



A Hybrid Seminar  
*Indigenous  
and Neglected  
Food Crops*



*A Gateway to  
Sustainable  
Tourism and  
Growth in Africa  
and the Caribbean*

May 8, 2025

12:30-19:00 (SAST)

Organized by AgriLuxe Marketing in partnership  
with The University of Johannesburg, The  
University of the West Indies, and FANRPAN.



## INDIGENOUS & NEGLECTED CROPS: A GATEWAY TO SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND GROWTH IN AFRICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

<b>CONTEXT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ This seminar is the first in a series to promote a wider initiative – AfriCaribbean WILD™<sup>1</sup> Tourism Routes. Given increasing trends in tourism markets for local, healthy “authentic” culinary and cultural experiences, the tourism routes initiative between Africa and the Caribbean aims to promote the regions as sustainable and unique culinary cultural meccas for both international, regional, and domestic travelers and public and private sector investors.</li> <li>▪ The seminar will be in <b>hybrid format</b> (in-person and virtual), with most attendants expected to participate virtually.</li> </ul>
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Highlight the social, economic, and environmental relevance of indigenous, neglected and under-utilized crops to Africa and the Caribbean. More specifically, to promote these African and Caribbean crops and related value-added foods and products as unique ingredients for developing sustainable tourism</li> </ul>
<b>KEY EXPECTED OUTPUTS &amp; OUTCOMES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increased awareness on             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The socio-economic and cultural value of indigenous, neglected and under-utilized crops vis-à-vis sustainable tourism development for the regions</li> <li>○ Opportunities for partnerships between the two regions in promoting indigenous and local foods crops and sustainable tourism</li> <li>○ Opportunities for relevant policy and investment projects</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ A seminar report and next steps</li> </ul>

---

<sup>1</sup> Wholesome. Indigenous. Local. Diverse

**MAY 8, 2025**  
**HYBRID SEMINAR**

---

# INDIGENOUS & NEGLECTED CROPS: A GATEWAY TO SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND GROWTH IN AFRICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

---

## AFRICARIBBEAN WILD TOURISM ROUTES SEMINAR SERIES

**AGENDA:** 12:30-19:00 SAST  
**FACILITATOR:** Mr. Jerry Mabena, CEO, Motsamayi Tourism Group and Chair, Tourism Business Council South Africa.

---

### **12:30-13:15 WELCOME & KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

#### 12:35-12:55 OPENING REMARKS

- Prof. Diane Abraham, Director, School of Tourism and Hospitality, University of Johannesburg
- Dr. Simphiwe Ngqangweni, CEO, National Agricultural Marketing Council, Republic of South Africa (RSA)
- Mr. Tshifhiwa Tshivhengwa, CEO, Tourism Business Council, RSA

#### 12:55-13:15 KEYNOTE ADDRESS

- Mr. Kwakye Donkor, CEO, Africa Tourism Partners

### **13:15-13:45 SETTING THE STAGE**

#### 13:15-13:30 CONCEPTUAL AND OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORKS

*This presentation provides an overview of trends in the tourism markets that are relevant to indigenous and local food crops. It also reviews the food system framework to highlight the benefits of collaboration between Africa and the Caribbean in maximising these market opportunities for achieving their sustainable development goals, namely those linked to food and nutrition security, food import reduction, job creation, and climate change adaptations.*

- Ms. Jeanette Sutherland, Founder, AgriLuxe Marketing

#### 13:30-13:45 BUILDING BRIDGES: STRATEGIES AND LESSONS LEARNED IN CREATING CROSS-BORDER AGRITOURISM ROUTES

*This presentation provides strategic insights gleaned from creating an international tasting trail between the United States and Canada*

- Dr. Lisa Chase, Professor at the University of Vermont Extension, Director of the Vermont Tourism Research Center, past President and current Education Co-Chair of the Global Agritourism Network.

### **13:45-14:45 CASE STUDIES: COUNTRY RESPONSES TO FOOD AND WELLNESS TRENDS IN TOURISM MARKETS**

*Examples of primarily private sector-driven business responses will highlight, among other themes: (i) the key markets targeted; (ii) social and environmental returns on their investments; (iii) challenges in their supply chains; and (iv) the role of smallholder farmers and entrepreneurs and how they can be more efficiently incorporated into agritourism value chains.*

*Fine Dining; Farm-2-Table*

- **Case Study 1:** Mr. Michael Daiber, General Manager, !Khwa ttu, an award-winning San heritage educational center and tourist destination, in the



Western Cape, **South Africa**, transformed its restaurant menu to tell an indigenous story.

- **Case Study 2:** Chef Gracia Bvute, Director & Head Chef, PaBvute Gourmet PVT LTD, specialising in luxury, traditional catering services and bespoke experiences in **Zimbabwe**.

#### *Food Festivals*

- **Case Study 3:** Chef Nyanda Peltier Charles, Founder, WATO Festival, Commonwealth of **Dominica** (celebrating Caribbean local foods and culture)

#### *Specialty Foods; Retail*

- **Case Study 4:** Ms. Retang Phaahla, Co-Founder, Setšong African Tea Crafters, **Limpopo, South Africa** (transforming local flora and fauna into an indigenous brand)
- **Case Study 5:** Ms. Gillian Goddard, Founder, Cross Atlantic Chocolate Collective, (a network of primarily **African-Caribbean** cocoa farmers and artisanal chocolate producers)

#### *Spa and Beauty Treatments*

- **Case Study 6:** Mr. Steve Andrews, Founder, Soothing Touch Spa and The Bamboo Retreat, **Barbados** (pampering agri-style)

14:45-15:00 OPEN DISCUSSION

An opportunity for dialogue through Questions and Answers

### **15:00-16:50 SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS**

15:00-15:10 DEVELOPING AN AUTHENTIC, LOCAL, CULTURALLY DIVERSE FOOD ECOSYSTEM FOR SOUTH AFRICANS AND GLOBAL TOURISTS

This presentation explores key learnings from the development of a food ecosystem at the V&A Waterfront, one of South Africa's premier tourist destinations. Participants will gain insights into how this complex neighbourhood is leveraging market-driven strategies, driving an ambition to foster an example of a just, equitable and sustainable food landscape, benefitting local communities, small-scale farmers and culinary entrepreneurs

- Mr. Henry Mathys, Strategic Programme Manager, V&A Waterfront, Cape Town, **South Africa**.

15:10-15:20 REDEFINING FARM LIFE – REIMAGINING LUXURY

This presentation showcases how farms, traditionally places for food production, can now be hubs for health and wellness experiences, tapping into an emerging market of travellers seeking nature-based therapies, organic foods, and holistic well-being experiences.

- Ms. Shadel Nyack Compton, Managing Director, Belmont Estate, **Grenada**

15:20-15:30 POTENTIAL FOR HERITAGE FOOD TRAILS IN THE CARIBBEAN

This presentation will highlight success stories in food and wellness tourism in selected Caribbean countries and the development of regional heritage trails linking indigenous foods and healing cultures

- Ms. Ena Harvey, Agritourism Specialist

15:30-15:40 LINKING ENTREPRENEURSHIP-AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA AND THE CARIBBEAN: FROM FARM TO TABLE

This presentation will highlight opportunities in the agri-food model to drive entrepreneurial innovations for meeting the demands of both local and global tourism markets.

- Ms. Isolina Boto, Head of Networks and Alliances, COLEAD

15:40-15:50 PROTECTING HERITAGE AND PROMOTING GROWTH: THE ROLE OF GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS (GIs) IN MARKETING INDIGENOUS AND NEGLECTED FOOD CROPS

This presentation will explore how the recognition of these crops with a GI label can elevate their marketing value, attract tourism, and stimulate sustainable local economies. They will also touch on the challenges of establishing such systems and the impact of protecting indigenous knowledge in both the agricultural sector and cultural tourism.

- Mr. Mark Forgenie, Managing Director, Vista Dorado Estates Moruga Hill Rice, **Trinidad and Tobago**

15:50-16:00 **CULTIVATING CONNECTIONS – THE ROLE OF TOUR OPERATORS IN SHAPING AGRITOURISM EXPERIENCES ACROSS AFRICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

The presentation will highlight the role of tour operations in, among other things, facilitating logistics and operations for a competitive agritourism route, marketing and promotion, and creating tailored tourism packages while supporting local community engagements. The presentation will also highlight feasible business collaboration models among tour operators from both regions to ensure the route is successful/competitive.

- Mr. Muthuri Kinyamu, Founder, Turn Up Travel and Board Member, **Kenya** Ecotourism.

16:00-16:10 **IMPROVING CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN AFRICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

Increased and competitive connectivity between the two regions is required for efficient South-South collaboration in maximising opportunities in tourism markets for mainstreaming indigenous food crops. This presentation will provide an update on flight options between Africa and the Caribbean, based on the joint venture between Air Peace and Antigua and Barbuda.

- Ms. Hafsah Abdulsalam, CEO, LIAT 2020, **Antigua and Barbuda**

16:10-16:20 **PROMOTING SOUTH-SOUTH COLLABORATION AND AGRITOURISM TRADE BETWEEN AFRICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

Afreximbank is leading a transformative process to strengthen social and economic ties between Africa and the Caribbean. Facilitating trade and investment is a vital step in this process and has formed a major part of the bank's Diaspora Strategy. This presentation will explore how this support can be leveraged to promote joint investments in establishing an African-Caribbean tourism trade route centred on indigenous and neglected crops bundled with the regions' cultural and creative assets.

- Mr. Okechukwu Ihejirika, Head, Caribbean Office, Afreximbank

16:20-16:50 **TAKING ACTION: MAKING A PITCH**

This presentation will provide an elevator pitch for developing a WILD food safari around homestead communities in Mpumalanga province to complement South Africa's well developed wildlife safari. It will also highlight lessons for integrating indigenous and neglected crops into more mature tourism market segments.

- Mr. Dave Varty, Co-Founder & Co-Owner, Londolozi Private Game Reserve

This presentation shares plans for RICE, Rising in Community Everyday, a proposed festival for promoting communities' uniqueness through culinary art and experiences.

- Chef Chaz Brown, Executive Chef at Garces Events

16:50-17:00 **OPEN DISCUSSION**

An opportunity for dialogue through Questions and Answers

**17:00-18:30 RESPONSES FROM ACADEMIA & DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS**

This session aims to learn more about Academia and Development Partners' agenda, particularly in terms of (i) on-going related activities; (ii) opportunities for collaboration among themselves for increasing efficiencies in delivering related impacts; and (iii) opportunities for new investments to contribute to maximising African and Caribbean indigenous and local food crops for sustainable tourism and development.

16:50-17:30 **ACADEMIA**

- Prof Michael Abberton, Director for West Africa and Head of the Genetic Resources Center, International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and director for IITA's work on neglected crops
- Dr Hema Kesa, Director, Food Evolution Research Laboratory and Senior Lecturer at the School of Tourism and Hospitality, University of Johannesburg
- Dr. Wendy-Ann Isaacs, Head, Department of Food Production, Faculty of Agriculture, University of the West Indies
- Dr. Yolisa Pakela-Jezile, Head, Institute for Tropical and Subtropical Crops and Acting Executive Manager, Crops and Natural Resources, Agricultural Research Council, RSA

17:30-18:30 DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

- Mr. Samuel Kamau Nganga, Upstream Manager, Manufacturing, Agribusiness and Services, International Finance Corporation (IFC)
- Mr. William Castro Rodriguez, Programme Officer and Caribbean Country Manager, International Trade Centre (ITC)
- Ms. Sandra Carvao, Director, Market Intelligence, Policies, and Competitiveness, UN Tourism
- Ms. Shauna Brandon, Rural Development Specialist, Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)
- Ms. Nyabeni Tipo, FAO Representative, Tanzania
- Dr. Wendell Samuel, Sr. Advisor to the Secretary General and Acting Assistant Secretary General, Directorate for Economic Integration, Innovation, and Development, CARICOM Secretariat
- Dr. Tshildzi Madzivhandila, CEO, FANRPAN and President-appointed Member of the National Planning Commission.

18:30-18:45 OPEN DISCUSSION

An opportunity for dialogue through Questions and Answers

18:45-19:00 CLOSING REMARKS

Closing remarks from partners