

ABSTRACT

This study was done to assess youth perception of agriculture in Trinidad by cross sectional surveying about 50 upper secondary school students each from five different geographic dispersions. While there are limitations in terms of bias because a census was not used its information still be useful. The research was done to compare previous research on the topic and assess changes if any. The aging agriculture population and little entrance of youths into agriculture has made this study vital in informing the decision of the relevant bodies responsible for agriculture literacy and educational initiatives and young farmer programmes so as to revive the sector which is currently on the decline.

The results shows that many youths have some form of agricultural exposure. Approximately sixty percent (60%) had secondary level education while 76.7% had practical experience through family farms, school, and home gardening. In addition 123 respondents were not aware of agricultural programs offered by the government of which 87.8% perceived that they could benefit from agricultural programs.

Agriculture was held as important by 99.6% of respondents and students generally linked agriculture with other sectors. The major factors that discouraged youths were the perception of it being hard work, lack of access to resources and the level of perceived invest in the sector by government being low.

Knowledge of career opportunities was almost equally divided among respondents. Even some had knowledge of these career opportunities only 51 students expressed interest in agriculture as a career with most of them being from the north eastern rural communities in Trinidad.

As a result there are implications for communication and awareness strategies used. Also increased government investment was recommended along with increased access to resources.