

SPEECH for RADA CEO  
On the SIGNING of  
MEMORANDUM of UNDERSTANDING for the REDI PROJECT  
TUESDAY, MARCH 2, 2010

Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries - Dr. the Honorable Christopher Tufton; Minister of Tourism – Mr. Edmund Bartlett; Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Representative – Dr. Marc Panton; Chairman of Jamaica Social Investment Fund – Mr. Omar Sweeney; Managing Director of the Jamaica Social Investment Fund – Mrs. Scarlett Gillings, CD; World Bank Special Representative – Mr. Badrul Haque; Executive Director of TPDCo – Mr. Earl Patrick; the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture Country Representative – Mrs. Cynthia Currie; Planning Institute of Jamaica Representative – Mrs. Barbara Scott; other distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen:

In the words of William Arthur Woods: “Leadership is based on inspiration, not domination; on cooperation, not intimidation.” Today’s signing of the Memorandum of Understanding for the Rural Economic Development Initiative or REDI Project, for short, is an excellent example of what leadership at its best can accomplish.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA) is happy to be a part of this cooperation with the Jamaica Social Investment Fund and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. The REDI project represents one step in the right direction toward reducing poverty among our Jamaican farmers and in our rural communities.

REDI will start its focus in the parishes of St. Ann; Trelawny; St. James; Hanover; Westmoreland; St. Elizabeth; Manchester and Clarendon; as well as in the Blue Mountain and John Crow Mountain areas. Since it is a national endeavor, REDI will later be available to our other parishes. Through REDI, a group of registered farmers with a viable idea for a sub-project will be able to access the funds and the support they need to make their idea tangible. Ladies and gentlemen, just imagine the possibilities for rural families and our wider Jamaican economy when this becomes a reality across our farming communities from Negril to Morant Point.

I am reminded of the popular adage: “Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day, but teach a man how to fish and he can feed himself for a life-time.” Ladies and gentlemen, the REDI project represents the kind of opportunity governments ought to give their citizens. Like the yam processing facility we opened in Trelawny on Monday of last week, the REDI project is another initiative that will allow Jamaicans to look at farming as a feasible business choice.

As Jamaica’s chief agricultural extension and rural development agency, RADA stands ready to support Jamaica’s farmers in this venture.

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Through our extension officers, RADA will spread the word to farmers about this lucrative opportunity.

RADA will encourage, assess and guide interested farmers toward formulating viable subprojects.

RADA will assist entrepreneurial farmers to qualify for REDI - from assisting them to complete the application forms to assisting them to follow-up with the decision-makers on the status of their applications

RADA will assist farmers to implement their subproject and provide them with technical assistance to effect quantitative and qualitative agricultural production

At no point will RADA leave farmers to find their own way, but we will follow-up to ensure the sustainability of their subprojects

RADA will have the task of supplying monthly progress reports on all subprojects. We will be a part of the Subproject Selection Committee as well as the Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee.

~~RADA is therefore involved in Promoting the REDI project; Registering the farmers;~~  
Monitoring and Training the farmers, and Submitting regular Reports on their progress.

Ladies and gentlemen RADA will rally our farmers to take full advantage of the REDI project because as Dr. Smiley Banton said: "The truth is that all of us attain the greatest success and happiness possible in this life whenever we use our native capacities to their

greatest extent.” The REDI project will provide a circumstance and a framework to allow our farmers to achieve the success and happiness they deserve.

On behalf of the RADA team, I thank \_\_\_\_\_ and all the individuals involved in making this a reality. Thank you.