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## Gov't House Announces Bargaining Agreement Signed in June for Dept. of Agriculture Employees

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### Governor Albert Bryan

Government House announced Wednesday that Governor Albert Bryan on June 2 signed a Collective Bargaining Agreement between the V.I. government and "Our Virgin Islands Labor Union" for non-supervisory employees at the V.I. Department of Agriculture.

It was not clear why the agreement, signed well over three months ago, was only announced Wednesday.

Mr. Bryan said the agreement is "one of many examples of the Bryan-Roach Administration continuing to put the people of this territory first along with investing in our infrastructure and our future."

“Negotiating salary increases and increasing pay scales for much-needed positions in the Department of Agriculture not only benefits the employees and the department, but it also benefits our entire Virgin Islands community by enhancing the efficiency and the services Agriculture can provide primarily for farmers and the Territory in general,” he said.

The new Collective Bargaining Agreement covers the period of October 1, 2019, to September 30, 2024, according to Gov't House.

Joss Springette, chief negotiator at the Office of Collective Bargaining, stated, "The Department of Agriculture has had a difficult time recruiting and retaining employees in various positions, such as heavy equipment operator and welder. The increased salaries for these and other positions will greatly assist the agency in meeting its staffing goals and improving the quality of life for the affected employees."

Last month, Mr. Bryan told the Consortium he signed a salary increase and retroactive pay contract for corrections officers at the Youth Rehabilitation Center and the Bureau of Corrections. As of Monday those adjustments had taken effect.