**Impact Statement**

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SCIENCES (CAFS)

FLORIDA AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL UNIVERSITY

TALLAHASSEE FLORIDA 32307

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

“IMPROVING CAFS PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION IN THE CARIBBEAN REGION”

by

Cassel S. Gardner, professor and Center Director

For the

FOOD SYSTEMS LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE (FSLI), RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA.

Agriculture is practiced in many countries in the Caribbean region and account for most of the employment of the labor force and food produced in those countries. In fact until recently (within the last 50 years), agriculture was responsible for a significant the GDP. Most of the income earned from the regions agriculture came through foreign export markets and included items such as citrus, banana, spice, coffee and vegetable crops. Traditionally, developing countries such as those in the Caribbean region base their agriculture practices research results from the developed countries or rely on the knowledge of foreign scientists who are not familiar with environmental conditions and other factors of the region which will impact agricultural productivity. The purpose of my project is to foster collaboration between CAFS governmental leaders and policy makers and agriculture entities and organizations and education institutions in the region. This will result in better recognition of FAMU/ CAFS as premier source for agriculture information and education simultaneously contributing to improvement in the knowledge level of local farmers and other personnel associated with agriculture.

Respective memorandums of understanding will be established and will address action items such as;

* Faculty exchange
* Student recruitment for long and short term training
* FAMU/ CAFS recognition of Caribbean leaders who have made significant contributions to development in the region
* Provision of funding

To ensure and facilitate the above action items we will establish and maintain membership in various organizations and groups in the Caribbean region that address agriculture. For example;

1. The Caribbean food Crop Society (CFCS) \_(currently a member of the advisory board)
2. Caribbean Agricultural Research and development Institute (CARDI)
3. Caribbean Agribusiness Association (CAB)
4. Jamaica Agricultural Society (JAS)
5. Winward Island Farmers Association (WINFA)

This project will be the basis of a long term relationships to be sustained through availability of adequate funding.

Training Mentor:

My mentor for this training will be:

Dr. Robert Taylor, Dean and Director, Land Grant Programs

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