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PRESS RELEASE

Ministry of Agriculture and JICA Host Training Program on Smallholder Horticulture Empowerment and Promotion

Belmopan, February 26, 2024.

The Ministry of Agriculture, in collaboration with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), is hosting a five-day training program on Smallholder Horticulture Empowerment and Promotion (SHEP) in Belize. This initiative is a key component of the Advisory Service on Post-COVID-19 Agriculture Value Chain Improvement, generously funded by the JICA.

Mr. Kenichi Machida, team leader and member of the JICA project, along with Ms. Mika Kawamoto, is overseeing the facilitation of the training held at the Central Farm Tilapia Hatchery Conference Room. Participants include technical officers from the Ministry of Agriculture, farmers, and lecturers from the University of Belize.

The main goal of the training is to provide participants with a deep understanding of the SHEP approach and to empower them with the essential skills for its successful integration into their agricultural practices. Participants will actively contribute to crafting personalized action plans that tackle specific challenges and leverage opportunities within Belize's unique agricultural environment. Throughout the program, participants will have the chance to enrich their learning through hands-on experiences, such as delivering lectures to farmers and engaging in practical SHEP activities. These practical applications guarantee a practical understanding and the effective utilization of the acquired skills in real-world scenarios.

Crafted to empower smallholder farmers with a concentration on market-oriented agriculture and horticulture crops, the SHEP approach endeavors to enhance participants' comprehension of farming as a sustainable business. The training places significant emphasis on instilling crucial marketing and production skills that are essential for success in the ever-evolving agricultural sector. This joint initiative between the Ministry of Agriculture and JICA underscores their shared dedication to strengthening Belize's agricultural domain.

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