

## **Abstract**

The nature of this study was to estimate the demand of local fresh agricultural produce by the tourism sector in Jamaica. This arose out of a mandate given by the Minister of Agriculture encouraging farmers to produce more fresh fruits and vegetables to supply the kitchens of the hotels; an initiative by government to foster stronger and more profitable agriculture-tourism linkages. It had been generally reputed that the tourism sector imports a significant portion of their food. Therefore, the study sought to provide reason for this while critically analyzing the variables affecting supply and demand of fresh produce consumed by tourists.

The research was conducted through the use of secondary data, sourced from government agencies in Jamaica, and other regional and international institutions. The data collected was used to establish a Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) Model. This model was utilized to estimate the tourist demand for fresh fruits and vegetables on a monthly basis. It was also fundamental in analyzing the factors affecting the supply-demand relationship of agricultural products, such as production, rainfall and prices.

The study showed that there were negative correlations between the variables affecting the supply of fresh produce, namely between rainfall and production, and production and prices. The findings indicated that the problem arose from increases in market prices at the end of the year when estimated demand also increased. Therefore, periodic shortfalls in supply, created the requirement for hotels to import to meet tourist demands.