

Guyana Marketing Corporation

Presentation by General Manager

at the

Agro Processors Forum

March 28, 2014

Hon Minister Ali Baksh

PS George Jervis

Representatives of Diplomatic missions in Guyana

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FAO REP

President of Guyana Agro Processors Association

Heads of Agencies and Departments of Government agencies

Agro Processors and other food manufacturers

Farmers

Students

Other invitees and persons present

Members of the media

Mr Chairman

Themed ‘*Shaping the future of Agro-Processing in Guyana*’, the Ministry of Agriculture through Guyana Marketing Corporation, and, in collaboration with the Guyana Agro Processors Association is hosting this forum today for us to chart a road map for the agro-processing industry to 2020 and beyond.

Mr Chairman

We are meeting at a time when companies are facing increased competition due to Globalisation. Companies face increasing competition on their domestic markets which was once “their” market. Due to technological advances, changing customer expectations and preferences, regulatory changes, increasing competition, manufacturers are no longer guaranteed their domestic market.

Customers now have the chance to shop around and compare products and prices. Companies, especially small and medium sized companies now find themselves in a global market, even if they do not export or import themselves.

Further, when we consider exporting and entering overseas markets, the challenges increase. There are regulatory requirements, market standards, logistical issues (shipping, etc) and changing customer and consumer preferences to deal with.

Guyana’s Agro-processing sector has responded to these challenges and there are many companies here today whose products are in markets in countries in the Caribbean, North America and Europe. These *companies* also command a significant segment of the local market.

So, why are we here, why are we meeting today? We are meeting because we do not wish to become complacent. We are here because we want to prepare a road

map, a charge, a focus of taking the agro-processing industry to 2020 and beyond. We are here because we want to expand the industry/sector.

That said, I know that there are presentations that will be made here today from the various facets that influence the agro-processing sector in Guyana; regulatory agencies, research, marketing, finance, technical support.

Allow me to reference Michael Porter, the Harvard University Professor who created a model in 1979, on the five competitive forces that are affecting an industry. These are:

- Threat of entry
- Bargaining power of suppliers
- Bargaining power of buyers
- Threat of substitutes
- Industry rivalry

Mr Chairman, colleagues, I trust that as we participate and contribute in today's activities, we take cognizance of these five forces.

Mr Chairman

We are aware that there are challenges! Who doesn't have challenges? Today, I hope that we would focus our energies on overcoming the challenges identified.

May I suggest that we consider the following five points, as we chart our path for the sector to 2020 and beyond:

- Solicit and encourage full participation of all stakeholders;
- Focus on the solutions, rather than the problems;
- Listen to the consumers, the customers; respond to their needs!
- Diversify our product range;
- A vibrant Agro-Processors Association.

Guyana Marketing Corporation, as it has been doing over the many years, stands ready to support the sector through the provision of marketing and business development services, through the Guyana Shop & the Marketing Information Centre.

Mr Chairman, colleagues, I wish the forum every success!

Nizam Hassan

General Manager

Guyana Marketing Corporation

28/03/2014