

# SMART AGRITECH SCHEME

## TOWARDS A SMARTER, MORE EFFICIENT AND PROFITABLE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

### SMART AgriTech grant supports Aitutaki family business The Good Way Farm

The Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM) is pleased to announce Aitutaki family business The Good Way Farm has received SMART AgriTech Scheme funding to build a temperature-controlled greenhouse. The new high-tech greenhouse will enable The Good Way Farm to focus on producing a regular supply of exotic crops such as kale to local shops, cafes and restaurants.

Based in Nikaupara, The Good Way Farm has developed over the last 15 years from a subsistence family farm into a successful commercial farm supplying local grocery stores and eateries with fresh vegetables on a weekly basis. The Good Way Farm currently grows various crops like tomatoes, cucumbers, lettuce, pak choi, beans, radishes, carrots, beetroot, and culinary herbs.

With Covid-19 leading to reduced demand from hotels and restaurants and an oversupply of some crops, The Good Way



Farm's Teparé Solomona says they've had to develop a new business strategy. "We've had to re-strategise to survive, and part of our new strategy is to focus on and increase our production of exotic crops such as kale, to consistently supply the Aitutaki Market and Prime Foods in Rarotonga. We are very grateful for the SMART Agritech grant, which will help us to build a high-tech greenhouse. The greenhouse will enable us to extend the growing season, increase our production

and the quality of our product, and grow more exotic crops. All of this is great for boosting the supply and variety of fresh, locally grown vegetables to our customers and communities."

The popular leafy vegetable kale has not typically been grown locally on Aitutaki or Rarotonga, but The Good Way Farm has been growing kale on a small scale for the past five years. With the assistance of a temperature-controlled greenhouse, they are confident they can produce enough kale to meet local demand. Once the greenhouse is established, The Good Way Farm will be able to introduce other exotic crops, reducing the Cook Islands' reliance on imported produce.

This latest grant is the sixth to be approved and released and reflects the SMART Agritech scheme's aim to foster innovation by encouraging the development and adoption of more innovative and productive technologies across the agricultural supply chain.