



Farmers Raise Concerns Over Government Farm Competing in Local Markets

Consortium calls for fair policies to protect independent agricultural producers

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The St. Kitts Consortium of Farmers and Food Producers wishes to bring to the attention of the public and relevant authorities our growing concern regarding the operations of SKNATURES and its impact on local agriculture.

As farmers and producers, we have long been the backbone of national food security, rural livelihoods, and community resilience. We have invested our time, labour, and limited resources into sustaining agricultural production under increasingly challenging conditions, including climate variability, rising input costs, and market uncertainties.

It is therefore deeply troubling that a government-operated farm, established with access to public funding, infrastructure, and institutional support, is now directly competing with independent farmers in the same markets we depend on for survival. This situation creates an uneven playing field, where small and medium-scale producers are placed at a significant disadvantage.

We are not opposed to government involvement in agriculture. On the contrary, we welcome policies and initiatives that strengthen the sector. However, such involvement must be structured to support and empower farmers, not displace them. When a state-supported entity enters commercial markets without clear safeguards, it risks undermining the very stakeholders it should be uplifting.

The consequences are already being felt. Farmers are experiencing reduced market access, downward pressure on prices, and declining profitability. If this trajectory continues, it threatens to drive many out of business, weaken domestic food production, and increase reliance on imports, leading to an outcome that runs counter to national sustainability goals.

We therefore call on the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis to:

1. Clearly define the role of SKN NATURE to ensure it complements rather than competes with local farmers.
2. Establish fair market guidelines that protect independent producers.
3. Engage in meaningful consultation with farmer groups and stakeholders.
4. Prioritize policies that strengthen local agricultural enterprises, including access to markets, financing, and technical support.

We emphasize that our intention is not confrontation, but collaboration. We remain committed to working with the Government and all stakeholders to build a resilient, inclusive, and sustainable agricultural sector that benefits all citizens.

We urge timely dialogue and decisive action to address these concerns before irreversible damage is done to the farming community.

About the St. Kitts Consortium of Farmers and Food Producers

The St. Kitts Consortium of Farmers and Food Producers is a non-profit organization representing farmer groups, agro-processors, and independent producers across St. Kitts. The Consortium works to strengthen collaboration, improve market access, and promote sustainable agricultural development for the benefit of all stakeholders.

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