

Nutrimix invests \$150M in feed and pet food plant



Prime Minister Dr Keith Rowley, second from right, is joined by Minister of Trade and Industry Paula Gopee-Scoon, second from left, Nutrimix president and Group CEO Ronnie Mohammed, third from left, and Nutrimix general manager Lydia Mohammed at the sodturning ceremony for the Nutrimix animal and pet food plant at the Point Lisas Industrial Estate yesterday. PHOTO BY KRISTIAN DE SILVA

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With T&T importing \$1.82 billion in animal feed and pet food between 2020 and 2024 while only exporting \$68.3 million, Minister of Trade and Investment Paula Gopee-Scoon sees an opportunity for the Nutrimix Group of Companies to boost the country's net exports with its proposed animal and pet food plant.

The \$150 million investment located in the Point Lisas Industrial Estate will see Nutrimix construct a state-of-the-art plant that includes two pelletised feed lines, producing 20 tonnes per hour, with extrusion lines producing up to five tonnes per hour. The estimated construction period is two years, followed by an additional six months for installation, commissioning, and testing. Nutrimix expects to employ more than 150 people during construction and create hundreds of new jobs both directly and indirectly.

The new products will include extruded feeds and food for tilapia, rabbits, dogs, cats, and other domesticated animals, aiming to replace imports of similar items within Caricom and extra-regional territories.

Addressing the sod-turning ceremony in Point Lisas yesterday, Gopee-Scoon said this development would yield greater efficiency and higher quality output.

She said the Government was pleased with, and supportive of, the growing trend of local reinvestments, which continue to drive the expansion of the manufacturing and agro-processing sectors.

“It not only reflects the private sector’s confidence in the economy but also serves as clear evidence that the Government’s policies and programmes are delivering results,” Gopee-Scoon said.

She described the plant as a bold step in backward integration within the agricultural value chain, which is essential as T&T seeks to achieve greater food security and meet the goals established by Caricom under the 25 by 25 initiative.

Between January 2020 and December 2024, T&T imported an estimated 302 million kilogrammes of animal feed at a value of \$1.3 billion. In contrast, the country exported 13 million kg of animal feed, valued at \$60 million. This figure excludes dog and cat food as well as bird seed.

Examining export potential, Gopee-Scoon noted that the global import market for animal feed experienced significant growth from US\$17.91 billion in 2020 to a peak of US\$22.79 billion in 2022, before slightly declining to US\$20.78 billion in 2023. The top importers in 2023 were Belgium (US\$997M), Germany (US\$953M), and the Netherlands (US\$911M), reflecting strong demand in European markets, while the United States (US\$894M) remained a key non-European importer.

For T&T, she identified the United States, Barbados, and St Lucia as the markets with the greatest export potential for animal feed.

T&T has also traditionally been a net importer of pet food.

Notably, between January 2020 and December 2024, approximately 50 million kilogrammes of pet food were imported at a value of \$523 million. During the same period, 639,000 kilogrammes were exported at a value of \$8.3 million.

“The global pet food market size was valued at US\$126.6 billion in 2024, presenting an opportunity to enter the international marketplace and earn foreign exchange. The United States, Panama, and Chile are the top three markets with the greatest export potential. Beyond these, other high-potential markets close to us include Guyana, Jamaica, Barbados, Belize, St Lucia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Colombia, Germany, France, China, the United Kingdom and Mexico.”