



Trees That Feed Foundation

Planting Fruit Trees To Feed People, Create Jobs and Benefit the Environment

Contact:

Trees That Feed Foundation: Natasha Norris, info@treesthatfeed.org 1-954-675-5228

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Mining Partners with Trees That Feed Foundation to Introduce New Avocado Varieties to Jamaica

Kingston, Jamaica — [11 February 2026]

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Mining, in partnership with Trees That Feed Foundation (TTFF), is pleased to announce the introduction of three new avocado varieties (Carla, Hass, and Semil31) to Jamaica from the Dominican Republic. This strategic initiative is designed to strengthen national food security, stabilize supply, and support the long-term growth of Jamaica’s avocado industry.

The introduction of these new varieties will help fill critical gaps in production by extending harvest windows and reducing seasonal shortages. Over the next decade, this effort is expected to support reliable, year-round avocado production across Jamaica, benefiting farmers, exporters, and consumers alike.

“The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Mining is very appreciative of this initiative, brought about by the shared values and vision of the Trees That Feed Foundation and the Government of the Dominican Republic, which fits perfectly with our strategic priority and mission to improve food security. This not only aligns with the Ministry’s move to boost exports, but also provides a steady income for our farmers, many of whom are seeking a complementary crop to citrus that grows well under similar conditions to avocado,” said **Orville Palmer, Chief Technical Director in the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Mining.**

“We are optimistic that these varieties will allow our farmers to secure a year-round income, add value, and deliver affordable end products for our people. Avocado will be just as precious to us as ackee,” he added.

“In keeping with the mandate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, the Embassy of Jamaica in the Dominican Republic is pleased to support Trees That Feed Foundation in their work to establish reliable, year-round avocado production across Jamaica. We welcome this collaboration as an important step toward strengthening food security, promoting sustainable agricultural practices, and creating economic opportunities for Jamaican farmers and communities,” said **Allan Marley, Jamaica’s Chargé d’affaires to the Dominican Republic.**

“When Minister Floyd Green asked me to secure year-round avocado production for Jamaica, I initially thought it might be impossible. Through our partnership with Trees That Feed Foundation, we have made it a reality,” said **Locksley Waites, Senior Agronomist at the Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA)**.

The budwoods for the new avocado varieties were purchased from **Wellington Martínez** of Momagro in the Dominican Republic, whose support was instrumental to the project. He has collaborated closely with Trees That Feed Foundation for many years, particularly on breadfruit initiatives.

“It will always be a great honor to contribute to the objectives of noble projects like the ones Trees That Feed Foundation promotes. We’re at the service of the people and we have a lot of work to do together,” said Martínez.

Trees That Feed Foundation has worked in Jamaica since 2009, collaborating with government agencies, farmers, and entrepreneurs. Jamaica was the first country where the organization planted food-bearing trees. Co-founders Mary and Mike McLaughlin were born, educated, and married in Jamaica. The U.S.-based organization now operates in more than 20 countries worldwide, with breadfruit as its flagship tree.

“Minister Floyd Green challenged us to help Jamaica achieve year-round avocado production, and we were honored to support that vision,” said **Trees That Feed Foundation President Mary McLaughlin**. “Now that the budwoods are in Jamaica and grafting has begun, this project enters the careful research phase that will ensure long-term success on Jamaican farms like the one I grew up on.”

The budwoods are being grafted by **Mr. Rakel Cobin** at Bodles Research Station, where the saplings will remain in quarantine for six months. The trees will then be planted in selected locations across the island and monitored to determine optimal elevations and soil conditions. Once this research phase is complete, the new avocado varieties will be made available to farmers throughout Jamaica.

Trees That Feed Foundation plants food-bearing trees to feed people, create jobs, and benefit the environment. This avocado initiative supports national priorities for agricultural resilience, climate-smart farming, and export growth.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Mining remains committed to partnerships that deliver practical, long-term solutions for Jamaica’s agricultural sector and position the country for sustainable growth in regional and global markets.

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