

2.0 Sector/ Policy Review

Agriculture still continues to form the foundation of the productive sector and the rural economy of Belize. At least, 35% of GDP (\$338 million at constant prices) and 41% of total employment is directly dependent on agriculture, fisheries & forestry. This is so because 90% of all manufacturing (which constitutes 17% of GDP and 12% of employment) is based on input (sugar, citrus concentrate, animal feed, agriculture chemical, furniture, jams, jellies, chips, juices, milk, ice cream, sausages, packaging etc) from/for the primary sectors of agriculture, fisheries and forestry. Primary agriculture and fisheries are responsible for 29% of employment and more than 21% of GDP (constant prices).

Table 2: Food & Agriculture Trade Performance 1990-2000 (BZE\$'000)

Category	1990	2002	% Change	Average Per Annum % Change
Agriculture GDP (1984 constant price)	\$ 104,806	\$ 202,552	93%	8%
Food/Agriculture Exports	\$ 177,830	\$ 278,198	56%	5%
Food/Agriculture Imports*	\$ 106,402	\$ 159,236**	49%	3%
Net Agriculture Trade Surplus	\$ 71,428	\$ 123,000 **	73%	10%
Net Trade Surplus/Capita (US\$)	\$ 386.10	\$ 478	90%	
Population	185000	257,310**	39%	2.5%
Tourist Arrivals excl. cruise tourists	86656	199521	130%	8.0 %
Sugar Exports	\$ 92,064	\$ 68,689	-25%	(-2.0%)
Citrus Exports	\$ 43,588	\$ 79,994	83.5%	17.0%
Banana Exports	\$ 19,736	\$ 40,990	107%	10.0%
Marine Exports	\$ 18,172	\$ 67,703	273%	13.0%
Non-Traditional Agriculture Exports	\$ 4,340	\$ 20,852	382%	20.0%
Other Non-Agriculture Exports	\$ 39,010	\$ 44,128	13.1%	2.0%
Total Exports	\$ 216,910	\$ 322,326	48.6%	4.0%

*Includes agriculture inputs (agro-chemical & animal feed)

**Refers to 2001 since data on 2002 not yet available

Source: Policy Unit, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Cooperatives; Central Statistical Office

During the 1990s both macro and sectoral trade development had a positive impact on the agriculture sector; the impact from global trade development was minimal but is creating great long-term uncertainty with respect to traditional markets in the European Union (EU) and the USA. From 1990 to 2001 the contribution of agriculture to GDP increased by more than 5% points (from 16.1% to 21.5%). The increase is largely attributed to the increase in the fisheries sub sector from 2% to 7% of GDP in 2001. Total agriculture export earnings, at current market prices, has increased from \$177.8 million in 1990 to \$278.1 million in 2002. This represents an increase of more than \$ 100 million (56%) and a per annum growth of 5%. On the other hand food/agriculture imports during the 1990s expanded by 3% per annum from \$106.4 million to \$158.9 million in 2001. The trade flow resulted in an increase in the agriculture trade surplus from \$71.4 million to \$123 million (2001) while the per capita net trade surplus increased from \$386 to \$478 (24% increase). All this indicates sustained growth within the agriculture sector together with strengthened food security supply (increased production) and access (increased exports).

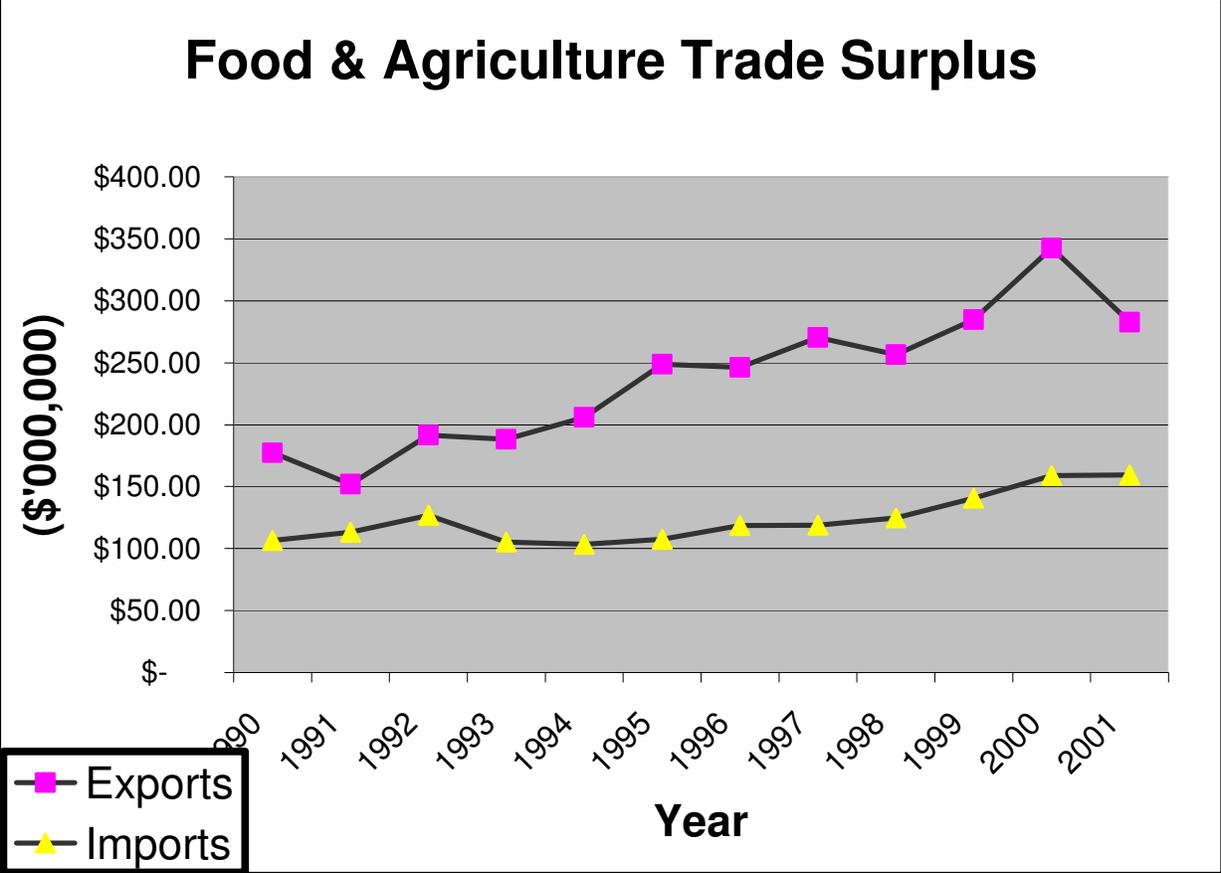


Figure 1
 Source: Policy Unit, MAFC; Central Statistical Office

Belize's export trade is dominated by agricultural exports, particularly the traditional products sugar, bananas, citrus and in recent years marine products. In 2002 total domestic exports amounted to \$322.3 million, of which agricultural exports contributed 86%. The traditional crops (sugar, citrus and bananas) and fish products accounted for 80% of domestic exports and 92% of total agricultural exports (excludes forestry products) while non-traditional agricultural exports (papayas, peanuts, black eye peas, cocoa beans, honey, chicle, and pepper products) accounted for only 8% of agricultural exports.

Export agriculture continues to rely on preferential markets in the European Union, the US, and the Caribbean Community and to a lesser extent Canada. Trade liberalization/ globalization trends such as the Free Trade Area of the Americas, World Trade Organization and other emerging regional/extra-regional integration movements are slowly eroding preferential market access and make it imperative to improve competitiveness and productivity, particularly, in products such as sugar, bananas, and to a lesser extent, citrus. However, even with respect to products catering to the domestic and regional markets in Caricom such as RK beans, cowpeas, rice, and livestock there will be need to achieve significant improvements since potential reductions in the Common External Tariff are becoming more imminent.

Natural disasters contributed to a reduction in agriculture production/exports and to short-term increases in food imports. The aggregate impact from Tropical Storm Roxanne (1995) and Hurricane Keith (2000) in Northern Belize together with tropical storm Chantal and hurricane Iris (2001) in Southern Belize resulted in more than US \$200 million in losses/damages to the agriculture sector alone. These natural disasters caused short-term shortages of domestic commodities such as rice, corn and beans and contributed to reduced exports of shrimp, lobster, papayas and bananas in the corresponding years, apart from damages caused to infrastructure.

2.1 Previous Agricultural Policies: Over the past 15 years Belize's agricultural and food policies basically aimed at creating a dynamic agriculture to meet the country's food needs, create employment and provide foreign exchange earnings. The thrust of the agricultural development strategy focused on promoting a market and export-led growth through diversification of the traditional production base (mainly sugar), import substitution, expanded food production and employment generation. Seven major objectives were targeted in the strategy:

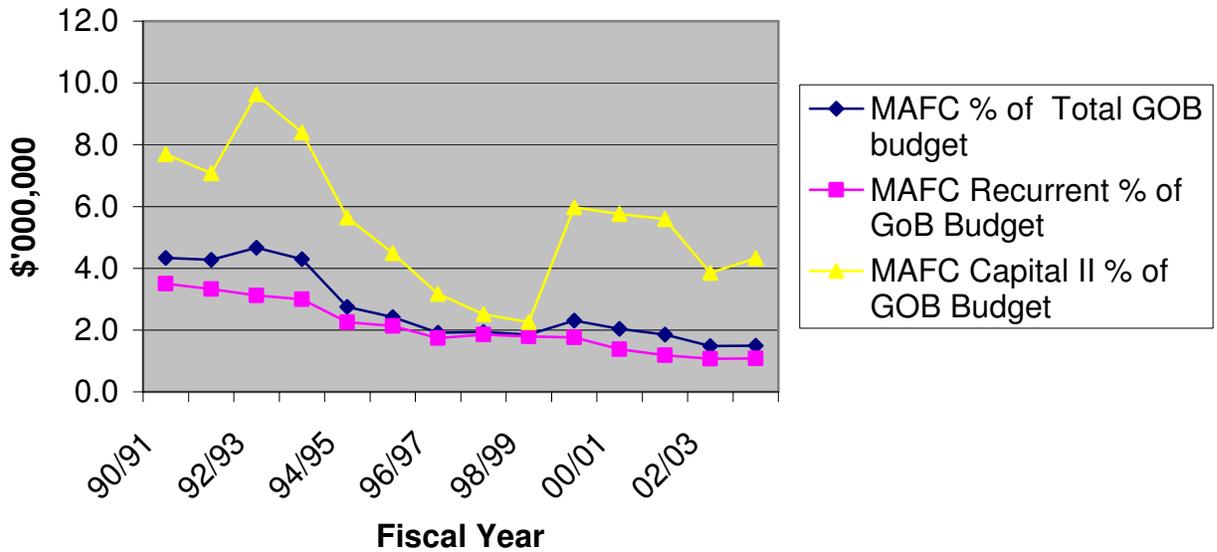
- (i) Greater efficiency in resource allocation in the long run.
- (ii) Minimizing sharp fluctuations in market prices and reducing investment risks and uncertainty in the sector.
- (iii) Promoting specific commodities for which there are identified and growing markets.
- (iv) Achieving a higher level of self-sufficiency in food production.
- (v) Reducing financial outlays of the Government on the sector.
- (vi) Expanding inter-sectoral linkages.
- (vii) Increasing the country's competitiveness in regional (CARICOM) and extra-regional markets.

The Government adopted a series of policy measures to achieve these objectives, most of which are still being implemented. These can be summarized as follows:

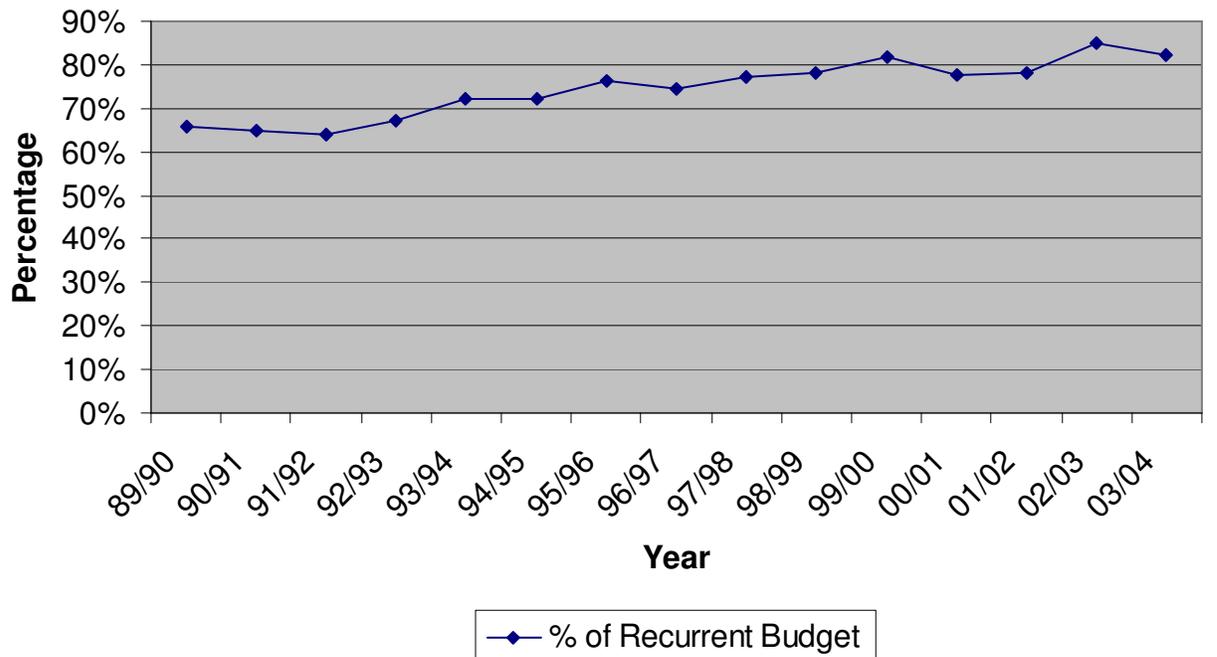
- (i) A marketing and price stabilization program for rice output from southern Belize, which continues to be administered by the Belize Marketing Board (BMB), and involves the purchase of paddy at a guaranteed price. Paddy is then processed into rice and distributed by the BMB at a retail-ceiling price. Import controls were put in place when there is a shortage in domestic supply, with the BMB being the sole distributor of imported rice.
- (ii) Price controls were placed on some basic foods for consumers. Some products subjected to this measure are cheese, powdered milk, cooking oil, rice, flour, and fish, sugar, bread, coffee and RK beans.
- (iii) Import controls (QRs) were implemented on a range of agricultural products to stimulate domestic production. These include a range of fresh fruits and vegetables, meats and meat products as well as some inputs such as animal feed.
- (iv) In the fisheries sector regulations were implemented for minimum size requirements, closed season, licensing requirements and size of catch for certain species in order to avoid depletion of fish stocks.
- (v) Concessional credit was made by institutions such as the Development Finance Corporation but also through other institutions such as NDFB, BEST, HELP-FOR-PROGRESS, BLPA and the Small Farmers Bank.
- (vi) Machinery services were provided by the MAFC, particularly to develop rice production in southern Belize at below-market prices as an incentive for encouraging agricultural activities by small farmers.
- (vii) Production, pricing and marketing arrangements for the three traditional commodities were implemented by the Sugar, Banana and Citrus Control Boards respectively.
- (viii) A diversification program was spearheaded by BABCO for fruit crop production (mainly papaya) and for improving quality and by BEIPU to assist exporters in penetrating external markets; both of these programs were financed by USAID.
- (ix) Policy support was provided to specific areas through various public sector institutions, externally financed projects and development concessions.

2.2 Government Expenditure: Since 1990, the proportion of the Government's budgetary allocation (both recurrent and capital) to agriculture has declined steadily. In 1990/91, \$5.3 million or 3.5% of the total Government's recurrent budget was allocated to the Ministry of Agriculture (MAF). In 2002/2003, this allocation declined to less 1.08 percent. Similarly, the capital budget declined from 7.69% in 1990/91 to 3.85 percent in 2002/03. At the same time, expenditures on personnel costs increased from 66% to 85% of the total Ministry's recurrent budget.

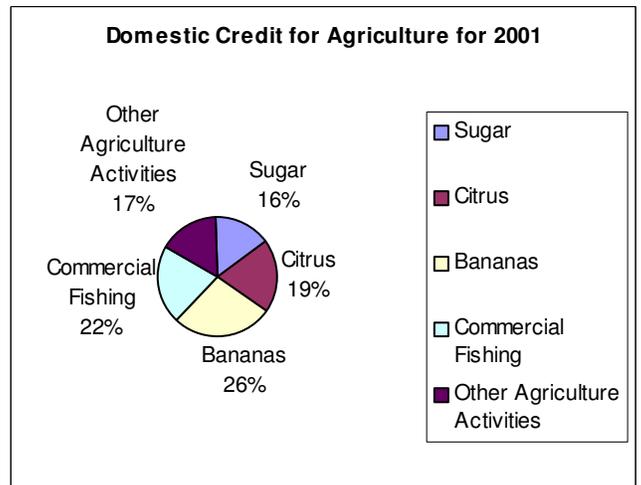
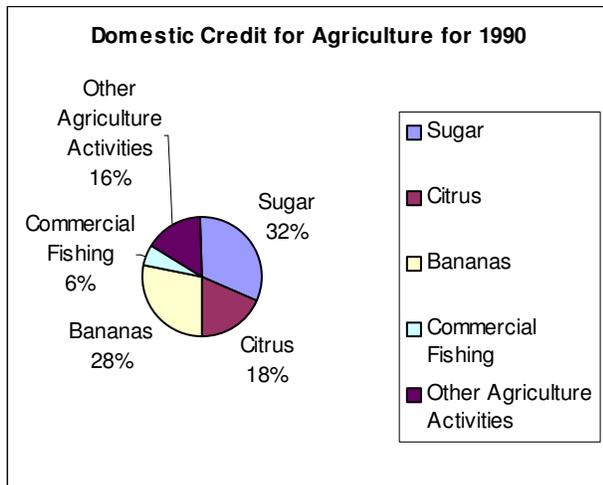
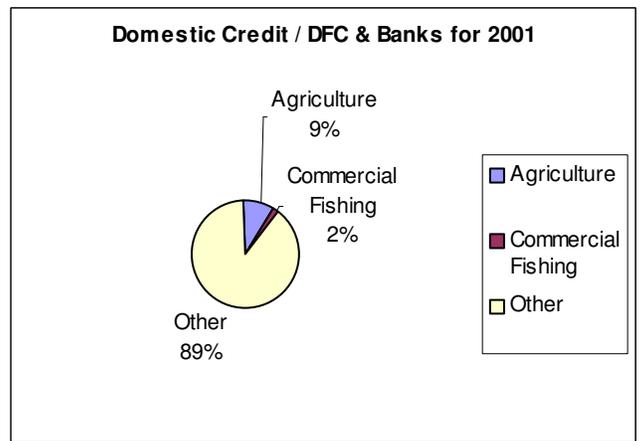
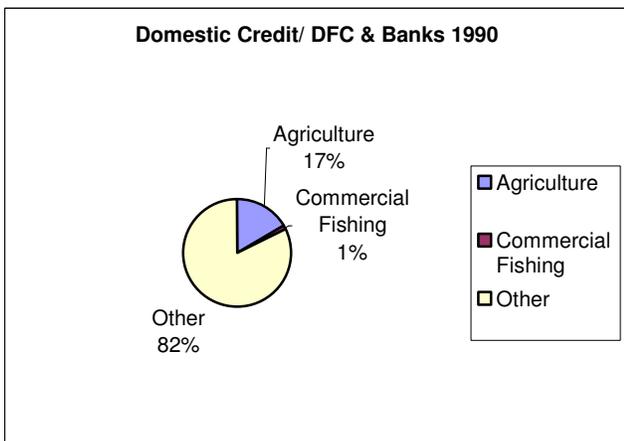
GOB Budgetary Allocation to MAFC



MAFC salaries as % of Recurrent Budget



2.3 Domestic Credit/Financing: In the last 12 years, total commercial credit to agriculture increased by \$61.26 million from \$ 63.54 million to \$ 124.8 million; commercial fishing (includes aquaculture) was responsible for more than \$23 million in additional credit (37% of the total increase). The loan portfolio of both the commercial banks and the DFC show a decline in the proportion going to this sector - from 17.8% to 11.4% for commercial banks and from 39.8% to 13.4% for the DFC. However, most of the credit continues to be targeted towards the traditional sector (sugar, bananas and citrus); within the agriculture sector Commercial banks reduced credit allocation to the traditional export crops from 81% to 69% while for DFC this rate declined from 64.4% to 39%; most of this reallocation was channeled to the aquaculture industry with the percentage going to non-traditional activities remaining stable.



2.4 Belize's Policy Agenda: Belize's development Strategy aims at achieving sustainable development, ensuring that all segments of the population benefit as the country implements sound and comprehensive socio-economic strategies to achieve broad-based economic growth. Poverty reduction from 33% to 28% by 2004 forms the centrepiece of the Government's economic development strategy, which is seeking to bring vulnerable groups into the mainstream of economic activity.

In this context, the policy agenda of the Government includes five main elements and objectives:

- 1. Enhancing and sustaining economic growth:** through establishing and maintaining a stable macroeconomic climate for investment, improving fiscal management, developing an enabling framework for increased private sector participation and modernising economic infrastructure in order to stimulate development in the urban and rural areas of the country. Economic growth will focus on diversification in agriculture, tourism, financial services, data processing and aquaculture farming. The aim is to achieve a real GDP growth of 5%.
- 2. Improving access to quality social services:** through investment and reform in education, healthcare; targeting safety nets for the poor; improving land titling, housing and essential infrastructure in the rural area.
- 3. Modernising the State and improving governance:** through political and public sector reforms, decentralisation of political and management authority, improving the regulatory framework and law enforcement on money laundering and drug trafficking, as well as improving the judiciary.
- 4. Implementing policies and measures for environmentally sustainable development:** through improving natural resources management (land, water and forestry), expansion of sustainable tourism and improving natural disaster prevention and management.
- 5. Ensuring safety and security in Belize:** through establishing peaceful relations with all neighbours, ensuring respect of human rights, improving security and reducing criminality

For the Agriculture sector, Gob is firmly committed to sustainable rural development and sees the agricultural sector (including livestock and fisheries) as providing the economic base for enhanced economic growth of the country, in particular of the rural areas, whilst contributing to poverty alleviation. The agricultural and food policies are accordingly designed to make the agricultural sector more efficient and competitive, while at the same time, contributing to the improvement of the economic and social well being of the population.

The overall Government's agricultural policy is based on the following broad objectives:

- Promoting sustainable agriculture and rural development.
- Increasing the efficiency and competitiveness of the agricultural sector as a whole.
- Accelerating diversification in the production of exports.
- Increasing food production, enhance food security and improve the nutritional status of the population.
- Improving income generation, distribution and equity with enhanced participation of small producers, communities and indigenous groups.
- Strengthen inter-sectoral linkages, in particular with the social sectors of health and education, as well as with the strategy and action plan for poverty eradication.

3.0 Major Challenges/Constraints Facing the Sector

The last agriculture census (1984/1985) indicated a total farm population of 11,000 while the last population census (2000) indicates a preliminary estimate of 16,979 persons owning farm land and 1878 persons involved in fishing/processing. The last poverty assessment survey (1996) indicated that more than 50% of all the poor (25,000 poor households) were regarded as farmers/fishers. The majority of these poor persons may be categorized as small farmers/fishers, indigenous people, women, recent immigrants, and/or practicing slash/burn and catering to the domestic market. It is expected that deeper trade liberalization will further encourage large farming and make it more difficult for small farmers/fishers to continue with their present production systems, particularly small farmers within the sugar and citrus industries.

The main challenge for Belize will be to identify and access markets and then develop or adapt appropriate technologies in order to improve labour productivity, improve quality of product, and formulate cost-effective policies, incentives and services that will provide small farmers/fishers with the capacity and tools required to succeed. Only so will they remain in the rural environment and maintain a link to the agriculture sector while moving out of the vicious cycle of poverty. In this connection, the key issues that must be addressed in moving forward the sector, are:

3.1 Broad Sector

1. Employment & wages: Wages in Belize are higher than those of neighbouring countries. For instant, the rates for unskilled labour are estimated to be about three to four times higher than those in neighbouring Central American countries. In order to deal with this cost/disadvantage the sector normally allows between 15-25% of the entire labour force in agriculture to be migrant temporary workers.

2. Domestic Credit: Most credit from commercial banks and also from the Government's main development bank (Development Finance Corporation) goes to stable and less risky activities within the agriculture sector (main traditional exports), where repayment periods are short and where there is virtually no supervision of borrower activities. This has resulted in small farmers not having easy access or affordable credit. Credit needs to cater to the unique characteristics of farmers by reforming administrative stipulations for its management, such as decentralization, collateral, repayment, supervision, and insurance against risk and uncertainty. The management of credit should not be based on production experience, repayment record and collateral since current lending practices discriminate against subsistence farmers, new farmers, women/youth and those without land ownership rights.

3. Export Credit remains a big constraint for expanding production by small farmers since farmers require cash at point of sale while the intermediaries/exporters are compelled to sell on credit either to local distributors or to export markets. In order for non-traditional exports to expand in any significant/smooth manner the cash flow problem faced by exporters due to lack of an export credit facility will need to be addressed by Government Policy.

4. Food Security: Food import in 2001 was estimated at \$120 million while imported agriculture inputs represented \$38.5 million. Total food/agriculture imports (\$159.2 million) represented 18% of aggregate imports (\$868.1 million). Belize has potential for reducing its food imports in the areas of animal feed, fruits/vegetables and some processed agriculture products. Reduction in imports would require that the agriculture sector engage in:

- Greater linkage between small farmers and agro-processors; this would ensure more stable markets for primary products and provide greater value-added while at the same time assure a given quality of the product which is competitive due to the larger production volume and guaranteed market (contract farming);
- Better organization of producers' associations, cooperatives and other forms of farmer groups so that they may be economically viable in producing/marketing their products; this will also ensure maximum utilization of all capital investments (machinery & infrastructure), for example, storage, irrigation, drainage, land preparation, drying, marketing, and harvesting;
- The primary/agro processing sector needs to have greater linkage with the tourist sector since this represents an export market; this would require that farmers be educated on how the tourist sector operates and on the benefits of capturing this market.
- Counteracting consumer preference in favour of imported processed food. Consumer perception is that locally produced commodities and locally processed products are inferior and that health/quality standards for such products are non-existent and/or not being enforced.

5. Infrastructure: Inadequate infrastructure contributes to high production cost and production inefficiencies which is limiting the growth of agriculture and agro-industrial production by reducing the competitiveness of agriculture products. Some of these infrastructure constraints are the high costs of fuel, utility and telecommunications, relative to those existing in neighbouring Mexico or the USA. Other constraints involve the limiting amount of secondary and feeder roads in the rural areas, which serves to limit production during the rainy season.

6. Plant & Animal Health: Belize, currently, enjoys a high level of agriculture health. In order to maintain its health status Belize will need to improve on its system of inspection and education to avoid the introduction of agriculture disease & pest. Belize will also need to strengthen its ability to handle occasional outbreaks with emergency responses, adequate surveillance and proper eradication programme, quarantine facilities and appropriate regulatory/legal instruments. IDB is financing a project on Plant & Animal Health, which should address these constraints

7. Agro-processing: Agro-processing/value adding is hampered by the high cost of packaging (bags, boxes, containers etc.) due to lack of economies of scale in importing small quantities and lack of knowledge on suppliers of good used equipment/machinery for their respective product line. Small processors are also, generally, not eligible for development concession (tax concession) and/or export processing zone designation since, initially, they just cater to the local market. All of these disparities put small processors at a great disadvantage relative to large producers and also in being able to compete with imported products. All these constraints partly explain why Belize continues to be largely a producer/exporter of primary products and importers of processed agriculture products.

8. Linkage to Tourism: One of the major constraints to food/agriculture in Belize is the small population base (257,310 people) and the wide geographical dispersion of that population. In 2002 tourist arrival in Belize was roughly 199,521 while the cruise ship industry had 319,690 visitors; in 2000 this generated expenditures of \$265 million. The tourist sector represents an export market within the national boundaries of Belize that so far is largely dependent on imported fruits/vegetables and imported processed food products. In order to capture this large potential market it would be necessary for small farmers to be better organized for distribution/marketing and for engaging in production that meets the price/quality demanded; farmers also need to be educated on the concept of contract farming and on the benefits of selling at lower prices but to large/stable markets.

9. Diversification: Diversification has had some success for large farmers (aquaculture, papayas, juices, RK beans and cowpeas). For small farmers there has been little success (hot peppers, organic cocoa, honey, plantains, coco-yam, cassava, rice and corn). Diversification into niche products such as deer rearing, small ruminants, herbs/spices, fresh water aquaculture, coco-yam, cassava, hot peppers and organic fruits/vegetables is one of the strategies which should contribute to the sustainability of small farmers in Belize given the present trends in globalization/trend liberalization. These products represent niche markets that largely are not of interest to the big multi-nationals due to their small size relative to other product lines. Successful diversification into niche markets will require addressing the constraints, which have just been elucidated.

3.2 Agriculture Sub-sector

1. Marketing and storage: The current production/marketing for most fruits/vegetables and other products catering to the domestic market is not sufficiently organized and well developed to supply year round, stable quantities with a uniform product quality. Contributing factors to the status quo are: the seasonal nature of most products due to lack of irrigation, inappropriate production technology, poor packaging, limited processing and value adding, inadequate market standards and grades, lack of adequate marketing agencies, lack of or inadequate storage facilities and deficiencies in the transportation system which does not allow for a regular flow of products all year-round.

2. Small-Scale Agriculture: Small farmers can be divided into milpa producers, who practice shifting cultivation, and permanent cultivators. More than 50% of all farmers in Belize would be considered milpa farmers; furthermore, more than 60% of all rice and corn farmers would also be considered milpa farmers. Small farmers are mostly engaged in producing for both the domestic market and for their own consumption; a large portion of small farmers produce sugar cane and citrus; about 92% of all citrus growers are small farmers (less than 20 acres) producing less than 20% of total production while about 98% of all sugar cane producers are small farmers producing the bulk of the crop. Most small farmers in Belize may be described as poor. Some of the main factors responsible for the low income are: their limited access to inputs/credit and lack of a good distribution network, the limited access to support facilities such as drying, storage, processing, transportation, access to improved varieties developed specifically for the Belizean environment, lack of appropriate technological packages required for optimizing yield, lack of an organized market intelligence system, and regional/central assembling centers/markets

and the small size of the domestic market and prevailing culture and attitude. During 2000, domestic agriculture (non-traditional agriculture) was responsible for more than \$125 million worth of output.

3. Drainage/Irrigation: There is complete dependence on rainfall by small farmers and very limited use of irrigation by even large farmers. Farmers, now, understand the importance of having irrigated agriculture due to their success on a limited scale with new commodities. It is important for credit institutions to be fully supportive of lending long-term for this type of infrastructure investment; in the medium/long-term it will contribute to more competitive and less risky agriculture. Poor drainage, in a similar fashion, has been contributing to a limited cropping season, low yields and low product quality which all results in high fluctuations of farm income. Small farmers understanding of good drainage needs to be increased and credit agencies should be willing to finance this type of activity as a way to reducing risk.

4. Research & Development: Very limited research & development (R&D) is being carried out on crops of interest to small farmer. R&D is needed for the traditional commodities, new and potential exports and particularly for commodities that cater to the domestic market so that gradually they may become competitive in quality and price. Farmers and extension staff must be fully involved in this process so that results can be shared/adopted by farmers.

5. Farming Practices/technology: Most farmers continue to use outdated production practices or equipment. Training and demonstration are required on better farming practices and technology that will build upon indigenous knowledge and allow rural farmers to be competitive. This is a priority for the process of transforming agriculture to a market-driven, producer-organized, technology-conscious and profit-optimizing strategy, practiced and shown to yield results by the Mennonite communities in Belize.

6. Packaging & Grades/Standards: Inadequate and/or non-existent packaging facilities together with a lack of product market requirement (grades/standards) continues to limit expansion of small farmers' subsistence crops – vegetables, root crops, and grains.

7. Land Availability & Security: Land Security continues to remain a constraint for small farmers; most small farmers do not have adequate title to the land which they occupy; Government's Land Administration has limited resources to solve this problem in an expeditious and affordable manner. This has resulted in the present land titling system being overburden with numerous conflicting and overlapping claims and farmers not being able to access capital for investment due to lack of collateral.

Land Availability for agriculture development is limited, in spite, of the small population base. For instance, 44% of all the land (class 5) consists mostly of steep slopes of the Maya mountains and lime karst and is best suited for forest. Another 20% of the land (class 4) has very poor drainage, is shallow and is subject to drought and is best suited for forest management/production. These two types of unsuitable land for agriculture development represent 64% of all land in Belize. The remaining 36% of land is suitable for agriculture development but 16% of this is already being used for sugar, banana, citrus and pasture development; the other 20% is suitable but requires proper management since it is characterized by poor drainage and is

difficult to work due to compaction or shallow depth to bedrock. Most of the latter 20% of land suitable for agriculture is located in Southern Belize where a great majority of small farmers and where poverty is more persistent and widespread. IDB is financing a Land Administration project to address some of these constraints.

3.3 Fisheries Sub-sector

1. Sustainability of Lobster Harvesting: A virtual explosion in the number of licensed fishers together with the enlargement of size and scope of operation of current fishers is putting pressure on the long-term sustainability of the lobster industry.

2. Imported Operational Inputs: Protein concentrate for animal feed is imported together with 30% of all seed stock; the industry needs to be able to obtain reliable supplies of seed stock and soybean concentrate, at competitive prices, in order to ensure its export market.

3. Animal Health: In 1996 the taura virus infected two farms. In 2001 all farms were infected with the taura virus; the virus caused the survival rate for post-larvae to decrease from 65% to 37%; this has caused export/production to be reduced by 44%.

4. Sustainability of Conch Harvesting: Inadequate law enforcement and patrol of the waters due to lack of man-power and facilities, together with continuous disregard for fisheries regulation and inadequate research/monitoring on sustainable production level is posing a threat to the long-term survival of the industry.

5. Sustainability of Small-scale finfish fishers: Small scale fishers are constrained by insufficient resource assessment studies required to determine maximum sustainable yields, need on improving harvesting technologies and greater use of modern equipment, insufficient financial resources to expand beyond the exploited barrier reef and by inadequate regulations and insufficient surveillance/ enforcement capabilities in order to prevent unauthorized utilization of resources by foreigner/local fishers.

3.4 Cooperatives Sub-sector

1. Loan Delinquency/Management: Credit unions are important financial institutions providing financial intermediation services to its members and play a significant role in stimulating the economy within the communities where they operate. Many of them have embarked on production credit for agriculture; they have also assisted numerous enterprises with credit and members with credit for houses and emergencies. Credit union membership exceeds 68,509 while their assets are valued at more than \$196 million with loans outstanding at \$158 million. Nevertheless, the smaller credit unions continue to be plagued by high loan delinquency and significant mismanagement.

2. Illegal Fishing: There are 4 active fishing cooperatives with a total membership of 1,285 and assets of \$20.1 million. In 2000 fishing cooperatives exports exceeded \$19 million; this represents more than 28% of total fish exports. Belize boasts the largest and most successful fishing cooperatives in the CARICOM region; this type of cooperative has been the most

successful in Belize. Threats to fishing cooperatives are from illegal fishing (under-sized fishing, out-of-season fishing, foreign fishing).

3. Financial Mismanagement/Disloyalty: There are 28 active agriculture/ marketing cooperatives with a total membership of, approximately, 700 and gross revenue of \$0.8 million. These societies deal with commodities such as fruits, vegetables, grains, root crops, livestock and dairy products. Some of the main constraints are members' disloyalty in selling his/her product through his/her cooperative, delinquency in loan repayment and mismanagement of cooperative finances.

4.0 Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries

4.1 Description: The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Cooperatives (MAFC) are the lead public sector institution responsible for formulating, executing, monitoring and coordinating the GOB 's agricultural and food policies. The mission of MAFC is **“to enable agriculture and fisheries as the economic pillar of Belize, ensuring food security, generating income and foreign exchange, creating employment, and conserving natural resources, in order to grow the economy, reduce poverty and empower the local populations for sustainable development”** The MAFC has two broad sets of responsibilities and functions: those related to policy and those related to the provision of goods and services. Its policy related activities would comprise the following:

- Formulation, implementation and coordination of sectoral policies, programs and projects that are designed to achieve the GOB's policy objectives.
- Design and execute strategies and programs associated with sub-sector and commodity specific activities.
- Monitoring, evaluation and periodic review of policy and program impacts at the sector and sub-sector levels.
- Provide policy guidance and recommendations to the GOB on issues of the sector.
- Coordinate the Gob's policy initiatives with development and other technical assistance from regional and international organizations.

The MAFC's responsibilities in the provision of goods and services will include:

- Applied research and development in non-traditional crops and livestock activities.
- Provision of extension services.
- Design and management of the regulatory framework relating to agricultural health.
- Education and training.
- Support to the provision of physical infrastructure such as feeder roads, irrigation, transport, storage, drying and marketing facilities.
- Data collection and information management to support planning and decision-making.
- Provision of information on technical matters and market opportunities.
- Facilitate linkages and networking between national institutions and with regional and international organizations.
- Develop an annual planning, programming and budgeting cycle to execute the above responsibilities.