

University of the Virgin Islands

Cooperative Extension Service

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FROM THE GROUND

A Publication of the

University of the Virgin Islands

Cooperative Extension Service

October 2012

AGRICULTURAL FORUM KICKS OFF

UVI'S LAND-GRANT CELEBRATION



The Cooperative Extension Service (CES) and the Agricultural Experiment Station (AES) at the University of the Virgin Islands concluded their celebration of the 40th anniversary as a land-grant program by honoring their volunteers and engaging the community in an agricultural forum, workshops, and an open house.

The celebration began on Thursday, June 21, 2012, with an Agricultural Forum on “The Role of Agriculture in the Economic Development of the Virgin Islands” moderated by Sheldon Turnbull, General Manager, DaVybe 107.9FM. The panelists were experts in agriculture and economics who included the following: Kwame Garcia, Sr., State Director/Extension Assistant Professor, UVI Cooperative Extension Service; Dr. Robert Godfrey, Director/Research Professor, UVI Agricultural Experiment Station; Dr. Louis E. Petersen, Jr., Commissioner, VI Department of Agriculture; Benita Martin, Farmer, St. Thomas; Dale Browne, Farmer, Sejah Farm, St. Croix; Eldridge Thomas, Farmer, St. Thomas; Dr. Simon Jones-Hendrickson, Professor of Economics/Interim Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, UVI; and Terrence “Positive” Nelson, Senator, Legislature of the U. S. Virgin Islands.

Questions from attendees, as well as from those who called into the program, focused on the introduction of agriculture in the Department of Education’s curriculum for K-12, which would introduce students to the science while,

(Continued on page 3)

FromThe Ground Up is a publication of the University of the Virgin Islands Cooperative Extension Service. It is available to Virgin Islands residents upon request and is also available on the web at <http://ces.uvi.edu>

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UPCOMING ACTIVITIES	
Batik & Clothing Construction	Sept.ember - December (STT)
Nutrition Classes	October 17 (STJ)
4-H National Youth Science Day	October 17 (STX)
Pesticide-Youth Garden Workshop	October 24 (STX)
Caribbean Urban Forestry Conf.	October 25-27 (STT)
STT/STJ Agriculture Fair	November 3-4 (STT)
Usefulness of Internet	November 12 &13 (STX)
VI Native Trees Workshop	November 15 (STX)
VI Native Trees Workshop	November 16 (STT)
Beginning PowerPoint	November 19 & 20 (STX)
Intermediate PowerPoint	November 27-29 (STX)
VI Woodworkers Expo	December 1-2 (STT)
Holiday Baking	December 5-6 (STX)



Message from the
State Director

As the Cooperative Extension Service (CES) and the Agricultural Experiment Station (AES) celebrate 40 years of land grant status, we invite you to revisit some of the celebratory activities held to commemorate the occasion. For 40 years we have been catering to the Virgin Islands community in many significant ways. A careful look at this edition of *From the Ground Up* will rekindle some of those memories.

Read about the agricultural forum and learn not only about the programs, but learn also about CES’ interest in acknowledging volunteerism as it honored its loyal volunteers.

Examine the anniversary snap shots that present a kaleidoscope of our activities and the people involved in those activities.

Relive the experiences of the Mango Melee and Tropical Fruit Festival, which remind us of the great agricultural potential of the fruitful paradise where we live.

Visit the new Goat and Sheep Products Farm/Eco Tour at the former Windsor Farms.

Learn with our students at the 4-H Summer Academy.

Meet the SCSEP that helps seniors realize their potential.

Try the cassava waffle recipe.

Admire and commend the women who completed the Clothing Construction and Pattern Drafting class.

Enjoy our employees and get acquainted with Virgin Islands native trees.

Learn about eggs, spinach, planting, and gardening.

Enjoy the photographic smorgasbord of CES and AES through *From the Ground Up*.

Sincerely,

Kwame Garcia, Sr.
State Director, CES

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The Virgin Islands Government employees and retirees are learning more about living healthily. The Division of Personnel, together with CIGNA Insurance, launched a wellness campaign for members, and more than 60 people took advantage of gardening classes held on St. Thomas and St. Croix. The University of the Virgin Islands Cooperative Extension Service conducted 3 six-week introductory gardening classes that offered basic instructions on creating and maintaining a home garden. Sixty-three individuals learned about the many benefits of gardening. The Cooperative Extension Service also held a gardening workshop for the Department of Human Services' Head Start Program staffers. Plans are underway to have a garden at every headstart facility territory-wide. Fifty-nine people learned about box garden construction, drip irrigation, garden location, and other relevant points. Gardening workshops were also conducted at the Berg's Home Headstart and the Pathfinders program of the Philadelphia Seventh-Day Adventist Church on St. Thomas.



CES' Extension Agent, Dale Morton, explaining the various types of fertilizers used in home gardens.



Employees of the Division of Personnel attending gardening classes at UVI-CES, St. Croix campus.



Members of the panel included (left to right) Dr. Robert Godfrey, UVI AES Director; Dr. Simon Jones Hendrickson, Professor of Economics/Interim Dean of the College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences; and Senator Terrence "Positive" Nelson.

that the "Buy Local, Eat Local" branding of "Virgin Fresh" fruits and vegetables is unique to the Virgin Islands and should be explored.

Farmer Brown of Sejah Farms stated that agriculture is one of the "greatest mediums for economic growth," but the government needs to invest in agriculture to build infrastructure, which will ensure "year round crop production." Farmers stated that youth should be involved in agriculture for continuity, since the average age of the farmers on both St. Thomas and St. Croix is about 57. Panelists also emphasized that the government should be more proactive in requiring industries to commit to supporting local farmers by buying local produce.



Over one hundred St. Croix Farmers attended the Agricultural Forum held in the UVI Great Hall on the St. Croix campus.

Kofi Boateng, Associate Director/Extension Assistant Professor, UVI CES who introduced the panelists, claimed that the attendance at the forum was "the biggest ever" in Extension forums. A similar attendance was evident on Sunday, June 24 at the opening program followed by workshops, vegetable seedling distribution and an open house.

Extension honored some community members by giving awards to families and groups who have participated and volunteered in UVI Cooperative Extension Service's educational outreach activities over the 40 years. Awardees were as follows:

- Mrs. Sylvia Dorcas Griffin
- Mr. & Mrs. Dale and Yvette Browne
- St. Croix Hiking Association



Mrs. Sylvia Dorcas Griffin receiving the Extension Award for her years of volunteerism and dedication to the Extension Service from UVI President David Hall.



University of the Virgin Islands President, David Hall, speaking at the 40th Anniversary Celebration of the University's land-grant designation.

Mrs. EvaMarie Gibbs-Stevens
Ms. Lyra P. Tonge
Mr. & Mrs. Rodney, Sr. and
Dawn Thomas

Boateng was impressed by the 150 students who attended the open house and learned of the various operations of the Agricultural Experiment Station research facilities. It was an “eye opener,” he said, as students learned of the V.I. forestry, horticulture and biotechnology labs producing plants without disease. Attendees were impressed by President Hall’s reaffirmation of UVI’s commitment

to the Territory as is seen in CES and AES extending themselves to the community.

A retrospective glance at those 40 years has shown that the land-grant program has been “very successful,” Boateng stated. He elaborated by listing the major successes as are seen in the following areas: 1. The Senepol cattle was developed on St. Croix with the assistance of AES research and CES activities; this breed is now known internationally. 2. The AES and CES assisted in the development of the VI White Hair Sheep, which are now acclaimed internationally for their resistance to internal parasites and are used extensively throughout the United States for their superior genetics, and 3. Acquisition of skills in box and container gardening, pesticide training, water quality, watershed management, small livestock production, sewing, parenting, nutrition, and publishing of the “Tropical Fruits of the USVI” poster series, which include their nutritional values. Through these programs, members of the community have been enlightened in various aspects, primarily in healthy eating and meal planning to alleviate the dangers of diabetes and hypertension. The 4-H Youth Development, and the Children, Youth and Families at Risk programs have assisted, and continue to assist, many youth and families, especially in the housing community.

Looking forward, Boateng said the Cooperative Extension Service and Agricultural Experiment Station will continue to offer marketable skills training



Attending the 40th Anniversary Celebration were (left to right) UVI CES Advisory Board member Elridge Thomas, Dr. Karl Wright, UVI Provost; Kwame Garcia, Sr., CES State Director; and Dr. Louis Petersen, Jr., VI Commissioner of Agriculture.



Evannie Jeremiah, Administrative Assistant (left), Sarah Smith, Extension Agent (center); and Marva Austrie, Administrative Assistant serving 40th Anniversary birthday cake.

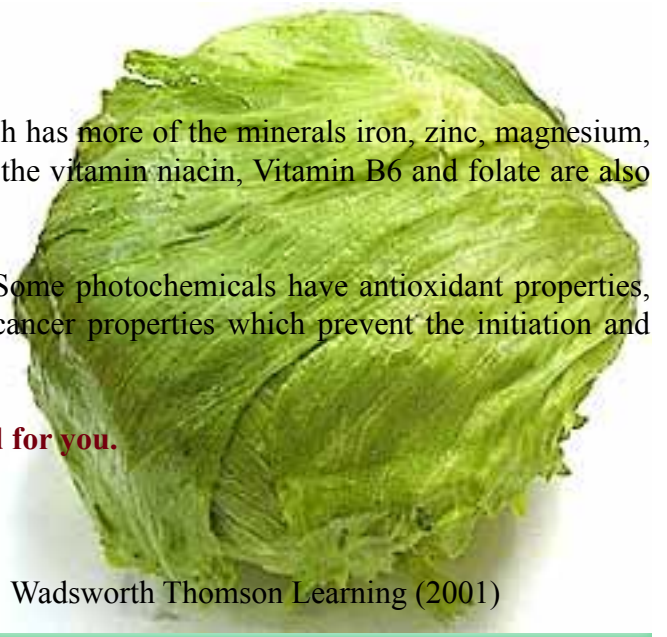


Popeye knew what he was talking about!

Spinach is chock full of minerals and vitamins. Spinach has more of the minerals iron, zinc, magnesium, and potassium than iceberg lettuce. Vitamin A, C and E plus the vitamin niacin, Vitamin B6 and folate are also more abundant in fresh spinach than iceberg lettuce.

Spinach contains more phytochemicals than iceberg lettuce. Some photochemicals have antioxidant properties, protecting against harmful cell damage and others have anticancer properties which prevent the initiation and promotion of cancer.

So copy Popeye when he says “I eats me spinach.” It’s good for you.



Reference – *Personal Nutrition* by Marie A. Boyle Wadsworth Thomson Learning (2001)



Home-grown Salad Mix from a Client in the CES Introduction to Gardening Class

Acting District Supervisor Carlos Robles and CES State Director Mr. Kwame Garcia proudly holding a plate of mixed lettuce grown by one of the students in the Introduction to Gardening Class. Commercial seed vendors sell a special type of seeds called a salad mix. It contains several varieties of lettuce that are harvested for salad when the plants are 2-3 inches high. Lettuce has a variety of tastes, colors, and textures. The Introduction to Gardening class is a part of the Cigna Wellness Program, which comes under the auspices of the VI Government’s Division of Personnel. The wellness program is designed to encourage government employees to take proactive measures in managing their health.

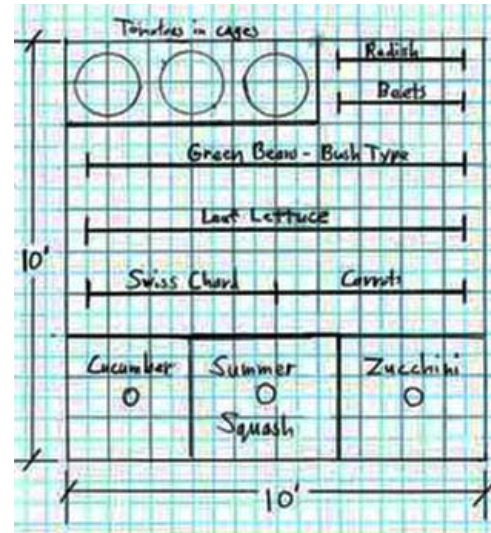
Planning a Vegetable GARDEN

So! You are planning to create a vegetable garden, and you are not sure where to begin!

Here are a few things to consider as you embark on this venture:

1. **Location** – The most ideal place for your garden is an area that gets 4-6 hours of, preferably, first morning sun. Take a look at your yard or porch one morning (two to three hours after sunrise) and see where the first rays of sunlight strike an area. Depending on the orientation of your house, condominium, or apartment, you will have to position your garden to take advantage of the available sun.
2. **Type of Garden** - What type of garden best suits your situation? You may have flat land, which lends itself to rows or even raised beds or box gardens. If you have a slope, then terraces may be the best option to create level places to grow your vegetables. For apartment and condominium dwellers, or for those of you who have poor quality soil, container gardening would be ideal.
3. **Time** – How much time do you have to devote to gardening? This will determine the size of the garden. The more plants you have the more time you will need to devote to properly caring for each plant.
4. **Source of Supplemental Water** - If it doesn't rain for three months, do you have enough supplemental water to irrigate your crops until there is a significant rain event?
5. **Source of Seeds and/or Seedlings** – Seeds and seedlings can be purchased from local plant shops, mail order catalogs, or on the World Wide Web. When purchasing seeds, select packages that have the current year's date on them. Observe whether the business keeps the seeds out in the open and subject to the changes in temperature. Seeds should be kept in cool, temperature-stable conditions, preferably in the crisper section of a refrigerator. Seeds that have been kept in warm conditions and/or are 3-5 years old usually germinate poorly. Do not select seedlings of plants such as tomatoes, eggplants, peppers, and squash if they are 3-5 inches tall and have flowers or small fruits. This means that the seedlings are too old and would most likely not yield well.
6. **Soil Conditions** – Clay soils hold water for a long time after heavy rains. For some plants such as herbs, this may cause root rot. On the other hand, when drought conditions prevail, the clay soils become hard and almost impenetrable. Because of the size of the particles, sandy soils don't retain moisture for long after a rain event. Plants growing under these conditions require irrigation more frequently than clay and loam soils. Adding manure, compost, or other forms of organic matter can help to improve soil quality and fertility.

If you have any questions about gardening, you can call your local Cooperative Extension Service at 693-1080 on St. Thomas, or 692-4080 on St. Croix.

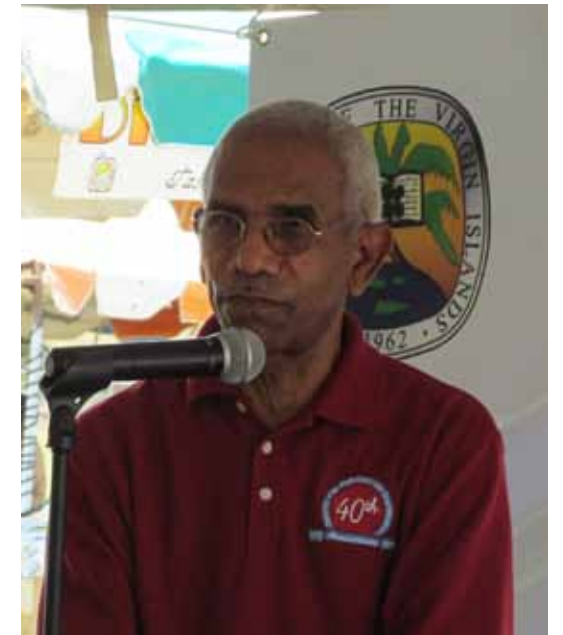


Mid-size garden layout (one square= 6")

that meets the needs of the community. The recently introduced V.I. Beginning Farmers Training Program is another program that targets beginning farmers to fill the void being created by retiring farmers. CES and AES have focused on beginning crop and livestock farmers who are being trained in relevant areas of farming such as agribusiness planning, integrated pest management, financial management, recordkeeping, crop and livestock productions, marketing, and accessing federal programs.

One of Extension's most popular programs is the free computer technology skills training. The number of participants is steadily escalating. From the inception of the training program, over 600 individuals have graduated. The relevant programs have been utilized by 10% of the VI population, and this number does not include interactions at the agriculture fairs, Mango Melee, Woodworkers' Expo, World Food Day, and other activities. In spite of the growing numbers, Dr. Godfrey stated that AES is still "underutilized." He said that AES is "small, but potent," primarily because of the tropical research and its collaboration not only with CES, but with land-grant programs in the USA and other researchers around the world.

According to the State Director of CES, Mr. Kwame Garcia, Sr., the Extension Service is ever mindful of its mission in meeting the needs of the community. To that end, in an attempt to re-train and equip community members for alternate professions, the Extension Service has begun to incorporate programs such as financial management, budgeting, and other skills training courses in its array of programs available to members of the community.



Extension State Director Kwame Garcia, Sr., reiterated the agency's position at the 40th Anniversary Celebration that the Extension Service is mindful of its mission and is implementing programs that meet the needs of Virgin Islands' residents.

UVI MARKS MILESTONE BY REACHING OUT TO COMMUNITY

University of the Virgin Islands President David Hall, speaking Sunday, June 24th at a celebration marking the 40th anniversary of the University's land grant designation, said that a main goal of a land grant college is community outreach and education. And that appears to be exactly what the University was doing that Sunday afternoon with awards ceremonies, educational and agricultural displays, an open house, food, and entertainment on the Albert A. Sheen Campus on St. Croix.

More than two hundred residents were there to listen to the program outside under a tent, to purchase farm products from farmers set up around the parking lot, or to go to the open house inside with tables of information about the various Cooperative Extension Service (CES) and the Agricultural Experiment Station (AES) programs.



Abyssinia Tzaddi, a participant in the Children, Youth and Families At Risk (CYFAR) program, giving the opening prayer at the 40th Anniversary celebration.

Don Bailey, a research specialist in the aquaculture program, had one of the open house displays. He displayed some whole and filleted tilapia grown in large tanks on the campus.

“This is all about the end result and farmers being able to sell their products and make some money,” Bailey said. Bailey was purchasing celery plants from Grantley Samuel’s booth early in the afternoon. Samuel echoed Bailey’s statement. “We need to feed ourselves and make a living at the same time,” Samuel said. “If we don’t farm here we will be in bad shape.” Other farmers with produce and plants for sale included Sylvia Dorcas Griffin and Joan Nelson. Veronica Gordon was selling products she makes from the calabash. Among those selling food were Laurie Samuel selling cakes, and Laverne Bates selling fruit tarts and cookies. Lyra Tonge had her coconut sugarcakes and peanut cakes for sale.

Sue Lakos, from the Extension office, had live chickens and peeps in an educational display, and Amy Hogg had



St. Croix farmer Grantley Samuel selling his produce at the 40th Anniversary Celebration.



Dr. Henry Smith, Vice Provost, Research & Public Service; Mr. Kwame Garcia, Sr., CES State Director; Dr. Karl S. Wright, Provost; and Dr. Louis Petersen, Jr., Commissioner, V.I. Department of Agriculture, planting a Black Olive tree (*Bucida buceras*) on the grounds east of the UVI Research and Extension Center on the Albert A. Sheen Campus, St. Croix. The planting of the Black Olive is in commemoration of the 40th Anniversary Celebration of UVI as a Land-Grant institution, which was held on June 24, 2012.

of trees, and construction of bridges; EvaMarie Gibbs-Stevens for outstanding volunteer service; Lyra Tonge for her involvement in the CES Home Economics program, and Rodney and Dawn Thomas for their involvement in 4-H projects. The College of the Virgin Islands and the University of Guam became Land Grant Institutions of higher learning, when President Richard Nixon signed into law the Education Amendments Act of June 23, 1972. In his remarks, President Hall also pointed out that the University was celebrating its 50th anniversary this year.

sheep intestinal parasites displayed under a microscope. At the UVI Great Hall, workshops were held on growing vegetables and raising poultry in the backyard.

Mathilde Wilson from the Extension Service said CES hopes to take farmers from small gardens to making a living.

After Hall’s remarks, Dr. Louis Petersen, Jr, Commissioner of Agriculture; Dr. Robert Godfrey, Director of the UVI Agricultural Experiment Station; and Dr. Henry H. Smith, Vice Provost for UVI Research and Public Service, also spoke.

Extension awards went to Sylvia Dorcas Griffin, for her consistent participation in CES’ outreaches; Dale and Yvette Browne who have been organizers of workshops, educational projects and training courses; St. Croix Hiking Association whose members have volunteered on a regular basis for Extension projects like Estate Adventure Nature Trail, planting

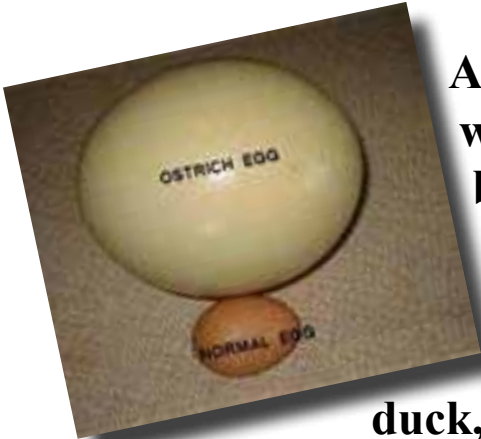
DID YOU KNOW?

Brown eggs and white eggs have the exact same nutrition, just different colored shells.

Fresh eggs, when hard boiled, **will not** peel easily. When making hard boiled eggs use older eggs to solve this problem.



One ostrich egg is the equivalent of 24 chicken eggs.



A fresh egg will lie on the bottom of a pan of water. An older egg will stand on its point on the bottom. An **OLD** egg will float.

All poultry eggs are edible. Some people who cannot eat chicken eggs have no problem with duck, goose, peacock, or guinea fowl eggs.

Egg size is based on the weight of the egg. Sizes that are standard for chicken eggs are: PeeWee, Small, Medium, Large, Extra Large, and Jumbo.

All of the egg’s vitamin A, E and D are in the yolk.

You can tell the date that the eggs in the supermarket were processed by looking at the end of the carton. The first three numbers are the day of the year that the plant packaged them. 001 equals January 1, 032 equals February 1 and so forth.

CES New Employee



Christina Chanes
Program Assistant II
Children, Youth and Families at Risk
(CYFAR)

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Orpha Penn is one of those UVI Cooperative Extension employees whose work behind the scenes augments the public efforts by staff across the programs. Her attention to detail, her organizational skills and her resourcefulness help to keep the office together and the staff on their toes. When program activities converge at the same time, Ms. Penn generally is the stabilizing force in the midst of the chaos helping to bring order and direction to the process. Thanks to her work behind the scenes, the Cooperative Extension Service programs are able to better respond to the needs of our community.



VIRGIN ISLANDS NATIVE TREES

Virgin Islands native plants were featured in a workshop at the UVI's St. John Academic Center. The workshop was held by CES's Natural Resources and Environmental Management Program with Dr. Gary Ray, a former UVI Plant Ecology Professor. Twenty-two attendees enjoyed the slideshow of ornamental and useful native plants presented by Dale Morton, CES Extension Agent, a professional photographer, who has been building his VI native plant photo collection and knowledge of native plants for many years. The slideshow was followed by a discussion of the usefulness of native plant conservation by Dr. Gary Ray who did his doctoral research on the ecology of St. John dry forests and is currently developing a Virgin Islands native plant nursery on St. John. Dr. Ray also devotes much time to regional and federal efforts that support conservation of Virgin Islands native plant communities and endangered plants. Because of the workshop's success and popularity, CES is scheduling similar events on St. Thomas and on St. Croix. For more information on native plants, contact Dale Morton at 340-693-1086.



Ms. Lyra P. Tonge accepting the Extension Award for her volunteerism and dedication to the Extension Service from UVI President David Hall.



Mr. & Mrs. Dale and Yvette Browne accepting the Extension Award for their volunteerism and dedication to the Extension Service from UVI President David Hall.



The family of Mr. & Mrs. Rodney, Sr. & Dawn Thomas accepting the Extension Award for their volunteerism and dedication to the Extension Service from UVI President David Hall.

EXTENSION AWARDEES



Ms. Catherine Prince, President of the St. Croix Hiking Association, accepting the Extension Award for the Association's volunteerism and dedication to the Extension Service from UVI President David Hall.



Mrs. EvaMarie Gibbs-Stevens (center) accepting the Extension Award for her volunteerism and dedication to the Extension Service from UVI President David Hall (right) and Marthious Clavier, Extension Specialist (left).

Anniversary Snap Shots



Even Carmen Wesselhoft, Extension Program Coordinator for St. John, got into the fun and showed off her recently completed silk short sleeve shirt and wrap skirt. “I’ve sewn before, but I decided to join the ladies and it has been wonderful working with them,” said Wesselhoft. “I’m excited to see you all in church.” Last week’s soiree celebrated the 10 students who completed CES’ first clothing class in years, explained acting district supervisor Carlos Robles.

“This is the first sewing class in donkey years we’ve had here,” said Robles. “I’ve been hearing about the excitement around this class. This is one part of what we do at CES: extend services to the community. I am proud and happy you have had the opportunity to do what you did for the past six weeks at a nominal cost of \$10,” Robles said. “Spread the word and let others know that we are here and we are here to serve you. Thanks for allowing us to serve you.”

Wesselhoft vowed to offer additional sewing classes at UVI’s St. John Academic Center. “Sewing will continue on St. John,” she said. “There is more interest out there and the schedule is taking off here at the Center. We’d like to hear about other ideas for classes as well.” Clothing construction instructor Johnson loved working with the students as much as the students enjoyed taking her classes, she explained.

“I really loved working with these ladies,” said Johnson. “I am proud of this group. I would love to come back and do more classes.” CES and UVI’s St. John Academic Center should play a vital role in the community, explained Center director Kent Wessinger. “We want you to know that the Center is around and is here for you and this community,” Wessinger continued. “There is a lot going on here in the fall, but it is my intention to make sure we establish more community classes that elevate St. John and bring us farther as a community.”

“Think about what we can offer to elevate the community and bring the community together,” said the St. John Academic Center director. “It is the institutions of education, which will help us hold on to our culture. We need you to help us to understand what we need to offer; we are listening.” In only four semesters, UVI’s St. John Center has grown from offering no accredited classes to offering 40 classes in the fall. Despite the busyness of the Center is, there will always be space and time for CES. “We will never be too busy to have classes for the community,” said Wessinger. “It shows there is a hunger and a need for these classes. Let this be the first step toward the future.”

Reprinted with permission, By Jaime Elliott, St. John Tradewinds





Clothing Construction students, above, with instructor Dr. Caryl Johnson, center, and Carmen Wesselhoft, Extension Program Coordinator, far left, pose in their new outfits. (St. John Tradewinds News Photo by Jaime Elliott).

ST. JOHN ACTIVITIES

and Pattern Drafting class at the Cooperative Extension Service at the University of the Virgin Islands' St. John Academic Center at The Marketplace.

The students, along with instructor Caryl Johnson, program supervisor of Family Consumer Science and 4-H for the St. Thomas/St. John District, hosted a fashion show and luncheon celebration to show off their work and share their excitement for the class. "I learned a lot and really enjoyed working with everyone," said Sonia Penn, who showed off an ankle length a-line maxi skirt. "It was really interesting and I'd like to do it again."

Many of the students had not sewn in years, including Yvonne Wells, who showed off a flattering fitted waist dress with cap sleeves and impressive pleating around the yolk. "Last time I sewed was in high school about 50 years ago," said Wells. "My mother was a seamstress, but for me it never took. When she passed I said, 'In her remembrance, I will take this class.'"

After completing the class, Wells admitted there was "room for improvement," but was still pleased with her effort. "I'm rather proud of myself," she said. Showing off a skirt, tunic and sash ensemble, Myrtle Callwood said she learned a lot and had a great time in the clothing construction class. "I'm so happy to be here today," said Callwood. "I would like to thank all the ladies. We all worked so well together and had a lot of fun." Rosa Samuel vowed to show off her recently completed short sleeved a-line maxi dress in church. "I have to wear this to church because I'm so proud of it," said Samuel. "The last time I made a dress was in the eighth grade. I didn't remember how to thread a needle or put in a bobbin." CES should offer future clothing construction and pattern making classes, Samuel added. "I hope you do this again because there has been a lot of interest in this," she said. Myrtle Isaac spun around in her a-line knee length skirt with almost completed cotton batik sleeveless top. "My top is not quite finished, but I learned so much in this class," said Isaac. "Sewing is a lot of fun and it eases your mind and makes you relax. I had a lot of fun in this class with all of these ladies." Wanda Burgos showed off a vest made from recycled sofa fabric, complimented by earrings made from buttons.

"I made this vest by recycling pillows on my sofa," said Burgos. "I learned to make my own pattern and I had never even sat in front of a sewing machine before. I had a great time finishing this garment and seeing this through." The class should also be offered to teenagers, Burgos suggested. "It would be interesting to see if this class could be offered to teens," she said. "It's a great thing to start a project and see it through to the end, and I think teens would really benefit from this."





Once again, St. Croix's Annual Mango Melee and Tropical Fruit Festival was a tremendous success. The Summer Fruit Festival was attended by VI residents, as well as many visitors from the mainland and other Caribbean islands. According to Holly Herold, Director of Administration at the St. George Village Botanical Garden, this year's festival attracted approximately 90 exhibitors and 3,500 visitors to the event.

For one attendee, Wendy Keeler, the festival came at a wonderful time. She bought mangoes and other fruits which were used as part of her wedding decorations. Each table had as its centerpiece mangoes and tropical fruits bought at Mango Melee.

As usual, the main exhibit hall was filled with the sweet aroma of at least 60 varieties of mangoes and an array of other tropical fruits—to include the baobab, breadnut, jack fruit, cashew, locust and dragon fruit. Although the festival's primary focus is the growth, production and use of mangoes, the other tropical fruits displayed gave the attendees a glimpse of the economic possibilities that exist by adding value to all of our local fruits.

Of course, what everyone looked forward to was the mango eating contest. They were not disappointed. Kofi Boateng, Associate Director for UVI's Cooperative Extension Service, stirred up the crowd as they cheered the contestants on.



Kofi Boateng getting the crowd ready for the mango eating competition.



Hector Gordon Sr. was the winner of the adult mango eating contest.



Wendy Keeler (left) and Jen Adams with a box filled with mangoes and tropical fruits.

CASSAVA WAFFLES RECIPE

Ingredients

- cassava farina
- cassava flour
- eggs
- baking powder
- oil or butter, water

1 cup cassava farina
1/3 cup cassava flour
1 egg
2 tablespoons liquid coconut oil or melted butter
1 tablespoon baking powder
1 and 1/4 cup cold water

Combine cassava farina, cassava flour, and baking powder. Mix thoroughly. Add water. Mix thoroughly. Add egg. Mix thoroughly. Add liquid coconut oil. Mix thoroughly.

Set electric skillet to highest setting. Pour sufficient mix to cover skillet. When skillet indicates waffle is done, flip waffle over maintaining the preformed pattern and bake for another two minutes.

Original recipe ©eatjamaican.com

CES & SCSEP ASSIST SENIORS IN REALIZING THEIR POTENTIAL



The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is a job-training program exclusively geared to unemployed, low income individuals, 55 or older, with low employment prospects. Through a deliberate approach, it endeavors to promote independence and self-reliance, while preventing isolation among this population, thus delaying or minimizing the need for institutionalization.

Virgin Islands SCSEP, provides the opportunity for our senior citizens to develop technology skills in order to enhance their employability. In the transitioning of seniors from retirement to re-employment, SCSEP endeavors to provide the community with an experienced, qualified, responsible and talented workforce, which can be the sustaining force that enables a company or organization to remain competitive and successful. The age of each SCSEP participant is an asset and the experiences they bring to the workplace are surely a beneficial.

The mission of SCSEP can only be attained if we dismantle the barriers that have kept our clients un- or under-employed and straddling the poverty line. Ultimately, the goal for SCSEP participants is to find employment. Hence, training is of utmost importance in finding a job and remaining employed.

In regards to training, SCSEP could not have had a more suitable partner than the University of the Virgin Islands and its Cooperative Extension Service (CES). Throughout the past year, SCSEP participants have been involved in computer training classes and each time the class ends they ask: "When can we start again?" It is evident that our SCSEP participants are eager to learn and UVI-CES is a good place to foster learning. In the future, SCSEP and UVI-CES will be embarking on a partnership that will provide other training opportunities to the clients of SCSEP.



New Goat Farm Opens on St. Croix



Windsor Farms, once the location of the largest dairy farm on St. Croix, reopened with a flourish on June 26, 2012. It has been reborn as the Windsor Farms Goat Dairy. It celebrated its opening with an open house held at the farm. The owner and operator, Mr. Ken Rodriguez, has a similar farm in Puerto Rico that specializes in using the land to produce several value added goat milk products as well as meat. He feels that this operation can be successfully expanded to St. Croix in light of our agricultural history. With the assistance of UVI Cooperative Extension Service staff and the Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture (VIDOA), he has begun the task of refurbishing the farm and foresees working in conjunction with several small farmers who are interested in starting up goat and sheep herds.



Edgar Austrie, Extension Assistant-Livestock, providing tours to youth groups.

There were many demonstrations at the open house, including goat milking, examples of products made from goat milk like soap, lotion, cheese and candies, and a display by the VIDOA veterinary division. There were also educational tours provided to youth summer camps and other groups hosted by Mr. Edgar Austrie, Extension Assistant-Livestock, with the Agriculture and Natural Resources Program. Attendance at the event was good. Attendees included Governor John DeJongh and Commissioner of Agriculture, Dr. Louis Petersen, as well as many staff members from the University of the Virgin Islands land-grant programs. In addition, there were approximately 450 youth from summer programs and 200 persons from the general St. Croix community who came out to see what was happening. Also several media outlets, both print and television were present. We wish Mr. Rodriguez all the best in this endeavor.



The “*Get in the Groove*” theme this year captured the 4-H Summer Academy’s emphasis on integrating physical education, healthy eating habits and good nutrition into the development of the whole child and healthier families. Over 220 youth, ages 5-14, participated in the six-week summer program, bringing their energy, creativity and eagerness to learn, as they embarked upon the multitude of activities and educational information offered. Youth got an opportunity to examine “first hand” the implications of owning a business and the issues involved in its successful operation. One of the preferred activities included instruction in steel pan—an annual favorite; sewing and modeling were also other favorite choices. In looking at numerous aspects of youth development and keeping with the 4-H motto – “To Make the Best Better,” counselor teams encouraged the campers to explore science, mathematics, marine environment, agriculture, nutrition/cooking, workforce preparedness, journalism, photography and computer technology. Educational field trips and knowledgeable guest speakers provided inspirational and motivational elements to the overall experience.

Another annual activity included the observance of Progressive Farm Safety Day. All aspects of safety were emphasized including safety at home, school, and the greater community. Young people learned the importance of reading labels and exercising caution around chemicals that may be commonly found at home. They also learned about drug prevention, care and humane treatment of animals and fire prevention among other topics.

Parents received a weekly update on camp activities through newsletters as well as at the closing program(s). They got an opportunity to see what their youth learned over the six-week experience. Several displays depicted the activities in which youth had been involved, especially the photographs taken and the robotics and PowerPoint fun. Great learning!!!

