

Postharvest Facility

This project was conceptualized by the Department of Agriculture and was constructed as a joint programme with the Public works Department Apprenticeship programme. Under this initiative, young persons are trained in the field of construction and certified by City and Guilds.

The post-harvest building is a facility where farmers can be trained in post-harvest handling and observe appropriate techniques for cleaning, handling, sorting, grading, packing and storing produce. It also has a practical use as it is being used to properly clean, handle, grade and store, fruit and vegetables harvested from the Lower Valley station.



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Nursery

The Department's nursery is responsible for production and sale of vegetable seedlings, herbs and fruit trees to the farming community of the Cayman Islands. Annual seedling production exceeds 80,000 per year. The main types of vegetable seedlings produced are tomatoes, bell peppers, hot peppers, Cayman seasoning peppers, cucumbers etc. The department prides itself on producing locally all the fruit tree varieties that it sells to the public. Main fruit trees propagated are mangoes, avocados, breadfruit, Annona spp. (sweet sop, soursop, custard apple), W.I. cherry, pomegranate etc.



Orchard/ Germplasm

The Department of Agriculture holds one of the largest repositories of fruit tree varieties and Musa spp in the Cayman Islands. The current orchard holds over fifty (50) varieties of mangoes, sixteen (16) varieties of avocados and fifteen (15) types of minor fruit trees (soursop, cashew, June plum, loquat, carambola etc.). Musa spp. germplasm comprises eighteen varieties (mixture of bananas and plantain).



Compost Area

The Department's composting project began in order to compost waste materials from the department's daily operation. It has now expanded into doing basic research of the large influx of Sargassum seaweed that has been plaguing the shorelines. The department is evaluating composting of sargassum as an intervention strategy to be used in crop production. The finished product will be evaluated for nutrient content as well as heavy metals concentration in order to determine the suitability of sargassum in agricultural production.

