



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Ministry of Trade and Industry

## MEDIA RELEASE

### ***Trade Minister: Real Diversification at Work in T&T***

**February 25, 2025:** Nutrimix's soon-to-be Animal and Pet Food Plant is a true representation of strategic and successful diversification. These were the sentiments expressed by Senator the Hon. Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry, at the sod-turning ceremony on Tuesday ( February 25, 2025) to mark the beginning of construction of the facility.

The Minister, who delivered Remarks at the event, explained that diversification efforts of companies like Nutrimix have been replicated on a wider scale. For example, over the eight year period 2016-2023, the food and beverage sector increased by 49 percent, moving from TT\$2.1 billion to TT\$3.2 billion. In fact since 2015, the non-energy sector has grown by 75 percent from TT\$61 billion in 2015 to TT\$107 billion in 2024 (GDP excluding petrochemicals at constant prices). This she said was "further evidence of real diversification" made possible through "Government's consistent support of the national diversification agenda with the promotion of manufacturing and agricultural activities."

Chief Executive Officer of the Nutrimix Group of Companies, Mr. Ronnie Mohammed, revealed that with the investment of approximately TT\$150 million the state-of-the-art Animal and Pet Food Plant will include two pelletized lines for feeds, producing 20 tonnes per hour with extrusion lines up to 5 tonnes per hour: yielding greater efficiency and higher quality output. Such an output will contribute both to import substitution and greater food security locally and regionally.

Over the period January 2020 - December 2024 Trinidad and Tobago imported an estimated 302 million kilograms worth of animal feed at a value of TT\$1.3 billion. In contrast, the country has exported 13 million kilograms of animal feed at a value of TT\$60 million. This figure excludes dog/cat food and birdseeds. Minister Gopee-Scoon said, "Looking at the potential for export, the global import market for Animal Feed experienced significant growth from \$17.91 billion in 2020 to a peak of \$22.79 billion in 2022, before slightly declining to \$20.78 billion in 2023. The top importers in 2023 were Belgium (\$997M), Germany (\$953M), and the Netherlands (\$911M), reflecting strong demand in European markets, while the United States (\$894M) remains a key non-European importer. For Trinidad and Tobago, the markets with the greatest export potential for Animal Feed are the United States, Barbados, and Saint Lucia."

On the topic of food security, Minister Gopee-Scoon said, "Nutrimix's bold step in backward integration within the agricultural value chain is what is needed as we seek

to achieve greater food security and achieve the goals established by CARICOM under the 25 by 25 initiative.”

However, “CARICOM needs to be a market that is free and open,” according to Prime Minister Keith Rowley. In delivering the Feature Address, the Prime Minister urged, “The time has come for us to move towards a single market and economy in favour of ease of doing business, food security and many other benefits. These matters are now on the agenda for change and Trinidad and Tobago must be at the forefront.”

The Prime Minister also praised the vision, drive, and dedication of Nutrimix’s founder and noted that Nutrimix is an example of what can be done right here in Trinidad and Tobago.

Also in attendance at the ceremony were the Hon. Stuart Young S.C., Minister of Energy and Energy Industries and Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister; Senator the Hon. Avinash G. Singh, Minister in the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries; Senator the Hon. Richie Sookhai, Minister in the Ministry of Works and Transport and members of the Diplomatic Corps.

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