



## Farmer-to-Farmer assignment helps nonprofit organization in Trinidad increase chicken egg production

Vision on Mission (VOM) is a non-governmental organization (NGO) that was founded in 1995 by Mr. Wayne Chance during his incarceration in the Port-of-Spain prison. The organization assists ex-inmates on their release to re-enter society successfully and is dedicated to the rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-offenders, deportees, delinquent youths, and the socially displaced into society. To further

their mission and goals to create a better future for their members and community, VOM identified agriculture as a way to teach personal skills and money management. Because chicken eggs are in high demand commercially in Trinidad and Tobago and for consumption at VOM, the NGO decided to work towards increasing their poultry production for commercial chicken eggs. To support



Darrin Karcher teaches participants egg anatomy

the organization, the USAID-funded John Ogonowski and Doug Bereuter Farmer-to-Farmer Program connected with Darrin Karcher, Associate Animal Science Professor and Extension Poultry Specialist at Purdue University and Adjunct Associate Professor at Michigan State University.

Darrin Karcher has a vast amount of experience consulting with poultry operations and building Extension capacities. In March 2022, Darrin Karcher trained 21 people: one youth, one woman, and 19 men in the care of laying hens for commercial egg production and safe handling processes for eggs. Karcher prepared training materials focused on brooding, meat bird management, eggs, and anatomy/physiology of the bird. Specifically, the trainings prepared participants to properly brood chicks, identify and utilize best management practices for layers, identify egg nomenclature and demonstrate techniques to assess egg quality, how to properly handle poultry, perform external assessment on the bird, and dissect and identify gastrointestinal and reproductive tract parts.

With Karcher's training, VOM was able to increase chicken egg production by 50%. VOM is not only using daily eggs for member consumption, but excess production has also allowed the organization to sell at local farmers markets. The knowledge that Darrin Karcher has passed on will be essential for helping the VOM organization and its members to continue improving farm production. With the higher chicken egg production, VOM and its members have economic security for the future and a new income source for its members.

*"This was an amazing experience. There is a distinct satisfaction one gains from working with people as you teach them versus just instructing them what to do."*



Darrin Karcher (left) with VOM staff, participant and board member.



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