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PRESS RELEASE

Signing of MOU for the Development of Healthy Banana-Based Snacks

Belmopan, November 4, 2021. 3:00 p.m.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security, and Enterprise, in collaboration with Fyffes, the Banana Growers Association, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health & Wellness, and Our Lady of Bella Vista R.C. School, today, signed a memorandum of understanding for a new school-based pilot project.

The project will provide a well-balanced nutrient supplement for distribution to at-risk groups in Belize. A hundred students in the Stann Creek and Toledo districts will be provided healthy snacks made from local bananas. The fortified product, made from local bananas, will be developed by the Ministry of Agriculture Agro-Processing Unit in Central Farm.

The social safety net of the program is expected to yield many positive benefits to children by improving their health as well as school attendance and grades.

The signatories included Hon. Jose Abelardo Mai, Minister of Agriculture, Food Security, and Enterprise; Hon. Louis Zabaneh, Minister of State, Ministry of Education; Hon. Michel Chebat, Minister of Health & Wellness; Caoimhe Buckley, chief corporate affairs officer, Fyffes; and Vincent Nuñez, principal, Our Lady of Bella Vista R.C. School.

High rates of malnutrition, mainly in the form of stunting and lower than normal weight, have been documented within the southern districts, which have neighboring communities with Fyffes' farms in Belize. The project will be expanded to other schools across Belize based on the results.

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