

## PRESS RELEASE

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# Government Honours Farmers and Fishers at 2026 Agriculture and Fisheries Exhibition and Market

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The Government of The Virgin Islands honoured outstanding farmers and fishers from across the Territory during the opening ceremony of the 2026 Agriculture and Fisheries Exhibition and Market, held at the Eileene L. Parsons Auditorium, H. Lavity Stoutt Community College, Paraquita Bay, on Friday, 10 April 2026.

Awards were presented by the Premier and Minister responsible for Agriculture and Fisheries, Honourable Dr. Natalio D. Wheatley.

Delivering remarks at the ceremony, which included a harvest procession and scintillating performances in music and recitations, Acting Permanent Secretary in the Premier's Office, Dr. Lavon Chalwell-Brewley, highlighted the importance of recognising the individuals who sustain the agriculture and fisheries sectors. "Today, we pause to not only celebrate produce, products, and progress — but most importantly, to celebrate people. This is an opportunity to recognise individuals whose dedication and hard work continue to strengthen agriculture and fisheries in the Virgin Islands."

She pointed out that these hardworking men and women are the heart of agriculture and fisheries; they rise early, work tirelessly, and remain committed to the work they do.

Dr. Chalwell-Brewley also expressed delight at the representation of awardees from across the Territory, noting participation from Tortola, Anegada, Virgin Gorda, and Jost Van Dyke.

### **Farmers' Awards**

The **Food Producer Award** was presented to:

- Ms. Moviene Fahie
- Mr. Ghansam Singh
- Mr. Wilbert "Isha" Chinnery
- Mrs. Henrietta Wheatley

"This award speaks to consistency, reliability, and the ability to supply a variety of fresh produce to our community," the Acting Permanent Secretary declared.

"These food producers continue to ensure that fresh, locally grown produce

reaches our tables throughout the year.”

The **Livestock Producer Award** was presented to:

- Mr. Bryan Hodge
- Mr. Godwin Callwood
- Mr. Daniel Cline
- Mr. Eldon Young

“The Livestock Producer Award recognises those committed to strengthening livestock production and supporting our local food supply,” Dr. Chalwell-Brewley stated. “Coming from Tortola, Jost Van Dyke, Anegada, and Virgin Gorda, these producers are making a meaningful contribution to livestock production across the Territory.”

The **Community Farming Hero Award** was presented to:

- Pleasant Valley Farm (Tortola)
- Mr. Jahnai Caul (Virgin Gorda)

According to the Acting Permanent Secretary, “The Community Farming Hero Award highlights those who go beyond farming to educate, inspire, and uplift others. Through their work, they are helping to build awareness and inspire the next generation of farmers.”

The **Agri-Tech Innovator Award** was presented to:

- Agri-Paradise Virgin Gorda Ltd

She said: “The Agri-Tech Innovator Award celebrates those bringing new ideas and modern approaches into agriculture. This reflects the growing role of innovation in making agriculture more efficient and sustainable across our islands.”

### **Fishers’ Awards**

Turning to the fisheries sector, Dr. Chalwell-Brewley recognised the contribution of fishers to the Territory. “We now shift our focus from the land to the sea...as we turn to our fishers — whose dedication and skill continue to sustain our

communities.”

The **Fishers Entrepreneurship Award** was presented to:

- Mr. Adam Turbe of Jost Van Dyke

She said: “The Fishers Entrepreneurship Award recognises a fisher who is building not just a livelihood, but a strong and growing business. This is a clear example of how fishing continues to expand into enterprise and opportunity.”

The **Young Fisherman of the Year Award** was presented to:

- Mr. Kareem Rivera of Tortola

Of this award, Dr. Chalwell-Brewley pointed out, “The Young Fisherman of the Year Award celebrates a young fisher demonstrating skill, commitment, and strong potential. A reminder that the future of our fisheries sector is in capable hands.”

The **Fish Producer Award** was presented to:

- Mr. Elton Gordon of Tortola

She said: “The Fish Producer Award recognises consistency in supplying quality seafood to the community. His efforts help to ensure a steady and reliable supply of seafood across the Territory.”

The **Lifetime Achievement Award** was presented to:

- Mr. Dean Soares of Anegada

The Acting Permanent Secretary said, “This award honours a lifetime of dedication and lasting contribution to the fishing industry. This moment reflects years of dedication, commitment, and lasting impact on the fishing industry.”

The **Community Fishing Hero Award** was presented to:

- Mr. Ishmael Michael Collins of Virgin Gorda

The Acting Permanent Secretary in the Premier’s Office declared: “A true example of leadership and investment in others within the industry.”

## **Celebrating Service and Commitment**

In closing, Dr. Chalwell-Brewley commended all honourees, celebrating their meaningful impact on the Territory through their contributions to food systems, community development, and the future of the Virgin Islands. She highlighted that they are not only producers, but also leaders, innovators, and role models. She encouraged continued support for their work as the Territory builds a stronger, more sustainable agriculture and fisheries sector.

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### **About:**

The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries is under the Premier's Office of the Government of the Virgin Islands. We are mandated to promote and regulate the agricultural and fisheries sectors to ensure that food produced and harvested within the Territory is safe, nutritious, and sustainably produced, while protecting the natural environment, enhancing economic growth, and improving the social well-being of Virgin Islanders.

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