



**For Immediate Release**

**November 12, 2014**

## **70 Volunteers to Support Jamaica Sustainable Farm Enterprise**

Beginning in October 2014, the Florida Association for Volunteer Action in the Caribbean and the Americas (FAVACA) launched a new three and a half year program focused on the development of market-driven organic agricultural production with focus in the parish of St. Thomas, Jamaica. FAVACA seeks to collaborate with local partners to ensure multi-layered sustainable practices across food systems, businesses, institutions, and organizations.

Over the course of the initiative, FAVACA will place 70 professionals to train an estimated 2,800 individuals on various facets including irrigation and management, distribution, and organic food systems. Based on over thirty years of experience and several development projects within Jamaica, FAVACA aims to empower local farmers in St. Thomas to address the number of environmental challenges and climate change issues that are hindering economic growth and crop production. Through increasing food security and enterprise profitability, this program will improve financial services and set a foundation for reproducible disaster-resistant agricultural environments.

The program is supported through funding provided by the U. S. Agency of International Development (USAID) John Ogonowski and Doug Bereuter Farmer-to-Farmer Program and administered by Volunteers for Economic Growth Alliance (VEGA). FAVACA Executive Director Demian Pasquarelli “sees significant opportunities for impact based on previous successes through a strong local partner in the Source Farm Foundation (SFF)” which has been selected as the implementing partner for the program in Jamaica. SFF has been working for the past two years to provide training in Permaculture, organic farming, farm economics, and market development for young and beginning farmers.

Within Florida’s backyard, this new initiative seeks to alleviate the obstacles that currently prevent organic agriculture success and strengthen ties between the United States and Jamaica.

**About FAVACA:** FAVACA is unique development partnership with the Caribbean and the Americas. FAVACA’s mission is to improve social and economic conditions in the Caribbean and the Americas through volunteer service. Volunteers are top experts in their fields and are thus able to impart invaluable knowledge and information to their international counterparts. These efforts match State, federal, foundation and private funds building on 30 years of partnership with our closest neighbors throughout the hemisphere. Our partners include: U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Exchange, the U.S. Agency for International Development, Jimmy Buffett’s Singing for Change Foundation, Tupperware, Money Gram, Western Union, Cayman National Bank, and many more. For more information, please contact Demian Pasquarelli at (850) 536-6630, [demian@favaca.org](mailto:demian@favaca.org), or visit [www.favaca.org](http://www.favaca.org).