

JAMAICA AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

67 Church Street, P.O. Box 609, Kingston, Jamaica W. I.

Website: www.jas.org.jm Email: adminjas114@gmail.com Telephone: 876-922-0610-2: Fax: 967-7419

OVER ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF SERVICE TO FARMERS AND JAMAICA

“LET’S EAT JAMAICAN”

Editor Sirs:

The Jamaica Agricultural Society is calling for stronger measures to be implemented quickly, against “Farm Terrorists”; in light of the stealing of One Hundred (100) pigs from pig farmers in St. Catherine. These measures should include the increase of fines and penalties under the Agricultural Produce Act from \$250,000 to \$ 3 million and the redefining of Praedial Larceny under the Larceny Act to include livestock, as presently the definition only covers ground provision. The JAS is also requesting that the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries extend the Animal Identification Tagging Programme to pigs, goats and sheep as was done with cattle over 2 years ago. The JAS estimates that over the last 10 years, due to praedial larceny, farmers having been losing approximately \$6 billion annual, as such the JAS wants the government to set up a Victim Compensation Fund for affected farmers and bring the Praedial Larceny under the Proceeds of Crime Law where those caught and found guilty should have their assets ceased by the court and disposed of and funds be used to support affected farmers.

The JAS is commending the Praedial Larceny Prevention Unit in the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries which has seen a 14% drop in reported cases of praedial larceny since the unit was established 2 years ago. The JAS would like to see more support for this unit which has started to have a positive impact. RADA must also be commended for the registration of approximately 177,000 farmers and the JAS will be intensifying the sale of

receipt books to all these farmers and would encourage the farmers to both register and purchase the receipt books as a part of the process to assist the police with enforcement. The JAS in collaboration with the Praedial Larceny Prevention Unit will be intensifying the Farmers and Public Education Campaign at the upcoming Denbigh Agricultural Show on July 30 to August 1. The education of the JCF and the Judiciary is also very important and this is an ongoing process which is commendable as the subject matter is now being taught to the young recruits in the JCF. To win this battle there must be total commitment from all stakeholders and send a clear message to agricultural enemy number one, "Farm Terrorists". They are not with us, They are against us, against the mission to grow what we eat and eat what we grow, against the biblical principle that one should not reap where he did not sow.

Norman Washington Grant OD, JP

President of the Jamaica Agricultural Society

jaspresident2012@gmail.com

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