



# GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

## MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, LAND AND FISHERIES

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### **Governance Framework for the Agricultural Finance Support Programme (Agro-Incentive)**

#### **A. Background**

1. **Vision 2030- The National Development Strategy 2016-2030** has identified building globally competitive businesses as one of the thematic areas where development efforts would be focused on the economic transformation of Trinidad and Tobago. A strong, modern competitive agriculture, agro-processing and fisheries sector has the ingredients for successful penetration of regional and international markets and will allow the country to attain diversification and promote economic growth.

2. At the heart of the stability and potential growth of agriculture is the **Policy of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries** (MALF Policy) to reverse decades of poor agricultural land administration and the collapse of land tenure. Current reforms and Government's aggressive approach towards modernizing the system of land administration will bring relief to food producers who are heavily dependent on State land for production. But beyond that, more has to happen on these lands. New techniques, equipment and technology must improve farm efficiency, productivity and lower reliance on labour. Primary production - the traditional form of farm income must now also take advantage of value-added opportunities, driven by consumers too busy to prepare their own food. Increased productivity of the agriculture, agro-processing and fisheries sector can be achieved through more innovative combinations of people, ideas and resources. The right skills and capabilities coupled with Government policy initiatives targeting the prospects for stability and growth can improve the viability of these sectors

#### **B. MALF Policy**

1. To promote these objectives, the Minister of Finance has introduced a new **Agro-Incentive** to be funded in the first year out of an allocation of TT\$20Mn targeting agro-producers with the aim of encouraging rational, efficient and methodical applications to agriculture. A key element of this strategy is

the transformation of the agriculture sector through increased focus on on-farm investments in protected farming; safe and healthy post-harvest packaging; reduction in post-harvest losses; value-added initiatives; agro-processing; renewable energy; climate-smart agriculture; Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), Food Safety Management Systems such as Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) and waste reduction. The incentive may also be available to qualified licensed woodcutters who wish to acquire specialized forestry equipment the advice of the Forestry Division and qualified saw millers who wish to improve health and safety in licensed sawmills under the guidance of the OSH Agency. .

2. The idea of new Agro-Incentive is to encourage new and existing farmers who wish, among other things, to invest in modern farming technology or other efficiency upgrades on their farms to resist the effects of changing weather patterns; reduce labour reliance; introduce more efficient use of water; reduce cost of production or improve health and safety as well as food safety. In addition the Government of Trinidad and Tobago wishes to encourage farmers to improve their breeding stock, pursue value-added initiatives, access research and development support and develop new products. Finally, the Government wishes to encourage younger farmers and provide improved access to the combination of training, land and financing.

3. Successful applicant can access a grant/incentive valued up to TT\$100,000. *In the first year*, priority financial support would be directed to the shift towards protected farming; the introduction of energy-saving and labour saving technology and efficiency improvements; the acquisition of specialized equipment; value-added initiatives, particularly those related to on farm improvements to support the packaging of primary production. Priority will also be given in the first year to brand building; packaging; space expansion; research and product development; protection of intellectual property; and food safety compliance requirements. Grants would not be available for the purchase of vehicles and other non-essentials such as consultancy fees and regional and international travel.

**The specific areas eligible in the first year for funding under the Agro-Incentive are as follows:**

- i. Upgrade of Facilities/Farms- Existing farmers who wish to perform farm upgrades with the intention of reducing labour via mechanization, reducing the cost of production, implementing new technology and improvement of health, safety and food safety in operations.
- ii. New Farm Start-Up for new or younger farmers- the incentive can be used as a guarantee to the Agricultural Development Bank (ADB) to access financing.
- iii. Livestock Farmers for upgrade of breeding stock.
- iv. Dairy Farmers- farm upgrades with the intention of increasing productivity, efficiency and food safety.
- v. Fish and fish processing- for value added activities.

- vi. Licensed woodcutters and saw millers for investment in specialized equipment to improve health and safety

**C. Qualifying Criteria**

1. The Agro-Incentive would be available to agricultural producers who:
  - i. Are registered with the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries as a “farmer”, “fisherman”, “licensed woodcutter”, “licensed saw miller”, or any other form of registration or licensing recognized by the Ministry. In any other case the applicant must be able to demonstrate to the Agro-Incentive Assessment Committee that they are involved in productive agriculture.
  - ii. Possess formal training or certification in agriculture/farming/agri-business/fish processing/forestry from the University of Trinidad and Tobago- Eastern Caribbean Institute of Agriculture and Forestry (ECIAF), the University of the West Indies (UWI), the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries (MALF) or the Caribbean Fisheries Training and Development Institute (CFTDI). Applicants may also be able to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Agro-Incentive Assessment Committee that they possess the appropriate level of experience and expertise in the particular agriculture activity.
  - iii. Have proof of land tenure such as a deed of lease or ownership or approval/ license to occupy. Applicants may also be to demonstrate that they are currently pursuing regularization by the Ministry or any other agency of the State.
  - iv. Wish to enter into value-added activities related to the processing and/or marketing of new products.
  - v. Produce products that can aid in import substitution or access export markets
2. The applications for funding under the Agro-Incentive are to include but not be limited to:
  - i. completed Application Form;
  - ii. evidence of registration with the Ministry;
  - iii. evidence of land tenure or permission to access/occupy or use land;
  - iv. evidence of formal training or certification in agriculture/ farming/ agri-business/fish processing or experience and hands on expertise;
  - v. business plan – where applicable; and
  - vi. any other information capable of supporting the application.

**All necessary planning, approvals and/or permits must be in place before the application can be considered.**

**D. Assessment Criteria**

1. Applications for support under the Agro-Incentive will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

<b>Assessment Criteria</b>	<b>Maximum Points</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
Quality and completeness of documentation	20	Organization information that is commensurate with the eligibility criteria and application requirements.
Alignment with Government and MALF Policy objectives	50	Application should be strongly aligned to the outputs/outcomes of Government and MALF Policy
Value for Money	30	Value for money will be determined by consideration of all aspects of an application, including timeliness, relevance, quality and scope of the project, as well as the potential value and benefits of the proposed activities. The budget should be reasonable and relevant to the eligible project activities
<b>Total</b>	100	

**Proposals must achieve at least 60 points to be approved for funding under the Grant Facility. Applications that do not meet the minimum score for assessment criterion can only be deemed ‘unsuitable for further consideration’ if the quorum of the Assessment Committee agrees.**

#### **E. Agro-Incentive Assessment Committee**

The Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries (MALF) will establish an **Agro-Incentive Assessment Committee** or Committees with a mandate to assess proposals/applications and present recommendations to the Permanent Secretary, MALF. The Committee shall comprise **five (5)** members:

- a. **two (2) representatives** from the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries (MALF) or its agencies;
- b. **one (1)** from the Agricultural Development Bank (ADB),
- c. **one (1)** from the National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation (NAMDEVCO); and
- d. **one (1)** from the Ministry of Finance (MOF).

#### **F. Approval Process**

1. Initial call for applications will be published in the print media and on the websites and social media pages of the MALF and MOF, its affiliated Agencies and the Tobago House of Assembly (THA). The use of media such as television and radio interviews shall also be considered.
2. Applications would be addressed to the Agro-Incentive Assessment Committee and deposited in boxes placed at branches of the Agricultural Development Bank and other places determined

by the Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries. The assessment, approval of applications, disbursement and administration of the grant will be the responsibility of the MOF. As far as possible, the duration of the process from application to approval of financial support for the applicant is **sixty (60)** days. Achievement of this turnaround target will be impacted by the time taken by the applicant to fully supply all the information and documentation required in support of the application.

3. The process for the approval of applications is outlined as follows:
  - a. Proposals are submitted to the Agro-Incentive Assessment Committee for evaluation based on the stipulated criteria. In the event the Committee considers it necessary, the Committee will request additional information or undertake site visits as required to assist in the deliberations.
  - b. The Agro-Incentive Assessment Committee will submit an Evaluation Report with its recommendations to the Permanent Secretary-MALF for onward transmission to the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries for approval. .
  - c. MALF will notify applicant of the outcome of their applications. A Grant Agreement will be executed between the GORTT and the applicant that is to govern the disbursement of funds and any specific terms and conditions that have been approved. Following this, disbursement will be arranged.

**G. Reporting**

1. The Ministry of Finance will monitor and review the performance of the Facility and bi-annual reports are to be submitted for the information of Cabinet.
2. Applicants would send regular financial and performance reports. The Grant Agreement will outline frequency for submission and the contents of the reports.

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**GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO  
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, LAND AND FISHERIES**

**APPLICATION FOR  
AGRICULTURAL FINANCE  
SUPPORT PROGRAMME  
(AGRO-INCENTIVE)**

**APPLICATION FOR AGRICULTURAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT  
PROGRAMME (AGRO-INCENTIVE)**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

1. All relevant sections must be completed and submitted with the requested documents.
2. The completed application form must be signed by the APPLICANT.
3. All completed application forms must be addressed to the Agro-Incentive Assessment Committee- Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries.
4. Applications are to be deposited in boxes placed at branches of the Agricultural Development Bank or other places designated by the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries.

For further information or queries please contact: [agroincentive@gov.tt](mailto:agroincentive@gov.tt)

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**FOR OFFICIAL USE**

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>OFFICER</b>
[ ] Application Form Received		
[ ] All required documents appended		
[ ] Additional documents/information required		
[ ] All additional requirements satisfied		
[ ] Application accepted		
[ ] Report Completed		



**IN THE MATTER OF THE STATUTORY DECLARATIONS ACT**

**CHAPTER 7:04**

I, ..... do solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:

I am located at ....., and in support of this Application for the Agricultural Financial Support Programme, I attach the following documents:

- Application form duly completed
- Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries registration information
- Documents relating to land tenure
- Information on training/certification in agriculture/farming/agri-business/ forestry or fish processing
- Information on experience in agriculture/farming/agri-business/ forestry or fish processing
- Business Plan (where appropriate)
- Other (*please specify*) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Name in BLOCK LETTERS**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

## **GENERAL PARTICULARS**

**(To be completed by ALL applicants)**

1. Name of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

2. Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Telephone No: \_\_\_\_\_

4. E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Type of Agriculture Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Type of Land Tenure:

Leasehold (State)

Freehold (Owned)

Other

Leasehold (Private)

Freehold (Rented)

7. Location of agriculture activity/business:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**8. Investment to date:**

<b>INVESTMENT</b>	<b>(TTD\$)</b>
Land & Building	
Machinery & Equipment	
Working Capital	
Other	
<b>TOTAL</b>	

**9. Annual Production:**

<b>PRODUCTS</b>	<b>ANNUAL</b>		
	<b>Production Quantity</b>	<b>Local Sales Value (\$TTD)</b>	<b>Export Sales Value (\$TTD)</b>

**10. Any other information in support of application:**

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I make this declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true and according to the Statutory Declarations Act and I am aware that if there is any statement in this declaration which is false in fact, which I know or believe to be false or do not believe to be true, I am liable to fine and imprisonment.

Declared to at \_\_\_\_\_ )

In the presence of \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

This day \_\_\_\_\_ of 20\_\_ ) **Declarant**

Before me,

**Commissioner of Affidavits**