

Torrential rains

Minister Arvin Boolell meets representatives of planters this Wednesday

On Wednesday 2 April 2008, the Minister of Agro Industry and Fisheries, Dr. the Hon. Arvin Boolell, will meet representatives of planters whose plantations have been affected by the recent torrential rains. Along with the Small Planters Welfare Fund (SPWF) and the Agricultural Research and Extension Unit (AREU), the Ministry will look into measures to accelerate the replanting programme.

Heavy rainfall received as from Saturday 22 March 2008 has created waterlogged conditions in sugarcane fields. If these conditions are not dissipated fast, they will have an adverse effect on the sugarcane crop.

With regards to foodcrops, it is estimated that around 170 ha of sensitive crops like bean, cabbage, cauliflower, carrot, tomato, creepers, etc., are likely to be affected. Damage to newly established plantations is estimated at 30-60% in general and may be highly significant in areas prone to waterlogging and soil erosion. The impact of excessive rain is expected to delay the establishment of new plantation that will include onion and potato for which the season is starting. Increased incidence of disease on some major crops is expected as a result of excessive humidity. A comprehensive field study is being done by AREU.

With regards to livestock, no animal mortality has been reported. 11 cow sheds and 12 goat sheds were reported to be flooded and there has been no significant damage in the poultry sector. Advisory service to farmers is being dispensed by AREU.