parish in 2013 accounts for 95,742.1 tonnes representing 15.5 percent of the 614,997 tonnes of domestic crop production to be rank number 3 in the country behind Manchester, St Elizabeth.

Agriculture remains one of the primary economic drivers in Jamaica as demonstrated in its contribution to assist Jamaica to succeed in meet the last 6 benchmarks under within the IMF programme. Agriculture, Livestock Fisheries and Forestry accounts for approximately 7 percent GDP. It employs over a 200,000 persons directly representing 18-19 percent of the labour force with another estimated 100,000 indirectly engaged. Agriculture is the most resilient of all our economic sectors and definitely one of the most important.

As we look for an increase in economic growth in our country, we have to create avenues that will promote agriculture as a career and lifestyle for youth who will carry the mantle of our agriculture sector. As a stakeholder we seek to open their minds to the various opportunities for growth and the support systems available to achieve that growth. We commend the Jamaica 4-H Clubs for their continued role of promoting and training of youths in agriculture.

This year marks the 120th Anniversary of the JAS, who continues to be an agency of advocacy and support to the Agricultural Sector. The JAS will continue to make its contribution to the growth of sector by;

- Training and Educational opportunities for farmers and youth interested in agriculture.
- Promoting the sector has an investment opportunity
- Developing and investing in research and technology to make the sector more efficient.
- Promote efficient competitive and diversified value-added agricultural production
- Establish marketing systems for the domestic and export markets
- Recommend that all farmers be involved in the pension plan established for farmers by JAS and COK Sodality. To ensure a secure future for farmers.

We invite you to be a part of the agricultural experience at the Hague Show and implore that you continue to support our local farmers by eating and buying Jamaican produce.

Senator Norman W Grant J.P
President JAS