ABSTRACT

This study originated as an elaboration of the Windward
Islands' Extension Communication Research Project which was mounted
in the Windward Islands - Grenada, St. Vincent, St. Lucia and
Dominica. The Audience Inventory utilized the data from
St. Vincent with a view to analyzing a communication process in
action among a sample of banana farmers.

The Utilization System Model was used as the theoretical
framework for the collection and analysis of data. The Model con-
ceptualized the process of communication as an interaction between
three (3) systems - Research System, Extension System and
Clientele System. The Model postulates that for a unit of infor-
mation to move from one system to another it must go through
'barriers'. These barriers are conceptualized as factors which
are likely to prevent the receiver from understanding and using
that unit of information. Four groups of barrier factors were
identified for this study. These were personal factors, communi-
cational factors, farm related factors and attitudinal factors.

The Clientele system,was the one selected for study and the
unit of information was identified as the practices handed down to
the banana farmers by WINBAN through the extension services of the
Banana Association and the Ministry of Agriculture.

A three per cent sample of banana farmers, who exported fruits in 1973, was chosen from among a total population of 4,758 banana farmers.

The analysis of the data revealed that the communication factors and the farm related factors were the most important 'barrier factors' for the efficient dissemination of banana farming information among banana farmers, while the personal factors and the attitudinal factors were found to be insignificantly related to adoption behaviour.

In conclusion, it was recommended that listening posts should be established so that greater use be made of radio, bulletins and journals.