



PR#269-26

PRESS RELEASE

Ministry of Agriculture Holds Coconut Training for Cayo Farmers

Belmopan, October 28, 2026.

The Ministry of Agriculture held a comprehensive two-day technical training workshop under the One Country One Priority Product (OCOP) initiative at San Miguel Farms in Esperanza Village, Cayo District, on October 21 and 22, 2026. This capacity-building activity was a collaborative effort involving the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security, and New Growth Industries, the Research Unit, Extension Service, and National Fruit Tree Program team.

The workshop brought together over 40 participants from the Cayo District, including local farmers, technical officers, and prominent agricultural stakeholders from Silk Grass Farms and Citrus Products of Belize Limited (CPBL). The training focused on strengthening participants' knowledge and skills in identifying and managing critical pests and diseases affecting the national coconut industry.

Throughout the session, technical facilitators led in-depth modules covering major agricultural challenges, including the Coconut Weevil, Rhinoceros Beetle, Red Palm Mite, and Coconut Mite. Participants also analysed the biology, symptoms, economic impacts, and management options for devastating diseases such as Red Ring Disease and Bud Rot. The training strongly emphasized the vital role of early detection and routine field monitoring.

The curriculum combined classroom instruction with valuable technical discussions and knowledge-sharing sessions, allowing stakeholders to exchange firsthand experiences and production challenges. To reinforce learning, participants conducted a field exercise at San Miguel Farms, gaining

hands-on experience in assessing and diagnosing the South American Palm Weevil and Red Ring disease.

Special emphasis was placed on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategies to encourage sustainable cultivation. The workshop enhanced the attendees' technical capacity and strengthened cross-sector collaboration among key stakeholders in Belize's coconut sector. The data, practices, and recommendations shared during these two days are expected to significantly improve local pest and disease management, directly supporting the sustainable development of the coconut industry under the OCOP framework.

For more information on upcoming workshop schedules or to register for future sessions, interested participants should contact their respective District Agriculture Office.

Ends

For more information, please contact:

Mr. Enrique Rivas

Enrique.Rivas@agriculture.gov.bz

Fruit Tree Coordinator

Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and New Growth Industries

Mr. Silverio Marin

Silverio.Marin@fao.org

OCOP Focal Point

Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN