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Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States - Export Development Unit

Business Innovator of the Year

Erica's Country Style a SME in St. Vincent and the Grenadines is reaping the accolades of her hard work and perseverance over the past twenty years.

Erica's produces a line of pepper sauces, marinades, mango salsa, sauces, salad dressings, pepper jelly, snacks, gift packages, rum punch and novelty mugs, caps and t-shirts. **Erica's stands out simply because she procures 95%of her raw material from local contract farmers in St. Vincent.**

Erica McIntosh the proprietor of Erica's Country Style was recently named **"Business Innovator of the Year"** by the St. Vincent & The Grenadines Chamber of Industry and Commerce Inc. She is not only an agro-processor champion but a well established business woman. She runs a boat tour operation, dabbles in real estate, and operates a health club and is a very talented photographer.

Erica's recently participated in **ZestFest 2009 in Texas USA and took 2nd prize** for her Hot Sauce in the Condiments Table Sauce category. She is excited at that achievement since this creates promotion for her products in the Chile Pepper Magazine which has a high distribution level.

On **August 29th 2009** the first shipment of products left St. Vincent bound for Barbados.....after a ten-year gap **Erica** has successfully re-entered the Barbados market which she considers her **biggest market penetration yet**..... simply because the Barbadian market already has an assortment of sauces and condiments. Erica's products are distributed by Hanschell Inniss Limited a fully-owned subsidiary of Goddard Enterprises Limited whose customers include large and small supermarkets and mini marts, restaurants, hotels, bakeries and flight kitchens.

Erica's Country Style has been an EDU client company for over fifteen(15) years and we have been intimately involved in her development over the years and we are proud that we have been a part of her journey. Today Erica's exports to the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, Tortola, and Barbados.

Erica formed part of the OECS/EDU delegation to Fancy Food 2009 in June 2009 and Expo Caguas 2009 in September 2009 where her products were well received and much interest expressed.

Caguas Business Community seeks greater linkages with OECS Firms

The Caguas Business Community in Puerto Rico calls for greater business linkages between the Caguas Municipality and the OECS. The recently concluded "Expo Caguas 2009" was a great success for the exhibiting OECS firms and the OECS. OECS exhibiting firms were able to sell products, establish contracts, meet potential buyers, source raw material and invite discussion for joint ventures and mergers.

The St. Kitts and Nevis Prime Minister Hon. Dr. Denzil L. Douglas, current OECS Chairman in his feature address indicated that the three-day exhibition in the Puerto Rican city of Caguas signifies a new level of interaction between the United States Commonwealth and the member countries of the Eastern Caribbean States. Prime Minister Douglas said the participation of the OECS in Expo Caguas 2009, represents new efforts to develop practical and mutual relations between Puerto Rico and the Eastern Caribbean countries.

The OECS/Export Development Unit (OECS/EDU) in collaboration with the OECS Mission to Puerto Rico coordinated the OECS participation, showcasing products, investment opportunities and services from the region under the theme "The Best of the OECS". The work of the OECS Secretariat was also highlighted. **The activity was funded by the European Union under the 9th EDF Caribbean Trade & Private Sector Development Programme**.

The OECS held a two hour round table discussion with panelists: **Anita Joseph, Head of the OECS Mission to Puerto Rico; David Lea, Film Producer (Montserrat); Erica McIntosh, Agro-Processors (St. Vincent & The Grenadines); and John Francis, Record Producer (St. Kitts & Nevis).** The round table resulted in lively interactions between the panelists and the Caguas Business Community with strong interest expressed in undertaking **Joint Ventures** with OECS firms in areas such as agro-processing and ICT, **Trading Raw Material Supply arrangements and Equity Participation** in OECS firms.

Two very important collateral events took place during Expo Caguas, the screening

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