



SCOTIABANK TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO LIMITED

MEDIA RELEASE

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Scotiabank supports community environmental and food sustainability initiatives

- **Households, children's and special needs homes establish kitchen gardens and grow boxes.**

10,000 households in Southern Trinidad and numerous children's and special needs homes across the country have established kitchen gardens and grow boxes as a result of a seedling distribution initiative supported by the Scotiabank Foundation.

Through a collaboration with the Sustainable Unemployment Reduction Efforts (SURE) Foundation, tomato, patchoi, lettuce, pimento pepper, eggplant and cauliflower seedlings, to name a few, were distributed to help reduce the food bill of the households and homes and encourage healthy eating habits. "Household gardens have many benefits, including and especially, that it improves food security for the members of the home. If all households in T&T plant a small garden, then, food security of the nation improves. Other notable benefits of planting include increased carbon capture, which for an economy like ours, has critical climate change implications. We therefore encourage more persons to plant their own produce which has far reaching effects for the household as well as the nation" commented Rebecca Gookool, President, SURE Foundation.

A further 2,000 families in San Fernando and environs are also benefitting from a youth focused, community initiative through Scotiabank's collaboration with Key of David International (KODI). In encouraging young persons to develop an interest in the agriculture sector as a viable means for providing for themselves and their communities, a vertical hydroponics system was installed, which not only provides these families with green produce, but also equips young people with knowledge of hydroponic farming.

"What I love most about growing vegetables in the hydroponics system is that it takes just a few weeks to see the plants grow once we plant them. I always thought growing food was a long complicated process but I've learned that it can be done in a short period of time, without using harsh chemicals and when it's ready it tastes really good " Indicated Shernica Hamlet, 16 years old, volunteer with the KODI community hydroponics programme.

"With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic locally, we focused our environmental investments on food sustainability initiatives" indicated Gayle Pazos, Managing Director, Scotiabank Trinidad and Tobago. "Food gardening behaviours have taken on a new significance, boosting community cohesion and resilience. We're especially proud to see the younger generations get involved and learn about the importance of healthy living and promoting food sustainability" she concluded.



Youngsters get involved in setting up grow boxes at Mother's Union Children's Home.



Jaydon Stephens - youth volunteer at KODI hydroponics programme inspects the progress of the plants.



Shernica Hamlet - youth volunteer at KODI hydroponics programme shows some of the kale greens produced.



Pimento peppers being picked from a household kitchen garden.

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