



SPC
Secretariat
of the Pacific
Community

PAPP

Pacific Agriculture Policy Project



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Year in Review to June 2015

Welcome to the first issue of our new quarterly Pacific Agriculture Policy Project (PAPP) e-newsletter. PAPP is supported by the European Union and implemented by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) Land Resources Division (LRD).

PAPP operates in the 15 Pacific ACPs (Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu), and Timor Leste.

PAPP aims to strengthen the livelihoods of smallholder farmers by strengthening their linkages to markets, improving access to information, research, and knowledge, and by improving the policy and operating environment for farmers through evidence based policies.

Within the twelve months since the commencement of the project as of June 2014, there have been a

number of activities, as detailed in this newsletter, structured around PAPP's 3 Key Result Areas (KRA):

- 1. Strengthened regional agricultural development strategy**
- 2. Improved dissemination and adoption of applied agricultural production research**
- 3. Agricultural enterprise development through improved market linkages**

This newsletter will serve the key purpose of keeping associated community stakeholders, donors and partners updated and informed with ongoing PAPP initiatives and exciting developments. Enclosed content subjects will include case studies, best practices, success stories and experiences related to agricultural and forestry policy.



The intra-ACP APP is funded under the 10th European Development Fund (EDF)



CONTENTS

KRA 1: Strengthened regional agricultural development strategy

- The baseline - Strengthened regional agricultural development strategy
- Partnership agreement with PIFON

KRA 2: Improved dissemination and adoption of applied agricultural production research

- Strengthening National food security through Plant Genetic Resources
- PAFPNet Outreach Events
- Pacific Agriculture and Forestry Policy Network (PAFPNet) Launch
- Web 2.0 and Social Media Training

KRA 3: Agricultural enterprise development through improved market linkages

- Training for farmers at the Tutu Rural Training Centre (TRTC), Taveuni, Fiji
- Review of Napil Rural Training Centre (NRTC), Tanna, Vanuatu
- Value Chain guide assists farmers, traders and policy makers
- Collaboration with POETCom to Link Smallholder Farmers to Niche Markets
- Enhancing “Off-Season” Production in the PICTs
- Buyer-Seller Market and Training, Apia, Samoa
- Farmer Hotelier Mart and Culinary Week, Nukualofa, Tonga
- Cook Islands Agriculture Information System (AMIS)

The baseline – Strengthened Regional Agricultural Development Strategy

Understanding the agricultural/forestry national policy landscape is an important first step for any national and regional policy intervention. The European Union (EU) supported Pacific Agriculture Policy Project (PAPP), undertook a series of vital baseline work over the last 12 months aimed at strengthening policy development in the 15 Pacific ACPs. The activities with their brief descriptions carried out by PAPP are listed below:

Deliverables /Activities	Description
Baseline analysis of National – level agricultural policies	- Completion of analysis among the 15 PAPP countries including a summary of common regional priorities, issues and opportunities
Regional Inventory	- Stocktake completion of existing policies for each PIC (first comprehensive inventory of its kind) - Useful tool for bilateral engagement and comparative analysis with donor and external parties

Agricultural Policy Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of the policy bank which acts as repository for the 15 PAPP countries with the aim of increasing public access to policy documents - The agricultural policy bank contains: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. National and regional agricultural policy information 2. Short summaries in English and local national language 3. Policy map – where the policy sits and other related policies
Agricultural Statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This review highlighted key gaps across the region and underlined the gap suitable for PAPP to support - Results from the review will be published on the PAFNet web portal once it is completed
National Minimum Development Indicators (NMDI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthened support for NMDI aimed at providing clear datasets to assist policy formulation - Future outlook – NMDI's will be integrated into at least 3 new national policies

For more information, please contact Vili Caniogo at: ViliC@spc.int

Partnership agreement with PIFON

October 2015 marks the first successful year of a unique partnership to strengthen the livelihoods of smallholder farmers through stronger market linkages, better information sharing and a supportive policy environment.

Farmers are at the centre of a two-year partnership agreement signed in October 2014 between PAPP and the Pacific Island Farmers' Organisation (PIFON) umbrella organisation representing 19 farmers' groups across the Pacific.

The PAPP-PIFON partnership provides FJD \$400,000 to strengthen the livelihoods of smallholder

farmers through stronger market linkages, stronger information sharing and a supportive policy environment.

Moreover, this agreement was established to help coordinate capacity building; sharing success stories and lessons learned; and supporting regional exchanges of expertise between Farmer Organisations (FOs) and their associated private sector and donor agency partners.

For more information, please contact Elenoa Tamani at: ElenoaT@spc.int



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Strengthening National food security through Plant Genetic Resources

Pacific crops possess some unique genetic traits. By applying appropriate technologies and other methods, it is possible to identify some of the traits enriched with nutrients, and those resistant to disease and the impacts of climate change. This knowledge can be used to create new varieties through breeding, to ensure Pacific Island communities have improved food security.

The Pacific Agricultural Plant Genetic Resources Network (PAPGREN) and the Pacific Plant Breeders Network, held a technical consultation based on the theme, Plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, use it or lose it, in Suva, Fiji, from 1-5 December 2014.

The purpose of the five day workshop was to address the role of plant genetic resources in strengthening national food security for agriculture and forestry.

Issues discussed include the impact and threat of genetically modified organisms on organics in the region, and how breeding and new resilient crops may help combat food insecurity and other impacts of climate change and natural disasters.

Stakeholders attending the meeting were from across the whole Pacific region, and included representatives from government ministries, farmer groups, planting material networks, universities and others.

The Centre for Pacific Crops and Trees (CePaCT), part of the Food and Nutrition Programme of the SPC hosted the meeting, with funding support from two European Union (EU)-SPC partnerships: Pacific Agriculture Policy Programme (PAPP) and Increasing Agricultural Commodity Trade (IACT). The United

Nations Food and Agriculture Organization Treaty Benefit Sharing Fund co-funded the meeting.

For more information, please contact Valerie Tuia at: ValerieT@spc.int

PAFPNet Outreach Events

PAFPNet, the regional information network administered by PAPP, has more than 800 members, which exchange ideas, information and conversations. The more members interact with each other the more successful the knowledge sharing outputs of PAFPNet and, for this reason, a series of 'membership drives' was recently held to increase the number of online participants.

Suva, Fiji

To expand member numbers and usage of the online service, PAPP hosted a PAFPNet outreach event at the SPC Suva Regional Office in Fiji targeting partner organisations and staff from across SPC's Suva offices, in January 2015.

A second seminar was also held in Suva successfully targeting 200 students from the University of the South Pacific (USP), Fiji National University (FNU), a number of local high schools, as well as professional staff of the university, many of whom have subsequently joined PAFPNet.

Nuku'alofa, Tonga

The University of the South Pacific, Tonga campus, hosted PAFPNet's first external national seminar on 21 April 2015, as part of the Tonga Farmer Hotelier Mart and Culinary Week themed "Linking Farmers to Hoteliers to Improve Nutritional and Financial Health".

At the event speakers from Tonga, Pacific countries and SPC promoted research about, and advocacy for, the benefits of Pacific agritourism and using



locally grown food for tourism and having more contemporary Pacific cuisine featured in restaurant menus.

More than 100 people attended the PAFPN seminar, including students from the USP Tonga Campus and Hango Agriculture School, representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFFF), local farmers and others.

Key outcomes of the seminar were to increase public awareness and youth involvement in PAFPN and, based on feedback forms completed by event participants coupled with new PAFPN member requests, these outcomes were achieved.

For more information, please contact Brittany Hazelman at BrittanyH@spc.int

The Pacific Agriculture and Forestry Policy Network (PAFPNet) Launch

The Pacific Agriculture Forestry Policy Network (PAFPNet) is a regional information network administered by PAPP, to facilitate communication, dissemination of information, capacity building, and awareness raising on issues related to agriculture and forestry policies in Pacific countries.

PAFPNet was originally established in 2006 with support from the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Co-operation (CTA), before being revamped and relaunched on 4 December 2014.

It was developed to create a cross-country platform for knowledge sharing, and to support formulation of agriculture development policies and best practice from across the region. It provides online tools and resources, and encourages interactive engagement between participants by regularly hosting e-discussions about topical issues.

For more information, please contact Miriama Brown at MiriamaK@spc.int

Web 2.0 and Social Media Training

Web 2.0: “Web 2.0” refers to the second generation of web development and web design, characterized as facilitating communication, information sharing, interoperability, user-centred design and collaboration on the World Wide Web.

Social Media: Social Media is a Web 2.0 innovation encouraging user-generated content and extending the focus to the users by allowing them to curate others content to share among their networks.

A series of five-day Web 2.0 for Development and Social Media Learning Opportunity workshops were delivered to promote information and knowledge sharing, learning and communication for the agriculture and forestry sectors using low-cost technology.

Pacific Island nations typically have a high dependence on ‘word of mouth’ and traditional media, such as radio and newspapers, to source information about agriculture activities that often results in a scarcity of information for people in rural and remote communities. This makes the need to increase the use of Web 2.0 in rural areas all the more important.

SPC delivered the four workshops in collaboration with the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), with two of the four workshops - in the Cook Islands and Vanuatu - also supported by the European Union funded Pacific Agriculture Policy Project (PAPP).





The trainings were designed to help users interact easily with each other through social media, including applications such as blogs, wikis, Google Docs, Google +, video sharing sites, photo editing, and sharing social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

As follow-up to the training sessions, and in order to ensure long-term sustainability, assistant trainers were assigned at each of the initial in-country Web 2.0 training events so they can continue to cascade the training to other in-country stakeholders, over the long term.

The Vanuatu workshop was attended by 23 participants from government and a range of agricultural stakeholder organisations, from 13-17 October 2014, in collaboration with the Vanuatu Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry, Fisheries and Biosecurity and the Office of the Government's Chief Information Officer.

The Cook Islands event was held in Rarotonga, 14-17 April 2015, where internet access has enabled direct access to markets for previously isolated islands that previously had limited and restricted contact with the world. The Web 2.0 workshop focussed on how Information Communication and Technologies (ICT) could be fully utilised as a vehicle for progress as well as a pathway for improving health, education, agriculture, monitoring climate change, tourism, commerce and e-government.

For more information, please contact Anju Mangal at: AnjuM@spc.int

Training for farmers at the Tutu Rural Training Centre (TRTC), Taveuni, Fiji

Young farmers being trained at Tutu Rural Training Centre (TRTC) in Taveuni, Fiji, benefitted from a

series of educational sessions to improve their understanding of the overall agriculture value-chain process for papaya and taro, from the start of production to consumer sales and consumption.

The November 2014 training also benefitted staff of TRTC, which specialises in delivering training through a 'non-formal adult education' approach.

This training was an initiative from the Pacific Island Farmers Organisation Network (PIFON), with support from the EU-funded Pacific Agriculture Policy Project (PAPP).

Specifically, the agriculture value-chain process training highlighted the development stages from farm to consumer, and how to improve agricultural productivity in rural areas. This knowledge system was established to target farmers in the hope of broadening their knowledge about market systems, agricultural production techniques, and the best methods to maximise returns.

As a result of the training, participants reported to have an improved understanding of: their role as a producer and the service they provide to consumers; the need to adopt sustainable practices to ensure long-term sales growth; demand being driven by the consumer and the need for farmers to respond and plan properly supply; the need for team work as any weak link in the chain can cost.

For more information, please contact Elenoa Tamani at: ElenoaT@spc.int

Review of Napil Rural Training Centre (NRTC), Tanna, Vanuatu

A knowledge-exchange and review of the Napil Rural Training Centre (NRTC) in Tanna, Vanuatu, was conducted by PAPP, in partnership with the



Pacific Islands Farmer Organisation Network (PIFON) and its PIFON Vanuatu member the Farm Support Association (FSA), in December 2014.

The NRTC is a pilot initiative for Vanuatu, replicating the Tutu Rural Training Centre (TRTC) in Fiji, so part of the review included a technical exchange of expertise between TRTC and Vanuatu's Farmer Support Association (FSA) with a focus on increasing youth involvement and their entrepreneurial skills in agriculture. The Napil Centre pioneered the involvement of village-based youth groups in commercial agriculture training, such as with the involvement of young Ni-Vanuatu women in commercial farming.

The technical exchange also involved the FSA Spices Network conducting a participatory on-farm value chain exercise on the island of Malo with organic peppers, to educate participants on how farmers and processors, or exporters, has a focus on quality requirements, supply costs, and other factors in this highly demanding but lucrative value-added market.

Preliminary assessments found the NRTC performed well, based on the Tutu model, especially its active involvement of youth during its training course whereby thirty three (33) young farmers, including eleven (11) women, were enrolled and given land access by their village chief for their Napil Centre blocks. This approach has increased the marketability of the young farmer's fresh, quality vegetables, ensuring also a steady inflow of cash.

The review also recognised the important role of 'non-formal' education training institutions in rural development, especially as conduits for technical assistance to rural and outer islands.

Beyond Tanna's community of Middle Bush, lessons from the Napil experience can make a significant contribution to future rural and economic development for Vanuatu and the wider Pacific islands region.

PIFON will continue to identify technical exchange opportunities relevant to the Napil Centre to ensure sustainability.

For more information, please contact Elenoa Tamani at: ElenoaT@spc.int

Value Chain guide assists farmers, traders and policy makers

The Agricultural Value Chain Guide for the Pacific Islands has successfully assisted farmers, traders and policy makers since its release in October 2014.

The value-chain guide was designed to take into account challenges specific to the Pacific, such as small volumes, high transportation costs and producers being far from market. The guide, produced by the Pacific Island Farmers' Organisation (PIFON) with support from the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), is the outcome of participatory consultations with farmers and the private sector to understand what it is that they want in value chains for export markets.

For more information, please contact Elenoa Tamani at: ElenoaT@spc.int

Collaboration with POETCom to Link Smallholder Farmers to Niche Markets

PAPP supported the Pacific Organic & Ethical Trade Community (POETCom) Secretariat to host the second Pacific Organic Technical Exchange in Nadi, Fiji, from 11-12 December 2014.

The Exchange was for those involved in organic agriculture in the Pacific to progress development





of the sector in the region, and to share knowledge and information about: Participatory Guarantee Systems of certification, third-party certification bodies operating in the region, continuous improvement for the Pacific Organic Standard, research and report updates.

POETCom is the governance body of the organics movement in the Pacific, whose role is coordination, information sharing, networking, capacity building and establishing a regional certification scheme for organic farmers in the Pacific. It also aims to raise awareness to expand the organic and ethical trade movement, and contribute to a productive, resilient, sustainable and healthy Pacific Island region.

Organic certification is one method of adding value to products whilst building on the Pacific region's reputation as 'clean and green', retaining traditional production methods, and ensuring sustainability of natural resources. Demand for organic products is increasing worldwide, particularly in Australia, New Zealand, USA and Asia; something which the Pacific is well-positioned to tap into, particularly through the tourism market.

The POETCom General Assembly was also held during the period of the Exchange, which included reports on activities in individual countries and decisions on important Secretariat activities.

For more information, please contact Karen Mapasua at: KarenM@spc.int

Enhancing “Off-Season” Production in the PICTs

Fiji's tourism sector is one of the major customers of imported vegetables because of supply consistency. In the year 2006, the Fiji tourism industry imported FJ\$435 million in vegetables alone. This is despite

the fact that local vegetables are cheaper than imported produce.

A five-day training workshop conducted by PAPP under its agreement with the Pacific Island Farmers Organisation Network (PIFON) enabled 45 participants from member farmers and farmer organisations to reflect and share options about off-season production, from 1-5 June 2015 in the three locations, Sigatoka, Nadi and Nadarivatu.

Contributing factors and restraints of off-season vegetable production discussed included: low-yields harvested by farmers during off-season; difficulties from climatic conditions; high incidence of pests and diseases; important technologies; challenges of supply consistency and quality; protective crop management and the use of the appropriate low cost protective cropping systems; vegetable seed production; alternative measures to open field cultivation; developing seedling nurseries and production systems, and other topics.

Market statistics show that Fiji's current annual import value for tomatoes, English cabbage, capsicum, cauliflower and broccoli stands at approximately FJD\$2.6M. With this piece of information and the right investment and implementation exercises in local off-season training, there is guaranteed expectation of higher returns to our local farmers/markets.

Investing in these simple practices throughout the Pacific could lead to a significant growth and increase in its agriculture sector and economy as a whole.

For more information, please contact Kyle Stice at: kylestice@hotmail.com

Buyer-Seller Market and Training, Apia, Samoa

PAPP, in partnership with the South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO) and the Samoa Tourism Authority (STA), organised the first farmer-hotel chef buyers' market in Apia, from 10-15 November, 2015.

The event, themed "Linking Agriculture to Tourism", matched over 25 local farmers with hotel chefs from 15 major hotels in Samoa. The event had two components: a Training Workshop to prepare farmers for the buyer-seller mart; and a Buyers-Sellers Mart to facilitate the conversation between farmers and chefs.

The workshop provided a platform for Samoan smallholder farmers to engage with chefs on mutual expectations, produce quality, consistency of supply, marketing and packaging of produce, and networking opportunities. The events were also developed in order to boost relationships between farmers, chefs, and government officials, and to promote Samoa's 'buy-local' initiative.

It provided hands-on experience for smallholder farmers to actively engage in discussions with policy makers and buyers regarding their experiences of and involvement in the food-chain.

Moreover, the workshop provided a pathway for farmers to better understand the operational approach of commercial entities (hotels) and how best they could strategically place themselves to meet demands.

The workshop participants acknowledged that working together, linking and agreeing on strategies was a great initiative.

For more information, please contact Elenoa Tamani at: ElenoaT@spc.int

Farmer Hotelier Mart and Culinary Week, Nukualofa, Tonga

A week-long agritourism event, the Tonga Farmer Hotelier Mart and Culinary Week, was held in Nukualofa 21-25 April 2015 to better support farmers to directly supply local restaurants.

The week's series of events focussed on the theme 'Linking farmers to hoteliers to improve nutritional and financial health'. It began with a farmer training workshop about supplying restaurant-standard produce, then progressed to a public seminar and a three day Tonga Culinary Training Workshop that included a Buyers-Sellers Mart, where farmers and chefs met to discuss direct-supply opportunities.

The event concluded with a Gala dinner attended by more than 80 people, with invitees including all those who participated at the various events during the week including 20 farmers; 20 chefs and trainee chefs; representatives of the tourism, agriculture and other associated government ministries; donors and event partners; event speakers and other distinguished guests.

The events, to strengthen links between agriculture and tourism, were a collaboration between the European Union, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO), Tonga Ministry of Agriculture & Food, Forests and Fisheries (MAFFF) and other partners.

The aim was to expand income opportunities for smallholder farmers by connecting them to directly supply the local tourism industry, with benefits including fewer imports, more demand for local supply, and an increase in traditional foods in contemporary restaurant menus.

For more information, please contact Elenoa Tamani at: ElenoaT@spc.int



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Cook Islands Agriculture Information System (AMIS)

An Agriculture Market Information System (AMIS) was established in the Cook Islands that aims to provide farmers with information on exactly what crops are suitable for the market in different seasons by looking at market prices and input costs.

The AMIS was the first of its kind in the region and will be used to capture vital information for effective agricultural policy development.

The purpose of the database is to collect specific market and production results to capture the performance of farmers, enterprises and the market. The information will then be used to form the building blocks for evidence based policy making and the design of projects aimed at supporting the growth of the sector.

Developing the database involved a five-week mission from 7 April to 4 May with support from PAPP in partnership with the Cook Islands Department of Policy, Planning & Projects (DPPP) and the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA).

The consultancy team worked with MoA officials to conduct intensive stakeholder consultations and to help design the database. The data is collected from the market, farms and enterprises and loaded into the new AMIS for processing. It is designed to collect a large amount of information over time.

Information from the AMIS will be readily available to planners and project developers across government agencies. The AMIS is housed at the MoA but is designed to both collect and distribute data to other stakeholders including the Office of Statistics, Customs and the Ministry of Health. Furthermore, it will also help answer some of the private sector's vital questions by sharing information with the Chamber of Commerce,

Development Bank and the Business Trade and Investment Board (BTIB).

Following a period of data collection, it is hoped that farmers will use the database's listing of market prices to plan crop production, while banks will have information on potential clients to help facilitate the approval of agricultural loans. The BTIB should be able to identify weaknesses and strengths in the dynamics of the agricultural market and provide targeted assistance to farmers through its soft loan programme- and these are just a few examples of the AMIS's potential uses.

The next round of work on the database is anticipated to take place in October 2015, as the monthly collected data will be available and can therefore be tested. The database, if successful, could serve as a useful model for application in other countries operating under similar circumstances.

For more information, please contact Anna Fink at: AnnaF@spc.int



Newsletter Timeline:

OCTOBER
2014

- 13 - 17 October "Web 2.0 and Social Media Training", Vanuatu
- 24 October "Partnership agreement with PIFON", Holiday Inn, Suva, Fiji

NOVEMBER
2014

- 10 - 15 November "Buyer - Seller Market and Training", Apia,, Samoa
- 11 November "PAFPNet Outreach Events - Public Seminar", Suva, Fiji
- 19 - 21 November "Review of Napil Rural Training Centre (NRTC)", Tanna, Vanuatu
- 27 November, "Training for farmers at the Tutu Rural Training Centre (TRTC)", Taveuni, Fiji

DECEMBER
2014

- 1 - 5 December "Strengthening National food security through Plant Genetic Resources", Suva, Fiji
- 5 December "The Pacific Agriculture and Forestry Policy Network (PAFPNet) Launch", Nadi, Fiji
- 8 - 12 December "Collaboration with POETCom to link Smallholder Farmers to Niche Markets", Nadi, Fiji

APRIL 2015

- 7 April - 4 May "Cook Islands Agriculture Information System (AMIS)", Cook Islands
- 14 - 17 April "Web 2.0 and Social Media Training", Cook Islands
- 21 - 25 April "Farmer Hotelier Mart and Culinary Week", Nukualofa, Tonga

JUNE 2015

- 1 - 5 June "Enhancing "Off - Season" Production in the PICTs", Sigatoka, Nadi & Nadarivatu





For additional information on the PAPP project, visit our website PAFNet web portal: <http://www.spc.int/pafpnet/>

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