



JOAM News

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The Jamaica Organic Agriculture Movement Ltd.

Message from the Chair

I would like to use this opportunity to wish for all present and future members of JOAM, a happy and productive 2007. The start of a new year provides an opportunity for us to reflect on the past and plan for the future and I would like members of JOAM to reflect on JOAM's past and your role in the successes and failures of the organization during 2006.

This honest reflection is necessary if each member is to continue to or begin making a positive contribution to the organization in 2007. There are several members of JOAM who continued to demonstrate the true meaning of volunteerism and to these members I say a big thank you. You are responsible for the continued growth of the organization in 2006. We had some memorable events in 2006 and I am sure these activities enriched the lives of participants.

While we had successes and was able

to involve several members in the building of the organization, we fell short of our targets. We still have a



Dr. Dwight Robinson,
Chair

largely unsatisfied organic market in Jamaica and if we cannot generate the local organic production to satisfy this demand, they will begin looking overseas.

Having interacted with different sectors of JOAM, I have realized

that all members share the goal of increasing organic production for the health of the environment and our people. What we seem to differ on is the route we should take in moving towards this common goal. I would have been very concerned about the sustainability of the organization if we were all in agreement on the route we need to take. I am inspired by the diversity of thought and ask that members not see it as a weakness, but rather as a strength.

As we continue on our path towards building a quality organic agriculture sector, I remind you that the road ahead is much longer than that left behind. However, we dare not turn back. I invite all members of JOAM and my fellow Jamaicans who have an interest in organic agriculture to work with us to ensure that we get to our goal of creating a quality organic agriculture industry in Jamaica.

EXTRA-ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

The next extra-ordinary general meeting (EGM) of the Movement will be held **April 26, 2007** at the Girl's Guide Headquarters at **2 Waterloo Road, Kingston 10**.

The EGM was designed to facilitate direct interaction between the general membership and the executive of JOAM. All the regional and Sub-committee Chairs will present on the status of their charge. The meeting comes a month before the ex-

ecutive goes into its annual retreat and provides an opportunity for the general membership to influence these deliberations. Your participation will be greatly appreciated.

The post of Chair of the North-western region is vacant and it is hoped that an interim Chair will be elected to the post. Members are encouraged to **identify and nominate** persons to represent the Movement in this capacity.

JOAM's Virtual Office

Due to limitations that are yet to be overcome by the Movement, no physical JOAM office is available to accommodate members and well-wishers. As such, stalwart efforts were made to create a website (<http://www.joamltd.org>), which serves as a virtual office for JOAM.

General information about the movement such as its goals and objectives, organizational structure, contact information, membership application form, pre-inspection application forms and well as the inspection process may be found there. In addition, activities relating to the local industry such as developments in the National Organic Enhancement Project out of the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands placed on the website as they develop.

Third Inspector's Training Course

JOAM presents its third inspector's training workshop in collaboration with the Independent Organic Inspector's Association (IOIA) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands (MOAL).

The training course is useful for inspector trainees, certification agency committee members and industry activist who wants to better understand the certification process. A background and knowledge in both conventional and organic agriculture practices are a plus to gain acceptance to the course. Successful candidates must also be able to perform physical and mental inspection processes. The course lasts for 4.5 days and includes classroom instructions on the certification process and organic standards.

The training workshop will be held **June 11-15, 2007 at the Eltham**

Training Centre in St. Ann. While the cost of the training is 57,800 Jamaican Dollars, the MOAL has once again agreed to subsidize the training costs. As such, potential candidates who are **JOAM members and Jamaican residents are allowed to pay only 15,000 JMD** of the tuition.

To register for the course, potential candidates must submit the application form with the required fee and an updated resume. **The deadline for registration is March 26, 2007.** Further information and application forms may be downloaded from the JOAM website at <http://www.joamltd.org> or IOIA at <http://www.ioia.net>.

If there are any additional questions or concerns please email Tracy Ann Logan at tracyann.logan@joamltd.org or call at (876) 842 2177.



BUDDING INSPECTORS CARRYING OUT MOCK INSPECTION DURING LAST YEAR'S INSPECTOR'S TRAINING

**JOAM MEMBERS AND
JAMAICAN RESIDENTS
CAN PAY AS LITTLE AS
25% OF THE FULL
COST TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE BASIC ORGANIC
INSPECTOR'S TRAINING
COURSE**

Members and Regional Activity

JOAM communicates with its regional group through its regional Chair. While the region looks to the Chair for its direction and level of activity, it is incumbent on the members of the region to support the Chair and call for activities in the region.

Members are reminded that while the Chair was designated by them to pilot the region, they also have the power and duty to contact the Chair or any member of the executive body if there is dissatisfaction with the level of activities in the region. The organizational structure and contacts of all members of the executive body are outlined on the JOAM website at <http://www.joamltd.org>.

Wellfest Wellness Festival April 2007

For the third consecutive year, JOAM will be a participant of the Jamaica Wellfest, a wellness festival held in Kingston. This festival allows JOAM and its members to showcase the guiding principles of organic farming and sell organically grown and certified products. The

festival will run from **April 27 - 29, 2007** at Hope Gardens. Members who are interested in tak-



ing advantage of this opportunity are encouraged to **start preparing early** to ensure so that only crops of superior quality will be ready to be showcased at the festival.

Participating members will be expected to assist in the manning of the booth and the sale of their

products. Members should participate in the festival to benefit from the holistic experience it promises.

The Jamaica Organic Agriculture Movement
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Our Mission
To facilitate the development of a sustainable and economically viable organic agriculture sector in Jamaica while maintaining organic integrity, promoting health, environmental consciousness and social responsibility