



# GLOCALISING PACIFIC AGRI-FOOD THROUGH TOURISM

29 June – 3 July, 2015 • Nadi, Fiji



EUROPEAN UNION



SPC  
Secretariat  
of the Pacific  
Community



CTA

South Pacific Tourism  
ORGANISATION

PAPP  
Pacific Agriculture Policy Project

INTRAACP  
Agricultural Policy Programme

USP  
THE UNIVERSITY OF THE  
SOUTH PACIFIC

PIPSO  
Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation

**1<sup>st</sup> PACIFIC AGRITOURISM WEEK**

**SUMMARY REPORT**

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## **1. SUMMARY**

The first ever Pacific Community Agritourism Week on 29 June to 3 July 2015 was a collaborative effort by regional development partners including the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (European Union-funded intra-ACP Agriculture Policy Project), the South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO) (EU-funded Pacific Regional Capacity Building Programme), the Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation (PIPSO) University of the South Pacific (USP) and the ACP-EU Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), and the SPC. The Pacific delegates were joined by experts from the Caribbean and the Indian Ocean.

The Agritourism Week was opened by the Head of Operations for the Delegation of the European Union for the Pacific, Renato Mele, who said promoting the links between agriculture and tourism can contribute to improved economic opportunities, build resilience in rural communities and enhance sustainable development. The activities included workshops for chefs and farmers, as well as information exchanges for policymakers, private sector operators and agritourism promoters.

A key event was an Agribusiness Forum called Linking the Agrifood Sector to the Tourism Related Market, 1-3 July 2015. The Agribusiness Forum was opened by Honourable Inia Seruiratu, Fiji's Minister for Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Development and National Disaster Management, Ministry of Agriculture, who said agritourism is one of the most promising avenues for diversification and trade growth for the agricultural sector.

In addition to the Agribusiness Forum, other concurrent activities held during the week included the Pacific Culinary Training Workshop, Regional Farmers Knowledge Exchange Workshop, Buyers-Sellers Mart, and Intra ACP - Pacific Agricultural Policy Project Steering Committee Workshop.

This Nadi Communiqué for Glocalising Pacific Agrifoods for Tourism calls for greater action and stronger integration of regional, national and intra-regional initiatives that recognise the opportunities for local agrifood and products in the growing tourism market. It also promotes the Pacific region along with its unique identity, beauty and culture as a culinary destination.

The inaugural Pacific Community Agritourism Week focused on building closer links between agriculture and tourism in the Pacific Islands region. Most of the participants were from the Pacific Islands, with others from the Caribbean and the Indian Ocean. The event brought together farmers and tourism operators to share ideas on using more local products in the tourism industry. The activities included workshops for chefs and farmers, as well as information exchanges for policymakers, private sector operators and agritourism promoters.

### **1b. Official Opening**

Promoting the links between agriculture and tourism can contribute to improved economic opportunities, build resilience in rural communities and enhance

sustainable development, said the Head of Operations for the Delegation of the European Union for the Pacific, Renato Mele, at the event opening on 29 June. The European Union is committed to developing the private sector, as the engine of growth, by generating jobs, contributing to public revenue and providing goods and services.

High birth rates and slow economic growth has led to high unemployment, reaching 60% in some Pacific Island countries. Businesses create jobs and lead innovation and change, making them a key part of ensuring decent work and sustainable development. Agriculture and tourism offer the best opportunities for inclusive economic growth in the region.

The total value of tourism in the Pacific Islands region is forecast to double to US\$4 billion by 2019. Up to 80 per cent of the food in the tourism industry is imported, because the hotels and airlines need reliable supplies of good quality products. This offers opportunities for farmers to increase the use of local foods and other products for the tourism sector, if they provide what buyers want in terms of quality, supply, presentation and other desirable features.

More local food on plates and more local products on offer for visitors mean extra income and jobs for farmers and suppliers, said the Deputy Director of SPC's Land Resources Division, Ken Cokanasiga.

### **1c. Forums and Workshops**

The Official Opening was followed by the Regional Farmers Knowledge Exchange Workshop and, on the next day 30 June, by presentations and discussions at a Forum on Elevating the Importance of Connecting Agriculture to Tourism.

More presentations and discussions featured on 1-3 July for the main Agribusiness Forum: Linking the Agrifood Sector to the Tourism Related Market, Case Studies and Experiences.

Held concurrently was the Pacific Culinary Training Workshop led by Celebrity Chefs Robert Oliver and Colin Chung, as well as the Intra ACP - Pacific Agricultural Policy Project Steering Committee Workshop.

### **1d. Activities**

A number of workshops and other practical activities featured during the Pacific Community AgriTourism Week. These included an agrifood display; a regional farmers knowledge exchange workshop (market linkages); practical sessions for the adaptation of local produce for international visitors into Pacific cuisine; buyer-seller exchanges; field visits and a finale dinner showcasing local Pacific produce.

### **1e. Buyers-Sellers Mart**

The Buyers-Sellers Mart united 20 chefs and 20 farmers from Pacific Island countries to quickly meet, exchange ideas and discuss any direct-supply

opportunities. The Mart was a trial format for chefs (buyers) and farmers (sellers) to practice business discussions and arrange transactions, in the hope they will replicate this process when they return to their home countries.

**1f. Summary Actions  
(Feeds into Joint Communiqué and PAPP Steering Documents)**

**PACIFIC COMMUNITY AGRITOURISM WEEK  
Organised by CTA, PIPSO and SPC  
Hotel Sofitel, Denarau Island, Fiji, 29 June - 3 July 2015**

**Suggested Actions**

*Regional*

- 1) Establish a Regional Agritourism Steering Group to initially comprise:
  - Regional partners: SPC, SPTO, PIPSO, CTA, USP, FAO
  - Other members as required.
- 2) Task the Steering Group to prepare an Action Plan and timelines for agritourism by 30 October 2015, that includes the following:
  - a Private Sector Development strategy/plan
  - a regional Agri-Tourism Policy framework/plan
  - a Communications and Knowledge Management strategy to support Agritourism in the Pacific
  - a multi-year work programme
- 3) welcome the new African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Private Sector Development Strategy with the European Union and called on all parties to ensure that the ACP SIDS, the Caribbean, Indian Ocean and Pacific regions receive maximum tangible benefits under the strategy.
- 4) recognise the actions to promote agritourism by the Melanesian Spearhead Group, which is developing a Private Sector Development Strategy and collaborating with the newly established Micronesian Trade and Economic Community.

*Caribbean-Pacific and Indian Ocean (ACP SIDS)*

- 5) strengthen Caribbean-Pacific visibility, including a marketing presence at each other's regional Agribusiness Forums and similar events. Special efforts can be made towards developing ACP SIDS projects for funding within the ACP-EU private sector envelope.
- 6) share relevant Work Plan activities between the Caribbean and Pacific regions that promote agritourism events.
- 7) establish an online repository(s) for case studies, best practices and tools promoting agribusiness and tourism-related markets, and link this to similar repositories in the Caribbean, Indian Ocean and elsewhere. A coordinated approach will be used to link the online sites supporting the Agritourism strategy.

- 8) launch a “Chefs for Development” platform where best practices in promoting local cuisine with local food can be promoted and shared

*National*

- 9) recommend conference organisers, chefs and tourism operators to make more use of local foods and products as part of the meeting arrangements.
- 10) provide support to national events on linking agriculture to the tourism industry.
- 11) support local chefs with the use of local ingredients in visitor menus, with national and regional up-skill training to encourage use of local resources and special events to showcase their quality, taste and authenticity.
- 12) advocate for improved fruit and crop lines for farmers, with a focus on value-adding.
- 13) create an accreditation system with the tourism ministries to confirm that an institution or product is meeting a local sourcing target for food and other agri-products.
- 14) promote excellence awards for the best chefs producing the top menu using local resources and village farmers supplying quality fresh local produce and products.
- 15) secure sponsors for experienced people to teach and mentor young people into farming and food preparation, as a business.
- 16) promote the use of local agribusiness consultants including sharing of databases of with the help of regional bodies and the private sector.
- 17) explore the development of Joint-Venture roasting and processing facilities in the coffee industry.
- 18) explore the feasibility of a regional Pacific seal for select premium products to brand the Pacific at national and regional Agribusiness events.
- 19) urge Agriculture and Tourism leaders to promote agribusiness as a natural fit for the priorities in other sectors such as education, health, employment, environment, infrastructure, and women and youth.
- 20) assist the agriculture and tourism ministries to research more targeted information along the value chains in agritourism, especially where this information is unclear or missing.
- 21) promote the adoption of favourable policies linking agrifood to tourism industries which support synergies between the two sectors.

- 22) improve the access to finance by building skills in financial literacy and business, as an aid to developing more bankable proposals.
- 23) urge government ministries and other stakeholders to make it easier to access the public information they have on file.
- 24) tailor the collection of primary data to better understand the demand in the market, and not just the supply from the farms.

## **2. KEY DISCUSSION ISSUES**

A wide-ranging discussion followed the presentations and comments by the speakers and presenters. A number of key points are outlined below.

### **2a. Key Discussion Issues**

#### **FORUM: Elevating the Importance of Connecting Agriculture to Tourism - Tuesday 30 June**

- a) Agribusiness offers a very good foundation for employment and economic development. Success stories and positive role models should be promoted more widely to build public awareness of the opportunities for employment and incomes, especially for young people and business investors.
- b) Courses offered by training institutions need to better reflect the needs in the industry, as employers often find that graduates lack practical skills. More research should be linked to longterm priorities for farmers, such as producing animal feed with a higher local content to reduce the reliance on costly imports.
- c) There is a demand for short courses in areas such as tourism management, in addition to the normal programmes lasting a year or more. The tourism management courses offered by the University of the South Pacific, mainly through distance learning, will become more localised in time. More training should be offered in-country, as this benefits more people.
- d) More specific data is needed from hotels and other stakeholders to assist with analysis and planning, as a lot of information is missing or not based on evidence.
- e) Institutions that build capacity in tourism and hospitality could help to drive agribusiness, particularly in the use of more local food and products in the visitor industry. The existing curriculum tends to follow a Western model, yet there is a lot of scope to learn from local examples.
- f) Different disciplines should be proactive about forming connections outside their own frameworks, and this approach may reveal new and more sustainable ways of doing things. For example, shark diving may be more economically viable than shark fishing.

g) Import substitution remains a challenge in small island countries where there are fewer and aging farmers, as youth are not attracted to farming. This may change as the agribusiness sector builds a stronger profile as a business. Some youth also associate farming with punishment, as weeding the compound is often used in Pacific Island schools for rule-breakers.

## **2b. Key Discussion Issues**

### **WORKSHOP: Regional Farmers Knowledge Exchange Workshop [Market Linkages] and the Buyers Sellers Mart**

#### *Opportunity*

- a) Data indicates significant, multi-million dollar opportunities for profits and savings across the agriculture and tourism sectors if they work more closely together.
- b) Exporters and agricultural entrepreneurs often focus on increasing exports but there was agreement of the significant opportunity to develop more local market opportunities.
- c) Opportunity for farmers to collaborate across Pacific countries to meet supply demands in domestic tourism markets, and to stop-gap (fill) any temporary supply shortage one country may incur (i.e. if cyclone or natural disaster impacts one Pacific country's ability to supply produce, then another Pacific country may assist, to ensure the client remains loyal to the Pacific for supply and does not look offshore, i.e. Asia).

#### *Business culture*

- d) Hotels, resorts and restaurants are businesses and so farmers need to operate their farms as businesses. For farmers to be business people they need to engage business principles such as customer service, quality control, consistency and reliability of supply.
- e) At the Buyers Sellers Mart a number of chefs arranged business transactions with farmers to supply local foods for their tourism business, and discussed opportunities to progress or expand these transactions.

#### *Market linkages*

- f) Significant discussion about the role of the 'middleman' or intermediary supplier (the 'business' conduit between the hotel and the farmers) and how intermediaries are becoming increasingly popular whether private sector (i.e. Farmboy, Fiji) or cooperative or non-profit (i.e. Women in Business Development Inc., Samoa). Concern that farmers receive poor farm-gate prices versus the final sales price intermediaries receive, generated much discussion about the business practices and risks absorbed by the intermediaries to support the farmers and provide a consistent, quality service to clients.
- g) Intermediary suppliers such as WIBDI and Farmboy, as well as the University of the South Pacific (USP), include education as central to their business

operations. They work on 'supply and demand' from the tourism perspective, and help to educate chefs on (a) the value and opportunity of contemporary Pacific cuisine appearing on menus, and (b) how to use local produce and prepare traditional foods.

### *Challenges*

- h) Transport is a significant issue for farmers, in terms of poor roads causing significant losses through produce damage, in delivering to domestic markets (also high-costs of sea and air freight being inhibitive for exports).
- i) Other challenges faced by farmers striving to achieve consistent quality and supply required by clients, include: weather (droughts, excessive rain/floods), production consistency across all farms (off season, inconsistent supply and quality of supply); seeds (availability and suitable varieties for the Pacific and warm climates); market access (tariff/non tariff barriers e.g., biosecurity, political pressures, etc.); logistics and infrastructure (i.e. transportation on bumpy roads causes loss); technical support and research.

## **2c. Key Discussion Issues**

### **AGRIBUSINESS FORUM: Linking the Agrifood Sector to the Tourism Related Market, Case Studies and Experiences – Wednesday 1 July to Friday 3 July**

- 1) Agriculture and tourism offer the best opportunities for inclusive economic growth in several Pacific Island Countries. The promotion of agritourism should help to create economic opportunities; build resilience in rural communities; and improve sustainable development.
- 2) The Pacific and the Caribbean share a number of challenges and they can learn from one another in designing solutions. Both regions have small markets that can be hard to reach, especially in the Pacific.

### *Marketing*

- 3) The Pacific has an exotic and clean image that can be leveraged in the marketing and branding of the Pacific as a destination, and for premium quality items. Some Pacific products have developed a highly visible and positive brand in overseas markets.
- 4) Marketing campaigns, and product development, should aim to make the most of the image of the Pacific Islands as largely unspoilt, unique and exciting. Marketing campaigns need to tell a good story, in a way that attracts consumers and makes your product stand out in the marketplace.
- 5) The branding of Tonga vanilla with a unique story has helped in markets such as Japan, where vanilla was mainly from Madagascar. Similarly, coconut oil in Japan, normally sourced from Sri Lanka, has been joined by Pacific Island brands.

6) In the Caribbean a well-known coffee brand includes tours of the coffee fields and processing facilities, theatre acts linked to a meal, and coffee drinking sessions. Some activities focus on the birds attracted to the fields, while others value-add the coffee hulls for organic compost. Similar opportunities exist in the Pacific.

7) A regional quality seal for the Pacific region, or sub-regions, may be used to help with the marketing of local products. This idea may be relevant to some Pacific products. Tanna Coffee used to have 300 employees. The new business has 10 fulltime staff while 500 farmers have been empowered to earn an income from value-added farming.

8) Small to medium businesses should make the best use of national tourism offices, and other organisations, as they have bigger budgets and more visibility.

9) The importance of strengthening the capacity for product development is an issue facing the whole industry, and not just the micro or small to medium enterprises.

#### *Access to finance*

10) On improving access to finance, it remains a challenge for Pacific agribusiness to meet the equity requirements. Most of the land in the Pacific Islands is owned customarily and cannot be secured or mortgaged for loans. A greater issue is the difficulty of submitting bankable proposals, especially from smallholders who often have limited financial literacy and lack business discipline and other critical skills.

11) Assistance to smallholders may include a financial literacy toolbox, or a pool of local consultants to assist with developing viable financial proposals. Supporting activities such as a farmer's talkback could provide more feedback, so that assistance is tailored to fill gaps in training, financial literacy and business skills.

12) A key part of a bankable proposal is to show good cash flow, and ensure that any borrowing covers overhead costs, or else the costs will eat into the working capital. The larger farms have gone from subsistence to commercial operations, often as part of a generational transition that takes many years.

13) There are a number of innovative financing models available, such as crowd funding, although they still require a strong and viable business proposal. Crowd funding is still developing, and remains a very small part of total lending.

14) Banks tend to lend to certain activities, such as retail, which has faster turnover than agriculture where the returns mainly rely on a harvest in the future.

15) While banks still need to see bankable proposals, it helps to have a good relationship, basic education and a bank that understands the market. For example, in Tonga some farmers who lacked collateral received finance because the bank had good ties to a reliable exporter, who helped the bank to identify good farmers.

16) Some might argue that a farmer's contract to supply should be accepted as collateral for a loan. However, the banks cannot rely on such contracts because if the borrower does not deliver, the contract becomes invalid. The banks need to be

confident of repayment, whereas a contract only shows a revenue stream. Similar concerns are associated with absentee businesses, which are not properly supervised, and subsequently will often fail.

*For us, by us*

17) The promotion of local food and local products is a priority for the sector. This can be done in many ways, such as food festivals, cooking competitions using local ingredients, chefs using local foods in innovative ways, books and videos, and training institutions promoting local foods in their courses. Food tourism is a growing segment of the visitor experience.

18) Local chefs know the local foods but are not encouraged to use them. This is partly a matter of education for managers, and better awareness among buyers and sellers. More can be done to build confidence between farmers and the hotel food and beverage staff, by tailoring the supply to meet the demand.

19) People who organise visitor packages and conferences should be encouraged to make greater use of locally supplied food. Suppliers must also play their part by gaining a better understanding of what the buyers want in terms of quality, presentation and supply.

20) A number of noted chefs are strong advocates for Pacific flavours, local ingredients and menus. Establishing chef's alliances and national chapters is one approach. They can share their experiences through knowledge platforms, and put up their content as part of a wider regional promotion.

21) Changing attitudes to the image and use of local foods, particularly with the influx of imported processed food, is a long-term goal.

*Trends*

22) Mass tourism in itself is not necessarily a bad thing, but needs to be managed properly to ensure the costs do not outweigh the benefits. The growing number of visitors to some destinations is placing more pressure on resources such as drinking water and coral reefs.

23) There may also be social impacts such as drugs and sex tourism. Managing and understanding these impacts requires improvements in the way information is collected and reported.

24) A number of NGO and private sector groups actively involve youth in their training and programmes. This is important in building capacity and giving young people the skills and confidence they need in agribusiness.

*Skills*

25) Mentors are very useful in providing professional support to improve business skills. This assistance can be managed to protect commercial information. Mentoring is focused on developing business skills for new and expanding agribusiness, and can give the operations a fresh angle.

26) There is still a gap between what training institutions are providing and the requirements of the private sector, including a lack of middle management training and other skills. Employers are finding that some graduates lack the practical skills to do the job.

27) Training courses are competency-based or topic-based, with much of it driven by content and volume, rather than critical skills. This is changing but the pace is slow.

#### *Pricing*

28) On pricing, producers undercut each other because buyers want to pay less for more, which is an approach that mainly benefits the middlemen and end-buyers. The informal market between friends and relatives is also impacting on the formal market. Any rethink on pricing and branding needs to take account of trading rules, which discourage price fixing.

#### *Associations*

29) There are few producer associations in the Pacific, or they exist but are inactive. More help is needed to organise producers into a group to collaborate on activities and advocacy, but this requires a strong leader who can bring people together.

#### *Awareness*

30) Consumer awareness is growing not only on a product or country, but also on issues such as social justice where more buyers expect to see workers being treated fairly.

31) There are many best practice examples of agribusiness, product development and marketing. These lessons should be shared more widely. The regional and national bodies have an important role to play in this exercise.

#### *Standards*

32) In agriculture processing, the main market is outside, which requires facilities that meet HACCP standards in the overseas markets. One idea is to consider establishing facilities that meet the standards expected in the overseas markets, and then work on a time-share basis with farmers on production.

#### *Data*

33) Data collection and retrieval needs improvement. Different parties collect a lot of data but getting access to it is difficult as the information is not shared or easily available. Another issue is that the right type of data is not being collected, leaving big gaps in knowledge. A new database in the Cook Islands, AgIntel, tries to address this problem by collecting highly disaggregated data that is far more detailed and useful to different people along the value chains.

## **2d. Key Discussion Issues**

### **WORKSHOP: Pacific Culinary Training Workshop and Finale Gala Dinner**

- a) Important that future hotel managers and chefs are familiar with the local markets and local suppliers.
- b) Important that chefs from various countries are aware of what can be grown in the Pacific (e.g. on the Field Market Visits, chefs from Samoa and Cook Islands were surprised at the range of produce being grown in Fiji that could be grown in their own countries, given the similar tropical conditions.)
- c) Resorts have primarily employed European or overseas chefs who cook 'western-style' food and so ongoing education for chefs is encouraged about local produce and cuisine. There is a need and opportunity for more education, which will benefit overseas and Pacific chefs.
- d) At the Buyers Sellers Mart a number of chefs arranged business transactions with farmers to supply local foods for their tourism business, and discussed opportunities to progress or expand these transactions. Chefs realised a strong opportunity to source and/or grow more produce locally, or alternatively source imports from other Pacific Island nations rather than further afield such as Australia, New Zealand or Asia.
- e) The Celebrity Chef-led sessions on 'adaptation of local produce and Cuisine Pacific for international visitors' generated significant interest amongst the delegate chefs who plan to replicate similar approaches in their respective commercial kitchens.
- f) The Finale Gala Dinner generated significant discussion about the value of promoting contemporary Pacific cuisine and using local produce, and highlighting through five-star food the need to better link the agriculture and tourism markets across the Pacific.

### **3. Findings from Days 1-2**

#### **3a. Forum, 30 June: Elevating The Importance of Connecting Agriculture to Tourism.**

##### *Regional*

- 1) Establish a Regional Agritourism Steering Group to initially comprise:
  - Regional partners: SPC, SPTO, PIPSO, CTA, USP, FAO
  - Other members as required.
- 2) Task the Steering Group to prepare an Action Plan and timelines for agritourism by 30 October 2015, that includes the following:
  - a Private Sector Development strategy/plan
  - a regional Agri-Tourism Policy framework/plan
  - a Communications and Knowledge Management strategy to support Agritourism in the Pacific
  - confirmation of the next date for a Pacific Agri-tourism week
  - a multi-year work programme
- 3) establish an online repository(s) for case studies, best practices and tools promoting agribusiness and tourism-related markets, and link this to similar repositories in the Caribbean, Indian Ocean and elsewhere. A coordinated approach will be used to link the online sites supporting the Agritourism strategy.
- 4) advocate for improved fruit and crop lines for farmers, with a focus on value-adding.
- 5) create an accreditation system with the tourism ministries to confirm that an institution or product is meeting a local sourcing target for food and other agri-products.
- 6) promote excellence awards for the best chefs producing the top menu using local resources and village farmers supplying quality fresh local produce and products.

#### **3b. Regional Farmers Knowledge Exchange Workshop and Buyers Sellers Mart**

- 1) capitalise on multi-million food sales opportunities across the domestic tourism sector in the Pacific Islands.
- 2) entrepreneurial farmers to focus more on expanding supplies to fill tourism sector needs (domestic markets) rather than on expanding export markets.
- 3) large-scale farmers and 'intermediary suppliers' ("middlemen") to collaborate more across countries to meet supply demands in domestic tourism markets, and avoid customers going to offshore suppliers (i.e. lose Pacific markets to Asia).

- 4) tourism sector to potentially use more intermediary supplier services, or “middlemen” to facilitate more access to local produce from smallholder farmers
  - 5) farmers to re-think running their farm as a business given hotels, resorts, restaurants are businesses requiring business transactions and customer service.
  - 6) chefs used the Buyers Sellers Mart to arrange direct-supply business transactions with farmers and committed to continuing same after the event.
  - 7) farmers, agricultural entrepreneurs and service providers to include more educational approaches when liaising with the tourism sector (work on ‘supply and demand’ from the tourism perspective, and help educate chefs).
  - 8) continue to work with governments and service providers to overcome challenges such as poor infrastructure i.e. roads; market access; research, etc.
  - 9) perhaps a need for the establishment of a platform for dialogue between the agriculture and tourism sectors, to work collaboratively about issues to be addressed.
- SPC or SPTO follow-up with the chefs after the Buyers Sellers Mart to determine whether:
- 10) chefs are able to (a) liaise with farmers for more direct supply of local produce, and (b) include more contemporary Pacific cuisine onto the menu.
  - 11) chefs are unable to use more local produce and Pacific cuisine, and if so, what are the roadblocks and how can these be overcome?
  - 12) chefs and/or farmers are replicating the Buyers-Sellers Mart format in their respective countries, either as forums or one-one-on business transactions (already Papua New Guinea has expressed interest in holding such a forum during World Food Week activities).

### **3c. Agribusiness Forum, 1-3- July: Linking the Agrifood Sector to the Tourism Related Market, Case Studies and Experiences.**

#### *Caribbean-Pacific and Indian Ocean (ACP SIDS)*

- 7) welcome the new African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Private Sector Development Strategy with the European Union and called on all parties to ensure that the ACP SIDS, the Caribbean, Indian Ocean and Pacific regions receive maximum tangible benefits under the strategy.
- 8) recognise the actions to promote agritourism by the Melanesian Spearhead Group, which is developing a Private Sector Development Strategy and collaborating with the newly established Micronesian Trade and Economic Community.
- 9) strengthen Caribbean-Pacific visibility, including a marketing presence at each other’s regional Agribusiness Forums and similar events. Special efforts can be

made towards developing ACP SIDS projects for funding within the ACP-EU private sector envelope.

10) share relevant Work Plan activities between the Caribbean and Pacific regions that promote agritourism events.

*National*

11) launch a “Chefs for Development” platform where best practices in promoting local cuisine with local food can be promoted and shared.

12) recommend conference organisers, chefs and tourism operators to make more use of local foods and products as part of the meeting arrangements.

13) provide support to national events on linking agriculture to the tourism industry.

14) support local chefs with the use of local ingredients in visitor menus, with national and regional up-skill training to encourage use of local resources and special events to showcase their quality, taste and authenticity.

15) secure sponsors for experienced people to teach and mentor young people into farming and food preparation, as a business.

16) promote the use of local agribusiness consultants including sharing of databases of with the help of regional bodies and the private sector.

17) explore the development of Joint-Venture roasting and processing facilities in the coffee industry.

18) explore the feasibility of a regional Pacific seal for select premium products to brand the Pacific at national and regional Agribusiness events.

19) urge Agriculture and Tourism leaders to promote agribusiness as a natural fit for the priorities in other sectors such as education, health, employment, environment, infrastructure, and women and youth.

20) assist the agriculture and tourism ministries to research more targeted information along the value chains in agritourism, especially where this information is unclear or missing.

21) promote the adoption of favourable policies linking agrifood to tourism industries which support synergies between the two sectors.

22) improve the access to finance by building skills in financial literacy and business, as an aid to developing more bankable proposals.

23) urge government ministries and other stakeholders to make it easier to access the public information they have on file.

24) tailor the collection of primary data to better understand the demand in the market, and not just the supply from the farms.

### **3d. Pacific Culinary Training Workshop and Finale Gala Dinner**

- 1) ensure hotel managers and chefs are familiar with the local markets and suppliers and understand the value of fresh and local produce.
- 2) encourage and educate tourism owners and staff, especially chefs, about the socio-economic benefits of sourcing more produce locally.
- 3) educate chefs, especially those employed from overseas, to better exploit the growing culinary tourism market with contemporary Pacific cuisine on menus.
- 4) increase direct business transactions with chefs and farmers, such as with initiatives like the Buyers Sellers Mart.

## **1. SUMMARY OF PRESENTATIONS**

(Note: the full presentations are available from SPC)

- 4a. Opening Remarks**
- 4b. Forum: Elevating the Importance of Connecting Agriculture to Tourism - Tuesday 30 June**
- 4c. Agribusiness Forum: Linking the Agrifood Sector to the Tourism Related Market – Wednesday 1 July to Friday 3 July**
- 4d. Regional Farmers Knowledge Exchange Workshop (Market Linkages) and Buyers Sellers Mart**
- 4e. Pacific Culinary Training Workshop and Finale Gala Dinner**
- 4f. Farmers Field Visits**

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### **4a. Opening Remarks**

#### **WELCOME REMARKS:**

**Dr Ken Cokanasiga, Acting Deputy Director, of SPC Land Resources Division  
Delegation of the European Union for the Pacific, Head of Operations, Renato Mele**

Promoting the links between agriculture and tourism can contribute to improved economic opportunities, build resilience in rural communities and enhance sustainable development, said the Head of Operations for the Delegation of the European Union for the Pacific, Renato Mele, at the event opening on 29 June. The European Union is committed to developing the private sector, as the engine of growth, by generating jobs, contributing to public revenue and providing goods and services.

More local food on plates and more local products on offer for visitors mean extra income and jobs for farmers and suppliers, said the Deputy Director of SPC's Land Resources Division, Ken Cokanasiga.

#### **4b. PRESENTATIONS, FORUM: Elevating the Importance of Connecting Agriculture to Tourism - Tuesday 30 June**

##### **The Pacific Tourism Strategy 2015- 2019 Chris Cocker, Project Manager, PRTCBP, SPTO**

The Pacific Regional Tourism Capacity Building Programme (PRTCBP) has funding of 5.7 million Euros under the EU 10<sup>th</sup> EDF, and runs from 2012 to December 2015. The main focus is to build capacity for tourism sector growth.

The SPTO has 100 private sector members and 18 government members. The Pacific Tourism Strategy (PTS) 2015 – 2019 provides a framework to support tourism development with a focus on addressing regional constraints and supporting sustainable growth. Regional tourism objectives are to increase the economic benefits of tourism, conserve the environment and Pacific cultures, ensure a safe and unique visitor experience, and support the cooperation between the public and private sector and local communities.

Total arrivals to the Pacific grew from 1.5 million in 2010 to 1.7 million in 2014. The average annual regional growth was 4.6 percent from 2010 to 2014. Half the visitor traffic is from Australia (34%) and NZ (16%) with the rest coming from Europe (10%), USA (9.1%), Japan (4.5 %), China (3.3%) etc. The current value is about US\$3.3 billion, growing to US\$4.4 billion by 2019.

The key development issues are:

1. Supporting sustainable tourism development
2. Improving access and transport infrastructure
3. Targeting poverty alleviation and positive gender impacts
4. Increasing yield and economic impact
5. Strengthening public/private partnership
6. Utilising technological innovation
7. Developing and enhancing quality products
8. Developing capacity and the pacific people

SPTO takes the lead role for implementing the PTS in partnership with National Tourism Offices, development partners, Pacific regional organisations and the private sector. The total PTS budget over five years is about US\$20 million.

A way forward for agritourism should include:

- A coordinated approach involving a Steering Group (SPTO/SPC-PAPP/USP/PIPSO/CTA/Private sector reps, etc.)
- A clear strategy or policy to unite the agriculture and tourism sectors.
- A workshop of key stakeholders to develop a framework for a multi-year programme on agritourism aligned to the strategy.

##### **Regional Tertiary Capacity Strategy for Tourism Marcus Stephenson, USP**

Tourism is vital to the economies of Fiji, Cook Islands, Vanuatu, Samoa and, increasingly, other Pacific Island Countries (PICs). The economic importance of tourism is recognised in every economic report since 2000. There is a need to strengthen education and training institutions to ensure sustainable tourism development.

USP has a School of Tourism and Hospitality Management in the Faculty of Business, which promotes teaching and learning, academic research, community engagement and administration. The USP courses are accredited to the International Centre of Excellence in Tourism and Hospitality Education (THE-ICE). The USP School of Agriculture and Food Technology in Samoa has various programmes in agriculture production, research and technology.

In Fiji, tourists spend 24% on food and 10% on beverages, making food a significant part of the visitor experience. Tourism trends are driving a demand for authenticity and a high quality experience. More tourism operators are exploring and using local foods and products. For example, Musket Cove in Fiji created an organic farm in 2002 to provide for its own needs as well as for sale, some of which carry the resort branding. Sinalei Resort in Samoa has a marketing philosophy of 'Fresh, local and honest food'. Sustainable tourism should promote community gardens for resorts; ensure activities do not harm fragile environments including mangroves and coral reefs, and reduce pollution and waste.

Past efforts to grow food to replace imports sometimes failed due to management issues. Other barriers are a lack of infrastructure for grading, storage and distribution; costly and inadequate logistics; a lack of knowledge or experience of hotel cooks; untrustworthy food purchasing agents, and a lack of research.

Sector priorities include:

- Research and product replacement
- Seed research
- Teaching expatriates, local chefs, cookery teachers and students to cook a "Contemporary Pacific Cuisine"
- Expanding Pacific organic farming
- Increasing the use of local food items in menus
- Improving the link between agriculture, education & tourism ministries
- Introducing new tropical fruit and vegetable lines to farmers
- Creating an accreditation with the Ministry responsible for Tourism confirming that an institution or product meets a local sourcing target
- Tourism excellence awards to include a prize for best village farmer supplying resorts with fresh produce
- The Ministry responsible for Agriculture to get donors to sponsor retired overseas and local farmers to train young people in resort land owner villages
- Ministries of Agriculture, Education and Tourism to raise the profile of cooks and farmers

**Developing Agricultural Market Pathways – Fiji**  
**Ms Sovaia Marawa, Chair, Fiji Market Access Working Group**

The Pacific Horticultural and Agricultural Market Access Programme (PHAMA) is funded by Australia and New Zealand, supported by SPC. It helps PICs to address regulatory requirements and develop relevant market access conditions to facilitate exports of high value fresh and processed primary products to importing countries such as Australia, New Zealand. It targets Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu and recently PNG, through government and industry stakeholders involved in market access issues.

The Fiji Market Access Working Group (MAWG) has ten members and is chaired by government. Achievements include new market access requests, improvements to existing pathways and research into value-added products. There has also been training for officials on audits, fumigation and inspection; helping exporters meet international Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) accreditation; marketing studies; product research and support for market access meetings.

Looking ahead, a public and private sector approach is critical to making market access workable. Industry associations (e.g. Ginger/Yaqona Taskforce) should be well organised, including strengthening of the Fiji Crop and Livestock Council, to address industry issues. HACCP and other international standards and accreditation systems are critical to meet export standards. The bilateral Quarantine Commodity Agreements/Protocols need to be maintained to ensure continued market access. SPC meeting a good time for biosecurity/and tourism officials to discuss market access issues. Capacity building is important to maintain market access pathways and develop new ones.

**Chambers of Agriculture – Sharing the New Caledonia experience.  
Francois Japoit, Project Manager, Chamber of Agriculture of New Caledonia**

The Chamber of Agriculture is led by a Board comprising farmers and is run by professional technicians. The mandates are representing and defending farmers' interests, and provide "public service missions" to farmers and delegated by the Government. The Chamber is the voice of farmers and a service provider, complementing the Government. The Chamber services include a crop sanitary protection group, supply of fertilizer, farm management and accounting services, livestock sanitary protection group, farm equipment, promoting sustainable development and organic farming.

A levy on agricultural imports provides half the Chamber's budget. Other funds are from allocation for specific operations, and about two percent of funds come from membership fees. There are 65 staff and 2,769 members. Building a network of Chambers of Agriculture in the Pacific will help to develop trade flows and technical exchanges. A Chamber of Agriculture with a strong voice for farmers ensures a bottom-up approach. Funding should be a translation of political will, such as a levy on imported food, rather than a government subsidy. Technical cooperation will be focused on economic development. The Pacific Island countries may have different structures and names, but share the same missions. (Chamber, Association, Council, etc.).

**Promoting Farmer Exchanges and Offseason Cropping  
Moses Palemo, Pacific Island Farmers Network (PIFON)**

The Pacific Island Farmers Network (PIFON) operated informally from 2008 and was formally registered in 2013 by 18 national organisations from Cook Islands, Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. The focus areas are seeds, soils, farmer oriented value chain training and youth in agriculture. The current Chair is Samoa and the vice-Chair is Tonga.

Farmer organisations play a useful role in agricultural development. Their advantages include access to two important assets - land and labour. Most land in the Pacific Islands is customary tenure or registered under communal ownership. Natural resources (land and marine) are communally owned, and labour is relatively affordable and available. Farmer activity can strengthen a sense of community and maintain traditional values. Economies of scale allow opportunities for improved viability. The organisations are also good vehicles for niche market requirements. Collaboration can be very useful at different levels of the value chain.

Other benefits include the ability to facilitate investment, marketing and strengthen other links in the value chain. An organisation offers opportunities to pool resources, as well as make it easier for support services to deal with a group rather than individual households. Members also benefit from better support towards sustainable businesses and greater self-reliance.

**PANEL: Samson Vilvil, CTA; Howard Aru, DG Agriculture, Vanuatu, and Marcus Stephenson, USP. Facilitator: Vili Caniogo, SPC Pacific Agriculture Policy Project**

Vanuatu plans to host a similar Agritourism Week in 2016. The CTA welcomes the focus on agritourism and is helping to share the experiences between the Pacific and the Caribbean regions, as many of the examples and lessons are relevant.

Tourism schools and farmers associations need to work closely so that gaps can be identified and reduced. Farmers have non-formal education but their knowledge is still relevant. Tourism models of education need to include farmers as stakeholders, as the focus is usually on other providers.

The issue of logistics means the northern Pacific has little direct trade with the southern Pacific. The Pacific Forum shipping line is an example of a regional effort to address this gap, especially for smaller ports, but this covered the bigger and more profitable ports for economic reasons.

#### **4c. PRESENTATIONS, AGRIBUSINESS FORUM: Linking the Agrifood Sector to the Tourism Related Market – Wednesday 1 July to Friday 3 July**

Agriculture is the main source of livelihood for most Pacific Island populations. While agriculture has declined over the last decade, the tourism sector has seen significant growth and is now a key sector in some island economies. The Agribusiness Forum promoted stronger links between the agriculture and tourism industries in the Pacific region.

**Panel Presentations. Chair: Mereia Volavola, Chief Executive Officer, Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation (PIPSO)**

**Chris Addison, Senior Expert on Knowledge Management, Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA).**

Pacific Island Countries (PICs) share common challenges in trying to achieve balanced economic growth and sustainable food security. Major constraints include small size, geographic dispersion, and vulnerability to natural hazards and external economic conditions. Other challenges are the impacts of climate change, a need to generate livelihoods, rising imports of highly refined foods, and decreasing local food production and consumption. Agriculture and tourism offer the best opportunities for inclusive economic growth in several Pacific Island Countries. The promotion of agritourism should help to create economic opportunities; build resilience in rural communities; and improve sustainable development. While agriculture remains the main source of livelihood for most Pacific Islanders, its contribution to island economies has generally declined over the last decade, whereas the tourism sector has seen significant growth.

**Dr Ken Cokanasiga, Deputy Director - Land Resources Division, Secretariat of the Pacific Community.**

The goal of the Pacific Community Agritourism week is to promote the links between the agriculture and tourism sectors. The events include meetings between key stakeholders, practical workshops for farmers, chefs and other actors along the value chain, and information exchanges. The value of tourism in the region is expected to double to \$4 billion by 2019. Up to 80% of food required by the tourism sector is imported, representing an opportunity for more local sourcing. Agritourism can also help to promote regional trade.

**Klaus Stunzner, Chairperson of the Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation (PIPSO)**

In 2014, PIPSO entered an agreement with the CTA for closer cooperation and technical assistance in a number of areas. Agriculture can enhance the tourism industry, and vice versa. This regional forum is a catalyst to bring out positive changes that we also want to see at the national level. The challenge is to take what we gain from this meeting and turn it into tangible measures in our economies.

**Honourable Inia Seruiratu, Minister for Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Development and National Disaster Management, Ministry of Agriculture, Fiji**

Access to finance is a common issue for many Pacific businesses, especially in the agriculture sector. Finance institutions are urged to offer solutions for farmers and others involved in agribusiness. The forum will promote closer links between the agrifood and tourism sectors to increase the local sourcing of food and other products, share success stories, and strengthen relations between value chain actors and the tourism industry. Agritourism is one of the most promising avenues for diversification and trade growth for the agricultural sector. Integrating these two economic activities will strengthen the collaboration of the agrifood sector and small-scale farmers, while reducing the import bill of Pacific island economies.

### **H.E. Roy Mickey Joy, Chairman of the ACP Committee of Ambassadors and Ambassador of Vanuatu to the European Union**

CTA helped to organise this conference following the UN SIDS global conference in Samoa in 2014. The fisheries sector is a major economic asset for the region and better prices are needed for Pacific fish. Fish stocks are being depleted in other regions and the Pacific must manage its own stocks well. Within the EU-ACP, some support will close by mid-2016, so the CTA role will increase. There is a strong focus on promoting the private sector. The Pacific region should advocate for good access to global funding for private sector development. The ACP is 40 years old. The African region receives most of the funding and enjoys higher visibility and programme support. The Cotonou Agreement ends in 2020 and the Pacific and Caribbean regions should prepare for changes in the ACP. This is an opportunity to enhance the cooperation between the 31 Pacific and Caribbean countries after 2020, and assist the two regions when dealing with the EU and other groups.

### **Vili Caniogo, SPC – Pacific Agriculture Policy Project (PAPP)**

The Pacific Community Agritourism Week is an opportunity to share information and experiences. The participants are from the public and private sectors, inter-government agencies and civil society. One of the outcomes will be a call to action with proposed steps to be undertaken at the regional and national level.

### **Session 1: Opportunities for the Pacific agrifood sector in tourism-related markets**

This session gave an overview of the major trends in regional trade and the main tourism-related markets through the perspectives of research, industry, government and finance.

### **Developing tourism-market opportunities for Pacific products and promoting trade. Michael Wong, CEO, Fiji Hotel and Tourism Association (FIHTA)**

The Pacific Islands are far apart and the air routes are long and thin, which imposes a lot of costs and challenges. Visitors are mainly from Australia and New Zealand, plus other countries. About three quarters of tourists to Fiji are on packages, and trending to mass tourism. To get more local products into hotel catering, the foods must tell a story. The challenges for more local food include presentation e.g. when ripened bananas are at their best they are also blotchy, which is not popular with

visitors. Trimming the bananas leads to better presentation, but adds to costs. Agriculture is the growing of anything (land and sea) and using what is around us. Wild swamp grass – kuta – is used for mats. But draining the wetlands for farming is damaging the environment and other resources, so there is a need to balance priorities. Intra-Pacific trade is difficult due to logistics, distance and poor shipping links. Some imports can be substituted. The Fiji industry is using more products made and branded locally. Regionally, 60-80 percent of the food for the tourism sector is imported. Fiji food imports bill is about \$600 million a year, with tourism accounting for \$60 million. The Fiji government provides about \$25 million to the national tourism authority, and the industry adds another \$110 million to that in terms of branding and marketing.

**Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) trade policy: opportunities for private sector and agribusiness development. Henry Sanday, Private sector development adviser, MSG Secretariat.**

The MSG (Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu plus the FLNKS of New Caledonia) was established in 1988 and the Secretariat opened in 2008 in Port Vila. The MSG Trade Agreement entered into force in 1993 with the group aiming for a Free Trade Area by 2017. The key points for agrifood trade are that “wholly obtained” items qualify for preferential MSGTA tariff treatment. In-country demand exceeds export demand. Visitor demand is seasonal, including for international meetings and events. There are issues relating to trade between adjacent sovereign provinces and states, which are closer to a border than to their own capital e.g. for Bougainville in Papua New Guinea, or Rotuma in Fiji. Informal agrifood and tourism sectors are significant. Within the MSG, rural entrepreneurship is alive, agritourism linkages are growing, and the informal sector operators are significant

**Linking policies on agriculture and tourism: the case of Vanuatu. Adela Aru, Principal Product Development Officer, Manager of Vanuatu Tourism Ambassador Programme, Ministry of Tourism and Commerce, Vanuatu**

Vanuatu’s Priorities Action Agenda identifies the productive sector as an engine for investment, economic growth and employment. The aim is to increase production and productivity in the primary sector to sustainably increase incomes and livelihoods, and to strengthen and increase market access in agriculture. Livestock, fisheries and forest development are supported, and regulatory and institutional arrangements are promoted. The visitor market is mainly comprised of tourists including those on cruise ships (82%), business and conferences (10%) and those visiting friends and relatives.

**Product developments to better reach new markets, Cate Pleass, Marketing Director, Pleass Global Limited**

Sustainable tourism tries to make a low impact on the environment and local culture, while helping to generate income, employment, and the conservation of local ecosystems. Bottled water product – Vai Wai – uses bottles that are biodegradable and can be recycled. One venture is Kila Eco Adventure Park. All structures are made with locally sourced materials and grasses for roofing. Compost toilets are used on site. Organic certification is a major compliance matter. All leaf

litter is collected and composted for fertilizer in composting bins made from fallen branches. The movement of people in the park is via walkways so that trampling of the forest does not occur. Compliance is managed carefully to protect the park and the land.

**Branding and labelling: key strategies for SIDS. The experience of the Caribbean. Escipi3n Oliveira, Deputy Executive Director, CEDA**

Cariform covers 15 countries whose challenges include competition, lack of human resources, harsh financing conditions, limited infrastructure, costly energy and transport links, low product recognition, out-dated technology and economic and environmental vulnerability. Globalisation has changed the way people live. There is a need to re-establish the region's competitiveness. Strong brands help to reduce sales volatility. The main aims are to enhance the business climate, improve access to finance and promote best practices. The tourism industry is looking to provide unique products and experiences. Keys for enhanced Caribbean – Pacific cooperation. Exchange best practices for SMEs. Research energy efficiency. Joint research in products and markets. Common approach to environmental challenges for SIDS. Promote recognition of economic vulnerability and differentiation of SIDS.

**Going organic: a comparative advantage for the Pacific agritourism sector Karen Mapusua, POETCom Coordinator**

Organic tourism is mainly activities based on organic farming, and should be certified by a recognised body. It is also a tool for sustainable development. The challenges in the Pacific are the cost of certification and complexity of maintaining certification; unsubstantiated claims of organic status; a lack of coordination; menus not suiting ingredients that grow well locally, and a small supply base. POETCom has been working on ways to provide customer guarantees. One is a Pacific Organic Guarantee System. There is also work on a lower cost organic guarantee, using a peer review system. There is a Pacific organic standard mark, and ongoing work to develop an Organic Tourism Standard. Organic tourism represents our values and identity, and creates a market for Pacific products while supporting sustainable development.

**Main drivers of agritourism in the Caribbean. Ena Harvey, Agritourism Specialist, Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA); and Kevon Rhiney, Expert Agritourism**

The six main drivers are supply deals with the hotel and restaurant sector; health and wellness; heritage features such as museums, etc.; local food festivals and traditions; farm-based activities; and community-based initiatives e.g. village fairs. The challenges include difficulty in accessing finance, a lack of good infrastructure, and seasonal weather. Case studies show the key drivers of success are adherence to quality standards and certification; strong market visibility and promotion; forging strategic alliances; high and consistent product quality; strong ties with clients; keeping up with market trends, and effective supply chain management and value adding. Lessons learned are that agribusinesses cannot rely on tourism alone; local producers and systems are increasingly subject to global food safety and quality standards. The industry needs improved micro-financing models; building

the technical capacity of farmers in meeting food safety and quality standards; promoting other forms of tourism e.g. culture-food-health; and creating an enabling environment via policy, advocacy and programmes.

## **Session 2: Linking agriculture and tourism: Learning from successes**

This session looked at various models of linkages between the agrifood and tourism sectors, which serve tourism-related markets. Facilitator: Vili Caniogo, SPC

### **Organic Farm to Table: creating a sustainable supply chain. Alberta Vitale, Associate Director, Women in Business Development Inc. (WIBDI), Samoa**

Small organic family farms, with an emphasis on youth, are at the heart of WIBDI's Organic Farm to Table programme that connects smallholder farmers to the tourism industry via hotels and restaurants. The programme is now expanding to include Farm to Home Table and Farm to Overseas Table. The business model is to promote local values, traditions and culture. Food is viewed as the gateway to our culture. Among the lessons learned are to connect people through the value chain, make youth the centre, staff the project, develop products, support chefs and farmers, expand the market and improve distribution. Mobile applications are helping with parts of the business services.

### **Joe's Farm: Providing vegetables & salads to the tourism- markets in Fiji Michael Joe, Managing Director, Joe's Farm**

Since 1981, Joe's Farm in Fiji has become an integrated commercial farm that supplies farm fresh produce. Clients include supermarkets, retailers, hotels and resorts, restaurants and fast-food outlets, vessels, aviation industry. The key achievements include large food supply contracts, including a 25-year government contract, and numerous business awards. Market surveys are vital, and helped in developing a 10-year strategic business plan. The buyers focus on price but other factors, such as reliable supply, are also important. The farm has expanded into commercial hydroponics and other ventures. There is extensive research and development, and staff training. Some contracts are with smaller farmers who receive training and other support such as transport, storage and distribution. To substitute imports, Fiji needs help with establishing collection centres in rural areas, giving seeds and training to farmers, and more help with sales and logistics.

### **Vanuatu Direct Ltd. Essential and central supplier of fresh and value added food through a certified system to Vanuatu hospitality sector. Cornelia Wyllie, Vanuatu Direct Limited**

This small business set up in 2006 supplies premium food and beverages in retail ready packs to consumers in Vanuatu, Australia and New Zealand. The company also supplies wholesale to supermarkets, hotels and restaurants as well as luxury yachts. The product range includes fresh produce from 350 contract eco-farmers, honey, shelf stable authentic tribal foods, juice, sauces and dried fruits without added sugar or chemicals. The marketing of Vanuatu Direct is to tell, rather than sell. The point of difference is the nutraceutical values of selected products. One of the markets identified is that everyone is concerned about their health. Technical

assistance from development partners and mentoring has helped to develop the business skills and expertise.

**Heilala Vanilla: branding and expanding markets. Jennifer Boggiss, CEO, Director, and Co Founder Heilala Vanilla**

Organic Heilala Vanilla tells a story of origin and partnerships. Heilala impressed celebrity chefs who conducted tours to show guests how to create vanilla-infused feasts. The business was established in 2002 and exports reached five tons in 2013. Relationships have also been formed with a network of growers. The company has worked closely with Massey University on product development and Heilala vanilla is also an ingredient in other value-added products. Markets include Australia, Singapore, Japan, the United States and others. No two markets are the same with each having different models of distribution, entry regulations and customer preferences. It is important to spend time in export markets, and to ensure strong and consistent branding.

**Tanna Coffee serves local and regional markets. Terry Adlington, Managing Director, Tanna Coffee, Vanuatu**

Tanna coffee started almost 20 years ago and serves the domestic tourism industry and export markets. Equipment and technical training is provided to over 500 smallholder coffee farmers on Tanna Island in Vanuatu. It is the only South Pacific Company selected as a finalist in the G20 World Challenge for Inclusive Business Opportunities. Production has increased from 3.5 tons to 86 tons per year, over 15 years. The popular Tanna Coffee tourist outlet has prompted a proposal for another centre to showcase Vanuatu's other value-added industries. Future directions are to develop new markets locally and overseas, diversify into other products, promote value-added products, lift market share by replacing some imports, and increase sales and marketing. The local market is saturated and exports are being expanded. Tanna Coffee is developing 200 one-hectare lots for farmers to plant coffee and other crops. The company would like to see the development of Joint Venture roasting and processing facilities in the region.

**Sustainable Denis Island: A Vertical Integration Success Story of Agriculture and a Five Star Holiday Resort, Seychelles. Guy Morel, Management and Marketing Expert; and Gilbert Port-Louis, Seychelles Agricultural Agency**

It helps to create a vision to shape our attitudes. For example, one could have a vision for the Pacific and Caribbean to contribute towards an equity fund to transform small to medium enterprises into solid firms. The agritourism agenda in the Seychelles aims for single digit real GDP and sector growth through better cross industry cooperation. We think of ourselves as Smart Island states rather than Small Island Developing States. There is an active population of 52,000 (70% in private sector, following a restructure in the late-2000's) from a total of 105,000 people. Employment is high at 96%. The US\$400 tourism industry goes for a highly differentiated, low volume and high yield product, and the main value driver is the environment. Tourist arrivals are approaching 250,000. Branding is more than a name, it is about an experience with the product. Half of the 9300 rooms are five star, with an occupancy of 60%.

The agriculture sector is just 600 hectares and mainly traditional, involving 652 fulltime farmers and 5000 backyard farmers. There is a need to capture how to value the informal sector contribution. What the industry is doing right to align agritourism is that it knows its numbers. The industry talks to the tourism influencers, as business is done at the relationship level. The main tourism suppliers procure from local farmers. Competitions are used to challenge chefs to use local produce in fine cuisine. If it is served in a traditional way it's culture, if it is served as fine cuisine, it's business. Traditional cuisine is promoted through specialised restaurants and festivals. An IFAD pilot project will organise farmers into production units to mitigate supply disruption and reduce costs. Fruit street vendors have been allowed to operate, and managed as an affordable route to the market. Vertical integration is encouraged.

The challenges include a low level of preparedness to deal with the emerging natural and trading environments in the agricultural sector; a slow pace to adopt and transfer new technologies in the sector, and little supply and demand coordination resulting in too much of the same or scarcity. In general, local farmers have a poor credit worthiness rating resulting in a high cost of capital to finance capital projects. There are lapses in key support institutions, through not matching the skills needed in the industry, and no clear strategic space and competitive strategy. The strategic intervention framework aims to build a culture of entrepreneurship, build bases of competitive advantage, add value through differentiation, and create value-based partnerships.

Denis Island is one of 115 islands in the Seychelles. The Mason family, who own and manage the privately owned island, operate an up-market resort. They practice ecotourism where the farm operates in parallel with the resort, providing the hotel guests and the staff with fresh organic produce. Denis Island is almost self-sufficient with pork meat, chicken, duck, rabbit, eggs, fresh milk, and a range of vegetables and fruits. The 25 villas have a room rate of 800 Euro based on a story of organic fresh produce and a unique experience.

**Agribusiness Forum: Linking Agrifood Sector To Tourism-Related Markets.  
Ms. Carmen Nurse, President. Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers**

CANROP provides a forum for rural women producers to address the concerns affecting their business. It creates a brand for quality products, and pools resources for marketing. CANROP organises skills training, promotes projects, and accesses funding from national and donor agencies to support work programmes. The network also facilitates the discussion of gender equality and equity. CANROP wants to see more consultation and representation at every level of decision making; more capacity building; timely access to inputs; more access and ownership to land and funding; promotion of more eco-friendly processing; better storage and standards to reduce waste, increased research and advocacy for equal rights and pay. The main challenges are a lack of knowledge about rights and roles; a lack of political will to address needs at the community, national and regional levels; no union representation, and a low representation of females in government.

**Session 3: Linking fisheries to the tourism-related markets**

### **Organiser and facilitator: Erik Rotsaert, Fisheries Expert**

This session will show various models of linkages between the fisheries and tourism sectors in niche products (certified, eco-labeling), aquaculture, and ranching sectors. Most PICs suffer from a lack of natural resources, small and import dependent economies, geographic dispersion, stronger local demand due to population growth and expanding tourism, leading to impacts on public health and the environment. Agritourism, including fisheries, offer the best opportunities for inclusive economic growth. Local sourcing of food for tourism has increased. However, many producers are unaware of the requirements or face supply issues. Limited marketing channels also keep smaller farmers from getting the right information at the right time about industry needs. Regionally, there is a lack of information on local/regional trading and on the connections between tourism industry needs and local/regional fish and seafood production supply and constraints. Eco-labeling is increasingly important as consumers become more aware of sustainability and environmental impacts of fisheries and aquaculture.

### **What partnership between the tourist industry and the fisheries sector?**

**Georges Ringeisen, Executive Chef, The Grand Pacific Hotel, Suva, Fiji**

Visitors come to experience the culture and food, and Fiji has a lot to offer. Most hotel menus have imported prawns, crayfish and other seafood. Some visitors expect to get a local experience with food. A lot of hotel food is imported but it is the local food that gives Fiji its identity. With fish, hotels mainly need tuna, wahoo and mahimahi. In a year, GPH needs two tons of yellowfin tuna and a ton of mud crabs for what is a medium sized hotel. Generally, commercial fishing is for export, while local fishing is for a local market. The local market is important for tourism and should be used sustainably.

In Fiji, the main issues are consistency in the stock and quality. HAACP standards are essential along the value chain, with quality maintained at every step. Some of the fish are landed in poor condition, and cannot be used by hotels. Visitors want to eat crayfish, which must also be treated carefully to protect the stocks. There needs to be an awareness campaign and training to protect the seafood stocks. Hotels only want fresh fish and seafood in good condition. Prawns are a high demand item and can be farmed. Fiji prawns have great potential for export and local markets.

**The Crab Company, Fiji: Specialises in the production of live mud crabs for the growing Pacific seafood market. Dr Colin Shelley, Co-Founder and Executive Director, The Crab Company (Fiji).**

The live crabs are graded for size and properly treated to ensure better quality. Most aquaculture development in the region is driven by government rather than the private sector, and there are few examples of private public partnerships. It is difficult to raise capital, as lending institutions are wary of aquaculture. The business model is for premium quality products. The farming systems uses ponds similar to prawn farms, as well as mangrove pens, which offers a low cost entry point for local farmers. This allows for contract farming similar to what is used in the poultry industry. Post harvest training ensures quality is maintained from breeding through to sales. One aim is that contract farming will include women

farmers and cooperatives. The approach is for total quality control. Sales are limited by supply and there is huge potential in the local and export markets. Crab farming also takes some pressure off the inshore fisheries and the mangroves, which supports both the environment and economic development. The company has finished the pilot phase and is building capacity and developing the crab farm on a 10 hectare block. The business also gets support from SPC and MDF for training, machinery and promotion. The company is looking to have clusters of farmers around the country that will benefit from an integrated production system. The benefits include import substitution, more rural incomes, poverty alleviation and business growth. The plan is to expand to 40-50 hectares of ponds and several hundred hectares of mangroves in the next few years.

**The FIJIFRESH Seafood. Supplies locally caught seafood to Fiji Island customers. Mr Ronnie Hyer.**

Retired to Fiji and found a gap in the fish markets as most of the caught fish was exported. The local demand is growing while supply is dropping partly due to longline export fishing. The best catch goes overseas with the lower quality ending up in the local market. Even by-catch is now being exported due to overseas demand. The company is focused on providing quality fish, which are vacuum packed and blast frozen to protect quality. Most of the time is spent buying fresh supplies, processing and selling. The fish stocks can be cyclical which impacts on supply. The company is now planning to run a boat the outer islands to secure more supply. Cash flow is a challenge as purchases from fishermen are all in cash, while hotels take a month to process a payment. Future plans are to expand into oysters, which were left over from an oyster project that closed due to a lack of marketing and markets. Another possible venture will be to supply crabs from the outer islands.

**Market Development Facility (MDF) is an Australian Aid project assisting small local producers. Ms. Reshika Kumar, Business Adviser.**

MDF supports 32 activities in horticulture and agro-exports, tourism and related services, and export processing. The activities include Farmboy, which established a HAACP kitchen for the processing of horticulture produce for hotels; upgrading of a hydroponic facility; supporting the diversification into fruit juices for a dairy company; upgrading a chocolate making facility; and support for a crab company a fresh fish supplier. Lessons learned are that the sector lacks information and skills; supplies may vary in quality and volume; quality inputs are lacking; cash flow is tight; accounting systems are weak, and there may be high costs for facilities and capacity building to comply with international standards.

**Session 4: The Chefs: the link between sustainable tourism, agriculture and cuisine. Facilitator: Chris Cocker, South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO)**

There is a need to upgrade farmers supply chains to larger hotels and resorts, and stimulate demand of local products and its use by chefs who can promote ways to more creatively utilize local produce in the hospitality sector. It will illustrate how local food and local cuisine can be promoted in the tourism industry.

### **Robert Oliver, Chef, author and television presenter of Real Pasifik, Pacific**

The story of food is the story of the people. Indigenous cuisine is the key to good health. Up to 80% of food in the tourism sector is imported, and greater local sourcing is desirable. The opportunities for the Pacific come from a vibrant organics movement, a world-class cuisine and chefs, and half of tourists citing cuisine in their destination choice. Books and television shows help to promote local foods and develop tourism awareness. One show is a Real Pasifik TV series shown in six Pacific nations. More awareness is needed of a Pacific cuisine through events such as food festivals and artisan products, because when local food is in tourism it becomes tourism for everybody. There is very little education in the region on a Pacific cuisine. The Fiji Chefs Association has no funding but operates as a network to share ideas. There is no regional entity for a chefs association - a future Pacific version could include farmers. One proposal is for a South Pacific Cuisine Lab for product and recipe development, which could be linked to a chefs association and restaurants. This could help to build trade and menu development and also involve guests chefs, short courses for tourists and chefs, and have a studio for books, TV and web content.

### **Chef Dane Saddler, Executive Chef, Caribbean Villa Chefs, Barbados**

Caribbean Villa Chefs is a full service culinary company, which provides chefs and other hospitality staff to private homes and villas throughout the Caribbean. It provides a culinary experience to local events and festivals, and exports the Caribbean experience to source markets. Each island offers flavours and food items to create unique dishes, menus and experiences. Local ingredients can be used to present international foods and to develop brands and value. Chefs are influential in promoting local food as they determine the menu and can influence client's buying and eating practices during their villa stay. There is also a potential export market as guests return home and want to again experience the flavours and ingredients more frequently.

### **Business by Design, Lynn Eckles**

Mentoring and business coaching is provided to the industry at different levels. There is a role for micro enterprises in innovation, niche markets and changes in the market. Tourism markets know that everyone eats, and this presents multiple entry points for marketing, promotion, activities and experiences.

### **Ena Harvey, IICA agritourism expert**

Sustainable tourism needs to be clear on who should benefit from tourism. Local communities cannot be an afterthought or a means to protect tourism investments. Tourism cannot be successful without a sustainable food production sector and climate smart agriculture. Agricultural biodiversity and heritage and the culture of food enhance the value of a sustainable tourism product. Sustainable Travel International is working with the South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO) to ensure that the tourism sector delivers on its potential to positively impact lives and protect places. Food tourism, when done properly, is a valuable development tool and also helps to improve incomes and generate employment. Slow Food

International aims to promote local foods and traditions of gastronomy and food production, as opposed to fast food.

***Special guest:***

**What role for the agrifood private sector in the ACP-EU relations and 11<sup>th</sup> EDF? H.E. Roy Mickey Joy, Chairman of the ACP Committee of Ambassadors and Ambassador of Vanuatu to the EU**

Since the demise of the ACP Centre for the Development of Enterprise (CDE), a new Private Sector Development Strategy has been adopted. The ACP Vision is for a PSD Strategy that enables a resilient, expanding private sector, playing a major role as an engine of sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction in ACP countries. The PSDS has four priority areas: (1) Improving the business climate for private sector development; (2) Developing and strengthening entrepreneurship microenterprises and small and medium enterprises; (3) Increasing access to financing for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs); and (4) Strengthening competitiveness and access for MSMEs to national, regional and global markets. The implementation of the ACP-EU PSD is an opportunity for the enhancement of Intra-ACP Relations in a new basis, mainly the ACP Secretariat relations with the regional organisations; the involvement of regional private sector stakeholders, and building business relations between the ACP and EU private sectors. The PIFS and PIPSO must work together to tap this source of future funding. The challenge for stakeholders is how to put together a project document within a few months. Africa will take most of the funding, based on population and GDP per capita. The Caribbean and Pacific regions will also receive a fair share.

**Session 5: Agrifinance: new opportunities for the agribusiness sector/ Partnerships and PPPs for entrepreneurship in Agritourism  
Organiser and facilitator: Lamon Rutten, CTA**

This session took up 3-4 challenges (situations in which a lack of working capital finance prevented farmers and others in the value chain from benefitting from clearly visible opportunities). The discussion looked at what could be done by whom to provide a solution, and how such a solution could become available to others in similar situations.

**Tevita Madigibuli, General Manager, Relationship & Sales, Fiji Development Bank (FDB)**

Finance is a catalyst for any development. FDB is a government vehicle for finance and its roles are to help contribute to economic growth in Fiji, encourage the development of natural resources from primary producers to markets, and promote business under the SME category with loans up to \$0.5 million. The agriculture loan facility covers farming, fisheries and forestry. FDB accounts for half of agricultural loans, with the balance by commercial banks (38%) and credit institutions (11%). The target is to lend up to \$53 million this year. The constraints for agribusiness include a lack of equity, remote locations and services, poor basic financial literacy and management practises and discipline, animal husbandry practices, renewal and extension of lease areas, and climate change or natural disasters. The FDB continues to work on increasing financial literacy, improving access to affordable drugs and

vet services, supporting technical training, and partner with academic and training institutions to increase the number of new farmers into agribusiness.

**Ashleigh Matheson, Chief Risk Officer, Bank of the South Pacific**

Commercial banks have a small exposure to agriculture. In 2012, the Reserve Bank of Fiji required commercial banks to increase their exposure to agriculture from below one per cent to four percent. So far, there are only \$60 million of agriculture loans in a loan portfolio of \$5 billion, or still about one percent. The RB understands that the banks are trying but are unable to comply. Banks rely on a business plan showing good cash flow, feasibility, ability to repay and security. The banks have similar lending policies and products, and they operate in a competitive financial market. The challenge is to get agriculture into a position where it is credit worthy. Small operators lack the scale and efficiencies which larger farms have. Fiji has an example in the garment industry, which went through closures due to a loss of subsidies or tariff protection, and the rise of the Chinese garment industry. Garment makers responded by not competing on scale but in other areas, such as seeking smaller orders rather than in the tens of thousands of items. The answer to access to finance may lie in the intensity of farming, but based on cash flow and not through debt. Land use should become more efficient. Fiji has a strong entrepreneurial community, but they are not getting into agriculture.

**Aseri Manulevu; Manager Business Finance, HFC Bank, Fiji**

As with the other banks, HFC has also struggled to comply with the RB directive. There is a small agricultural loan portfolio in areas such as poultry, including covering part of the equity. The focus is on the customer who will be doing the actual work.

**Sashi Kiran, Founder and Director of FRIEND, Fiji**

FRIEND is a cross between an NGO and a business. Capital is available but development projects tend to go to medium and larger operators. Microfinance for the grassroots level tries a one size fits all, such as canteens for low population areas, pointing to a lack of market research. There is a market for local products but the missing link is very little product development services for rural farmers. FRIEND works with individual farmers, usually on small activities. There is still a need for farmer training at the village level, and providing other support services such as processing, transport and marketing. Financial literacy courses need to be tailored to be more practical in everyday activities.

**Eugene Williams, Local Business Banking Manager, Westpac Bank**

In rural areas, larger exporters buy supplies from smaller farms for onward sale, with the farmers receiving a small percentage of the final price. This is normal business. Westpac lends about \$25 million for agriculture loans, which is a very small part of the portfolio.

**Mereia Volavola, CEO, PIPSO**

Most agriculture loans in the region are from the development banks. Commercial banks struggle to lend more than one percent of their loan portfolio to the sector. The issue is not just finance, as the banks have excess liquidity, but the banks do not see enough bankable proposals. Few farmers have equity or security. Micro and small business lack the tools and capacity to prepare good financial proposals. Financial institutions can do more to improve financial and business skills in the agriculture sector, especially for rural farmers.

**Session 6: Addressing the data gaps for Agribusiness/Agritourism**  
**Organiser and facilitator: Chris Addison, CTA**

This session shared the work on agribusiness platforms being developed with CABA and PIPSO and the need to strengthen key business information and data for the SMEs and partners involved in the agribusiness sector. Some insights on the use of new technologies (e.g. drones) to build data will be shared as well as mapping farms with GPS and linking to mobile app to build data. Developing a virtual Agribusiness Forum Platform can offer services such as a stakeholder's directory, a news and event service, an inquiry service, a discussion service and a library service.

**What data for agribusiness/agritourism?**  
**Chris Addison, CTA, Mereia Volavola, PIPSO and Vassel Stewart, CABA**

**Anna Fink, SPC Expert, Agricultural Statistics**

The current situation is that there is lots of data on agribusiness, but it is hard to access. The biggest gaps are in crop production and yields, and service providers. PAPP is engaged in areas such as GIS mapping, national surveys, a regional strategy on agricultural statistics, and improving access to agricultural statistics through an online portal and other measures. The Cook Islands is establishing an AgINTEL database which allows much more detailed analysis.

**What tools and applications to collect, manage and use data locally?**  
**Amiaifolau Afamasaga Lutua, Samoa Tourism Authority**

Tourism is the main foreign exchange earner and accounts for 30% of GDP. The sector is vulnerable to external shocks and climate change. To do proper planning, accurate and timely data is essential. Stakeholders need to be involved in the information gathering and decision-making. Proper planning requires reliable and timely data as well as the involvement of stakeholders in generating data and setting priorities. The benefits of using a participatory process is that it generates data on tourism development used in national map information; engaging the community adds to the quality and detail of data; leads to better planning and decisions; builds awareness of geographical features of the community, aids longterm planning and helps to identify diversified tourism products. The next steps are to digitize the data and integrate the participatory process into other tourism development areas through the STA.

**Use of Drones in the Agritourism sector, Kevin Rotsaert, Skyward Industries Ltd, Fiji**

The main focus is the collection of primary data through advanced mapping and surveying with drones and other technologies. The primary data greatly improves the understanding of the chain of dependency in a system. Most people spend time trying to manage data, rather than getting new data. The traditional collection methods are mainly manual and handheld, which takes months of work. Using drones covers the farm areas in minutes and allows more time for analysis and quickly developing outcomes for clients.

**GIS & integrated data for sound business decisions, Faumuina F. Tafunai, Women in Business Development Inc., WIBDI**

WIBDI has 600 certified organic farms. The market wants information to base their decisions but the current database is not serving the needs. WIBDI needed a data system that farmers could understand and use, though existing examples overseas were too complex. Many farmers do not have bank accounts and farming is not taxed. The data goals are to save more time, improve efficiency, use less paper, respond accurately to markets, improve reporting to management and donors, and make more money for farmers. More staff may be recruited to run the data work.

**Tracking Demand Dynamics of Agricultural Produce in the Seychelles: A Prerequisite for Strategy Formulation, Guy Morel, Management and Marketing Expert; Gilbert Port-Louis, Seychelles Agricultural Agency**

Primary data collection should focus on understanding the demand in the market, and not just supply from the farms. This allows strategies and activities to be aligned to fill the gap between the two measures.

**10h45-12h30 Focus groups session**

This action-focused session captured the key messages and recommendations to take forward and some concrete deliverables needed to strengthen the sector.

**G1 Enhanced access to financing for farmers, agro-processors and development agencies.**

Explore and promote non-traditional financial schemes.

**G2 Branding small islands as quality food destination**

Identify health benefits, validate and communicate. Promote innovative ways and product utilisation.

**G3 Chefs for Development: the missing link between agriculture and tourism**

Capacity building and career pathway options are a priority. Activities include cooking competitions, the teaching of business skills and promoting new menus.

**G4 The key role of the private sector in linking agriculture to the tourism industry**

Key areas include representation and dissemination of information. There is a need to create partnerships, guarantee quality and quantity, and improve logistics. More effort is needed to promote national and regional value chains from big to smaller

producers. Stakeholders should invest in marketing and product development, and exchange best practices.

### **G5 Addressing the data gaps and using ICTs**

Databases need to benchmark existing projects, including the analysis of successes and failures. Some thought should be given to training support for developers.

### **CLOSING**

The Caribbean delegation thanked the organisers for the meeting and the valuable exchanges with other participants. A similar event will be held in 2017 in the Caribbean and a Pacific delegation will be invited.

PIPSO noted that in October 2015 a Pacific business delegation will visit the Caribbean. A lot of conferences result in no action and the outcomes of this meeting should be followed up. Many regional organisations work in isolation and there is a need to work together more, and also with the Caribbean.

### **Closing Remarks**

#### **Ambassador of Vanuatu to the EU, Belgium, France and the United Kingdom, H.E. Roy Mickey Joy.**

Small island countries face many challenges and the response should be diversification strategies, coping mechanisms and private sector development. The lack of diversification in the economies of small islands is an issue not only in terms of the creation of a limited export base, but also because it means that domestic demand for the products and services that are not created by the country has to be met by imports. Private sector development is a must in looking forward. A persistent constraint to private sector development and expansion in Pacific island and other SIDS has been the lack of access to finance to overcome the fixed costs related to doing business in a small island economy.

We have to reverse this trend and work collectively to put forward regional programmes for the private sector development. One very telling constraint in the capacity for effective government support of the private sector in SIDS is the lack of national data on private sector activities outside of the scope of finance. The health benefits of using more local food will help to address the rising problems linked to NCDs.

There are numerous benefits that have been argued in favour of certification and labeling as forms of value addition for the agricultural sectors. We should be able to develop a regional project in support of agribusiness development with the financial institutions and the European Investment Bank and get also support of the ACP Group in Brussels. How do we strengthen quality products, branding and labeling? A critical component of agribusiness development will be forging strong partnerships to acquire global financing and a better trade environment across the Pacific and amongst the ACP SIDS.

In support of the Nadi Declaration and outcomes of this Forum, I would like to highlight three areas, which I will follow-up with the ACP Group in Brussels and partners in region.

1 Promoting with PIPSO, SPC and CTA, support to private sector SMEs and companies in the region and in SIDS. We should be able to develop a regional project in support of agribusiness development with the financial institutions and the European Investment Bank and get also support of the ACP Group in Brussels. I believe a quick action plan in that respect by a steering committee would accelerate its development and attracting resources into the region.

2. Working with a “Chefs for Development” platform, CTA is launching with Robert Oliver and other partners, the work towards serving the Commonwealth Summit in 2017 in Vanuatu. We aim at building a strong platform, which can serve the food needs of the Summit in 2017 while raising awareness amongst Heads of State on the linkages between food and cuisine and the development component.

3. Developing Agritourism policies at national and regional level. I propose starting with Vanuatu in collaboration with CTA and IICA who will share experiences in the Caribbean, which has a regional strategy. We need policy frameworks in place able to strengthen cross-sectoral linkages and build resilience.

### **Acknowledgements**

The organisers thanked the sponsors for their support, and the participants for their valuable contributions.

#### **4d. Regional Farmers Knowledge Exchange Workshop (Market Linkages) and Buyers Sellers Mart**

**Day One: 29 June 2015**

##### **Background on Fiji's current National Agriculture Policy Agenda 2020 and status [including linkages to tourism]**

**Vinesh Kumar, Principal Agriculture Officer - Fiji Ministry of Agriculture, Western Division**

The Ministry of Agriculture's vision is "to influence market forces through vibrant and sustainable agriculture activity that reduces poverty, reduces the risks of food insecurity and increases the contribution to GDP." In terms of food security – "first food on the table and then we look at exports" – the Ministry is concerned about reduced consumption of locally grown root crops and increase in imported rice, and the need to increase crop and livestock production.

Ministry is providing marketing support for farmers, bilateral agreements, promotions and products through the food chain and with value adding, and promotions for agriculture products.

Many challenges include climate change impacts, scarcity of labour (fewer farmers and of those many are aging farmers), and competition for resources (ie in sugar sector cannot maintain cost of production so reforms trying to reduce post-harvest costs, reduce production overheads and improve efficiencies such as via improved mechanisation). Also new farming practices and better land use planning for Fiji, ie development and housing encroaching on agricultural lands and perhaps we need better planning.

##### **Exploring Fiji's fresh produce value chain Elenio Yap, SMED Officer, SPC-LRD (IACT)**

Presented statistics on the monetary opportunities currently available within the tourism sector for the local agricultural sector: 2013 Turnover in Fiji Hotels indicates \$195million (24%) total turnover was earned from food of which only 6% (\$11.7m) was local sourced ingredients – so there is an 18% opportunity. Elenio explained that "the grass is NOT greener on the other side" and that there is an amazing opportunity for farmers to capitalise now on the local tourism industry.

Ways to do this include: establish a platform for dialogue and information exchange among buyers, farmers, growers, processors, and support agencies so people have access to information about who they may buy from and what is available; review terms of payments to assist farmers (and better understanding the hotels' procurement options); maximize the capture of growing opportunities through dialogue, farm technology adjustments, synchronized/consolidated production planning; learn from successful Case Studies such as Farmboy; recognize that sourcing of fresh produce locally can form part of corporate social responsibility of Fiji's tourism industry players; and other ideas were discussed.

Questions and discussion at end of presentation included: the need to perhaps have an NGO working with communities to better link groups of smallholder farmers with hotels, and also important for farmers to know what services and assistance is available to them and that services reach the village level where they are most needed.

### **Sustainable agriculture serving the community Kalais-Jade Stanley, Women in Business Development Inc (WIBDI)**

WIBDI's Farm to Table program aims to make the menu the business plan for its farmers. This is part of its economic program designed to help achieve its vision, that vulnerable Samoan families will take control of their economic and social development through entrepreneurial activity and contribute to Samoa becoming an economically independent nation. Its

In response to an FAO survey in Samoa in 2009 - that 85% of local hotels and restaurants would use local produce if supply and quality were consistent - WIBDI established in Dec 2013 its Organic Farm to Table programme (in consultation with Robert Oliver and seed-funded through UNDP's Youth Employment Programme run jointly with ILO). Its role in the program is multi-faceted: farmer training; seed distribution; marketing; restaurant liaison; produce grading and delivery; invoicing; bridge financing to pay the farmers while we wait for invoices to be paid; even chef training to educate them about the benefits of having Pacific contemporary cuisine on menus to lure culinary tourists.

Farm to Table operates on a supply guarantee system where "consistency is our first product". Started with 5 restaurants and 20 farmers and now 23 restaurants and over 60 farming families. While the program develops much of WIBDI's core business remains in virgin coconut oil and other products and services, such as its provision of business literacy for farmers. It sources from 600 organically certified smallholders farmers from 183 villages across Samoa.

### **Case Study experience of linking local fresh produce to the tourism sector Kamlesh Prasad, Farmboy**

Moved into vegetables several years ago, in response to a decline in the sugar industry. Initially selling on the roadside and anywhere the business could, then expanded to supply hotels. Initially it was difficult trying to sell local produce into the hotel industry where the majority of hotels had imported chefs – part of Farmboy's work is sponsoring a chefs competition 'Fijian cuisine with western touch' to encourage chef's use of more local foods.

The uniqueness of Farmboy is that it not only wants to see what's available and put it to the customer and excel in quality but it also wants to develop its own customers. Thanks to AUSAid and govt support, it has been helped to achieve these goals and to improve its facility (and also educate our customers)

Priority is the consistent supply of quality produce, and to achieve this Farmboy deals with 1000 growers directly or indirectly as sometimes need to liaise with many farmers to meet the orders required by the hotel or resort (ie after the Nadi floods still fulfilled 100% of orders).

Moving into pre-prepared or value-added foods. Fresh mangos that may be too ripe for supply to hotels are made into ready-to-use pulp for easy use by chefs; spinach is pre-prepared so only has to be cooked; bananas are frozen, etc so turn potential waste into value-added business.

Quality is paramount for the tourism sector and this is an ongoing education process for famers. Superyachts at Denarau Marina are more demanding of quality than 5-star resorts, but with 99% of yachts visiting Denarau serviced by Farmboy then the business benefits are clear, ie if 40g tomatoes are ordered a hotel will take 30g tomatoes but a super yacht will not! Some farmers say “a tomato is a tomato” or “your competitor takes everything so why not you!” and I need to explain the customer demands and that meeting these demands, results in high-premium, long term business.

More work needs to be done, especially with government, to control the pesticides used on farms. The market wants glossy food and without any holes but unfortunately that is not the best one for the table, and currently cannot guarantee organics to customers who are wanting this.

Questions and discussions at the end of the presentation included: how does Farmboy arrange payment? Farmboy pays cash on delivery (“for farmers we pay cash on the spot, and some in advance to plant and supply to us”), so that carries risk for from the farm-gate until the product is delivered to client and paid for.

What about produce that is rejected by the hotels or delivered by farmers but can't be used, ie undersize? This is why Farmboy is moving more into value-added processed foods such as mango pulp, frozen banana, etc.

### **Post-Harvest Experience – Gains & Losses**

**Luke Berrell, Consultant (Formerly General Manager Nishi Trading Tonga 2013-2014)**

The estimated cost of loss after 4 days is 58% loss. This is a combined loss from: over-ripening; failure to ripen; physical damage during transport; post market wastage, other factors.

Price is not always the reason your customers return. They return for a number of reasons so know what the customers value as it can be as much about service as the product itself. So it is important to talk and listen to customer, and to minimise waste and maximise the use and value of ‘wastage’. Also know the different expectations of the market as it differs for: the grower (want produce that is easy to grow and easy to sell), the wholesaler (want high price and low wastage) and for the consumer (want taste, appearance, health and safety).

Post-harvest quality and control aspects to consider: food must be safe (ie preliminary food safety assessment as safety a priority for the tourism sector as don't want to get anyone sick) and protected from risks such as un-composted manure, poor water quality, animals accessing fields, handling hygiene etc; temperature needs to be correct (not too high or too low) and this includes monitoring temperature during transportation and storage; minimise the effects of bruising and damage during transport and delivery (ie example of vibration monitors placed in the truck shows the peaks and troughs of damage to produce on the journey to market – especially on poor roads typical in the Pacific).

**Farm Products Marketing tips – order forms, contracts, pricing**  
**Greg Cornwall, University of the South Pacific - School of Tourism and Hospitality Management, Co-ordinator Hotel Management**

An estimated \$5million in annual sales could go to smallholder farmers producing mandarins and coconuts, if hotels provided these juices to each guest on arrival instead of the current practice of providing imported juice. Importantly, this is what tourists want – they want 'bu' juice (coconut) as part of their Pacific experience.

Central to the role of training the next round of hotel managers, to run hotels such as the Sofitel, is taking students on field trips to the market, so they can learn to negotiate for the right price, and look at quality - just as farmers have to produce for hotels as customers, hotels also have to supply for their customers.

Also work to educate the chefs about the value of having more Pacific cuisine on the menu, to meet the increasing amount of travellers seeking culinary tourism. This includes the local market of people from overseas, ie a flatmate in Fiji (born overseas) usually ate imported Western foods but after they tried the local foods that is what they now prefer.

Soon, with education and encouragement, people will seek Pacific foods and not just while here on holiday but to be exported to their home countries.

**Sofitel Purchasing Manager**  
**(name unknown)**

Has worked as Purchasing Manager for Sofitel for nine years and in that time the main challenges are ways to source the best optimal quality goods: consistent supply, product type, quality, and price. 50/50 is provided locally versus imported.

Typically liaises with five suppliers, to whom he provides the weekly tender list. Encourages the use of local farm products as that helps Sofitel as it means more fresh produce that is less expensive – and more local jobs is good for everyone and the local economy.

Questions and discussions at the end of the presentation included talk about the pros and cons of having a "middle man" versus the direct supply from the farmer, and how the "middle man" absorbs significant risk, time, and costs from the moment goods are purchased at the farm-gate to when the clients pays are 30-days invoicing.

Sofitel tends to liaise just with five suppliers. Would like to go direct to the farmer, but for reasons of logistics, consistency, quality its proven to be more practical to go through the “middle man”, ie Farmboy, plus they have a 30 day supplier payment and most farmers require cash on delivery and Sofitel and most resorts does not do that. Farmboy also helps train and educate Sofitel staff, ie chefs previously did not use rosella plant but thanks to Farmboy they now use this locally sourced produce.

### **Designing a crop calendar** **Elenoa Tamani, SPC-LRD**

Presentation about an introduction to designing a crop calendar and how best to do this and key contents to include.

Farmers’ ‘Break Out Session’ to develop their own crop calendar in terms of the value chain from farm to hotel, and to identify what each actor contributes, their costs , their risks and their rewards.

## **PRESENTATIONS – FARMERS KM WORKSHOP – Day Two: 30 June 2015**

### **Summary of Previous Day’s Talks** **Jacqui Berrell, Rapporteur for Event**

Day 1 of the Regional Farmers Knowledge Exchange Workshop’ included case studies, presentations and discussions about:

- the shared sentiment that farmers and hoteliers very much want to work more with each other
- resorts primarily employ European or overseas chefs who cook ‘western-style’ food and so ongoing education for chefs is encouraged about local produce and cuisine
- data indicates significant and multi-million opportunities for profits and savings across the sectors if they work more closely together (versus importing)
- hotels, resorts, restaurants are businesses, and they require a business transaction and so farmers need to re-think running their farm, and focus on running a business.
- significant discussion about the role of ‘middleman’ or intermediary supplier (this is the ‘business’ conduit between the hotel and the farmers, and is becoming increasingly popular whether private sector or cooperative,ie Farmboy Fiji or WIBDI). -Both these intermediaries – as well as USP and others - also work on ‘supply and demand’ from the tourism perspective, and to educate chefs on (a) the value and opportunity of contemporary Pacific cuisine appearing on menus (b) how to use local produce and prepare traditional foods.
  - Farmboy provided a detailed Case Study on how it is a business focussed on customer service – even during the Nadi floods they still provided their tourism customers with supplies every day. Farmboy deals with 1000 growers and have a huge challenge trying to get the local volume of produce needed by the tourism industry.
  - Women in Business Development Inc. (Samoa) also presented a similar scenario on the significant efforts involved in being the intermediary between the agriculture and tourism sector.

## **Farmer Knowledge Exchange**

### **Minoru Nishi, Managing Director of Nishi Trading - Tonga**

Nishi Trading is a producer, exporter and packer who has been doing squash for 28 years. In 2000 started exporting with a focus on quality and sustainability, so still going now after many others have entered then left the export market.

Believes “it’s about capacity and working together”, both within the country and the region, “as if we can get all farmers to improve their capacity and better supply markets then it’s a win for all suppliers (in the Pacific)”. Talked about how the Pacific is well placed to fill gaps ‘next door’ in Aust and NZ (ie watermelon), and that “we can work together” – across countries - to do this, rather than compete or, worse still, lost the market that the Pacific could capture to other regions like Asia. “We are too small in the Pacific to see each other as competitors, we need to work more closely together,” ie papaya shortage in Fiji a few months ago and perhaps together could maintain these important markets (not let suppliers defer to other non-Pacific countries).

Opportunities for Nishi and others in the Pacific include: onions to substitute NZ imports (this year able to sell over 2000 bags of onions, and maybe there is a chance to export to Fiji, Samoa and maybe Japan when the market is right); and watermelon exports trialled to Samoa last year, though difficult as the duty is quite high in Apia, and also NZ during the off-season for other suppliers to NZ. Also potential for more organics and Nishi Trading is trialling some cropping techniques with staff to improve potential organic production.

Nishi Trading has built a new packhouse, opened in November 2014, that is HACCP certified for watermelon, butternut and squash as overseas markets are demanding HACCP. Ie Next month starting packing for a local cooperative (not Nishi Trading) packing and selling watermelon to NZ. Longer term goal is for more processing of produce to value-add for the local and overseas markets.

Highlighted key constraints and possible solutions being implemented, including: weather and the investment in irrigation (droughts, excessive rain/floods), production consistency across all farms to supply exporters (off season, inconsistent supply and quality of supply); seeds and idea of a Seed-Bank (availability and suitable varieties for the Pacific and warm climates); market access (tariff/Non tariff barriers eg., biosecurity, political pressures, etc); logistics and infrastructure (ie transportation on bumpy Tonga roads causes loss); technical support and planning and increasing connection between MAFFF high-level researchers or partners able to offer researchers (research and extension support can sometimes fall short of demand, especially at a high-level and as a result Nishi brings in and supports its own volunteers).

Questions and discussions at the end of the presentation included the importance of safety standards, which is why the new packhouse is HACCP certified.

**Farm Gate to Road roadside to Road transport, Air-Freight or Sea-Freight  
Local Markets, Big City Markets & Mining Towns in PNG  
Maria Linibi, Papua New Guinea Women in Agriculture (PNGWiADF) – PNG**

Women in Agriculture (PNGWiA) has more than 20,000 members mostly women in all sectors in PNG, and has a focus more on local consumption rather than exports. Maria began PNGWiA after she was retrenched from her Communications work and went back to her husband's village where, unsure what to do, decided to become a farmer as her father was a farmer.

As her farming ability developed she started supplying produce to hotels and others in the village but she could not keep up with demand as orders for "100kg capsicum this week and 200kg watermelon next week" so as one person she could not supply that, and "that is why we started the Women in Agriculture group.

Focus on key areas – prefer to focus than over-expand - including Cottage Industries and Primary Production for local markets, as well as market communications to farmers, such as exchange and network groups to help educate farmers and facilitate their better access to services and resources.

Market issue include packaging and, in particular, transportation – there is no shortage of local customers wanting goods such as the many local mines but the difficulty is transporting the goods from often remote farms to the clients, given rugged terrain for land transport.

Questions and discussions at the end of the presentation included the use of mobile phones to text (SMS) market information to farmers every week or every month, in partnership with government, though this has challenges given there are 800 languages in PNG. Similarly, language is a barrier to educating women to better access farming services and, given "85% of farming in PNG being done by women" there is a significant need. Targeting women also means training is best done in the evening when women are free after "feeding their husbands during the day."

Also discussed, was how hotels are getting mostly imported food so work to be done to help educate them about availability and benefits of locally sourced goods.

**Rural Training Centre  
Reuben Moli, Asia Pacific Sustainable Development (APSD) – Kastom Garden,  
Solomon Islands**

By 2005 established and opened the rural training centre (similar to TuTu training centre in Fiji) with a focus on organic education then, by 2014 as demand increased, introduced training in other trade skills (though it is compulsory all students include agriculture as part of their studies, so if they do not get skilled work after graduating they can at least be self-employable through farming).

Promote organic farming in surrounding communities through awareness programs and visits.

Established a marketing network called Pacific Garden (reopened 2014) which links farmers to buyers, also source seeds and sell to farmers and produce and sell organic fertilizers and insect repellents.

## **BUYERS-SELLERS MART - Day Three: 1 July 2015**

### **Summary:**

Chefs and farmers from countries across the Pacific met at the Pacific Community Agritourism Week in Fiji, with many discussing business transactions on-site to supply local produce to restaurants and resorts.

The Buyers-Sellers Mart brought together 20 farmers and 20 chefs in a format similar to 'speed dating', where they had short 10-minute sessions with each other to quickly meet, exchange ideas and discuss any direct-supply opportunities.

Many of the 20 chefs arranged business transactions with farmers to supply local foods for their tourism business as a direct result of the Buyers Sellers Mart.

Being a first for the region, the Buyers-Sellers Mart also attracted attention from international dignitaries, impressed with the Mart's practical and effective approach. This included H.E. Roy Mickey Joy, Chairman of the ACP Committee of Ambassadors and Ambassador of Vanuatu to the European Union, who encouraged the Pacific region to keep exploring practical ways of linking farmers to such important markets. The same sentiment was echoed by Fiji's Minister for Agriculture, Mr Inia Seruiratu, who joined the Mart to encourage the farmers further develop agritourism, and then took the time to meet with each chef and farmer and listen to their issues and ideas.

Participant and farmer-trainer, Reuben Moli of Solomon Islands, said: "This is the way forward, it's two-way as we learn what chefs want and the chefs are learning from the farmers about what products we have."

Chef de Partie at Fiji's Shangri La Resort, Mr Rizwan Ali, was "happy to join this workshop". He said: "I am gaining more experience with local products, as usually I just go to work and come home again, but this way I visit the farmers and learn about the local products that are available and also how to cook the local food in different ways."

Tongan caterer, Ms Heimoana Ali, said: "I wish there would be more of this happening! I have learned the benefits of how to cook more varieties of local dishes and to adapt our menu based on what's available locally and I have been able to establish promising business contacts with ginger producers",.

Wednesday's Buyer-Seller Mart was just one of many activities, such as site visits, cooking demonstrations and capacity building, taking place during the Agritourism Week. The Agritourism Week is being held from 29 June to 3 July and involves about 100 attendees from the Pacific, Caribbean and Indian Ocean.

***(REFER TO THE CONFERENCE 'EVALUATION OVERVIEW' FOR MORE INTERVIEWS AND FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS)***

**Welcome to the Buyers-Sellers Mart  
Chris Cocker, Project Manager, PRTCBP, SPTO**

The Buyers-Sellers Mart is a trial to replicate in the field, for an actual business transaction between a buyer (chef) and seller (farmer). It is a two-way relationship: (a) chef seeks reliable farmers to supply consistent quality and quantity at a good value price, plus want customer service and an honest business transaction. In turn (b) farmers expect chefs to request consistent supply and pay them on time. Attendees are from all different countries and so can use this opportunity to share ideas and possible cross-country business transactions - this encourages a regional approach to agritourism and inter-country business encouraged.

**Honourable Inia Seruiratu, Minister for Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Development and National Disaster Management, Ministry of Agriculture, Fiji**

The Honourable Minister spoke about how Fiji, to best address its poverty issues, has a focus on agriculture and targeting rural Fijians because their livelihoods and food security depend on agriculture. And while Fiji has an abundance of foods it also has serious problems with a lack of nutrition, obesity and non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

The government has high expectations on the agriculture sector and how it can impact on social issues in Fiji.

Tourism offers a big domestic market opportunity for agriculture. For the tourism industry need reliability and consistency of supply to meet volumes, quality and regulations are also a factor. This all starts from the production level, as there has to be a linkage between market and production. Farmers need to take ownership of this programme and view farming as a business.

Culinary tourism is a chance to promote the Pacific culture - the Asians are doing it well and through better linkages between agriculture and tourism the Pacific can improve its culinary tourism market.

**Caribbean Experiences and Successes in Agritourism  
Ena Harvey, Caribbean Agritourism Expert**

Data indicates 60% of American leisure travellers are interested in taking a trip to engage in culinary tourism within the next 12 months.

Culinary delights enhance the tourist's experience - all travellers eat and drink! Therefore food and drink have a greater ability to make a memorable experience and long lasting memories than any other kind of tourism experience.

Culinary tourism is "rooted" in agriculture and the rural sector – this is what is nice about culinary tourism, as it benefits the rural communities and helps share the culture. This is a direct transfer of money from the tourist to the land.

Culinary travel is more than just restaurants and can also include: wine tours, cook books, lectures and cooking classes; towns or regions that specialise in a food product can capitalise on this with tours and experiences; culinary cruises; interactive dining experiences such as 'cooking with grandmothers' or -full experience cooking class from shopping at the market to cooking and eating.

Tourists want these experiences and will pay for them. People are spending more of their disposable income on food.

The Pacific has the ingredients for success and now needs to work hard to better link tourism and agriculture, and to market the region – take a regional approach as more effective working together than individual countries promoting Pacific cuisine.

#### **4e. Pacific Culinary Training Workshop and Finale Gala Dinner**

##### **PACIFIC CULINARY TRAINING WORKSHOP**

**29 June – 3 July 2015, Sofitel Hotel, Nadi, Fiji**

**For the Pacific Regional Tourism Capacity Building Programme (PRTCBP)**

The Pacific Culinary Training Workshop featured over all five days of the agritourism event, primarily at the FNU Campus, invited over 20 chefs from countries across the Pacific and featuring celebrity chefs Robert Oliver and Colin Chung plus local identity Chef Shailesh Naidu.

The week culminated in the Finale Gala Dinner at Tanoa International Hotel, where the visiting chefs collaborated with the celebrity chefs to prepare a multi-course dinner of contemporary Pacific cuisine, using local produce and flavours.

Day One comprised Field Visits where chefs went to the local markets for meat, fish, herbs and produce, as well as to the Farmboy fresh produce distribution centre, which supplies many local resorts and tourism businesses.

As highlighted by Greg Cornwall, University of the South Pacific - School of Tourism and Hospitality Management, Co-ordinator Hotel Management, it is important that future hotel managers, as well as chefs, are familiar with the local markets and local suppliers.

Samoa's Rosaline Ah Him-Peters, of Hotel Millenium explained that upon visiting the local market in Fiji she saw "what can be grown in Fiji and I did think that growing some of the varieties in the Pacific was possible but it can be done, which also means we can grow it in Samoa" such as broccoli, cauliflower and, red cabbage.

From Cook Islands, Chef Teraitua Michel Cuthers-Boxnorn based at Club Raro explained how after going to the market in town and seeing the wide range of fruit and vegetables being sold in the Fiji markets he thinks "much of this could also be produced locally at home". "We import a lot of food which we could grow locally, and I've seen that now."

Day Two involved theory and practical sessions for the chefs, led by celebrity chef Colin Chung, and including a session on 'adaptation of local produce and Cuisine Pacific for international visitors'.

Day Three the chefs returned to the Sofitel for the Buyers-Sellers Mart where, in the format of 'speed dating', 20 chefs met consecutively with the 20 invited farmers to 'meet and greet' and discuss potential produce-supply transactions.

Some comments from chefs included Tongan caterer Heimoana Ali, who said: "I have learned the benefits of how to cook more varieties of dishes and to use more local products based on their availability, and adapt our menu based on what's available. "I wish there would be more of this happening in Tonga and other places."

Fiji's Rizwan Ali, Fiji, Chef de Partie at Shangri La Resort said: "I am happy to join this workshop... this way I visit the farmers and learn about the local products that are available and also how to cook the local food in different ways."

"Today I've been talking to farmers about off season vegetables and how to keep supply consistent and the idea to process the fruits which means we can have all these things available all year," said Samoa's Rosaline Ah Him-Peters.

Lunch at the Buyers-Sellers Mart was prepared by Celebrity Chefs - Robert Oliver and Colin Chung with support from FNU trainee-chef students, and provided delegates with a simple yet tasty contemporary Pacific fusion of flavours.

Day Four and Day Five focussed on preparations for the Finale Gala Dinner – with Day Five consisting entirely of in-kitchen preparations for all participating chefs. During Day Four the chefs had a final chance to learn and review ideas about adapting local produce for Pacific Cuisine to be served to international tourists and local diners, with the day led by local identity Chef Shailesh Naidu.

#### **4f. Farmers Field Visits**

##### **FIELD VISITS – FARMERS KM WORKSHOP – Day Two: 30 June 2015**

###### **Summary of Field Visits:**

###### **1<sup>st</sup> FIELD VISIT: Farmboy, hosted by Owner, Kamlesh Prasad**

Started as a small business on the front verandah of the house, and as the business grew sourced a \$50,000 loan to purchase a cooler and then was able to expand.

Talked about: high cost of electricity, different clients want different packaging and general quality levels – though the building and processes all must meet minimum standards, challenges of balancing overheads with opportunities.

Local v export markets. Strict quality controls for local supplies, ie hotels require 'traceability' of each product back to the source farm. Export market is more complicated and very strict ie even the rejects from pre-approved export farms need to be documented. Strict biosecurity applies on farm and at airport. Avoiding pests the priority, ie found 1 ant in exports sent to NZ, so paid: \$399 to identify type of ant, then \$150 to fumigate plus because of ant the approval was delayed from Friday to Monday and, as not put in a cool room, there were further losses.

Risks and costs (importance of trust between suppliers). For example, farm gate price \$1.20 and by the time ready for market has cost \$4/kg (in pre-payments to farmer, pre-booking transport, processing etc) then sell for \$4.50 (50c profit). This is a lot of "headache and risk" for Farmboy and so trust in farmers is essential.

Value added products are processed and packaged in-house (plain plastic packaging with labels) and include frozen: mango pulp, breadfruit, guava, banana, cow peas, jackfruit, dalo/taro, passionfruit, etc

###### **2<sup>nd</sup> (SERIES) OF FIELD VISITS: MEAT PROCESSING VALUE CHAIN**

Livestock series of field visits from the end of the value-chain (butchery) then back through the value-chain to processing (abattoir) and then to the farm (piggery):

- a) Fiji Meats
- b) Slaughterhouse (abattoir)
- c) Piggery

###### **a) Fiji Meats**

Fiji Meats in Lautoka is a key supplier of processed livestock, and also value-adds under its own brand: chicken chipolatas, beef curry, chicken curry, smoked boneless chicken, etc

###### **b) Slaughterhouse (abattoir)**

At the slaughterhouse, delegates taken in groups of 4 into the abattoir to receive a tour and explanation of the slaughter and transport process (no live demonstrations, as the abattoir was in the 'clean-up' part of the day).

###### **d) Piggery**

A large-scale piggery with 3,500 pigs was the last stop on the afternoon field trips. Currently all pigs are supplied to the domestic market (including the tourism sector) with none currently for export.

For breeding, the piggery aims to get 2.5 litters per year, and plans to start a breeding program as currently there is no record of the boars (boars typically become more unproductive as they get older). For the sows, currently they breed up to 14 times (up to about 4 years old) whereas in NZ it is only 7-10 times. Of the food, about 50% is outdated 'human consumption' food such as milk, cheese, etc aged beyond their expiry date.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> FIELD VISIT FOR CTA INVITEES (Friday): Joe's Farm, Hosted by Michael Joe, Managing Director**

After a perilous road trip along rocky and winding roads to Joe's Farm, the serenity of the idyllic, remote location and vast expanse of nurseries was breathtaking.

Joe's Farm has a focus on lettuce; they now supply all the requirements for lettuce nationally with there no longer being a need for tourism or other sectors to import lettuce into Fiji. Managing Director, Joe, started small and has gradually grown his business to its current success – it took 23 years to learn everything he knows about hydroponics and greenhouses, and has been in business for 34 years.

Managing the hydroponic nurseries on the farm requires attention day and night, as the plants need to be monitored constantly in case there is any bacteria entering the plants that need to be dealt with immediately. Joe explained the success of the plant growth is all about the food the plants are given; plants are fed different 'food' solutions at the different stages of their growth cycle.

Statistics: 4000 head of lettuce harvested per week; 4 week period from transplanting to harvesting that equates to 16 tables harvested weekly of the total 64 tables (that are in a constant re-planting and growth cycle); 400,000 litres of water used every day; total of 50,000 heads of lettuce in the greenhouses.

Seeds are imported from NZ and result in almost 100% germination - Joe's Farm does significant research on seeds and also greenhouses. Nowadays Michael Joe works part-time consulting to assist others develop greenhouses (ie in Marshall Islands). Suggests to potential investors that they first do a detailed feasibility study, and ensure there is sufficient water, sunlight, ideal temperatures, etc.

This year want to value-add produce (ie pre-packaged lettuce leaves), using the 20% of outer leaf refuse that gets thrown away during processing – much of this is still good quality and can be repackaged as 'salad mix'.

"I never got my degree from university but I learned it all from experience. "To be a successful farmer you have to have a passion. You have to set your mind to the job."  
[ENDS]

**5. ANNEXES**

**5a. AGENDA**

**5b. PARTICIPANT LIST**

**5c. EXHIBITORS**

**5d. PROCEEDINGS IN DETAIL**

- a. Regional Farmers Knowledge Exchange Workshop and Buyers Sellers Mart – complete presentations.
- b. Pacific Culinary Training Workshop – presentation notes