

and Tobago, Barbados' main Caribbean Community (CARICOM) market for its exports, and reciprocal removal of stamp duties on CARICOM products should enhance intra-regional trade i.e., trade among the countries that are members of CARICOM. Government has removed the stamp duty (15 per cent) on raw materials and packaging materials imported from extra-regional sources, effective April 1988, in an effort to stimulate manufacturing and enhance export competitiveness.

Agriculture. Sugar accounts for 99 per cent of agricultural earnings. Production has been falling since the beginning of the decade, to 110 000 tonnes in 1986 and to 83 400 tonnes in 1987. World market prices for sugar remain very low, and the combination of a cut-back in acreage planted and an extended dry season accounted for the further drop in production in 1987.

Production of food crops has fluctuated of late, declining marginally in 1987 on account of the prolonged dry season. The production of dairy and poultry products plus cotton has shown excellent growth and the fish catch has been increasing at a more modest rate.

Food imports rose from US\$48.5 million in 1976 to US\$79.9 million in 1986. Foodstuffs continue to make up a substantial percentage of total imports.

Construction. Infrastructural upgrading projects, most notably the construction of a US\$40 million IADB (Inter-American Development Bank) financed highway, the completion of a US\$12 million fisheries harbour and processing complex, public and private sector housing developments, expansion of hospital facilities and the government's capital works program have kept activity within the construction sector at a high level. Growth is expected to continue in this sector with a number of internationally financed projects still under construction and with an increase in the number of housing starts.

Energy. Barbados has a single oilfield at Woodburne which produced 331 768 barrels of crude oil in 1987 as compared to 559 152 barrels in 1986. Natural gas sales declined by 10 per cent to reach 8.1 million m³. The government's policy to decrease production pending higher world oil prices is reflected in the reduction of output of crude oil and natural gas. The construction of a Cdn\$4 million LPG Plant, (financed by the Export Development Corporation) producing some 25 000