



Small Rum Producers Benefit from World Class Quality Initiative

- *This initiative is part of a CARIFORUM project funded by the European Union within the context of their support for the Caribbean Economic Partnership Agreement and implemented by the West Indies Rum & Spirits Producers Association (WIRSPA).*
- *Training workshop is aimed at introducing best practice in sensory assessment to smaller rum companies working in partnership with larger producers.*
- *Initiative underscores call from PM Anthony of St. Lucia for regional brands to remain uniquely authentic and strive for absolute quality.*

June 2014 - Rums produced by the small distilleries in CARIFORUM show tremendous diversity and stack up well against global brands says Mike Booth, spirits consultant and master blender for several international brands. Booth was speaking during a sensory training workshop in Barbados at which rum brands under the Authentic Caribbean Rum Marque were sampled side by side with brands from the giants of the drinks world. These smaller regional rums represent great value and demonstrate high quality authentic product, adds Booth.

The workshop was part of a CARIFORUM initiative funded by the European Union under their support for the Caribbean Economic Partnership Agreement. It is part of a series of collaborative activities aimed at introducing best practice to smaller producers achieved through partnerships with larger producers under the umbrella of the regional rum grouping, WIRSPA. According to Frank Ward, chairman of WIRSPA, "we have a very diverse membership in terms of size, these activities provide the opportunity for our larger better established brands to give a helping hand to the smaller producers to ensure that we all continue to deliver top quality products in a very competitive market.

The session was not just about testing of current rums but also aims to establish a best practice process for assessment and on-going measurement of sensory quality. This echoes the thoughts of St. Lucia Prime Minister, Dr. Kenny Anthony, who recently spoke of rums from the region as being "uniquely authentic - of absolute quality and absolute excellence". He encouraged the industry to maintain its investment in quality programmes and support for exports under the banner of Authentic Caribbean Rum.

The training session was held at the sensory evaluation lab of the West Indies Rum Distillery in Barbados with participation from 12 Caribbean distilleries, from the largest producer in Dominican Republic, Brugal, to one of the smallest, Shillingford Estates in



**This project is funded by
The European Union**

A Project of the
Caribbean Forum of ACP States

CARIFORUM



Dominica. For these smaller distilleries, the training workshop provided invaluable feedback on their brands and included a session where un-aged spirit from producers' stills was also sampled.

Producers from the following brands were present:

Antigua & Barbuda - Antigua Distillery Ltd

Belize - Traveller's Liquors Ltd

Dominica - Shillingford Estates Ltd

Dominican Republic - Brugal & Co SA

Guyana - Demerara Distillers Ltd

Haiti - Societe Rhum du Barbancourt

Grenada - Grenada Distillers Ltd and Westerhall Estates Ltd

St. Lucia - St. Lucia Distillers Ltd

St. Vincent & the Grenadines – St. Vincent Distillers Ltd

Suriname - Suriname Alcoholic Beverages NV

Trinidad & Tobago - Angostura Ltd

End

Images: ACR Marque; Rum Products being assessed

The West Indies Rum & Spirits Producers Association implements the European Union¹ funded CARIFORUM Rum Sector Support Project on behalf of CARIFORUM.

The Authentic Caribbean Rum (ACR) Marque was developed as a symbol of authenticity, provenance and quality for rums within the WIRSPA family. As usage of the Marque grows it will act as a visual symbol to help trade customers and consumers identify ACR brands, but in the short-term it will be used to promote the development of Authentic Caribbean Rum as a distinct sector within the drinks industry. For more information visit www.wirspa.com ; www.acr-rum.com or contact wirspa@wirspa.com.

¹ European Commission is the EU's executive body.

“The European Union is made up of 28 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders”.



**This project is funded by
The European Union**

A Project of the
Caribbean Forum of ACP States

CARIFORUM