

**AUDITOR GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT
PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT**

MANAGEMENT OF THE PRODUCTION INCENTIVE PROGRAMME BY RADA

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The Department is headed by the Auditor General, Pamela Monroe Ellis, who submits her reports to the Speaker of the House of Representatives in accordance with Section 122 of the Constitution of Jamaica and Section 29 of the Financial Administration and Audit Act.

This report was prepared by the Auditor General's Department of Jamaica for presentation to the House of Representatives.



AUDITOR GENERAL'S
DEPARTMENT OF JAMAICA

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Audit at a Glance

MANAGEMENT OF THE PRODUCTION INCENTIVE PROGRAMME BY RADA

Key Data



- RADA received funding of \$2.9 billion and spent \$2.8 billion to carry out activities under the PIP for financial years 2019-20 to 2023-24.
- MoAFM received from the Kingdom of Morocco 72,000 bags of fertiliser valued at \$349.4 million for distribution to farmers.
- 44% of PIP expenditure of \$2.8 billion was invested in procurement of seeds and agrochemicals
- PIP provides support to over 10,000 farmers island wide.
- PIP was implemented across 13 parishes.

Main Findings

- RADA developed a tool to select priority crops for resource allocation, but 54 per cent of the chosen crops lacked clear targets, to accurately track and effectively assess performance.
- RADA aligned its procurement plan with planting seasons, to provide essential farm inputs.
- RADA established Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for the distribution of agricultural inputs but was unable to confirm that the fertiliser allocated to MPs for subsequent distribution reached the intended farmers.
- RADA's ability to validate production activities reported by extension officers was significantly constrained by a shortage of manpower.



Conclusion & Recommendation



Given the agricultural sector's vulnerability to external factors such as weather, pests, and economic challenges, RADA must focus on strengthening areas within its control. This includes improving crop selection with clear targets, strengthening beneficiary selection processes, and establishing a robust inventory management system to ensure thorough record-keeping for farm inputs acquisition and distribution.

Both MoAFM and RADA must ensure that their practices adhere to the established policies, the FAA Act, and its associated Instructions. Otherwise, the accounting and accountable officers are exposed to the risk of surcharge.

Auditor General's Overview

Agriculture has always been a cornerstone of Jamaica's economy, contributing 9.02 per cent to the GDP in 2023, according to the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN). To boost production, productivity, and food security, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Mining (MoAFM) through its Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA), launched the Production Incentive Programme (PIP), which aimed to strengthen agricultural productivity, food security, income generation, foreign exchange, and rural development. Achieving this goal relies heavily on the effective management and use of agricultural inputs, such as fertilisers and seeds.

A performance audit was conducted to assess RADA's efficiency and effectiveness in managing and monitoring the PIP, aimed at strengthening agricultural productivity, food security, income generation, foreign exchange, and rural development. The audit revealed shortcomings in target design and performance monitoring, as well as adherence to protocols for beneficiary selection and the distribution of farm inputs. For example, while RADA's annual procurement plan for supplying key farm inputs to farmers was aligned with the planting seasons, 54 per cent of the selected crops did not have clearly defined targets to enable RADA to accurately track and assess output performance. Further, RADA's ability to monitor performance was partly undermined by staff capacity constraints, while deficiencies in internal controls for the distribution of Moroccan fertiliser, compromised the transparency and accountability mechanisms.

RADA and the MoAFM must be commended for its efforts to strengthen resource allocation and crop prioritization by introducing an additional crop selection tool. However, beyond that, the overall effectiveness of the PIP requires a comprehensive approach. I therefore encourage RADA and its portfolio Ministry to consider implementing my recommendations as they seek to achieve the broader strategic objectives of the PIP.

Thanks to the management and staff of MoAFM and RADA, for the cooperation and assistance given to my staff, during the audit.



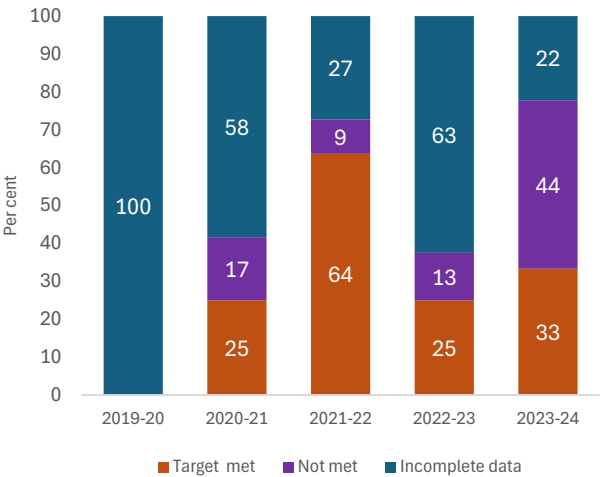
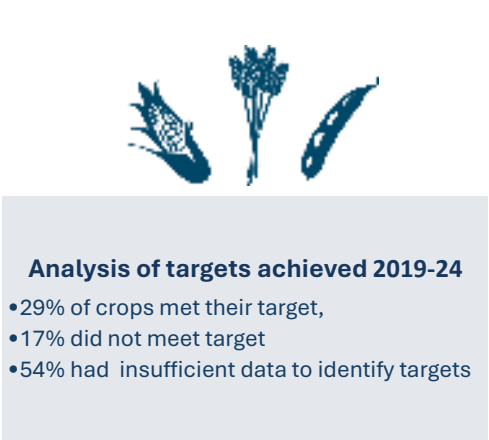
Pamela Monroe Ellis, FCCA, FCA
Auditor General

Executive Summary

The Production Incentive Programme (PIP), managed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Mining (MoAFM) and implemented by RADA (Rural Agricultural Development Authority), is a key component of Jamaica's agricultural strategy to strengthen agricultural productivity, food security, income generation, foreign exchange, and rural development.

A key strategy of the PIP is the identification of priority crops by the Ministry and RADA that will increase agricultural productivity and output, which would lead to food security, increase farmers income and promote rural development. To achieve the stated PIP objective, the Ministry and RADA provided key farm inputs, such as fertiliser and seeds to farmers and field extension and monitoring services.

RADA's records showed that on average for the five-year review period, 29 per cent of crops successfully met their targets, 17 per cent did not meet the stated targets, while 54 per cent did not have clearly defined targets. For example, no targets were presented for 2019-20, while for 2023-24, three of the nine priority crops met their established targets, four did not, and sufficient data was not provided for two crops. Further, priority crops, including Irish potato, onion, and cassava, also underperformed due to adverse weather conditions, pest infestations, and diseases. Accordingly, the absence of clearly defined targets for more than half of the priority crops, coupled with the inconsistency in crop performance, complicated RADA's efforts to effectively track and assess the performance of the PIP. These factors also undermined RADA's ability to develop a comprehensive and effective strategy to address the multifaceted challenges faced by the farmers, including environmental factors and pest management.



WHAT WE FOUND

- 1. RADA had a tool¹ for the selection of priority crops for resource allocation; however, 54 per cent of the selected crops did not have clearly defined targets to enable RADA to accurately track and assess the Programme's performance.**

The MoAFM and RADA selected priority crops based on factors such as consumer demand, local and export needs, import substitution, climate resilience, national food security, sustainability, and economic considerations. However, RADA records showed that 54 per cent of the crops had no clearly identifiable targets to accurately track and effectively assess the Programme's performance. Whereas 46 per cent of crops had targets, only 29 per cent successfully met the stated targets, while 17 per cent underperformed due to adverse weather conditions, pest infestations, and diseases. In 2023, RADA introduced an additional crop selection tool to guide resource allocation and crop prioritization, which considered economic, socio-political, and environmental factors that were aligned with MoAFM's strategic direction. Of eight priority crops identified by the new tool, only two were approved and funded in the 2024-25 PIP Plan. However, RADA indicated that the MoAFM incorporated other crops based on strategic priorities and production data. Nonetheless, proper evaluation of the tool's effectiveness will be essential if the broader strategic objectives of economic growth, climate adaptation, and food security are to be met.

- 2. RADA's ability to effectively monitor and assess the performance of the PIP was partly undermined by staff shortfalls and the absence of clearly established targets.**

RADA provided field extension services for agricultural development programmes within designated areas through its extension officers, who conduct farm inspections and field surveillance visits. While extension officers offered valuable guidance and assistance to farmers, we noted a significant imbalance in the ratio to farmers which undermined RADA's ability to effectively report on PIP performance which was compounded by the limited targets for the priority crops. In its Strategic Business Plan for 2022-2023, RADA cited the high ratio of farmers to extension officers, as a key weakness. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the recommended ratio is one extension officer for every 800 to 1,000 farmers². However, at the time of our audit, RADA reported a ratio of one extension officer for every 1,500 to 2,000 farmers. Notwithstanding, RADA reported that for the 2019-20 to 2023-24 period, its extension officers exceeded their annual targets for field visits, particularly in farm inspections and crop care, from a low of 7 per cent to a high of 144 per cent.

While RADA reported on the performance of the PIP programmes at the parish level, its ability to undertake monitoring visits to validate the PIP activities reported by the extension officers, was

¹ Value Chain Commodity Selection Matrix Tool: Priority Commodities

² FAO website (www.fao.org/home/search/en/?q=recommended+Ratio+for+extension+officer+to+farmers)

severely hampered by manpower limitation. The Strategic Planning, Performance & Project Management Unit which was tasked with this activity to support decision-making by the MoAFM and Board, had only one assigned officer. Consequently only 24 of the planned 36 field visits were completed during the periods 2020-21, 2021-22, and 2023-24.

3. RADA's annual procurement plan for supplying key farm inputs to farmers was aligned with the planting seasons; and despite 84 per cent of contracts experiencing delivery delays, all inputs were ultimately delivered within the relevant planting periods.

RADA's annual procurement plan for key inputs was strategically aligned with specific planting seasons to optimize productivity. We reviewed 19 contracts for two priority projects, Irish potatoes and onions, valued at \$554.19 million, and found one contract where deliverables were received within the stipulated period and for 16 contracts, the deliverables were delayed by an average of 47 days. Notwithstanding, the procured farm inputs were delivered within the relevant planting seasons. RADA explained that for the remaining 2 contracts, the Authority is in the process of reviewing their records to present the outstanding delivery records. Nonetheless, we are unclear how RADA could be assured that it received full value for its investment in farm inputs, in a context where it did not have clear targets against which to assess performance of the PIP.

4. RADA established Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for the distribution of agricultural inputs but was unable to confirm that the fertiliser allocated to MPs for subsequent distribution reached the intended farmers.

- i. RADA Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) stipulated that its Agricultural Extension Officers or Agricultural Assistants should compile beneficiary lists based on an assessment of needs recorded on a Beneficiary Assessment & Verification Form (BA&VF), that must be verified by the Parish Manager or Deputy. Only registered and suitable farmers may receive these benefits which are distributed either directly from RADA, an approved supplier or from the parish office. Beneficiaries are recommended by stakeholders such as extension officers, MPs and various agricultural groups. The BA&VF must be signed by the above-mentioned officers to confirm that beneficiaries have been accurately recommended and approved to receive farm inputs. Of 752 BA&VFs reviewed, only 49 did not have the necessary signatures to verify approval for the receipt of farm inputs. However, RADA did not provide evidence regarding the number of farmers that were not approved, as the BA&VF only recorded the names of farmers who were successful.
- ii. A special audit of RADA's records` revealed that from 2019 to 2023, 11,026 bags of fertiliser, valued at \$54 million, acquired under a bilateral arrangement with the Kingdom of Morocco, were allocated directly to MPs for further distribution to farmers. However, RADA did not provide evidence of the controls in place, to ensure that the fertiliser reached the intended farmers. RADA indicated that despite repeated requests, MPs did not submit distribution sheets detailing recipients. Accordingly, RADA could not provide proof that the

fertiliser reached legitimate farmers or that proper measures were followed. The veracity of the distribution process was further compromised as extension officers, responsible for assessing the needs of farmers, were not involved in the process. The Accountable Officer at RADA has a responsibility for the collection, receipt, custody and issue of public property, such as the Moroccan fertiliser and ought to have instituted the requisite controls to govern the distribution of fertiliser to the farmers, whether it is being done directly by RADA or through Members of Parliament (**See Part 4 - RADA's Distribution of Moroccan Fertiliser**).

- iii. Review of RADA's distribution lists revealed that between 2019 and 2023, 3,809 bags of fertiliser, representing 5.3 per cent of the total 72,000 received were classified as bad and subsequently discarded. However, this information was not reflected in its manual records as RADA did not have in place a proper inventory management system to account for the supplies held at its warehouse.

RADA's Response:

"In keeping with the long-established practice within RADA, MPs have always been involved in the distribution of inputs to farmers in collaboration with RADA. For the Moroccan fertiliser the instruction on the allocation to MPs was provided by a technical team. Similarly, when contacted the PS said that he had no interaction or discussion regarding or verifying any communication from his office about MP or other persons being included on the list for fertiliser distribution. Neither is he aware of any directives or instruction being issued by his office in this regard."

5. RADA's inventory management of the distribution of Moroccan fertiliser to farmers revealed the absence of proper segregation of duties while stock records were not maintained on a perpetual inventory basis. RADA initially assigned three officers to manage the warehouse; however, due to "poor working conditions" related to staff accommodation, only one officer was available to oversee inventory management. This officer was tasked with not only managing the inventory but also securing the warehouse and adjusting inventory levels through distribution, as well as handling write-offs and the disposal of damaged or dumped fertiliser. Segregation of duties helps prevent errors and fraud by ensuring different individuals manage key tasks. Also, we saw no evidence that RADA conducted reviews of the inventory records to determine the accuracy of the fertiliser stock. This was highlighted by the MoAFM's Internal Audit Unit in its Report dated December 2019. The absence of segregation of duties was evident in the receipt of two additional shipments of fertiliser in 2022 and 2023. Further, the inventory records for fertiliser presented were not prepared on a perpetual inventory basis, to show receipt, distribution and balance. For instance, RADA reported that there are 800 bags of fertiliser at AIC warehouse as of August 2024; however, this could not be corroborated by RADA records. RADA presented a manual record showing only the date, quantity

distributed by grade, vehicle details, signature of issuing officer and signature of the driver collecting fertiliser on behalf of parish offices, government agencies and Members of Parliament (MP).

CONCLUSION

Given the agricultural sector's vulnerability to external factors such as weather, pests, and economic challenges, RADA must focus on strengthening areas within its control. This includes improving crop selection with clear targets, strengthening beneficiary selection processes, and establishing a robust inventory management system to ensure thorough record-keeping for farm inputs acquisition and distribution. Also, both the MoAFM and RADA must ensure that their practices adhere to the established policies, the FAA Act, and its associated Instructions. Otherwise, the accounting and accountable officers are exposed to the risk of surcharge.

OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE

To address the identified issues with PIP and enhance its overall effectiveness, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Enhance the Crop Selection Process by Setting Clear Targets and Creating a Strong Evaluation System:

To make the Programme more effective, it is crucial to ensure that every selected crop has clear and measurable targets that align with economic, environmental, and food security objectives. Along with this, a solid system for monitoring and evaluating progress should be put in place to track performance and make adjustments as needed. This will help RADA ensure that resources are focused on the crops that will have the biggest impact on the country's priorities and resilience.



2. Strengthen Beneficiary Selection:

Implement robust procedures to document and approve selection criteria for beneficiaries, ensuring transparency and accountability across the board.

3. Improve Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting:

Develop clear, measurable key performance indicators (KPIs), increase the frequency of field visits, and deliver comprehensive performance reports. Ensure the Board receives detailed updates and conducts thorough evaluations. Implement an accountability mechanism for managing government resources, including segregation of duties and mandatory reporting to the MoAFM, to strengthen oversight of RADA's distribution activities.

Background

1.1. The Production Incentive Programme (PIP) is a key initiative by the Government designed to enhance agricultural productivity island-wide. Managed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Mining (MoAFM) in collaboration with other agencies, the programme focuses on implementing strategies to boost agricultural output. It provides comprehensive support to over 10,000 farmers island wide, offering access to modern technologies, and expert guidance, all aimed at fostering success in an evolving agricultural sector.

1.2. PIP seeks to achieve several important goals:

- Ensuring food security
- Increasing income generation for farmers
- Boosting foreign exchange
- Promoting rural development

1.3. To support these objectives, the programme offers a range of incentives for farmers, including:

- Planting materials (seeds and seedlings)
- Agro chemicals (including fertilisers)
- Equipment and infrastructure support
- Tillage and land clearance assistance
- Training and capacity-building session

1.4. The PIP aligns with the Vision 2030 Jamaica National Development Plan and supports the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. It specifically contributes to efforts aimed at achieving food security and self-sufficiency by 2030, with a focus on doubling agricultural productivity and increasing incomes for small-scale food producers and family farmers.

Figure 1 Alignment of PIP with Vision 2030 and SDGs



Source: AuGD's compilation

RADA's implementation of the PIP – Funding and Expenditure

1.5. As shown in **Table 1**, RADA received \$2.941 billion from the MoAFM during the review period for the management of PIP. However, deficiencies in RADA's record-keeping hindered our ability to verify the accuracy of expenditures. At the time of our audit, the only audited financial statements available related to 2019-2020, while the financial statements for 2020-21 through 2022-23 were still being reviewed by their auditors. During our Exit Meeting on October 29, 2024, RADA informed AuGD that the finalization of the 2020-21 statements, initially scheduled for October 31, 2024, was delayed. RADA also indicated that efforts were being made to complete the financials for 2021-22 and 2022-23 within the next 12 months, but no definitive timeline for their completion was provided.

Table 1: RADA budget request, receipt and expenditure for PIP 2019 -2024

| Year | Budget Request (as per PIP Plan) \$ | Budget Allocation & Funds received (by MoAFM) \$ | Difference \$ | Expenditure \$ |
|---------|---|---|------------------|-------------------|
| 2023-24 | 629,500,000 | 604,435,429 | 25,064,571 | 492,100,408 |
| 2022-23 | 559,000,000 | 674,200,000 | (115,200,000) | 662,106,656 |
| 2021-22 | 1,120,000,000 | 606,633,526 | 513,366,474 | 588,730,538 |
| 2020-21 | 340,000,000 | 669,543,634 | (329,543,634) | 669,543,634 |
| 2019-20 | 280,000,000 | 386,138,717 | (106,138,717) | 386,138,717 |
| TOTAL | 2,928,500,000 | 2,940,951,306 | (12,451,306) | \$2,798,619,953 |

Note: 1 - Email sent on July 22, 2024, indicated that no official correspondence had been received from MoAFM regarding budget allocation approvals. As a result, RADA's Budget Allocation and the Funds Received have been represented as identical figures.

2 – Although MoAFM allocated \$702,943,634 in 2020-21, the net amount of \$33,400,000 (\$150 M - \$116.6 M) was not PIP related and hence not included, resulting in final figure of \$669,543,634.

Source: AuGD compilation and analysis of RADA data

Why we conducted this Audit

1.6. Over the years, the Government of Jamaica implemented several initiatives to enhance agricultural productivity and bolster agricultural output, to ensure food security, foster income generation, foreign exchange earnings, and advance rural development. A prominent initiative among these efforts was the Production Incentive Programme (PIP). Given its objectives and the significant expenditure by the MoAFM, it was important to evaluate the programme's efficiency, effectiveness and receipt of value for money, over the five-year period, 2019-20 to 2023-24.

Audit objective

1.7. The objective of the audit is to assess the effectiveness of RADA's management of the Production Incentives Programme to meet its stated goal to increase agricultural production. To form a conclusion against the objective, the following criteria were considered:

- RADA budget and priority activities for the PIP were informed by market needs assessment and proper due diligence (Planning).
- RADA efficiently implemented the production incentives to deliver priority activities and done in line with established GOJ procedure/guidelines (Implementation).

- The Ministry responsible for agriculture (MoAFM) and RADA provided effective oversight, monitoring and reporting on the achievement of the programme outcomes (Monitoring and Evaluation)

Audit scope and methodology

1.8. We planned and conducted our audit in accordance with standards issued by the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI), which are applicable to Performance Audits. We gained knowledge of RADA's operations through a review of internal and external information; interviews with management and staff; observations, and analytical reviews. We also conducted a risk assessment and developed an issue analysis with the questions that the audit should answer, to form our opinions and conclusions (**Appendix 1 & 2**). The accounting and operational records were examined for the review period, April 2019 to March 2024 and augmented for completeness, by review of transactions beyond this period, where relevant.

1.9. The audit specifically scrutinized six sub-projects: Irish potatoes, yam, onion, poultry support, drought mitigation, and fertiliser initiatives managed by RADA. The objective was to assess RADA's efficiency in managing selection of beneficiaries, distribution of inputs and monitoring of activities, which is critical to enhancing agricultural production and productivity under the PIP framework. The audit focused on the parishes of Saint Catherine, Saint Elizabeth, Saint Thomas, and Westmoreland based on priority crops linked to case study. The detailed findings are discussed in subsequent sections of this report.

1.10. We also reviewed MoAFM and RADA's management of 72,000 bags of fertiliser, valued at approximately \$349.4 million, which were gifted to Jamaica, by the Kingdom of Morocco between 2019 and 2023 under a bilateral agreement.

1.11. This report was prepared in accordance with professional auditing standards and sought to inform Parliament and the public in their assessment of whether the Production Incentive Programme was being managed in an efficient, and effective manner.

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Strategic planning for priority crops and projects

2.1 We expected RADA to justify and prioritize crops using objective criteria, with clearly identified assumptions, constraints, and risks. This was important for the efficient and effective allocation of scarce financial resources, to assist farmers engaged in planting various crops, while at the same time contributing to the PIP objective to increase agricultural production.

2.2 MoAFM and RADA identified the primary rationale for crop prioritization as being influenced by a variety of factors, including consumer demand, unmet local and export demand, import substitution, climate resilience, national food security priorities, sustainability, value-chain development, and other economic considerations.

2.3 In 2023, RADA introduced a tool³ to improve its crop and project selection processes. This tool provided an additional method for guiding resource allocation and prioritization of crops/enterprises based on MoAFM's strategic direction, perceived needs, and economic and developmental objectives. The tool utilized a matrix that evaluate economic, socio-political, and environmental factors, enabling RADA to identify and rank priority crops for the upcoming year.

2.4 For the 2024-25 planning period, the new crop selection tool helped RADA to identify eight priority crops and three new projects. However, our review of the 2024-25 PIP Plan revealed that only two of the eight priority crops identified through the tool were approved for inclusion in the PIP Plan and subsequently allocated funding. RADA stated that *"MoAFM incorporates other crops into the National PIP based on strategic priorities and a review of production data."* While the decision-making process for these selections was not always formally documented, the chosen crops/enterprises aimed to address economic needs, bolster climate resilience, improve pest and disease management, enhance production and productivity, and contribute to food security. Furthermore, proper evaluation of the tool's effectiveness will be essential if the broader strategic objectives of economic growth, climate adaptation, and food security are to be met.

PIP's budget and expenditure management

2.5 Between 2019 and 2024, the MoAFM allocated a total of \$2.9 billion for the implementation of the PIP programme. Of this, RADA spent \$2.8 billion (95 per cent) on the programme's activities (**Table 2**).

³ Value Chain Commodity Selection Matrix Tool: Priority Commodities

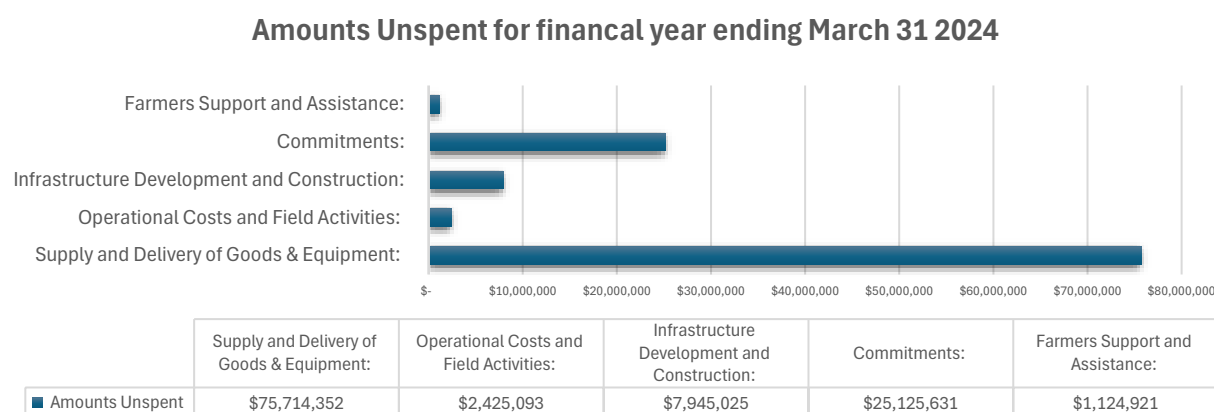
Table 2: RADA's budget request, receipt and expenditure for PIP 2019-2024

| Year | Budget Request (as per PIP Plan) \$ | Budget Allocation & Funds received (by MoAFM) \$ | Difference \$ | Expenditure - Amount Spent \$ | Amount unspent \$ | % of unspent amount |
|--------------|---|---|---------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2023-24 | 629,500,000 | 604,435,429 | 25,064,571 | 492,100,408 | 112,335,021 | 18.59 |
| 2022-23 | 559,000,000 | 674,200,000 | (115,200,000) | 662,106,656 | 12,093,344 | 1.79 |
| 2021-22 | 1,120,000,000 | 606,633,526 | (513,366,474) | 588,730,538 | 17,902,988 | 2.95 |
| 2020-21 | 340,000,000 | 669,543,634 | (329,543,634) | 669,543,634 | 0 | 0.00 |
| 2019-20 | 280,000,000 | 386,138,717 | (106,138,717) | 386,138,717 | 0 | 0.00 |
| TOTAL | 2,928,500,000 | 2,940,951,306 | (12,451,306) | 2,798,619,953 | 142,331,353 | 4.84 |

Note: RADA's email sent on July 22, 2024, indicated that no official correspondence had been received from MoAFM regarding budget allocation approvals. As a result, RADA's Budget Allocation and the Funds Received have been represented as identical figures.

Source: AuGD compilation and analysis of RADA data

2.6 As shown in **Table 2**, the amount of \$142 million represented the cumulative unspent balances for each year from 2019 to 2024. This amount accounted for 4.84 per cent of the total allocated funds during the same period. For the financial year ending 31 March 2024, the unspent balance stood at \$112 million, representing amounts received in prior financial years from the portfolio ministry to meet payments for various agricultural and infrastructural activities, as well as operational costs (see **Figure 2** and **Appendix 5**). For example, RADA explained that due to the impact of severe drought, funds budgeted for projects such as sweet potato (\$2 million) and red peas (\$1 million) could not be utilized in the 2023-24 financial year.

Figure 2 Amounts Unspent for financial year ending March 31, 2024

Note: Vide email dated July 22, 2024, advised that no official correspondences were received from MoAFM regarding budget allocation approvals and as such RADA's Budget Allocation and Funds Received are represented as the same.

Source: AuGD compilation and analysis of RADA data

Misalignment of annual PIP plan with annual SBP

2.7 There is a lack of alignment between the budget required to execute the PIP, as outlined in the National PIP Plan, and the approved RADA Strategic Business Plans (SBP). Although labelled as Strategic Business Plans, the document provided annual projections more like those expected in Operational Plans. Our review of both the PIP Plan and the SBP revealed significant discrepancies, with only one year showing consistent figures. For example, in 2022-23 & 2023-24, the PIP Plan was underfunded by \$123 million and \$170.5 million respectively, when compared to the SBP, pointing to a gap in resource forecasting or misalignment with strategic priorities. RADA indicated that the \$839 million in 2020-21 exceeded the planned budget due to a government realignment of resources in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, aimed at supporting the survival of the agricultural sector and ensuring national food security (**Table 3**).

Table 3: Variances between annual projection of PIP Plans and RADA Operational (Strategic Business) Plans

| Period | Budget as per PIP Plan \$'000 | Budget as per Strategic Business/Operational Plan | Difference |
|----------|----------------------------------|---|---------------|
| 2023-24 | 629,500,000 | 800,000,000 | (170,500,000) |
| 2022- 23 | 559,000,000 | 682,000,000 | (123,000,000) |
| 2021-22 | 1,120,000,000 | 1,120,000,000 | - |
| 2020-21 | 340,000,000 | 1,179,000,000 | (839,000,000) |
| 2019-20 | 280,000,000 | - | 280,000,000 |

Source: AuGD compilation of RADA information

Selection of beneficiaries for farm inputs

2.8 The beneficiary selection process for the PIP begins with recommendations from extension officers at the parish level, ultimately requiring approval from both the Parish Manager and Deputy. However, when multiple farmers meet the qualification criteria, subjectivity arises in determining which farmer will receive benefits, especially in the context of limited funding.

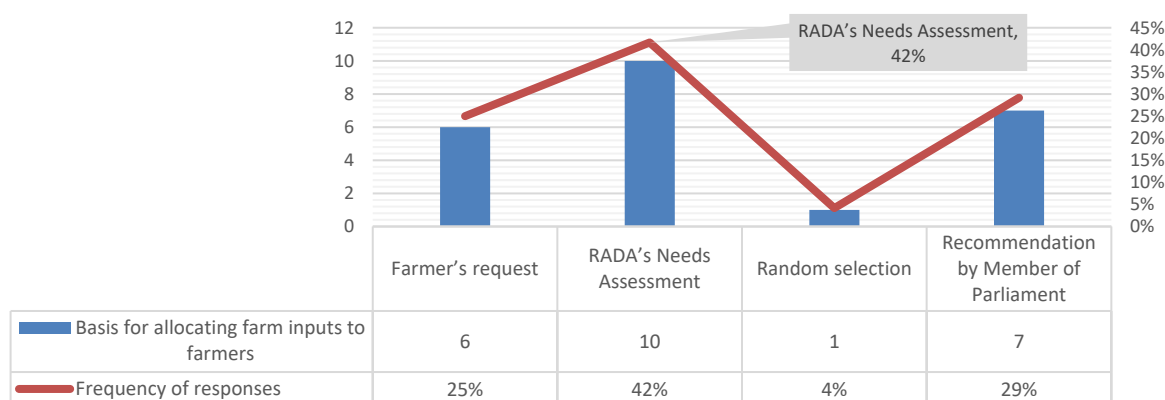
Three core criteria determine farmer eligibility for PIP support: registration as a farmer, possession of agricultural land or necessary infrastructure, and willingness to engage in training and guidance from extension officers

2.9 Upon notification that farm inputs are available, the first step, as outlined in the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), is for the Agricultural Extension Officer or Agricultural Assistant to compile a proposed beneficiary list based on a needs assessment and verified against farmers' registration and suitability by the Deputy Parish Manager⁴. However, RADA only provided a list of approved successful beneficiaries and did not reveal how it determined their eligibility (needs assessed). Hence, we could not determine whether the most suitable farmers to obtain farm inputs for the PIP were selected to enable the efficient and effective allocation of limited resources in relation to the PIP.

⁴ SOP-003 Distribution of Farm Inputs, DATE ISSUED: 2021-05-20: 5.2 AEO/AA- Compile proposed beneficiary listing based on needs assessment, confirm farmer registration status and submit to DPAM. (If a proposed beneficiary is not registered, then registration should be done before inputs are distributed). Section 5.3 (DPAM/PAM) – verify proposed beneficiaries to ensure that the farmer is registered and suitable for the programme and ask AEO to replace unsuitable farmers where necessary.

2.10 RADA indicated that the Authority had begun developing a prioritization matrix for selecting beneficiaries. RADA's ICT Department also completed an online application focusing on the PIP's youth component (farmers aged 18-35), which is currently in the pilot stage. If successful, this initiative aims to improve objectivity in the beneficiary selection process. RADA advised that in the interim, its Beneficiary Assessment & Verification Form (BA&VF) was the official tool for assessing and documenting farmers' needs and that recommendations from stakeholders are considered before BA&VFs are completed. A survey of Parish Managers revealed that the distribution of farm inputs is heavily influenced by recommendations from members of parliament and requests from farmers, rather than relying solely on a formal needs assessment (**Figure 3**).

Figure 3: Basis for allocating farm inputs to beneficiaries as per Parish Managers' response to survey



Source: AuGD survey

2.11 RADA required that the BA&VF include signatures from the Extension Officer, Parish Manager, and Deputy to confirm that beneficiaries were properly recommended and approved. A review of a random sample of 752 beneficiary records from various programmes (Irish Potato, Onion, Yam, Fertiliser, Poultry, and Drought Mitigation) revealed that the required signatures were missing from 49 BA&VFs (**Table 4**). RADA responded that procedures have been established to ensure that, moving forward, all documentation will be thoroughly completed and signed prior to implementation.

Table 4: Sample of Beneficiary Assessment and Verification (BAV) Forms without requisite signatures

| Parish | No. of Beneficiaries sampled | No. BAVF without requisite signature | BA&VF not presented for review |
|---------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| St. Thomas | 204 | 11 | |
| St. Elizabeth | 431 | 15 | 40 |
| St. Catherine | 117 | 23 | |
| Total | 752 | 49 | |

Source: AuGD compilation

Acquisition of farm inputs

2.12 During the period from 2019-20 to 2023-24, we found that seeds and fertiliser were the primary agricultural inputs provided by RADA to farmers. Specifically, RADA spent \$1.2 billion on seeds and \$16.9⁵ million for agrochemicals and related transportation (Table 5). These inputs represented 44 percent (\$1.238 billion) of the total PIP expenditure of \$2.799 billion for the same financial years, with 34 percent of these purchases occurring at the parish office level.

Of note, feedback from 80 farmers surveyed across three parishes—St. Elizabeth, St. Catherine, and St. Thomas—reveals that fertilisers and seeds constitute a larger proportion of agricultural support compared to other forms such as machinery and training. This highlights the significant role these inputs play in enhancing agricultural productivity

Table 5: RADA's Expenditure on Seeds and Agrochemicals (including Fertiliser)

| | 2023-24 | 2022-23 | 2021-22 | 2020-21 | 2019-20 | Total |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ |
| Seeds | | | | | | |
| Irish potato | 155,788,064 | 190,610,000 | 150,085,000 | 177,963,353 | 56,919,750 | 731,366,167 |
| Onion | 40,365,000 | 66,186,875 | 19,999,512 | 17,250,000 | 35,493,040 | 179,294,427 |
| Pepper | 1,900,000 | 13,000,000 | 19,237,632 | 27,420,000 | 12,009,800 | 73,567,432 |
| Sundry* | 10,842,443 | 51,146,250 | 36,250,070 | 138,603,894 | 0 | 236,842,657 |
| Sub-total | 208,895,507 | 320,943,125 | 225,572,214 | 361,237,247 | 104,422,590 | 1,221,070,683 |
| Agrochemicals (including fertiliser) | | | | | | |
| | 0 | 890,271 | 150,000 | 4,592,950 | 11,298,664 | 16,931,885 |
| Grand Total | 208,895,507 | 321,833,396 | 225,722,214 | 365,830,197 | 115,721,254 | 1,238,002,568 |

* Broccoli, Cabbage, Cantaloupe, Carrott, Cauliflower, Corn, Cucumber, Lemon, Lettuce, Lime, Pak Choy, Tomato, & Watermelon seeds.

Source: AuGD compilation and analysis of RADA data

2.13 Given that a significant portion of the budget was allocated to these inputs, we expected that RADA's management processes would include rigorous checks and balances to ensure the timely and sufficient provision of inputs, aligned with crop cycles, to promoting the efficient and economical use of public funds.

2.14 RADA developed an annual procurement plan for purchase of farm inputs, particularly as it related to onion and Irish potato seeds. One strategy employed by PIP was bulk procurement, typically managed through RADA's corporate office. However, some seeds were also purchased at the parish level. Seeds procured through the corporate office are managed by RADA's Procurement Unit. Our review confirmed adherence to the Government procurement guidelines, including tender evaluations, necessary approvals, and contract signings.

2.15 We sought to determine whether RADA aligned its procurement of key inputs with the planting seasons for Irish potatoes (October to April and July to September) and onions (September to March), to

⁵ The breakdown of the agrochemical expenditure includes \$6,096,929 for fertiliser, \$77,460 for fertiliser testing, \$6,257,496 for fertiliser transportation, and \$4,500,000 for chemicals.

ensure timely delivery and adequate quantities. We selected 19 contracts valued at \$554.19 million for two priority projects, namely Irish potatoes and onions for review. We found that seeds procured under 16 of the 19 contracts were delivered after the latest delivery date, ranging from 4 to 128 days with an average delay of 47 days (**Appendix 4**). Notwithstanding, a comparison of the actual delivery period showed that the farm inputs were received by RADA and distributed to farmers within the specific planting season. In February 2025, RADA indicated that a data breach led to the loss of scanned and stored documents, resulting in the unavailability of the actual delivery dates for the remaining 2 contracts. In April 2025, RADA responded that the Authority is currently in the process of reviewing their records to submit the delivery records for review.

2.16 Although the contract agreement included provisions for liquidated damages of up to 10 per cent of the contract sum in the event of non-performance, there was no evidence that RADA enforced these provisions or evaluated the contractors' performance. RADA stated that, during this period, there were insufficient grounds to claim liquidated damages.

Process of acquisition and distribution of fertiliser

2.17 During the review period from 2019 to 2024, there was no evidence that RADA directly procured fertiliser for its parish offices. Test checks conducted at three parish offices confirmed that these offices independently sourced their own fertiliser. However, we noted that RADA also received fertiliser through donations which were supplied to its parish offices for distribution to farmers.

2.18 Between 2019 and 2023, MoAFM received 72,000 bags of fertiliser at an estimated value of \$349.4 million⁶, from the Moroccan government under a bilateral agreement with the Government of Jamaica. This donation formed part of the Framework Agreement between both countries on Cooperation signed on November 16, 2016, for a term of five years, with the possibility of renewal for an additional five years. This agreement primarily focused on areas such as defence and security, education, and agriculture—specifically, the supply of fertiliser to enhance soil productivity and increase agricultural output. RADA oversaw the receipt and storage of the fertiliser and managed their distribution to relevant organizations and agencies under the MoAFM oversight. The fertiliser received by RADA was stored at one of the Agro-Investment Corporation warehouse (AIC) facilities located at Spanish Town Road, Kingston.

According to the Agriculture Sector Plan (2009) a major factor affecting production in 2008 was high fertiliser cost. To remedy the challenge faced, GOJ embarked on a few initiatives to amend the fertiliser problem by the granting of a major subsidy on retail price, import the commodity at a significantly lower price and in more recent times entered in a bilateral agreement with the Kingdom of Morocco to be franked with fertiliser to be issued to farmers free of cost.

2.19 RADA's records revealed allocations to RADA parish offices, members of parliament, and other agencies, as well as the quantities that were salvaged and discarded as indicated in **Table 6**.

⁶ Based on \$4,853 per bag (CIF plus customs duties and charges)

Table 6: Allocation from AIC warehouse to RADA parish offices, members of parliament, and other agencies, companies and individuals

| Shipment Year | 2019 | | | 2022 | | | 2023 | | |
|---|---------------|--------------------|------------|--------------------|---------------|-----------|---------------|---------------|----------|
| Entity | Proposed | Actual | Variance | Proposed | Actual | Variance | Proposed | Actual | Variance |
| RADA | 11,700 | 10,910 | (790) | 10,500 | 18,630* | 8,130 | 12,000 | 12,243 | 243 |
| Members of Parliament | - | 2,985 ⁷ | 2,985 | 9,950 ⁸ | 70* | (9,880) | 10,000 | 7,971 | (2,029) |
| Other Agencies | 12,147 | 7,053 | (5,094) | 3,500 | 2,559 | (941) | 2,000 | 1,569 | (431) |
| Individuals/Companies | - | 202 | 202 | - | 8 | 8 | - | - | - |
| Bad and Dump | - | 1,650 | 1,650 | - | 1,359 | 1,359 | - | 800 | 800 |
| Orange River Research Station (salvage) | - | 1,200 | 1,200 | - | 1,374 | 1,374 | - | 617 | 617 |
| Balance (in storage) | | | | | | | | 800 | 800 |
| TOTAL | 23,847 | 24,000 | 153 | 23,950 | 24,000 | 50 | 24,000 | 24,000 | - |

Note: *Total of 18,630 bags of fertiliser also includes allocations to members of parliament. We requested on September 11, 2024, copies of correspondence sent to parish offices regarding breakdown of allocation to MPs to complete our analysis. To date, this remains outstanding.

* 70 bags of fertiliser were collected directly from the AIC warehouse

Source: AuGD compilation and analysis of RADA data

Moroccan fertiliser allocated to RADA/Parish Offices

2.20 Our review revealed that RADA allocated 41,783 bags of Moroccan fertiliser for distribution to its parish offices, with the goal of reaching farmers. A detailed breakdown of the allocation to RADA and its parish offices is provided in **Table 7**.

Table 7: Allocation from warehouse to RADA/ parish offices

| Entity | 2019 | 2022 | 2023 |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| RADA: | 10,910 | 18,630 | 12,243 |
| Clarendon | 600 | 4,177 | 1,731 |
| Hanover | 570 | 191 | 200 |
| Manchester | 1,682 | 2,485 | 1,250 |
| Portland | 898 | 652 | 590 |
| St. Andrew | 800 | 891 | 460 |
| St. Ann | 356 | 1,785 | 1,477 |
| St. Catherine | 650 | 1,297 | 1,000 |
| St. Elizabeth | 2,424 | 3,206 | 1,300 |
| St. James | 520 | 389 | 200 |
| St. Mary | 600 | 806 | 1,482 |
| St. Thomas | 710 | 951 | 1,233 |
| Trelawny | 500 | 1,374 | 1,120 |
| Westmoreland | 600 | 426 | 200 |
| TOTAL | 10,910 | 18,630 | 12,243 |

Source: AuGD compilation of RADA data

2.21 We sought to reconcile the amounts of fertiliser approved for distribution with the quantities recorded in the parish offices' store records for the 2023 fertiliser shipment. From a selected sample, we conducted verification, to determine whether the bags of fertiliser distributed from the AIC warehouse

⁷ RADA advised that one invoice book was missing and page one, two and three missing from a second invoice book.

⁸ 4,320 bags of fertiliser were allocated to constituencies, 3,000 bags allocated to the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries for his discretion, 2,000 bags were allocated to the Former Minister and Opposition Spokesman for their discretion, and 630 bags were allocated to the Minister of State, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

facility, aligned with the quantities received and recorded in the selected parishes (St. Thomas, St. Catherine, and St. Elizabeth). While no discrepancies were found at the St. Elizabeth and St. Catherine Parish Offices, a review of RADA's delivery receipts and distribution records revealed one instance where the quantity issued from the AIC warehouse differed from the amount received by the St. Thomas Parish Office. This resulted in a shortfall of 45 bags, valued at \$218,385⁹ (Table 8). Consequently, RADA acknowledged the need for an investigation to determine the reason for the 45-bag discrepancy between the inventory records at the parish office and the warehouse dispatch records.

Table 8: Analysis of total bags of fertiliser received at three parish offices versus amount distributed from the AIC warehouse

| Parish Office | Proposed Distribution (RADA) | Actual Distribution (AIC Warehouse) | Parish Office Inventory records | Difference |
|---------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------|
| St. Thomas | 1,250 | 1,233 | 1,188 | 45 |
| St. Catherine | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | - |
| St. Elizabeth | 1,300 | 1,300 | 1,300 | - |
| | 3,550 | 3,533 | 3,488 | |

Source: AuGD compilation and analysis of RADA data

2.22 We also noted that between 2019 and 2023, 11,026 bags of fertiliser valued at \$54 million were collected by representatives of Members of Parliament for distribution to farmers. The Moroccan fertiliser distributed by RADA was government property, and as such, all security and accountability requirements should have been adhered to. The FAA Act, PBMA Act, and Asset Management Policy do not grant authority for the distribution of government property without following the prescribed accountability procedures. However, our review found that the distribution of the 11,026 bags of fertiliser did not consistently follow RADA's established distribution process. This points to insufficient controls over the fertilisers collected by MPs representatives for distribution to farmers (See Part 4 - RADA's Distribution of Moroccan Fertiliser).

Moroccan fertiliser allocated to individuals and companies

2.23 Our audit identified instances where bags of fertiliser were not distributed in accordance with the approved distribution listing. For instance, from the 2019 and 2022 shipments, RADA distributed 210 bags of fertiliser to two persons and two companies, directly from AIC warehouse. These recipients were not on the approved MoAFM distribution list and RADA did not present any approved beneficiary and verification forms used to assess eligibility for farm input. RADA indicated that the four recipients were farmers producing various crops; however, the requisite authorization from RADA and MoAFM was not presented.

Inventory management over Moroccan fertiliser

2.24 The audit identified deficiencies in RADA's internal control systems relating to the inventory management and distribution of the shipments of fertiliser in 2022 and 2023. Section 7.3.1(i) of the FAA (Financial Instructions) states *"Accounting Officers shall be responsible for keeping proper inventory records of all stationery, consumable stores, furniture, office machines, equipment, plant and machinery, lands, buildings and other government assets including those received as gifts¹⁰ and private properties placed in*

⁹ Based on \$4,853 per bag (CIF plus customs duties and charges)

¹⁰ AuGD's emphasis

government's custody". We noted a lack of proper segregation of duties to prevent errors and fraud by ensuring different individuals manage key tasks within the inventory management process at MoAFM/RADA. For example, a single officer was responsible for both inventory management- adjusting inventory levels by distribution and write-offs/disposal of bad and dumped fertiliser, and warehouse security, which increases the risk of mismanagement. Although RADA initially assigned a team of three officers to manage various processes, RADA indicated that their on-site presence was inconsistent due to poor working conditions. Of note, the issues related to the segregation of duties were corroborated by the MoAFM's Internal Audit Report of December 2019.

2.25 On our visit to the warehouse facility in June 2024, we were unable to verify the fertiliser stock on hand due to haphazard storage, lack of spacing and safety concerns. Additionally, the inventory records presented were not prepared on a perpetual inventory basis, showing receipt, distribution and balance. Additionally, there was inadequate administrative support to document and maintain records considered essential, to give proper account for the donated fertiliser. For instance, RADA reported that there are 800 bags of fertiliser at the AIC warehouse as of August 2024; however, this could not be corroborated by RADA's records. RADA presented a manual record showing only the date, quantity distributed by grade, vehicle details, signature of issuing officer and signature of the driver collecting fertiliser on behalf of parish offices, government agencies and members of parliament (MP). To address these issues, RADA advised that it intends to enhance the record-keeping process by implementing a perpetual inventory system, ensuring that these improvements are completed in time for the next shipment of fertiliser.

2.26 RADA provided three distribution lists showing that, between 2019 and 2023, 3,809 bags of fertiliser—representing 5.3 per cent of the total 72,000 received—were classified as bad and subsequently discarded. However, the manual inventory records did not reflect this information, highlighting weaknesses in the accountability of fertiliser stock. We expected that fertiliser deemed defective and disposed of should follow a clear, transparent process, but it was not apparent that RADA had formal procedures in place for the classification of fertiliser as bad and its subsequent disposal. As a result, we were unable to determine the criteria used to classify fertiliser as defective and decide which bags were selected for disposal. In response, RADA indicated that it "will implement procedures to receive written management approval for discarding fertiliser, as well as ensuring dual custody during the handling of discarded fertiliser to maintain transparency." RADA also asserted that the fertiliser was discarded because bags were damaged during the offloading and restocking process due to nails protruding from wooden pallets, damage caused by forklifts, or the collapse of pallets or piles.

2.27 In addition, we observed bags of fertiliser that were damaged while being loaded on trucks as well as significant spillage on the floor of the AIC warehouse. However, RADA could not definitively determine the total number of bags of fertiliser that were damaged while receiving and distributing fertiliser. RADA responded that consistent efforts were being made to identify and secure better quality pallets suited to palletize 3,000 lbs of fertiliser per pallet. Ideally, heavy duty plastic pallets would be the best; however, to date no supplier has been identified to enable procurement of these pallets. RADA added that its core operations normally do not include handling of large volumes of fertiliser and storage.

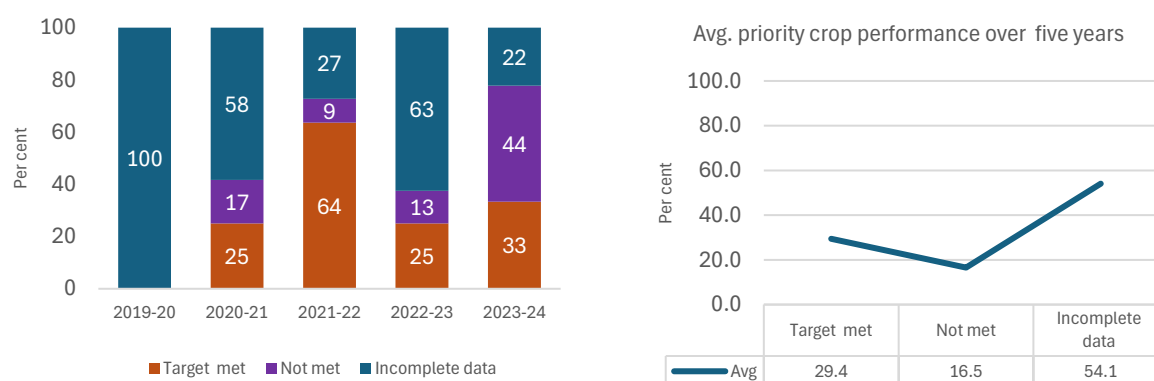
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Part 3 Monitoring and Evaluation of PIP

Targets and achievements

3.1 We sought to identify whether the targets set for priority crops were achieved to assess overall performance. Accordingly, we compared the established targets with the actual achievements for each priority crop over the respective years. Our analysis revealed that the achievement status for each crop varied yearly, and there were specific years where targets were not met, as highlighted in **Appendix 3**. On average, over the five-year period, 29 per cent of the crops met their targets, 17 per cent underperformed and 54 per cent of the crops had no identified targets for assessment. Our analysis revealed more than half of the crops lacked clearly defined targets, complicating efforts to accurately track and assess the performance of the PIP. For example, we were not provided with sufficient data on established targets for the 2019-20 period, raising concerns about the PIP's ability to effectively meet its objectives. In contrast, for the 2023-24 period, three out of nine priority crops met their targets, four did not, and sufficient data was not provided for two crops. **Figure 4** provides a visual summary of target achievement for priority crops.

Figure 4: Summary and Analysis of Target Achievement for Priority Crops for period 2019-20 to 2023-24



Source: AuGD analysis

3.2 The non-achievement of targets for the three crops, Irish potato, onion, and cassava may be attributed to a range of factors. For Irish potato, drought conditions, the spread of late blight disease, and inconsistent rainfall, significantly impacted yield. Onions suffered from pest infestations, particularly beet worms, which compromised both the yield and quality of the crop. Meanwhile, cassava planting targets were missed primarily due to unfavourable weather conditions in September, which disrupted the optimal planting period and affected overall productivity (**Table 9**).

Table 9: Factors affecting non-achievement of targets for three crops – Irish Potato, Onion and Cassava

| <i>Financial Year</i> | <i>Priority Crop</i> | <i>Remarks</i> |
|-----------------------|----------------------|--|
| 2023-24 | Irish Potato | ✓ Major shortage of seed material ✓ Drought conditions affected major production areas (Dec 2023 – Mar 2024) |
| | Onion | ✓ Crop affected by beet Armyworm ✓ Excessive rainfall affected parishes of St. Catherine and Clarendon, resulted inability to plant ✓ St. Thomas parish planted on time, but 30% of crop was washed away by rain |
| 2022-23 | Irish Potato | ✓ Crops were negatively affected by no rainfall from December 05, 2022, to March 15, 2023, resulting in low crop yield. ✓ Late blight disease was prevalent |
| 2021-22 | Irish Potato | ✓ Late germination resulting in low crop yield. ✓ Late blight disease was prevalent |
| 2020-21 | Cassava | ✓ Inclement weather conditions experienced during the month of September resulted in planting target not being met. |

Source: AuGD analysis of quarterly performance reports, onion and Irish potato programme documents

Inadequate monitoring of PIP by RADA's Board

3.3 Section 7(1) of the Rural Agricultural Development Authority Act (1990) stipulates that the Board must meet at least once per month for ten months each calendar year. Based on the minutes submitted for audit review, RADA Board generally adhered to this requirement. (Table 10).

Table 10: Frequency of Board meeting – required and held

| Year | Frequency of Mtgs Required | Meetings Held |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| 2019 | 10 | 9 |
| 2020 | 10 | 10 |
| 2021 | 10 | 12 |
| 2022 | 10 | 8 |
| 2023 | 10 | 11 |
| 2024 Jan-May | 5 | 4 |
| Total | 55 | 54 |

Source: AuGD compilation

3.4 Our review of 54 meeting minutes from January 2019 to May 2024 indicated that the PIP was discussed periodically. We expected that these discussions would typically focus on the programme's progress (examination of performance of PIP against targets) and challenges. However, while the CEO often

provided updates, comprehensive evaluations were infrequent. Furthermore, the 13¹¹ minutes presented for the Production & Infrastructure Committee (which is responsible for key decisions related to PIP's operation), showed some discussion of the programme, but lacked substantial detail on its performance. Notably, there was little or no discussion of the committee's report at the Board level.

3.5 This inconsistency in comprehensive assessments and detailed reporting diminished the degree of accountability in managing the PIP. **Table 11** summarizes key observations and issues identified in the meeting minutes.

Table 11: Key observations and issues identified in Board meeting minutes-PIP

| Financial Year (period) | Observation |
|---------------------------|---|
| 2019-20 | <i>Increased financial commitment to PIP was needed</i> |
| 2020-21 | <i>PIP initiatives addressed COVID-19 impacts</i> |
| 2021-22 | <i>Improved farmer support, but issues like praedial larceny persisted</i> |
| 2022-23 | January 2023: Mismanagement concerns arose, including unmet seed promises to farmers in St. Thomas, affecting RADA's reputation. |
| | October 2022: Board criticized vague reports on ginger and onion, demanding better details for auditing. |
| 2023-24 | March 2024: Preparation for an audit by the Auditor General's Department was discussed, focusing on RADA's data readiness. |
| (April - May 2024) | <i>Emphasis on improving information about PIP's priority crops.</i> |

Source: AuGD assessment and compilation

¹¹ Minutes as submitted by RADA covering the period 2019-24

Monitoring of PIP activities by RADA's extension officers

3.6 The Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA) serves as the primary provider of agricultural extension services under the purview of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Mining (MoAFM). RADA plays a pivotal role in the implementation of the Production Incentive Programme (PIP). PIP was implemented across 13 parishes, concentrating efforts on cultivating a diverse range of key crops including Irish potatoes, yam, onion, strawberry, ginger, dasheen, cassava, hot pepper, and pineapple. The MoAFM's responsibility for overseeing and managing operational facets of RADA, encompasses budgetary allocation and personnel administration.

3.7 In January 2025, RADA had a staff complement of 522 individuals, operating from 14 distinct locations, including its central office located in Kingston, alongside 13 parish offices. Eight-one (81) per cent of RADA staff complement (425) comprises technical officers, while the remaining 97, (19) per cent represented administration/corporate service officers (**Table 12**).

Table 12: RADA's Staff Complement

| Category | Number | Percentage |
|---------------------------------|------------|------------|
| <i>Core/ Technical</i> | 425 | 81 |
| <i>Admin/Corporate Services</i> | 97 | 19 |
| Total | 522 | 100 |

Source: AuGD compilation of RADA information

3.8 RADA operates in 99 extension areas and, as of January 2025, engaged 95 agricultural extension officers and 44 agricultural assistants. These field staff were responsible for providing extension services, conducting training, distributing agricultural inputs, and implementing water conservation initiatives. RADA's extension officers are central to the input distribution process, completing verification and assessment forms for all beneficiaries, which are then signed and approved by Parish and Deputy Parish Managers before inputs are distributed.

3.9 RADA's agricultural extension officers are tasked with delivering field extension services for agricultural development programmes within designated areas. **Table 13** provides a summary of farm inspections, pest surveillance, and pesticide surveillance conducted by these officers from 2019 to 2024.

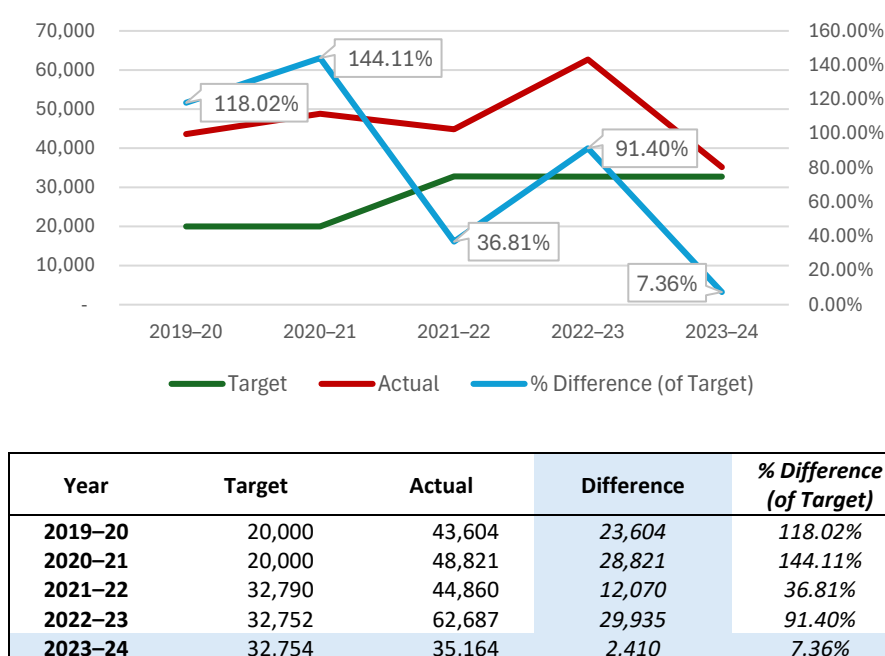
Table 13: Field visits conducted by extension officers 2019-20 to 2023-24

| Description | Years | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------|----------------|---------|----------------|---------|----------------|---------|----------------|---------|----------------|
| | 2019-20 | | 2020-21 | | 2021-22 | | 2022-23 | | 2023-24 | |
| | Target | Actual | Target | Actual | Target | Actual | Target | Actual | Target | Actual |
| Farm Inspections/ Crop Care | 20,000 | 43,604 | 20,000 | 48,821 | 32,790 | 44,860 | 32,752 | 62,687 | 32,754 | 35,164 |
| Pest Surveillance | 16,000 | 27,938 | 16,000 | 30,026 | 27,000 | 28,055 | 27,747 | 27,192 | 27,747 | 25,354 |
| Pesticide Surveillance | 34,000 | 86,337 | 34,000 | 109,085 | 51,000 | 47,506 | 51,120 | 94,111 | 59,338 | 86,888 |
| TOTAL | | 157,879 | | 187,932 | | 120,421 | | 183,990 | | 147,406 |

Source: RADA data submitted

3.10 In its Strategic Business Plan for 2022-2023, RADA's SWOT analysis identified the high ratio of farmers to extension officers as a key weakness. This issue was further highlighted in the Board Minutes of July 27, 2023. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the recommended ratio is one extension officer for every 800 to 1000 farmers¹². However, at the time of our audit, RADA reported a ratio of one extension officer for every 1,500 to 2,000 farmers¹³. Notwithstanding, RADA reported that for the 2019-20 to 2023-24 period, its extension officers exceeded their annual targets for field visits, particularly in farm inspections and crop care, from a low of 7 percent to a high of 144 per cent.

Figure 5: RADA data on Farm Inspections/ Crop Care visits conducted by extension officers over period 2019 - 2024



Source: AuGD analysis of RADA data

3.11 To tackle the challenges posed by the significant disparity in the ratio of extension officers to farmers, RADA implemented innovative strategies to ensure comprehensive service coverage for all farmers¹⁴, including:

¹² FAO website (www.fao.org/home/search/en/?q=recommended+Ratio+for+extension+officer+to+farmers)

¹³ In April 2022, the CEO reported to the Board that the extension officer-to-farmer ratio averaged 1:1,500 to 2,000

¹⁴ Interim Evaluation and Baseline Reset of the Production Incentive (Draft – dated November 2022)



- Training and engaging lead farmers- in remote areas to provide peer-to-peer extension support.
- Establishing WhatsApp and community groups - to influence the widespread use of cell phones among both extension officers and farmers for effective communication and problem resolution.
- Utilizing electronic and print media channels - to disseminate critical agricultural information.

3.12 These initiatives were part of RADA's commitment to overcoming resource limitations and enhancing the reach and effectiveness of agricultural extension services across the country. Further, RADA planned to increase the number of extension officers following the rationalization of the commodity boards, including JACRA¹⁵ and the Banana Board.

Monitoring and Evaluation

3.13 We expected RADA to have a robust continuous monitoring and evaluation framework for assessing PIP performance. This framework should include regular crop data collection, performance reviews, and supplementary inspections or farm visits. While RADA reported on the performance of the PIP programmes at the parish level, its ability to undertake monitoring visits to validate the PIP activities reported by the extension officers, was severely hampered by manpower limitation. The Strategic Planning, Performance & Project Management Unit which, was tasked with this activity to support decision-making by the MoAFM and Board, had only one assigned officer. Consequently only 24 of the planned 36 field visits were completed during the periods 2020-21, 2021-22, and 2023-24 (**Table 14**).

3.14 In February 2025, RADA responded that *“there is a shortage of staff in the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, currently only one person is assigned”*.

Table 14: 24 field monitoring visits conducted by Strategic Planning Performance & Project Management Unit between 2019-20 and 2023-24

| Financial Year | Planned | Actual Field Monitoring Visits | | | Variance |
|----------------|-----------|--------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|----------|
| | | Month | Crop | No. of visits | |
| 2019-20 | None seen | - | - | - | - |
| 2020-21 | 12 | - | - | - | (12) |
| 2021-22 | 12 | January 2022 | Onion | 12 | 7 |
| | | | Irish | 5 | |
| | | | Strawberry | 2 | |
| | | | Sub- total | 19 | |
| 2022-23 | None seen | - | - | - | - |
| 2023-24 | 12 | October 2023 | Lime/Lemon | 1 | (7) |
| | | November 2023 | Yam | 1 | |
| | | | Strawberry | 2 | |
| | | | Coco | 1 | |
| | | | Sub-total | 5 | |
| Total | | | | 24 | |

Source: AuGD compilation and analysis of RADA information

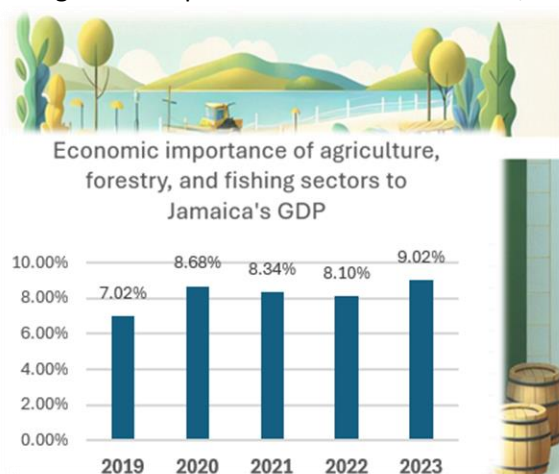
¹⁵ Jamaica Agricultural Commodities Regulatory Authority

Influence of agricultural outcomes through PIP

3.15 The involvement of multiple stakeholders in the implementation of the PIP make it complicated to pinpoint specific factors influencing agricultural outcomes. Additionally, the Medium-Term Frameworks (MTFs) revealed a sector-focused approach rather than a single programmatic strategy. The 2021–24 MTF highlighted ongoing challenges within the agricultural sector, including vulnerability to extreme weather events worsened by climate change, inadequate infrastructure and equipment, and limited access to essential resources for production. These issues have particularly impacted women and youth. Furthermore, problems like crop and livestock theft and illegal fishing practices, worsened these existing challenges.

3.16 Explicitly assessing the impact of PIP's expenditure on agricultural production was not feasible, as RADA worked in conjunction with multiple stakeholders, including the Research & Development Division, Export Division, Fisheries Authority, National Irrigation Commission, Banana Board, 4H Club, distributors, processors, input suppliers, and farmer organizations. This complex network of actors makes it difficult to isolate the specific contribution of PIP's activities to agricultural outcomes.

3.17 According to the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN), agriculture, forestry, and fishing have consistently contributed to Jamaica's GDP, although this contribution has fluctuated in recent years. These figures underscore the sector's fluctuating but substantial contribution to Jamaica's economic output during the specified period (2019-23).



Feedback from farmers and parish managers

Feedback from farmers and parish managers highlighted both the positive impact of the PIP on agricultural productivity and the ongoing challenges that need to be addressed for further improvement.

3.18 We visited three parishes (St. Elizabeth, St. Catherine, and St. Thomas) and surveyed 80 farmers using questionnaires to assess the implementation of the PIP by RADA. Findings showed that 35 per cent of farmers had 10 to 20 years of farming experience, while 10 per cent were newer (under 5 years). Nearly all (99 per cent) of the 80 farmers received support from RADA, mainly fertilisers or seeds, with training provided for fertiliser use. Farmers sighted concerns such as poor farm road conditions, inadequate seed distribution, and most significantly, issues with fertiliser distribution and unreliable RADA tractor services. Despite the challenges, 95 per cent acknowledged the Programme's crucial role in stabilizing income and enhancing food security.

3.19 Senior officers at RADA indicated that the availability of farm inputs were not publicly advertised due to resource constraints. As a result, farmers selected for farm inputs were primarily chosen based on recommendations from extension officers. Data gathered from questionnaires distributed to RADA's 13 parish offices revealed that resource allocation for farming inputs was determined by RADA assessments,

recommendations by MPs, farmer requests, and random selection. With a 77 per cent response rate, the survey gathered insights from 10 parish managers. An important take-away was that 80 per cent of respondents emphasized mentoring farmers as a core responsibility, using methods like training, monitoring, and guidance on best practices. However, insufficient funding for training emerged as the major challenge in delivering these programmes, highlighting the need for improved financial support for agricultural training initiatives.

Introduction

4.1 Between September 2019 to July 2023, the Kingdom of Morocco donated approximately 72,000 bags, each containing 50kg of assorted fertiliser at an estimated value of \$349.4 million¹⁶ (**Table 15**). There were three shipments of approximately 24,000 bags each, with the first (September 2019) and last (July 2023) being consigned to the Ministry of Agriculture, while the second shipment was consigned to RADA. All shipments were received at the warehouse facility at the Agro-Investment Corporation (AIC) complex. From the AIC warehouse, deliveries were made to the parish offices of RADA for distribution to the farmers, in addition to direct distribution to other government entities within the agricultural sector and several other designated beneficiaries.

Table 15: Summary of Fertiliser Imported

| Date | Item Description | Quantities (50kg Bags) |
|--------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| 19/9/2019 | Diammonium Phosphate | 6,000 |
| 19/9/2019 | Other Fertiliser | 6,000 |
| 19/9/2019 | Mineral or Chemical Fertilisers | 12,000 |
| 9/3/2022 | Diammonium Phosphate | 24,000 |
| 11/7/2023 | Other Fertiliser – NPS | 16,000 |
| 11/7/2023 | Diammonium Phosphate - DAP Euro | 4,000 |
| 11/7/2023 | Potassium Chloride - MAP Special | 4,000 |
| Total | | 72,000 |

Source: AuGD compilation from Jamaica Customs records

4.2 We conducted a special audit of the distribution of Moroccan fertiliser by the Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA) over the period 2019 to 2023. The special audit was conducted following concerns raised within the public domain and subsequent press reports indicating questionable and inequitable distribution of Government of Jamaica (GOJ) owned fertiliser, by RADA to Members of Parliament in several constituencies in January 2024. The special audit was commissioned to determine whether the fertiliser distributed was in fact the property of the Government of Jamaica, and if so, whether the collection and distribution were done in accordance with MoAFM and RADA's policy regarding the distribution of agricultural inputs to farmers.

4.3 Notwithstanding that the fertiliser donated by the Kingdom of Morocco was a gift to the Jamaican government, and as such must be accounted for, in keeping with the Jamaican Constitution, the Ministry of Finance's Circular No. 17 (2013) and the Financial Administration and Audit Act (Financial Instructions). We noted that for the first shipment of Moroccan fertiliser in 2019, MoAFM tasked RADA with the preparation

¹⁶ Based on \$4,853 per bag (CIF plus customs duties and charges)

of a Comprehensive Distribution Plan (CDP) to govern the distribution process, to be approved by the MoAFM. The CDP did not stipulate that MPs should receive an allotment, but RADA indicated that historically, MPs were indirectly involved in the distribution process, to the extent of recommending beneficiaries within their respective areas. Notwithstanding MPs indirect involvement, the allotment of 2,985 bags of fertiliser to MPs, from the first shipment, was managed by RADA, i.e. RADA was responsible for storing the fertiliser, assessing the recommended beneficiary's eligibility and distributing the fertiliser to the approved beneficiaries (**Table 6**).

4.4 Prior to the receipt of the Moroccan fertiliser RADA's practice required MPs to recommend to the Authority, beneficiaries for agricultural inputs. Thereafter, RADA would determine their eligibility, conduct the required needs' assessment and distribute the agricultural inputs from the parish offices, directly to the selected farmers. RADA deviated from this approach for the second and third shipments of Moroccan fertiliser.

4.5 As it pertains to the second shipment, we noted that 70 bags were issued directly to one MP for distribution to farmers (**Table 6**). In the case of the third shipment, the number of bags of Moroccan fertilizer allocated to MPs for distribution to farmers increased significantly when a total of 7,971 bags was allocated to 46 MPs and one caretaker (**Table 17**). As previously stated in paragraph 4.4 above, RADA did not observe its usual protocol for the allocation of fertiliser from shipments 2 & 3 for the MPs. Instead, RADA stated that the CDP document prepared in 2019 was not a binding policy document but rather its internal operational guide for distribution of agricultural inputs to farmers and was not meant to govern distributions by MPs. Nonetheless, we saw letters from RADA's Parish Agricultural Managers to MPs across the parish of St. Catherine outlining "the protocol for distribution of fertilizers". The protocol outlined the "Mechanism of Farmer/beneficiary selection" and the "Allocation and Distribution of fertilizer" (**Appendix 6**).

4.6 The protocol for distribution as seen in the abovementioned letters were almost identical to the Comprehensive Distribution Plan prepared for the 2019 shipment with the only exceptions being that instead of RADA, the MPs office "will distribute the fertilizer after which the signed distribution sheet be submitted to RADA" and instead of RADA being responsible for the transportation using the Ministry's fleet of trucks, the letters stated that "fertilizer should be collected from the RADA parish offices as soon as possible". Notably, RADA stated that its extension officers would verify that farmers are registered for beneficiary selection, farmers should receive no more than two bags of fertiliser, sign acknowledging receipt and that MP's office will distribute the fertiliser after which the signed distribution sheets are to be submitted to RADA (**Appendix 6**). RADA indicated that for the second and third shipments, the logistics were reorganized to ensure that the collection and distribution of the MP component would not cost the Government. However, RADA was unable to indicate whether the bags of fertiliser allocated to MPs were subsequently issued to the intended beneficiaries as the required distribution lists were not provided by the MPs. Also, the beneficiary listing vetted by RADA to determine eligibility based on the assessed needs were not provided.

4.7 RADA responded that "All fertilizers distributed through RADA are done transparently, with established procedures. PAMs¹⁷ provided communications to MPs requesting submission of beneficiary distribution lists. RADA should not be held accountable for non-submission of beneficiary lists by MPs. However, every effort will be made going forward to ensure compliance to these procedures by the MPs. The

¹⁷ Parish Agricultural Manager

management of RADA remains committed to operate within Government guidelines and all principles of good governance.” Further, RADA indicated that “for the third shipment, it should be noted that while allocations were made to MPs, there was no framework or specific rules developed that they were to adhere to. However, RADA’s expectations were that the MPs would prepare and keep records of beneficiaries to whom the fertilizers were distributed to. Continuing efforts are being made by RADA to collect these lists from all MPs”.

4.8 From the sampled parishes (See paragraph 1.9 for basis of selection), none of the MPs who received Moroccan fertilizer submitted the required distribution sheet to RADA listing details of the recipients (**Table 16**). RADA did not present evidence that the beneficiaries of the fertilizer allocated to MPs were verified and received no more than the maximum two bags of Moroccan fertilizer (**Appendix 6**).

Table 16: Moroccan Fertiliser Allocated to MPs

| Sampled Parishes | # of Bags of Moroccan Fertilizer Received | Distribution Sheet Submitted (Yes/No) |
|-------------------------|--|--|
| <i>St. Thomas</i> | 300 | No |
| <i>St. Catherine</i> | 860 | No |
| <i>St. Elizabeth</i> | 2,231 | No |
| <i>Westmoreland</i> | 350 | No |

Source: AuGD compilation of RADA distribution records

4.9 We noted that an internal audit report was sent to the Permanent Secretary (PS) in the MoAFM, which highlighted allegations that Moroccan fertiliser was being sold at a private farm store in the parish of Saint Catherine during August 2023. In response, RADA stated that the PS in MoAFM had referred the matter to the Board for further investigation. However, RADA did not provide any evidence to confirm that further action was taken. (**Table 17**).

4.10 RADA asserted that MPs from both political parties received an equal allotment of fertilizer donated by the Kingdom of Morocco, with each receiving 100 bags. However, RADA provided records indicating that in many cases, some MPs received more than 100 bags, while others received less. RADA confirmed that nine MPs from the Opposition qualified for the allotment, while 37 MPs from the Government qualified (**Table 17**). RADA stated that “special allocations were made for the Minister, the state minister, the former Minister of Agriculture, and the Opposition spokesperson on agriculture due to the significant number of requests received while performing their duties, the size of the agricultural base in their areas, and the negative impact of Tropical Cyclone 22 in 2023 and that all MPs coordinated the collection, storage, and distribution of the fertilizer regardless of political affiliation.” We noted that the Opposition Spokesperson on Agriculture, who is not a Member of Parliament, but a caretaker was allocated 50 bags of fertilizer. However, RADA’s protocol does not provide for an allocation of supplies to caretakers.

Table 17: Allocation of fertiliser to MPs for distribution to farmers (3rd Shipment)

| No. | Parish | # of Governing MPs | Amount | No. | Parish | # of Opposition MPs | Amount |
|-----|---------------|--------------------|--------------|-----|----------------------------|---------------------|------------|
| 1 | St. Elizabeth | 4 | 2,231 | 1 | St. Elizabeth | 0 | 0 |
| 2 | Westmoreland | 3 | 300 | 2 | Westmoreland ¹⁸ | 1 | 50 |
| 3 | Manchester | 3 | 300 | 3 | Manchester | 1 | 100 |
| 4 | Clarendon | 4 | 925 | 4 | Clarendon | 1 | 300 |
| 5 | St. Catherine | 5 | 630 | 5 | St. Catherine | 3 | 230 |
| 6 | St. Andrew | 3 | 690 | 6 | St. Andrew | 2 | 130 |
| 7 | St. Thomas | 2 | 300 | 7 | St. Thomas | 0 | 0 |
| 8 | St. Mary | 2 | 250 | 8 | St. Mary | 1 | 130 |
| 9 | Portland | 2 | 350 | 9 | Portland | 0 | 0 |
| 10 | St. Ann | 2 | 330 | 10 | St. Ann | 0 | 0 |
| 11 | St. James | 4 | 425 | 11 | St. James | 0 | 0 |
| 12 | Trelawny | 1 | 100 | 12 | Trelawny | 0 | 0 |
| 13 | Hanover | 2 | 200 | 13 | Hanover | 0 | 0 |
| | TOTAL | 37 | 7,031 | | TOTAL | 9 | 940 |

Source: AuGD compilation of RADA's records

4.11 The Accountable Officer at RADA has a responsibility for the collection, receipt, custody and issue of public property, such as the Moroccan fertiliser and ought to have instituted the requisite controls to govern the distribution of fertiliser to the farmers, whether it is being done directly by RADA or through MPs.

¹⁸ Allocated to Caretaker/Opposition Spokesman on Agriculture

CASE STUDY 1- The Irish Potato Programme

The Irish Potato Programme

- For the Irish Potato Programme, selection is based on a recommendation from Parish Agricultural Managers, Extension Officers, and Advisory Board Personnel. Eligible farmers must own or have access to at least half an acre of land, irrigation water, and be willing to engage in training and other specified commitments.
- A crucial issue identified was the absence of a formal needs assessment in the distribution process of farm inputs. According to the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), Agricultural Extension Officers or Agricultural Assistants were required to compile a proposed beneficiary list based on such assessments. However, during visits to the parishes, no documentation was found to show that these lists were created with proper needs assessments, which casts doubt on the fairness and effectiveness of the distribution process.
- In terms of financial management, the expenditure on seeds for the Irish Potato Programme alone totalled approximately \$731 million over five years, reflecting the programme's significant investment. Despite this, there were discrepancies in the reporting of targets. For example, the target for Irish potatoes in the 2021-22 period was reported as 1,200 hectares in the PIP plan but listed as 3,600 hectares in the Ministry's annual report. RADA advised that this discrepancy was a result of the incorrect figure being cited in the Ministry's report and the matter was referred to the Ministry's Strategic Planning Unit to review and amend.
- The Irish Potato Programme also faced several challenges that impeded its success. These included adverse weather conditions such as drought, the spread of late blight disease, and inconsistent rainfall, all of which severely impacted crop yields.
- Overall, the lack of formal documentation and recordkeeping made it difficult to evaluate the programme's success and areas for improvement accurately. The audit underscores the need for better documentation, clear written policies, and improved oversight to ensure that support is effectively targeted and managed, ultimately aiming to enhance the agricultural sector's productivity and resilience.

Summary of issues

| Issues | Detail | Impact |
|--|--|--|
| <i>Impact of Specific Crop Diseases and Weather Conditions</i> | The programme faced significant challenges from adverse weather conditions such as drought and late blight disease, which severely impacted crop yields. | These factors directly affect the success of the Irish Potato Programme by reducing crop productivity and increasing the risk of crop failure |
| <i>Formal Beneficiary Selection Criteria</i> | The Irish Potato Programme had formally documented criteria for selecting beneficiaries, which included requirements such as owning or having access to at least half an acre of land and having irrigation water. | Clear and formal selection criteria are crucial for targeting support effectively, and the absence of such documentation in other programmes may lead to less targeted and potentially less effective support. |

The Onion Programme

- Financially, the Onion Programme had substantial investments. Over five years, RADA spent approximately \$179 million on onion seeds, reflecting its importance in the agricultural support strategy. Despite this investment, the management of the programme encountered several hurdles. For instance, discrepancies were found in the reported targets. The PIP plan had set a target of 200 hectares for onions in the 2021-22 period, but the Ministry's annual report showed a target of 1,200 hectares. Such inconsistencies made it difficult to assess whether the reported outcomes aligned with the proposed success measures.
- The audit review discovered significant issues with documentation and evaluation. There were no targets outlined for the years 2019-20 and 2020-21, and achievements for 2022-23 lacked clarity on specific targets. Although the target for 2021-22 was met, performance fell short for 2023-24. The shortfalls were attributed to several factors, including pest infestations, specifically beet worms, which affected both yield and quality.
- The monitoring report dated August 30, 2023 provided a glimpse into the activities undertaken by the Onion Development Programme. The report highlighted a goal to meet 100 per cent of the national demand for onions by planting 700 hectares. Key activities included land preparation and farmer training across major growing parishes. Despite these efforts, the programme struggled with its effectiveness and evaluation.
- The Onion Programme's challenges underscore a broader issue within RADA's operations: a focus on executing activities rather than evaluating their effectiveness. Without proper documentation, transparent reporting, and rigorous evaluation, the Programme's success remains uncertain, and its potential impact on Jamaica's onion production is compromised.

Summary of issues

| Issues | Detail | Impact |
|---|---|---|
| Specific Pest Infestations | The Onion Programme struggled with pest infestations, particularly beet worms, which affected both yield and quality. | Pest issues are unique to the Onion Programme's cultivation and directly affect the programme's ability to meet its production targets and quality standards. |
| Unclear Documentation and Reporting of Targets | The Onion Programme had no clear targets outlined for certain years (2019-20 and 2020-21) and lacked clarity on specific targets for the 2022-23 period. This issue was compounded by discrepancies between planned and reported targets. | Inconsistent documentation makes it difficult to assess whether the programme achieved its goals and impacts overall productivity and accountability. |

The Yam Programme

- Over a five-year period, PIP emphasized the cultivation of various yam types, including sweet, negro, yampie, and yellow yam. As part of incentive to farmers RADA procured yam heads (seed tubers - setts) from local suppliers and distribute to selected beneficiaries.
- The effectiveness of the Yam Programme was difficult to gauge due to significant issues with data management and reporting. Missing and inconsistent data obscured a clear understanding of the programme's performance. This lack of reliable information made it challenging to evaluate how well the project was managed and whether it met its objectives.
- Notwithstanding, RADA indicated that yam production has increased, across the various varieties of yams. For example, sweet yam moved from 1,664 tons in 2019 to 2,144 tons in 2023, an increase of 28.8 per cent. Also, overall yam production moved from 148,675 tons in 2019 to 194,959 tons in 2023, an increase of 31.1 per cent.
- The programme faced challenges related to Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The KPIs set for the Yam Programme, like those for other crops, often lacked specificity and measurability. For instance, in the 2021-22 period, the KPIs for yam included goals such as reducing anthracnose disease and propagating clean planting material. However, given that target of reducing anthracnose disease was immeasurable, RADA used production data to track progress and assess success of the programme.
- Overall, while the Yam Programme aimed to boost yam production through local procurement and targeted support, the challenges with data consistency and unclear KPIs hindered a comprehensive evaluation of its success and impact.

Summary of issues

| Issue | Detail | Impact |
|---|---|---|
| Data Management and Reporting Issues | The Yam Programme suffered from missing and inconsistent data, which obscured a clear understanding of its performance. | Poor data management impedes the ability to evaluate the programme's success and effectiveness, leading to difficulties in tracking progress and making informed decisions. |
| Performance Management | KPIs for the Yam Programme were not specific and measurable. | |
| Procurement from Local Suppliers | The Yam Programme involved procuring yam seed tubers (setts) from local suppliers as an incentive for farmers. | Provide local farmers with ready market for sale of yam seed tubers (setts) to other farmers, thereby increasing local production and reliability |

Summary of Case Studies 1-3:

Common issues among the Irish Potato Programme, Onion Programme, and Yam Programme as per case study:

| Issues | Details | Impact |
|---|---|---|
| Lack of Formal Needs Assessments for Allocation of Farm Inputs | All three programmes did not provide evidence of conducting formal needs assessments before distributing farm inputs. SOPs require Agricultural Extension Officers or Assistants to compile beneficiary lists based on these assessments. However, the audit revealed that the necessary documentation to prove these assessments were not present across the programmes. | This undermines the transparency surrounding fairness and effectiveness of input distribution, potentially leading to misallocation of resources. |
| Inconsistent Financial Reporting and Targets | Each programme experienced discrepancies between planned and reported targets. For instance, the Irish Potato Programme had differing target figures in the PIP plan and the Ministry's annual report. Similar inconsistencies were found in the Onion Programme's reported targets. | Inaccurate reporting and mismatched targets make it difficult to evaluate the programmes' performance and effectiveness accurately. |
| Poor Documentation and Recordkeeping | All programmes exhibited issues with documentation, whether it was missing beneficiary assessment and verification (BAV) forms, unclear records of targets, or inconsistent data. For example, missing signatures on BAV forms were noted for the Irish Potato Programme, and incomplete records were an issue in the Yam Programme. | Inadequate documentation hinders the ability to assess programme success, track progress, and make informed decisions. |
| Challenges with Performance Indicators | KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) for these programmes were often poorly defined or lacked specificity. For instance, the KPIs for the Yam Programme, like those for other crops, were not clearly defined or measurable. | Without clear and measurable KPIs, it is challenging to monitor and evaluate the programmes' effectiveness and achievements. |
| External Factors Affecting Programmes | The Irish Potato Programme struggled with drought and disease, the Onion Programme faced pest issues, and the Yam Programme's performance was hindered by inconsistent data and unclear KPIs. | These external factors can significantly impact crop yields and overall programme success, compounding the difficulties already faced in management and evaluation. |
| Focus on Execution Rather than Evaluation | There was a noticeable emphasis on executing activities rather than evaluating their effectiveness. This was evident across the programmes, where the focus seemed to be on the implementation of activities without a corresponding emphasis on thorough evaluation and performance measurement. | This focus impairs the ability to understand the real impact of the programmes and to make data-driven improvements. |

Addressing these common issues would require improvements in documentation practices, clearer target setting, more rigorous needs assessments, and a balanced approach to both execution and evaluation.

Appendix 1: Audit Questions and Area of Focus

Key Question: Is RADA managing the Production Incentives to Farmers Programme effectively to achieve its stated goal to increase agricultural production?

| Level two questions | Level three questions that underpin this | Audit Objective - Determine whether: | Area of Focus |
|---|---|--|--|
| Issue 1 – Does RADA have in place an effective and efficient planning process? (Planning) | 1.1 Did RADA employ an objective basis to inform and prioritize planning decisions? | Planning production incentives activities were done effectively (budget and priority activities for the PIP were informed by market needs assessment and proper due diligence. | Strategic Management and Project Planning Budgeting, Research Policies and Plans |
| Issue 2 - Were measures adopted to ensure the proper implementation of the projects? (Implementation) | 2.1 Were the identified priority projects implemented efficiently? | RADA efficiently implement the production incentives to deliver priority outcomes, and in line with established GOJ procedure and guidelines. | Procedures and guideline for implementation of projects Project manuals |
| Issue 3 –Is there an established performance measurement framework in place to track achievement and communicate results? (Monitoring and Reporting) | 3.1 Were there performance monitoring mechanisms (<i>targets, KPIs</i>) in place to ensure efficient execution of projects? | An effective mechanism for monitoring and evaluation was in place. (Targets clearly defined, measured, and documented) | Performance Measurement Timeline of Achievement to Date Strategic objectives/KPIs |
| | 3.2 Is RADA subjected to proper oversight to ensure attainment of strategic goals and objectives? | | Reporting Structure Strategic Direction Leadership (Board and Portfolio Ministry) |

Appendix 2: Audit Criteria and Source

| Level Three Questions | Criteria | Source |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Did RADA employ an objective basis to inform and prioritize planning decisions?</p> <p>(PLANNING)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Justification and determination of priority projects (Business Case or research outcome for selection of projects - Assumptions, constraints, and risks are defined) Maintenance of project schedule with the associated cost estimates. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimates of expenditure Corporate and operational plans (RADA) | <p>MoAFM/RADA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SOP for PIP Planning document (research doc, SOPs) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate and operational plans and related budget Estimates of expenditure Board decision and approval (where necessary) |
| <p>Were the identified priority projects implemented efficiently?</p> <p>(IMPLEMENTATION)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate and operational plans (RADA) Guidelines/ instructions/ Standard operating procedures (SOP) for the PIP programme and selected projects. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental manuals Established selection criteria for farmers to be provided with farm inputs. The projects' deliverables required to deliver the objectives and scope are defined. | <p>RADA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SOP for PIP and projects Operations Manual Work programmes for projects. Status Reports Board decision and approval (where necessary) |
| <p>Were there performance monitoring mechanisms (targets, KPIs) in place to ensure efficient execution of projects?</p> <p>(MONITORING & EVALUATION)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operations Manual Strategic plan, KPIs Procedure prescribed for monitoring Evaluation reports Annual and quarterly reports Operations Manual Corporate Governance & Accountability Frameworks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RADA's SOP for PIP Department/operations manuals Strategic and operational plans, quarterly reports RADA Board minutes Correspondence between MOA and RADA regarding decision making. Board Charter |
| <p>Is RADA subjected to proper oversight to ensure attainment of strategic goals and objectives?</p> | | |

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| (MONITORING & EVALUATION) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework (MTF) • Reports (annual, management, performance & financial statements) • Medium Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework (MTF) |
|--------------------------------------|--|

Appendix 3: Achievement status – Priority Crops

| Priority Crop/Activity | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
|------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Irish Potato | ? | ? | ⊘ | ⊘ | ⊘ |
| Onion | ? | ? | ✓ | ? | ⊘ |
| Cassava | ? | ⊘ | ? | ? | ✓ |
| Coco | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Dasheen | ? | ✓ | ✓ | ? | ⊘ |
| Ginger | ? | ? | ? | | ✓ |
| Hot Pepper | ? | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ? |
| Lime | | ⊘ | ? | ? | ⊘ |
| MD2 Pineapple | ? | ? | ✓ | | |
| Strawberry | ? | ? | ✓ | | |
| Vegetables | | ? | | | |
| Yam | ? | ? | ✓ | ? | ? |

Key

| | |
|---|--------------------------|
| ? | Incomplete data provided |
| ⊘ | Target not achieved |
| ✓ | Target achieved |

Appendix 4: Contracts For Purchase of Seeds

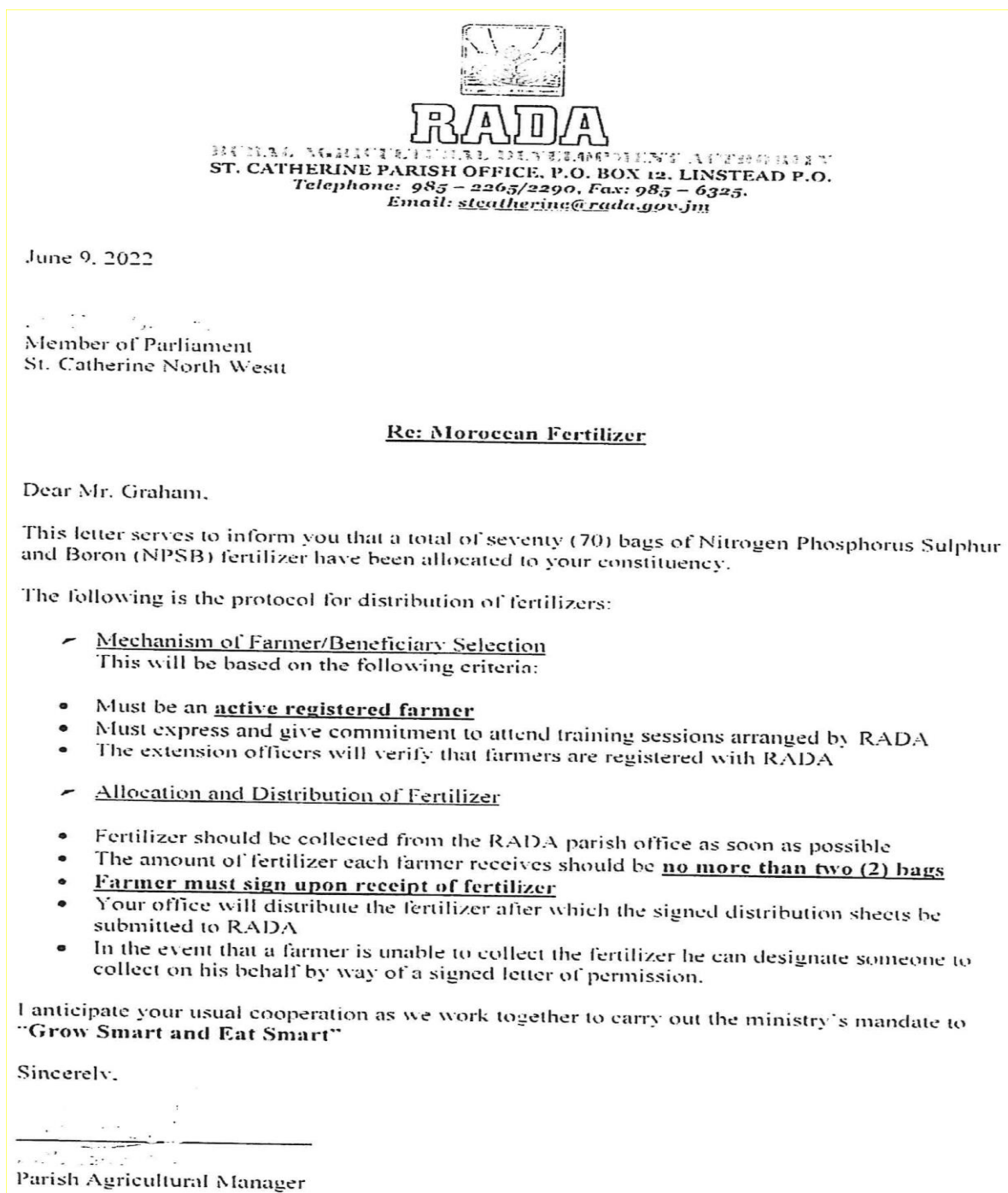
| CONTRACT NUMBER | CONTRACTOR | CONTRACT DETAILS | CONTRACT COST (\$) | DELIVERY PERIOD EARLIEST/LATEST | ACTUAL DELIVERY PERIOD | VARIANCE ¹⁹ DAYS | PLANTING SEASON |
|----------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| RADA/GOODS/07/2019 | Company 1 | Irish Potato Seeds | 14,998,676 | 18-Jan-19 / 10-Jan-19 | 11-Feb-19 | 24 | July to September October to April |
| RADA/GOODS/13/2020 (LOT 2) | Company 1 | Irish Potato Seeds | 20,506,282.50 | 23-Nov-20 /18-Dec-20 | 30-Nov 20 to 3-Dec 20 | 0 | |
| RADA/GOODS/13/2020 (LOT 1) | Company 1 | Irish Potato Seeds | 59,296,875.00 | 23-Nov-20 /18-Dec-20 | Delivery dates not provided for 7 of 10 parishes | - | |
| RADA/GOODS/11/2020 | Company 1 | Irish Potato Seeds | 24,827,062 | 16-Oct-20 /20-Nov-20 | 22 Oct 20 to 24 Nov 20 | 4 | |
| RADA/GOODS/06/2020 | Company 1 | Irish Potato Seeds | 23,388,410 | 7-Jul-20 / 20-Jul-20 | 27-Aug-20 | 38 | |
| RADA/GOODS/05/2021 | Company 1 | Irish Potato Seeds | 20,240,000 | 30-Aug-21 / 29-Sep-21 | 1-Nov -21 to 16- Nov-21 | 48 | |
| RADA/GOODS/05/2021 | Company 1 | Irish Potato Seeds | 48,990,000 | 14-Sep-21 / 14-Oct-21 | 6 Dec 2021 to 6 Jan 2022 | 84 | |
| RADA/GOODS/15/2021 | Company 1 | Irish Potato Seeds | 19,228,000 | 18-Feb-22 / 4-Mar-22 | 17-Feb-22 to 1-Apr-22 | 28 | |
| RADA/GOODS/07/2022 | Company 1 | Irish Potato Seeds | 47,092,500 | 15-Aug-22 / 31-Aug-22 | 3-Nov-22 to 5-Dec-22 | 96 | |
| RADA/GOODS/07/2022 | Company 1 | Irish Potato Seeds | 41,687,500 | 15-Aug-22 / 31-Aug-22 | 31-Oct-22 to 5-Jan-23 | 128 | |
| RADA/GOODS/03/2022 | Company 1 | Irish Potato Seeds | 8,409,375 | 22-Jun-22 / 20-Jul-22 | Not Presented | - | |
| RADA/GOODS/16/2022 | Company 1 | Irish Potato Seeds | 25,714,000 | 3-May-23 / 7-Jun-23 | 5-Jul-23 | 28 | |
| RADA/GOODS/16/2022 | Company 1 | Irish Potato Seeds | 24,540,195 | 3-MAY-23 / 7-JUN-23 | 29 JUN 23 - 8 JUL 23 | 31 | |
| RADA/GOODS/04A/2023 | Company 1 | Irish Potato Seeds | 39,991,250 | 6-Oct-23 /5-Nov-23 | 13 Nov 23 - 15 Jan 24 | 71 | |
| RADA/GOODS/17/2023 | Company 1 | Irish Potato Seeds | 36,698,869 | 6-Oct-23 / 1-Dec-23 | 7 Dec 23 - 25 Jan 24 | 56 | |
| RADA/GOODS/17/2023 | Company 1 Company 1 | Irish Potato Seeds | 24,966,500 | 1-Mar-24 /13-Mar-24 | 4 Mar 24 - 27 Apr 24 | 45 | |
| RADA/GOODS/10/2023 | Company 2 | Onion Seeds | 40,365,000 | 1-Sep-23 / 29-Sep-23 | 10 Oct 23 to 5 Nov 23 | 37 | September to March |
| RADA/GOODS/12/2020 | Company 2 | Onion Seeds | 17,250,000 | 15-Sep-20 /14-Oct-20 | 8-Oct-20 to 11-Nov 20 | 28 | |
| RADA/GOODS/06/2021 | Company 2 | Onion Seeds | 16,001,100 | 30-Aug-21 /29-Sep-21 | 2-Sep-21 to 11-Oct 21 | 12 | |
| TOTAL | | | 554,191,594.35 | | | | |

¹⁹ Difference between the latest delivery date as per contract agreement and the actual latest delivery dates per delivery records.

Appendix 5: Details of Unspent Balance as of March 31, 2024 (Spent in 2024-25)

| Payment Date | Particulars | Supply and Delivery | Operational and Miscellaneous Costs | Farmers Support and Assistance | Infrastructure Development & Construction | Commitments (Planned Expenditures) | Grand Total |
|--------------|--|----------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 5-Apr-24 | Supply & Delivery Double Cab Pickup (3) | 28,819,920.00 | - | - | - | - | 28,819,920.00 |
| 5-Apr-24 | Pig Nipples | 1,454,750.00 | - | - | - | - | 1,454,750.00 |
| 5-Apr-24 | Onion Seeds | 1,355,988.00 | - | - | - | - | 1,355,988.00 |
| 5-Apr-24 | Refreshment-Minister's Field Tour | - | 230,000.00 | - | - | - | 230,000.00 |
| 5-Apr-24 | St. Mary Agri-Expo 2024 | - | 373,600.00 | - | - | - | 373,600.00 |
| 16-Apr-24 | Supply & Delivery of Vegetable Seeds | 18,536,418.75 | - | - | - | - | 18,536,418.75 |
| 19-Apr-24 | Upkeep Mileage-March 2024 | - | 7,000.00 | - | - | - | 7,000.00 |
| 23-Apr-24 | Farmers Assistance | - | - | 89,920.96 | - | - | 89,920.96 |
| 26-Apr-24 | Construction of Water Catchment Pond | - | - | - | 5,611,270.00 | - | 5,611,270.00 |
| 29-Apr-24 | Refreshment-Minister's Field Tour | - | 31,600.00 | - | - | - | 31,600.00 |
| 29-Apr-24 | Signage-Hinds Town Pond | - | - | - | 120,000.00 | - | 120,000.00 |
| 29-May-24 | Piglets Medication | 990,000.00 | - | - | - | - | 990,000.00 |
| 29-May-24 | Drench Guns | 579,050.00 | - | - | - | - | 579,050.00 |
| 31-May-24 | Mileage & Subsistence-March & April 2024 | - | 458,332.24 | - | - | - | 458,332.24 |
| 31-May-24 | Cross Cut Shedder | 24,261.55 | - | - | - | - | 24,261.55 |
| 3-Jun-24 | Broilers Crumble | 60,600.00 | - | - | - | - | 60,600.00 |
| 7-Jun-24 | Beet Army worm Pheromone Septa | 934,400.00 | - | - | - | - | 934,400.00 |
| 12-Jun-24 | Mileage, Subs. & Toll-Monitoring-May 2024 | - | 76,193.27 | - | - | - | 76,193.27 |
| 27-Jun-24 | Chaff Cutter | 1,200,000.00 | - | - | - | - | 1,200,000.00 |
| 12-Jul-24 | Upkeep Mileage & Toll-July 2024 | - | - | - | 81,620.00 | - | 81,620.00 |
| 12-Jul-24 | Mist Blower & Engine Oil | 625,600.00 | - | - | - | - | 625,600.00 |
| 23-Jul-24 | Mileage, Subs. & Toll-May & June 2024 | - | 363,532.44 | - | - | - | 363,532.44 |
| 23-Jul-24 | Grass Chaffing Machine | 1,270,152.00 | - | - | - | - | 1,270,152.00 |
| 26-Jul-24 | Goat Milking Machines | 742,368.57 | - | - | - | - | 742,368.57 |
| 31-Jul-24 | Transportation of Tractor-Land Preparation | 200,000.00 | - | - | - | - | 200,000.00 |
| 31-Jul-24 | Goats for Farmers | - | - | 1,035,000.00 | - | - | 1,035,000.00 |
| 2-Aug-24 | Advertisement-Procurement of Seeds | 141,697.25 | - | - | - | - | 141,697.25 |
| 14-Aug-24 | Supply & Delivery of Water Tanks | 6,367,622.22 | - | - | - | - | 6,367,622.22 |
| 16-Aug-24 | Mileage & Subsistence -May & June 2024 | - | 679,831.24 | - | - | - | 679,831.24 |
| 23-Aug-24 | Supply & Delivery of Water Tanks | 2,028,205.60 | - | - | - | - | 2,028,205.60 |
| 12-Sep-24 | Supply & Installation of HDPE Pond Liner | 1,636,320.60 | - | - | - | - | 1,636,320.60 |
| 13-Sep-24 | Upkeep Mileage & Toll-July & August 2024 | - | 107,936.68 | - | - | - | 107,936.68 |
| 24-Sep-24 | Upkeep Mileage- August 2024 | - | 97,066.67 | - | - | - | 97,066.67 |
| 3-Oct-24 | Supply & Installation of HDPE Pond Liner | 8,034,498.02 | - | - | - | - | 8,034,498.02 |
| 14-Oct-24 | Repairs to Pool Vehicle - St. Mary | - | - | - | 132,135.00 | - | 132,135.00 |
| 22-Oct-24 | Supply and Delivery of Desktop Computers | 712,499.35 | - | - | - | - | 712,499.35 |
| 7-Nov-24 | Argo Park for Sweet Potato | - | - | - | 2,000,000.00 | - | 2,000,000.00 |
| FY 2023-24 | Funds Committed (not yet spent) | - | - | - | - | 25,125,630.84 | 25,125,630.84 |
| | Total | 75,714,351.91 | 2,425,092.54 | 1,124,920.96 | 7,945,025.00 | 25,125,630.84 | 112,335,021.25 |

Appendix 6: Specimen of Letter from Parish Agricultural Managers to Members of Parliament across St. Catherine



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Acronyms and Abbreviations

| | |
|---------|---|
| AIC | Agro-Investment Corporation |
| BA&VF | Beneficiary Assessment and Verification Form |
| CDP | Comprehensive Distribution Plan |
| CEO | Chief Executive Officer |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GOJ | Government of Jamaica |
| INTOSAI | International Organization of Supreme Audit Institution |
| ISSAI | International Standards of Supreme Audit Institutions |
| KPI | Key Performance Indicator |
| MTF | Medium-Term Frameworks |
| MoAFM | Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Mining |
| MoFPS | Ministry of Finance and the Public Service |
| PAM | Parish Agricultural Manager |
| PIP | Production Incentive Programme |
| RADA | Rural Agricultural Development Authority |
| SOP | Standard Operating Procedures |
| STATIN | Statistical Institute of Jamaica |
| SBP | Strategic Business Plans |