

Manufacturers benefit from recent workshop

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AS part of its Industry Celebrations last week, the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation (BIDC) held a manufacturer's workshop titled "Value-Added Manufacturing" at the Savannah Hotel on Wednesday. Acting BIDC head, Anton Norris, was on hand to discuss the seminar and the state of Barbadian manufacturing with reporters.

The aim of the seminar, he said, was to apply some problem solving techniques to some of the challenges of the manufacturing industry.

He explained that the international consultant, Steve Woloz, who spoke at the seminar, had held a seminar in Barbados in April last year and based on its success, the BIDC asked him to return to share his insights with the manufacturing sector.

Asked about the state of Barbadian manufacturing today, he said the improvement process was ongoing. Funding, however, was important, he said, noting the support manufacturing got from the Enterprise

main themes addressed in Woloz's presentation.

Crediting Barbadian companies for seeking ISO

and HACCP certification, he cautioned that getting these certifications was just the beginning. Thriving in a

global market requires continual improvement and effective troubleshooting, he advised.

BIDC's technical assistance fund, which has already helped over 100 companies.

Mr. Norris said the industry had been working towards meeting World Trade Organisation (WTO) stipulations since the 1990s, but when the market opens in 2005, he continued, some companies will be ready and others will not. Some manufacturers in Barbados have already begun getting International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) and Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) certified, he said.

He expressed confidence in the sector overall, noting that there were small and medium-sized companies in Barbados that were already cutting edge and world class. For Barbadian manufacturers to survive in a global market though, they would have to price their product competitively. Contrary to popular view, he continued, competitive pricing did not have to be accompanied by overseas production. It was simply a matter of learning to run a productive manufacturing operation here, he said. Productivity was one of the