



PR#294-22

PRESS RELEASE

Ministry of Economic Development Supports Climate-Resilient Agricultural Practices by Rural Farmers

Belmopan. October 6, 2022. 3:20 p.m.

To address the challenges of market access for Belizean farmers, the Ministry of Economic Development through its Resilient Rural Belize (RRB) Program, today signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Belize Marketing and Development Corporation (BMDC).

Signing on behalf of the ministry and BMDC were Dr. Osmond Martinez, Chief Executive Officer in the ministry, and Mr. Servulo Baeza, Chief Executive Officer in the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Enterprise, respectively. Mr. Geraldo Flowers, RRB Program Manager, and Mr. Valentin Carrillo, Director of BMDC, witnessed the signing.

The RRB Program aims to introduce climate-resilient agricultural practices that allow smallholder farmers to operate using sustainable production processes, even under the stress of extreme climatic events. Therefore, the main objective of this MOU is to improve BMDC's Agricultural Market Price Information System (Agrilink) and its role in providing wholesale and retail market price information. Technical assistance and capacity building for farmers will be provided on the use of Agrilinks, marketing techniques, quality assurance, market analysis, climate-resilient production planning and technologies focused on post-harvest loss reduction, storage, standards and conformity assessment systems and innovation, and effective information dissemination tools.

Additionally, the RRB will work together with BMDC to strengthen linkages between producers and buyers by supporting the formation of partnerships with key institutional actors, such as hotels and restaurants in high-end markets and processors in industrial markets. The RRB will facilitate and promote the establishment of commercial partnerships, linking producers

and their cooperatives with buyers, as well as supporting the building of potential public-private-producer partnerships.

The Briceño Administration is committed to identifying the priorities and opportunities in Belize and designing programs such as the RRB to serve each sector in the country. It also understands the urgency to reduce poverty and minimize the impact of climate change. Therefore, the government will work diligently to increase sustainable economic activities and build on climate adaptation and mitigation.

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