

Young growers learn the value of home gardeneing

MP for the Laventille East/Morvant Constituency Adrian Leonce in collaboration with the Women in Action for the Needy and Destitute (WAND), the House of Angostura and the UWI, has launched a project called the Future Growers Project, where children in primary schools in the area are given the skills and tools to learn how to grow their own food.

A release said this project is geared toward introducing and reinforcing the values that can be gained by growing their own food with particular emphasis on revenue generation, financial savings and health benefits. Eight primary schools in the area were targeted for this initiative, they are Malick Girls RC School, Morvant Epiphany Anglican School, Morvant New Government School, St Dominic's RC School, Lower Morvant Government School, Hockett Baptist School, Success RC School and Chinapoo Government Primary School.



From left to right, Karen Lee Lum of WAND, Laventille East/Morvant MP Adrian Leonce, Michelle Ford from the Laventille East Morvant constituency, Dr Reynold Stone from UWI, Brandon Abraham, Dr Wendy Issac from UWI, Brandon Murphy from UWI and Angostura corporate communications manager Giselle Laronde West.

Workshops have been conducted at each school, from September to November by students and facilitators of the UWI Facility of Food and Agriculture and PCS Nitrogen.

At the workshops, the children

were shown how to create their own hydroponic grow system; the use and benefits. They learned how to grow nutritious leafy crops and received a certificate of participation.

Eventually, each school will be

provided with a hydroponic system unit which the children will use to grow their first batch of produce. Other organisations like FT Farfan and Caribbean Chemicals, have committed to come on board, to provide tools

and seedlings, while Scotiabank and Massy Motors have already contributed financially.

The key objectives of the project are to:

- promote the importance of the agricultural sector in our primary schools;
- Create, facilitate and stimulate the interest of future growers by providing a launching pad for young 'agripreneurs';
- Teach children the value of growing their own food: both from a financial and nutritional perspective;
- Foster home gardening as a sustainable avenue for reducing a family's food bill and also to earn additional revenue.

Eventually, schools will be given the opportunity to sell their produce at a Market Day which will be hosted in the area in 2018. It is hoped that the students will continue to plant at home and encourage their family to follow, eventually providing some extra income or food.