



# Science, Technology & Innovation News

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Newly appointed Executive Director of the Scientific Research Council (SRC), Dr. Charah Watson, speaks at a JIS 'Think Tank', today (April 26), at the agency's head office in Kingston.

## Agro-Industry

### 4,710 Kilograms Of Julie And East Indian Mangoes Shipped To The UK



Approximately 4,710 kilograms of mangoes were shipped to the United Kingdom (UK) from the Norman Manley International Airport in Kingston on Thursday (April 22). The mangoes were exported by local fresh food producers Native Nature, Dussard Trading, Tropical Foods, Carita Jamaica Limited and Wah Gwaan Foods (Yam Man) Jamaica Limited. [...]

### 315 Farmers Reap Benefits Under Irrigation Systems Consultancy Project



A total of 315 farmers from 11 districts in St. Thomas and St. Andrew have benefited from irrigation equipment and techniques to boost crop production under the Irrigation Systems Consultancy Project. The consultancy was executed through a partnership involving the National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA) and the Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA). [...]

### More Persons Interested In Farming – Minister Green



Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, Hon. Floyd Green, says there is growing evidence to suggest that even amidst the raging COVID-19 pandemic, more persons have been expressing an interest in farming. Mr. Green, who was speaking at the National Irrigation Commission (NIC) office in Watchwell, St. Elizabeth, [...]

### More Than 400 Kits Distributed Under Backyard Garden Project



Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, Hon. Floyd Green, says that the Backyard Garden project is “up and running” with more than 400 gardening kits already distributed to householders across the island. He was speaking to **JIS News** during a ceremony in Twickenham Park, St. Catherine, on Thursday (April 15), where 13 kits were handed over to residents of the parish. [...]

### Farmers Urged To Consult With RADA To Prevent Oversupply Of Crops



Farmers are being urged to consult with the Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA) when establishing crops to prevent an oversupply of a particular produce. RADA, in a statement today, noted that there is currently an oversupply of cabbage within the marketplace in addition to growing concerns for other vegetable crops. [...]

### Farmers To Benefit From \$30-Million Passion Fruit Project



Scores of farmers in Rock Hall, St Andrew, are the first group to benefit from the distribution of more than 10,000 passion fruit seedlings under a flood relief project. The project, implemented by the Jamaica Agricultural Society (JAS) and funded by the State of the African Diaspora (SOAD) and the Economic Community of the Sixth Region (ECO-6), is valued at \$30 million. [...]

### Caribbean Agriculture Ministers Discuss State Of Sector In COVID-19 Pandemic Era



Caribbean agriculture ministers have discussed new challenges facing the sector as a result of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. A statement from the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) said that the virtual meeting brought together ministers from 14 countries discussing the “dramatic consequences” of the COVID-19 pandemic in the region, [...]

### Agro-processing Learning Lab Opens At Knockalva Polytechnic College



The Agro-processing learning lab at the Knockalva Polytechnic College in Ramble, Hanover, was officially opened yesterday. The lab will help prepare students for agro-processing and the wider world of agribusiness, while providing greater access to tertiary education for people in western Jamaica. Speaking at the virtual ceremony, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, Floyd Green, [...]

## BUSINESS NEWS

### 2,000 Entrepreneurs Benefiting From ENDS



Minister without Portfolio in the Ministry of National Security, Senator the Hon. Matthew Samuda, says that more than 2,000 entrepreneurs are benefiting under the pilot phase of the E-Commerce National Delivery System (ENDS). The programme was first rolled out on March 26 in Portmore, St Catherine, and expanded to Montego Bay, St. James, and Kingston and St. Andrew on April 2. [...]

### ENDS To Be Expanded Next Week



Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Andrew Holness, says the E-commerce National Delivery System (ENDS) is to be expanded to additional areas by next week. The pilot, which commenced in Portmore on March 26, was extended to Kingston and St. Andrew and St. James on April 2. Mr. Holness, who was speaking in the House of Representatives on Tuesday (April 13), said that the system has been going well [...]

### Operators of MSMEs Encouraged To Create Pension Plans For Their Workers



Assistant Manager for Pension Administration at JN Fund Managers Limited, Ms. Roxanne Wizzart encouraged operators of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) to learn more about creating pension plans for their employees. Speaking at a recent Jamaica Business Development Corporation (JBDC) 'Virtual Biz Zone' session under the theme 'The Importance and Benefits of Pensions for MSMEs', [...]

## Climate Change

### Enterprising Entrepreneurs Encouraged To Participate In Climate Launchpad Programme



The Caribbean Climate Innovation Center (CCIC) is encouraging prospective entrepreneurs with clean technology (cleantech) ideas to participate in the upcoming ClimateLaunchpad initiative. The engagement is deemed potentially capable of transforming promising ideas that address climate change into impactful businesses. ClimateLaunchpad is one of the world's largest green business ideas competition [...]

### PM Holness Among 40 World Leaders Invited To Climate Summit



Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Andrew Holness, is among two Caribbean Heads of Government who have been invited to attend the virtual Leaders Summit on Climate, which will take place from Thursday (April 22) to Friday (April 23). United States President Joseph Biden, who is hosting the summit, invited 40 leaders from around the world, including Mr. Holness and Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, [...]





## Health Issues

### Jamaicans Will See Impact Of Vaccinations As More Persons Get Jabs – Dr. Ennis



Director of Family Health Services in the Ministry of Health and Wellness, Dr. Melody Ennis, says Jamaicans will see a difference in Coronavirus (COVID-19)-related hospitalisations and deaths as more persons become vaccinated. Dr. Ennis, who was addressing the Ministry's virtual COVID Conversations on April 29, urged patience as the country waits to see the results of vaccination, [...]

### Ministry To Begin Administering Second COVID-19 Doses First Week Of May



Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, says that Jamaicans who got their first dose of the coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine in March will begin to receive their second dose during the first week of May. Jamaica received a shipment of 55,000 doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine through the COVAX Facility on Monday (April 26), [...]

### 55,000 Doses Of AstraZeneca Vaccine Arrived Yesterday



Jamaica received another 55,000 doses of the coronavirus (COVID-19) AstraZeneca vaccine through the COVAX Facility on Monday (April 26). The shipment was met on arrival at the Norman Manley International Airport, in Kingston, by Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton. It was organised by the World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization (WHO/PAHO). [...]

### PAHO Members Called On To Contain Spread Of Vaccine-Preventable Diseases



Members of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) have been called on to take steps to contain the spread of vaccine-preventable diseases, such as measles and rubella, while simultaneously undertaking coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccinations. Director, Dr. Carissa Etienne, said this is imperative as uncontrolled outbreaks of measles and other preventable diseases "could further stretch our health systems [...]"

### Health Minister Reminds Persons To Still Observe Protocols After First Jab



Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, is reminding persons who have received the first dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine that they must continue to observe protocols to prevent catching the coronavirus (COVID-19). "Having the vaccine doesn't mean you won't get COVID-19. It is how your body responds to that," Dr. Tufton said. [...]

### **CARPIN Calls For Shift From Highly Hazardous Pesticide Use In Agriculture**



The Caribbean Poison Information Network (CARPIN) is calling for a switch to more sustainable agricultural practices that do not rely heavily on the use of Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs). HHPs in agriculture have been found to be hazardous and a shift from the use of these substances can enhance human health and the environment while simultaneously creating appreciable economic [...]

### **Health Ministry Suggests At Least 60 Minutes Of Activity Per Week For Children**



The Ministry of Health and Wellness is calling on adults to ensure that children receive at least 60 minutes of physical activity each week, for sustained health. Issuing the call, Senior Health Education Officer at the Ministry, Charmaine Plummer, told **JIS News** there is an increase in overweight and obesity, due to limited physical activities, which she attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic and other cultural norms. [...]

### **Colon Cancer: Knowing Your Risks And How To Cope**



As reported by the Jamaica Cancer Society (JCS), colon cancer (colorectal cancer) is the third leading cause of cancer-related deaths in Jamaica. In 2018, 642 new cases were recorded and 373 persons passed away from the disease. This type of cancer occurs in the colon, which is the large intestine, or in the rectum. It is developed from abnormal growths called *polyps* [...]

### **No Evidence That Vaccine Impacts Male Fertility – Dr. Ennis**



Director of Family Health Services in the Ministry of Health and Wellness, Dr. Melody Ennis, is dismissing assertions that the AstraZeneca coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine has a negative effect on the fertility of men. She said there is no evidence that the vaccine affects the erectile function of men or reduces sperm count on male fertility were noted among the thousands of persons [...]

### **COVID-19 Vaccine Does Not Impair Immune System**



Director of Family Health Services at the Ministry of Health and Wellness, Dr. Melody Ennis, is assuring the public that the coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine does not impair or impede the body's immune system to fight other illnesses. Speaking in an interview with **JIS News**, Dr. Ennis explained that the vaccine operates to generate antibodies that are specific to a particular disease entity. [...]

## Medical Marijuana

### New Chairman of CLA Wants Ganja Industry To Earn Maximum Benefits Globally



Reforming the Cannabis industry into one which earns maximum benefits globally, is the goal of the newly appointed Chairman for the Cannabis Licensing Authority (CLA), LeVaughn Flynn. He was announced as the new Chairman for this agency of Government on February 23, by Minister of Industry, Investment and Commerce, Hon. Audley Shaw. [...]

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### SRC To Establish Pilot Plant To Produce Cosmetic Products



The Scientific Research Council (SRC) is to establish a pilot plant for the production of personal care and cosmetic products, new Executive Director, Dr. Charah Watson, has said. “We have been supporting micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in the development and production of products and one of the areas we have seen a lot of interest in is personal care / cosmetic products. [...]

### Universal Service Fund Encourages Responsible Use Of Public Wi-Fi Hot Spots



As the Universal Service Fund continues to roll-out free Wi-Fi across the country it is reminding users to connect with care. To date, the Agency has established 13 Public Wi-Fi hotspots in growth centres across the country. Chief Executive Officer of the Universal Service Fund Daniel Dawes said the Agency intends to institute an additional six free public Wi-Fi solutions by the end of the year. [...]

### Student Attendance Registration App Being Developed



A student attendance registration application is to be developed to collect information in real time about school attendance. Education, Youth and Information Minister, Hon. Fayval Williams, who made the disclosure while addressing a virtual Post Sectoral Debate Press Conference on Thursday (April 29), said current national statistics indicate 74 per cent consistent school attendance among children. [...]





*The SRC is happy to  
introduce our newly appointed  
Executive Director,  
Dr. Charah T. Watson.*

Dr. Watson received a Doctorate in Chemistry and Bachelor's Degree in Food Chemistry and Pure and Applied Chemistry from the University of the West Indies, Mona. Dr. Watson's track record as a multidimensional scientist, an innovator and entrepreneur will further advance the mission of the Scientific Research Council, allowing it to thrive as a research and development entity in years to come.



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