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PRESS RELEASE

Minister of Agriculture and Belize Rural North Area Representative Participate in Belize District Agriculture Field Trip

Belmopan. April 1, 2021. 11:00 a.m.

Hon. Jose Abelardo Mai, Minister of Agriculture, Food Security and Enterprise, and Hon. Marconi Leal, area representative of Belize Rural North, on March 31, 2021, visited selected areas of the Belize District as part of a field trip organized by the Belize District Agriculture Department.

The purpose of the field trip was to learn about the farmers and crops grown in the areas as well as exchange experiences, expertise and ideas with the Ministry's extension service and farmers from other districts.

The first visit was to Mr. Jim Jones hydroponic farm in Lord's Bank. Mr. Jones produces lettuce, kale and fennel using a hydroponic system in his two greenhouses. The second visit was to Los Pequeños Agricultores y Ganaderos de Nago Bank Cooperative in the Maskall area. The Nagobank Cooperative met with Minister Mai and Hon. Leal to present a report on their activities, challenges and successes. After the presentation, there was a tour to view crops under cultivation, those included watermelons, cantaloupe and tomatoes.

Finally, the Minister and Hon. Leal were hosted by the Bomba United Farmers Group. They also presented a report on their activities and challenges and led a tour of their crops, which currently include onions and watermelons.

Minister Mai and Hon. Leal conveyed their gratitude to the residents of the areas visited and shared their commitment to addressing the issues raised, which included road access and land tenure. Minister Mai expressed a renewed commitment to assuring the Ministry carries out the Plan Belize

goals of ensuring Belize's food security, improving the productive sector and growing the economy. He also thanked the staff of the Ministry of Agriculture that accompanied him on the field trip.

Minister Mai was accompanied by Mr. Servulo Baeza, CEO in the Ministry; and other officials of the Ministry as well as partner agencies such as OIRSA and the Belize Marketing and Development Corporation.

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