



PR#148-22

PRESS RELEASE

Local Farmers to Break Carrot Production Records

Belmopan, June 9, 2022. 3:40 p.m.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Enterprise informs that for the first time in the history of Belize, carrot farmers are on track to produce enough carrots to supply the local market for up to 10 months, using improved farming technology and practices, and new varieties. Up until 2020, farmers were only able to supply the local market with carrots for six months.

A total of 2.12 million pounds of carrots is being produced across the country on 206.5 acres in the 10-month period. The ministry applauds the efforts of local farmers, particularly in the carrot-growing communities of Concepcion, Cristo Rey, Patchackan and Xaibe in Corozal; San Carlos and Indian Church in Orange Walk; La Gracia, Seven Miles and San Antonio in Cayo; and Roseville in Stann Creek, for their ability to work together to achieve this milestone.

The ministry categorically states that, at this time, there is no massive oversupply of carrots, only a shift in supply from the rest of the country to San Carlos and Concepcion. Additionally, the ministry notes that it is normal to have between 3% to 5% of losses in carrots in the field. Any attempt to otherwise mislead the Belizean public is pure political mischief and recklessness. The fact that the on-farm wholesale carrot prices have edged up in the last week or two from 35 to 40 cents per pound to between 50 to 60 cents per pound is evidence that there is no massive oversupply as is being claimed in some circles. Retail prices at the markets countrywide remain at around \$1.50 per pound.

Furthermore, since October 2021, the ministry has not issued any new import permits for carrots. Any imported carrot that finds itself on the local market

would therefore be the result of contraband. With the help of other government agencies, the ministry hopes to deter this practice.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Enterprise encourages Belizeans to continue to support the hardworking, rural-based, local farmers who are ensuring food security in the country.

As preparations are made for the new carrot season, which begins in October 2022, farmers are asked to work closely with the ministry's extension service in their area to schedule production and avoid potential over- and undersupply issues.

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