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Jamaica to pump \$250m into banana exports



Funding is being provided under the European Union-supported Jamaica Banana Accompanying Measures (JBAMs)

Around \$250 million will be put into a project aimed at revitalising banana production for the export market by the Jamaican government.

Funding is being provided under the European Union-supported Jamaica Banana Accompanying Measures (JBAMs), with the Caribbean nation's Banana Board as the implementing agency.

The Banana Export Expansion Programme (BEEP) targets new and existing farmers in the traditional banana-growing parishes of Portland, St Mary and St James.

The \$250m investment by Jamaica's government will go towards land divestment in priority agro parks, off farm irrigation infrastructure, and farm road improvement.

Some \$76.5m will be distributed through JBAMs for material input supplies, Global Good Agricultural Practices (Global GAP) infrastructure, and Fairtrade Labelling Organisations (FLO) certification.

Farmers will receive support from JBAMs in the areas of training, certification, and technology transfer in both production and post-harvest management. They will be required to provide 60 per cent

of their production cost, while the remaining 30 per cent will be provided through the BEEP.

A series of natural disasters in the recent past have severely curtailed Jamaica's banana production, and as a result, the banana export market.

Strong efforts to revitalise the export market, due to high international demand for Jamaican bananas, have resulted in new markets in Canada and Grand Cayman, and a scaled-back resumption of exportation to the United Kingdom, which was suspended in 2008.