CARICOM AGRICULTURE YOUTH ADVISORY BODY

PILOT CONCEPT NOTE

CALS-LAFP AGRIFOOD ENTERPRISE INCUBATION CAMPUS

A 100-acre pilot connecting leadership certification, enterprise incubation, tenant grants and structured local procurement

Issuing institution	CARICOM Agriculture Youth Advisory Body (CAYAB)
Proposed host	One participating CARICOM Member State, to be selected
Proposed duration	36 months, subject to feasibility and approval
Document status	Concept Draft v0.1 - for consultation and proposal development

11 August 2026

info@caricomyab.org | www.caricomyab.org

Approval note: This is a CAYAB proposal for discussion. CARDI has indicated verbal willingness in principle to assist with proposal development and to explore serving as fund administrator. All partner roles, use of logos, financing commitments and implementation arrangements remain subject to written confirmation, due diligence and formal approval.

1. Executive summary

CAYAB proposes a 100-acre CALS-LAFP Agrifood Enterprise Incubation Campus as a national pilot of the proposed Local Agriculture First Policy (LAFP). The campus would combine temporary access to productive land and enterprise space with shared infrastructure, technical services, the Caribbean Agrifood Leadership System (CALS) certification pathway, staged tenant grants and coordinated access to institutional and commercial demand.

The model is designed to answer a practical regional question: can youth and small-scale agrifood entrepreneurs become reliable suppliers when land, leadership development, enterprise support, production planning, aggregation, finance and verified demand are organized as one system rather than delivered as disconnected interventions?

Core proposition: CALS develops the leader; the campus incubates the enterprise; the Tenant Enterprise Grant Facility finances business readiness and growth; and LAFP connects production to dependable local and institutional markets.

2. Project snapshot

Field	Proposed design
Project	CALS-LAFP Agrifood Enterprise Incubation Campus Pilot
Location	One willing CARICOM Member State selected through readiness and approval criteria
Scale	One approximately 100-acre campus; final design subject to land and engineering studies
Primary participants	Provisional first cohort of 20-30 youth and small-scale agrifood enterprises
Duration	36 months, including design, establishment, incubation, graduation and evaluation
Programme steward	CAYAB
Proposed fund administrator	CARDI, subject to written agreement, due diligence and approval
Funding approach	Separate campus-capital envelope plus a proposed US$2 million Tenant Enterprise Grant and Support Facility
Policy status	Pilot of a proposed LAFP implementation pathway; no procurement award or partner commitment is guaranteed

3. Background and rationale

Young and small-scale agrifood entrepreneurs frequently encounter multiple barriers at the same time: insecure or inadequate access to land, fragmented extension, limited infrastructure, weak business records, insufficient collateral, small and irregular volumes, post-harvest losses, and difficulty meeting institutional procurement requirements. Conventional projects often address only one constraint, leaving the enterprise unable to progress from training to dependable revenue.

The CAYAB Regional Consultation and Validation Series provides a platform for examining CAYAB's institutional framework and the proposed LAFP. The proposed campus would emerge as a practical implementation and research mechanism informed by that dialogue. It would not be represented as an approved output of the current regional project unless the responsible institutions formally decide so in writing.

The pilot would organize production against verified demand from schools, hospitals, correctional institutions, social programmes and other buyers, subject to national law and transparent procurement processes. It would test whether coordinated support can improve supplier readiness, local food availability, youth livelihoods and the proportion of institutional food expenditure retained within the local economy.

4. Goal, objectives and expected results

4.1 Goal

To demonstrate a governed and replicable model through which certified agrifood leaders and incubated youth and small-scale enterprises can supply dependable local markets and contribute to national food security, enterprise growth and LAFP implementation learning.

4.2 Objectives

- Establish an approximately 100-acre agrifood enterprise incubation campus in one participating Member State.
- Deliver the CALS leadership and enterprise certification pathway as an integrated condition of tenant development and graduation.
- Provide selected enterprises with time-limited access to plots, workspaces, infrastructure, mentoring and shared technical services.
- Operate a staged Tenant Enterprise Grant Facility that finances readiness, development, market access and graduation.
- Map institutional demand and coordinate production, aggregation, processing and delivery without bypassing national procurement law.
- Generate evidence on cost, reliability, inclusion, income, food supply, leadership development and replication potential.
- Produce a country-owned scale-up recommendation and a regional implementation learning package.

4.3 Expected results

Result area	Illustrative pilot result
Leadership	A cohort completes the CALS certification and practical leadership requirements.
Enterprise	Tenant businesses maintain records, meet milestones and demonstrate independent operating readiness.
Markets	Verified demand is translated into transparent production and delivery plans.
Infrastructure	Shared services reduce duplication and improve quality, storage, processing and logistics.
Finance	Staged grants help enterprises acquire productive assets and leverage additional finance where appropriate.
Evidence	Baseline, performance and final evaluation data support a scale, revise, pause or close decision.

5. Theory of change

Stage	What the pilot provides	Intended change
1. Recruit	Living Registry outreach, eligibility screening and baseline assessment	A transparent cohort of eligible enterprises
2. Certify	CALS learning, leadership practice and enterprise planning	Capable, ethical and policy-literate agrifood leaders
3. Incubate	Land, workspace, shared services, extension and mentoring	Reduced start-up barriers and better business discipline
4. Finance	Milestone-based tenant grants and financial coaching	Productive investment and stronger business readiness
5. Connect	Demand mapping, scheduling, aggregation and lawful procurement pathways	More reliable supply and market access
6. Graduate	Independent-readiness review, transition support and alumni network	Sustainable enterprises and replicable leadership

6. The 100-acre campus model

The campus is not simply a subdivision of farmland. It is a shared agrifood enterprise environment. The final physical plan must follow land surveys, environmental review, water assessment, engineering design, commodity analysis, national approvals and consultation with potential tenants and surrounding communities.

6.1 Illustrative land-use concept

Use	Illustrative acres	Purpose
Tenant production plots	55	Crop, livestock or integrated enterprises, allocated by business and land-use plan
Demonstration and research	8	Applied trials, seed systems, climate and production learning
Protected agriculture and nursery	5	Seedling production and controlled-environment systems
Livestock, apiculture and integrated systems	5	Diversified enterprise and circular agriculture
Aggregation, cold storage and processing	5	Washing, grading, packing, storage and value addition
Training, administration and enterprise services	3	CALS delivery, mentoring, records and coordination
Roads, drainage, water, utilities and safety	9	Campus access and essential services
Environmental buffers and circular systems	5	Water protection, biodiversity, composting and waste management
Expansion and contingency	5	Adjustment following detailed design
Total	100	Illustrative only; not a surveyed master plan

6.2 Shared services

- Water, irrigation, electricity and renewable-energy systems.
- Extension, soil and water testing, plant health and veterinary support as relevant.
- Mechanization, nursery, cold storage, washing, grading, packing and processing.
- Food-safety, quality-assurance, certification-readiness and traceability support.
- Business planning, accounting, procurement readiness and digital recordkeeping.
- Aggregation, transport, logistics, market intelligence and buyer coordination.

7. Participant, tenancy and graduation model

7.1 Participant pathway

Stage	Status	Required evidence
Application	Living Registry applicant	Eligibility, identity, business concept and baseline information
Foundation	CALS-LAFP Fellow	Orientation, conduct agreement, development plan and initial assessment
Certification	CALS candidate	Core modules, assessments and approved enterprise capstone
Incubation	Campus tenant	Time-limited licence, milestones, records and grant compliance
Practicum	Tenant leader	Enterprise results plus mentoring, community or system-leadership contribution
Graduation	CALS-certified agrifood leader and LAFP alumni enterprise	Certification, enterprise-readiness and approved transition plan

7.2 CALS certification requirements

CALS is the leadership and professional-development spine of the pilot. Graduation requires more than classroom attendance. The tenant must demonstrate leadership competence and enterprise performance. Until an authorized institution grants academic or professional accreditation, the award must be described accurately as a CAYAB programme certificate.

- Caribbean agrifood systems, policy and institutions.
- Leadership, ethics, governance and accountability.
- LAFP, local procurement and buyer requirements.
- Enterprise planning, financial management and cooperative development.
- Climate-smart agriculture, food safety and resilience.
- Digital agriculture, data literacy and traceability.
- Communication, negotiation, project management and monitoring.
- A capstone based on the tenant's actual enterprise and a practical leadership assignment.

7.3 Tenancy principles

- Tenancy is time-limited and does not automatically confer ownership of campus land.
- A written licence defines the plot or workspace, permitted use, service obligations and exit conditions.
- Tenants maintain production, financial, environmental and grant records.
- Performance reviews determine progression, remediation, extension, graduation or discontinuation.
- An accessible appeal and grievance process is available.
- Participants under 18 cannot be tenants or grant signatories and require a separate safeguarding framework.

7.4 Graduation outcomes

Outcome	Meaning
Graduated	CALS requirements and independent enterprise-readiness requirements are met.
Graduated with continuing support	Core requirements are met; limited mentoring or market support continues.
Extended incubation	Potential is demonstrated, but specified requirements need additional time.
Withdrawn or discontinued	Voluntary exit or termination for sustained non-performance, misconduct or noncompliance, with due process.

8. Tenant Enterprise Grant Facility

Grants are development instruments linked to approved enterprise plans and milestones; they are not automatic entitlements attached to tenancy. The proposed US$2 million facility would finance grants and the services required to administer, monitor and convert them into sustainable outcomes.

Grant window	Illustrative range	Purpose and release condition
Start-up readiness	US$5,000-15,000	Initial productive assets after CALS foundation and approval of the enterprise plan
Business development	US$15,000-30,000	Capacity, quality, climate resilience or processing after satisfactory performance review
Market readiness and growth	US$30,000-50,000	Competitive award tied to buyer requirements, delivery capacity and co-financing where suitable
Graduation and transition	US$5,000-20,000	Relocation, expansion or contract readiness after approval of an independent transition plan

Disbursement would be milestone-based and may combine cash, direct supplier payment and equipment supplied in kind. CARDI, if formally appointed, would conduct due diligence, execute grant agreements, control disbursement, maintain financial records, monitor compliance and support audit. CAYAB would retain programme stewardship and participate in policy, beneficiary and performance oversight under an approved governance charter.

9. Market and procurement model

The pilot should not produce first and search for a market afterward. It would begin with lawful demand assessment and buyer engagement. Potential demand sources include schools, hospitals, correctional institutions, social programmes, government cafeterias, hotels, processors, retailers and other approved buyers.

Demand-to-delivery step	Pilot action
Demand mapping	Document product, volume, frequency, quality, packaging, delivery and payment requirements.
Supplier planning	Match tenant and external supplier capacity to realistic product and seasonal opportunities.
Production scheduling	Coordinate planting, production and contingency arrangements.
Aggregation and quality	Combine, grade, pack, process and trace products to buyer specifications.
Procurement route	Use transparent procedures and national legal review; the pilot does not guarantee contracts.
Delivery and payment	Track fulfilment, acceptance, invoicing, payment time and dispute resolution.
Performance learning	Measure reliability, cost, income, quality, nutrition, inclusion and local expenditure retention.

10. Governance and proposed institutional roles

Governance principle: CAYAB should own and steward the programme mandate; the fund administrator should protect fiduciary integrity; grant decisions should follow published criteria and independent conflict-of-interest controls.

Entity	Proposed role - subject to agreement
CAYAB	Programme founder and steward; CALS/LAFP alignment; youth outreach; governance; leadership delivery; beneficiary accountability; learning and communications.
CARDI	Proposal-development partner and proposed fund administrator; fiduciary controls; due diligence; grant agreements; disbursement; reporting; audit support; technical and research inputs.
Host government	Land and enabling approvals; national focal point; demand and policy coordination; extension and infrastructure support; legal and procurement participation.
FAO	Potential technical, resource-mobilization or funding partner, only under written approval; safeguards, food-systems and evaluation advice.
CARICOM Secretariat	Potential regional-policy and Member State coordination role, only under written approval.

Entity	Proposed role - subject to agreement
Campus operator	Day-to-day facilities, tenant services, safety, maintenance and operational records under a performance agreement.
Independent Grants Committee	Application scoring, award recommendations, recusals and documented decisions under approved criteria.

10.1 Proposed governance bodies

- CAYAB-CARDI Facility Steering Committee.
- Independent Grants Committee with youth, technical, financial and host-country representation.
- National Pilot Implementation Team.
- CALS Certification and Graduation Review Panel.
- Independent audit, complaints and evaluation functions.

11. Implementation phases and decision gates

Phase	Indicative period	Principal outputs	Decision gate
1. Authorization and feasibility	Months 1-3	Written partner positions; host screening; land, demand, legal, water, environmental and financial assessments	Proceed to detailed design, revise or stop
2. Design and resource mobilization	Months 4-9	Master plan; operating model; CALS curriculum mapping; grant manual; costed proposal; agreements	Financing and implementation approval
3. Establishment and cohort selection	Months 10-12	Priority infrastructure; staff; transparent tenant selection; baseline	Campus readiness certification
4. Certification and incubation	Months 13-30	CALS delivery; tenancy; grants; production; procurement pilots; reviews	Midterm continuation or redesign
5. Graduation and evaluation	Months 31-36	Graduation reviews; transition grants; final evaluation; scale recommendation	Scale, revise, pause or close

12. Indicative financing framework

The campus requires two separate financing envelopes. Envelope A covers land development and physical infrastructure and must be costed after feasibility and engineering. Envelope B is the proposed US$2 million Tenant Enterprise Grant and Support Facility. Keeping the envelopes separate protects enterprise funding from being consumed by construction costs. All figures below are planning assumptions only; administrative costs, indirect costs, tax treatment, procurement and eligible-expenditure rules must be negotiated and approved by the funder and fund administrator.

12.1 Envelope A - campus capital

To be determined through site-specific surveys, design and bills of quantities. Potential categories include land preparation, roads, drainage, water, energy, buildings, cold chain, processing, equipment, digital systems, safety and environmental mitigation.

12.2 Envelope B - preliminary US$2 million facility

Budget component	Indicative amount	Share
Tenant grants and graduation awards	US$1,050,000	52.5%
CALS training and certification delivery	US$250,000	12.5%
Technical, enterprise and market-readiness support	US$200,000	10.0%
Monitoring, research and independent evaluation	US$150,000	7.5%
Fund administration, audit and compliance	US$200,000	10.0%
Communications and knowledge transfer	US$50,000	2.5%
Contingency and risk provision	US$100,000	5.0%
Total	US$2,000,000	100%

13. Monitoring, evaluation, research and learning

The pilot should be designed as an implementation and research project. A baseline, periodic reviews and independent final evaluation would test whether the combined model improves leadership, enterprise survival, supply reliability and local market participation.

Domain	Illustrative indicators
Participation	Applicants, tenants, countries of origin where relevant, gender, age, inclusion and completion.
CALS	Module completion, assessment results, capstones, leadership practicum and certification.
Enterprise	Revenue, costs, assets, record quality, survival, employment, finance leveraged and graduation.
Production	Acres used, yields, losses, quality, climate practices and scheduled-volume fulfilment.
Markets	Buyers engaged, opportunities, contracts where lawfully awarded, sales, delivery reliability and payment time.
Public value	Local expenditure retained, food availability, nutrition relevance, youth livelihoods and replication cost.
Governance	Grant cycle time, complaints, conflicts, audit findings, data incidents and corrective actions.

13.1 Core research questions

- Does predictable demand improve tenant income and enterprise survival?
- Which campus services generate the greatest improvement in supplier readiness?
- What is the cost and time required to develop a procurement-ready youth enterprise?
- Can coordinated tenants meet buyer requirements for volume, quality, delivery and traceability?
- Which components are transferable to other Member States and which require national adaptation?

14. Risks and safeguards

Risk	Required safeguard
Policy or partner overstatement	Use conditional language; obtain written approvals before naming commitments or using partner logos.
Land and community conflict	Complete tenure, environmental and community due diligence; publish selection and grievance procedures.
Procurement challenge	Independent legal review, transparent routes, no guaranteed contracts and documented conflicts.
Grant misuse or capture	Published criteria, due diligence, staged payments, audit, recusals and beneficial-ownership disclosure.
Tenant dependency	Time-limited tenancy, performance reviews, transition planning and graduation support.
Supply or climate failure	Diversification, water planning, insurance assessment, aggregation and contingency production.
Late buyer payment	Service standards, invoice tracking, escalation and finance options subject to law.

Risk	Required safeguard
Data misuse	Consent, minimization, role-based access, retention rules, incident response and exportability.
Exclusion	Accessible applications, offline support, reasonable accommodation and transparent appeals.
Minor participation	No tenancy or grant contracting by minors; separate safeguarding and guardian-consent arrangements.

15. Sustainability and replication

The campus should develop a mixed sustainability model rather than depend indefinitely on grants. Potential revenue may include affordable tenant service charges, aggregation and processing fees, training delivery, research partnerships, facility use and other approved income. Public-interest functions and support for disadvantaged tenants may continue to require donor or government subsidy.

Graduates would enter a CALS-LAFP Alumni and Supplier Network, remain connected through the Living Registry and, as CRAIG develops subject to approval, access opportunities, aggregation, mentoring, data and regional market services. Replication should follow evidence and country readiness, not automatic copying of one physical design.

16. Decisions requested

1. Approve the concept as a CAYAB working proposal for structured consultation and development, not implementation.
2. Authorize a written clarification with CARDI regarding proposal-development support and willingness in principle to serve as fund administrator.
3. Authorize preparation of a full feasibility and investment package, including site-selection criteria and separate capital and grant budgets.
4. Invite expressions of interest from Member States without promising selection or financing.
5. Authorize integration of the CALS certification course, Tenant Enterprise Grant Facility and LAFP procurement research into one pilot architecture.
6. Authorize donor and technical-partner engagement using approved conditional language and without unapproved partner logos.
7. Require legal, fiduciary, safeguarding, environmental, data and procurement approvals before implementation or grant disbursement.

17. Immediate next steps

Action	Lead	Proposed timing
Record CARDI's position in writing and define the proposal-development team	CAYAB/CARDI	Within 2 weeks
Approve pilot design assumptions and host-country readiness criteria	CAYAB	Within 3 weeks
Prepare Member State expression-of-interest and demand-assessment instruments	CAYAB/CARDI	Within 4 weeks
Commission feasibility, safeguards and preliminary engineering	To be appointed	Following host shortlist
Finalize CALS certification, tenancy, grant and graduation manuals	CAYAB with technical partners	During detailed design
Develop the full funding proposal and donor prospectus	CAYAB/CARDI	Following feasibility evidence

Recommended next decision: Authorize development of the feasibility and funding package while preserving the distinction between a CAYAB concept, CARDI's verbal willingness in principle and any future formally approved partnership or financing commitment.

Annex A. Preliminary design documents required

- Full project proposal and results framework.
- Site-selection and 100-acre campus feasibility study.
- Preliminary master plan and capital cost estimate.
- CALS curriculum-to-certification and assessment framework.
- Tenant selection, licence, performance and graduation model.
- Tenant Enterprise Grant Facility operations manual.
- CAYAB-CARDI collaboration and fund-administration agreements.
- Institutional demand and procurement-readiness study.
- Environmental, social, safeguarding, data and grievance frameworks.
- Monitoring, research, evaluation and regional learning plan.

Document control: CAYAB_CALS_LAFP_Agrifood_Enterprise_Incubation_Campus_Pilot_Concept_Note_v0.1_2026-08-11