

PACIFIC AGRICULTURE POLICY DIGEST

ISSUE No. 07 • JANUARY – MARCH 2017

A PUBLICATION BY THE INTRA-ACP PACIFIC AGRICULTURE POLICY PROJECT



IN THIS
ISSUE

PACIFIC COUNTRIES
TAKES STEPS TO
PROTECT KAVA
EXPORTS

YOUTH IN AGRICULTURE:
ADAPTING THE 'TUTU
MODEL' IN VANUATU

AGINTEL SUPPORTS
IMPROVED FARMER
AWARENESS IN THE
COOK ISLANDS

SUPPORT FOR NEW
TECHNOLOGIES IN
AGRICULTURAL DATA
COLLECTION

THE PACIFIC APB
IN THE RUNNING
FOR A PRESTIGIOUS
INTERNATIONAL PRIZE

PAFPNet UPDATE



WHAT'S
COMING
UP?



A woman with long dark hair, wearing a patterned shirt and a purple sash, is sitting at a market stall. She is holding a yellow pencil and writing on a white notepad. The stall is filled with fresh produce, including bunches of bananas and several large, round, brown breads. In the background, there are signs for 'HEMALS MILK BAR' and 'BULA MOVE'. The entire image has a blue tint.

Welcome to our 7th edition of the Agriculture Policy Digest. The Digest is prepared by the European Union supported Intra-ACP Agricultural Policy Program (APP*) which is implemented in the African, Caribbean and Pacific regions. The Pacific component of the Program or “PAPP” (Pacific Agriculture Policy Project) is implemented through the Pacific Community (SPC) and has been in place since July 2014.

This 7th Edition contains stories about:

1. Pacific countries take steps to protect Kava exports
2. Youth in Agriculture – Adopting the Tutu Model in Vanuatu
3. AgINTEL supports improved farmer awareness in the Cook Islands
4. Support for new technologies in agricultural data collection: the P-SPAFS is already generating results
5. The Pacific Agriculture Policy Bank in the running for a prestigious international prize - the WSIS Prize
6. PAFPNet Update
7. WHAT'S COMING UP?

We hope you will enjoy reading these stories.

Also you will find previous Issues of the Digest at <http://pafpnet.spc.int>
Don't forget to subscribe to receive upcoming editions of this e-newsletter and to see what is coming up for PAPP; and HAVE YOUR SAY through PAFPNet!

** The APP aims to improve 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. More information about the APP can be found on <http://pafpnet.spc.int>*



PACIFIC COUNTRIES TAKE STEPS TO PROTECT KAVA EXPORTS

© Pacific Horticultural and Agricultural Market Access (PHAMA)

Kava is currently undergoing a renaissance – particularly for kava farmers in Vanuatu, Fiji and other Pacific countries.

The kava industry in Fiji is valued at around FJD66 million (AUD 42m) per year benefitting over 21,000 kava farms. Between 2010 and 2013, kava production in Fiji grew by over 30 percent. In that period, earnings doubled from F\$3.8 m to F\$7m. In Vanuatu, kava exports grew by almost 40 percent during that period benefitting over 30,000 households.

Kava's attraction in global markets is familiar territory. Over twenty years ago, Kava was highly demanded as an herbal alternative by international pharmaceutical companies. That demand was eventually beleaguered by health and product safety concerns.

In the last five years, a greater regional effort is being made to improve the quality of kava produced by the Pacific. Last month Fiji, launched its very own Kava Quality Standard and Kava Quality Manual.

Developed by the Pacific Horticultural and Agricultural Market Access Program (PHAMA) and Fiji's Ministry of Agriculture and SPC, the Fiji Kava Manual provides detailed advice covering planting, harvesting and processing. It also outlines the varieties of kava grown around the country. The Kava Standard puts in place the requirements applicable to all kava products used as a food or food ingredient and/or other products intended for human consumption. The documents can be found in the Fiji Agriculture Policy Bank: <http://pafpnet.spc.int/policy-bank/countries/fiji> or PHAMA website: <http://phama.com.au/news/fiji-launches-national-kava-standard/>

Fiji Kava National Training of Trainers (TOT) workshop



Last month, EU-APP and PHAMA took twenty representatives from the kava industry; farmers, buyers, extension officers and government officials through the contents of the new Kava Manual and Standards. A number of recommendations were put forward at this Training Workshop. These included:

- Establishment of kava variety demonstration plots and disease surveillance;
- Planting material distribution nurseries at provincial levels;
- Research on performances of the Fiji varieties on different altitudes and agro-climatological zones, responses to mineral fertilizers, viable disease control measures and other research gaps that may be identified;

- Preservation in tissue culture (TC) by MOA Research laboratory as back-ups.
- Encouraging Agriculture Schools with land to keep demonstration plots for Kava variety collections.

Vanuatu has also been busy undertaking similar steps. It has a new kava policy in place <http://pafpnet.spc.int/policy-bank/countries/vanuatu> and a robust national kava industry taskforce. Extensive research has also been undertaken on the different varieties grown in Vanuatu and biosecurity measures.

YOUTH IN AGRICULTURE: ADAPTING THE 'TUTU MODEL' IN VANUATU

Increasing urban migration, lack of income generating opportunities, low levels of interest in agriculture, and difficulties with access to land are just some of the issues affecting young people across the Pacific.

In 2014, the Vanuatu Farm Support Association (FSA) received technical assistance from the Marist Tutu Rural Training Centre (TRTC) (Fiji) under the PAPP-PIFON (Pacific Island Farmers Organisation Network) partnership to strengthen its training program in Tanna. The successful Tutu model long run by the Marist Catholic Order on Taveuni, Fiji, trains young people to be successful farmers on their own land.

The exchange enabled TRTC personnel to visit Napil Training Centre (NTC) and identify gaps and areas of strengthening that would better attract, retain and train youths. The benefits of that exchange have been tremendous. After 18 months of adapting to the Tutu model, Napil held its first graduation of young farmers in December 2016.

A total of 10 young farmers completed the course (3 females and 7 males) with farms containing an impressive range of crops and livestock. These included 7,170 taro, 1,039 yams, 442 cassava plants, 519 sweet potato plants and 159 Kava plants. Stock also included cattle, pigs, and chicken and a plantation of over 200 sandalwood trees.

NPTC's program focuses on participants growing their own vegetable seedlings. The Centre provides free vegetable seeds for the participants in their two years of cultivation, at a reduced cost (50%) and at full cost in the third and final years. Napil seeds and seedlings are also available for purchase by other farmers on Tanna. The availability of seeds and seedlings has made a significant contribution to the recent increase in fresh vegetable supplies on Tanna. Like Tutu, a bank account was established for each trainee at the commencement of the course. Vegetables grown by trainees on the Centre are sold at the Lenakel market and all of the proceeds paid into the trainee's saving bank accounts. Already around VAT 610,500 (AUD7, 000) has been saved from these sales. For more information, see <http://pafpnet.spc.int/helping-smallholder-markets/napil-training>

About the Marist Tutu Rural Training Centre (TRTC): was established in 1969 in Taveuni and has been running their Young Farmer Training Course since 1983. Its stated purpose is "to help form and train young single men from the province of Cakaudrove to be autonomous, responsible, and mature young adults who are principled decision-makers, able to take control of their own lives and choose freely to live as farmers on their own land, accept their call to be of the village and be able to live in the service of others in their society". From the 224 young men who have participated in the course to date, 206 (92%) are still farming as their main source of livelihood.



AGINTEL SUPPORTS IMPROVED FARMER AWARENESS IN THE COOK ISLANDS

© Pacific Organic & Ethical Trade Community (POETCom)

Over the last 2 years, PAPP has been developing an ICT based market information system for the Cook Islands Government. Called "AgINTEL", the system was aimed at effectively recording demand for fruit, vegetables, herbs and spices from institutional buyers (shops and hotels) and disseminating that to producers quickly.

The AgIntel followed after an import substitution study conducted by the Cook Islands Ministry of Agriculture and FAO study which recommended the establishment of regular market surveys and information systems for to better match demand and supply.

The AgINTEL system focused on strengthening existing market surveys and then correlates results of various surveys into a new database. The database uses HS codes (Harmonised Systems tariff codes) to trace particular fruit, vegetables, herbs and spices from their production to their sale in domestic markets including shops and resorts.

AgIntel is still work in progress but already the system has prompted a noted increase in farmer interest in the Ministry's market bulletin. The bulletin provides prices and volumes of produce sold at Punanaga Nui market (Raratonga) and is developed using results from the AgINTEL. Patrick Arioka, Director of Planning, Policy and Projects at the Ministry noted regular demand for the bulletin and farmers saying, "Farmers are even contacting the Ministry to ask about what produce is expected to be on the market in the next 2 months based on historical trends in the AgINTEL."

AgINTEL has not only increased the awareness of farmers of the data available to them, it is also providing them with a way to plan their own production and price their products. In the longer term this could lead to the identification of market opportunities for farmers and smoothing seasonal fluctuation in price and availability for consumers.

SUPPORT FOR NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN AGRICULTURAL DATA COLLECTION: THE P-SPAFS IS ALREADY GENERATING RESULTS

SPC PAPP has been working with FAO and other partners to develop a new Strategic Plan for Agricultural and Fisheries Statistics (P-SPAFS). P-SPAFS is a 10 year strategy designed to strengthen the use of evidence in public and private decision making. The Strategy, based on the Global Strategy for Agriculture and Fisheries Statistics was discussed and developed at a 2015 regional meeting of Pacific agricultural statisticians and policy makers. The Strategy is already creating awareness for greater coordination.

Already the UN Statistics Institute for Asia Pacific (UNSIAP) in partnership with the Pacific Community (SPC) and the World Bank are jointly running a regional training for statisticians, including those involved in agriculture, on the use of tablets and smartphones for data collection.

Alick Nyasulu, Statistician and Lecturer at UNSIAP said "our engagement with PAPP through the P-SPAFS helped us target participants for this training who would most benefit and helped us link the capacity building directly with ongoing initiatives on agricultural statistics in the region."

The use of Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) surveys facilitates the collection of data using tablets or smartphones. This has the potential to increase both the speed and accuracy of data collection. The training is being conducted alongside training on STATA. STATA is a statistical software which enables quick and accurate data analysis. Using CAPI software in combination with STATA provides a significant boost to the speed, accuracy and quality of data collected.

Alessandro Romeo, Statistics officer for FAO Samoa said "The use of STATA in combination with CAPI has the potential to revolutionise how we collect data in the Pacific-enormous gains in speed, accuracy and regional comparability are possible. Thus, it is not only recommendable but it is necessary that data collection in the Pacific is done via new technologies to come-up with timely and reliable evidence based policy making."



THE PACIFIC AGRICULTURE POLICY BANK IN THE RUNNING FOR A PRESTIGIOUS INTERNATIONAL PRIZE - THE WSIS PRIZE

What is the WSIS Prize?

The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Prizes are prestigious annual awards that recognise innovation and outstanding success in implementing development oriented strategies that leverage the power of ICTs. The Prizes will be awarded at the WSIS Forum 2017 in Geneva, Switzerland in June, and a win for the Agriculture Policy Banks will bring a high level of international attention to the work being done by all our countries to make agriculture policy information more transparent and accessible.

What are the Pacific Agriculture Policy Banks?

Agriculture and fisheries are the lifeblood of our Pacific countries. Just two years ago, little was known publicly about what a country Government's plans and priorities were for these vital sectors, the extent of public support, and where development partners might best engage. This all changed with the development of the "Agriculture Policy Banks" (APBs) – <http://pafpnet.spc.int/policy-bank/countries>

Today the APBs cover fifteen countries (Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu) and enable online access - by anyone - to key agricultural information; policies, commodity plans, statistics and the operations of your Agriculture Ministries.

The benefits are already immense; Nationally, there is raised awareness and more inclusive engagement and fostering complementary regional approaches for common commodities.

The Agriculture Policy Banks are an initiative developed by the Pacific Agriculture Policy Project (PAPP) in partnership with member countries. PAPP is supported by the European Union and implemented by the Land Resources Division of the Pacific Community (SPC), working to enhance the capabilities of the agriculture sector in eradicating poverty.

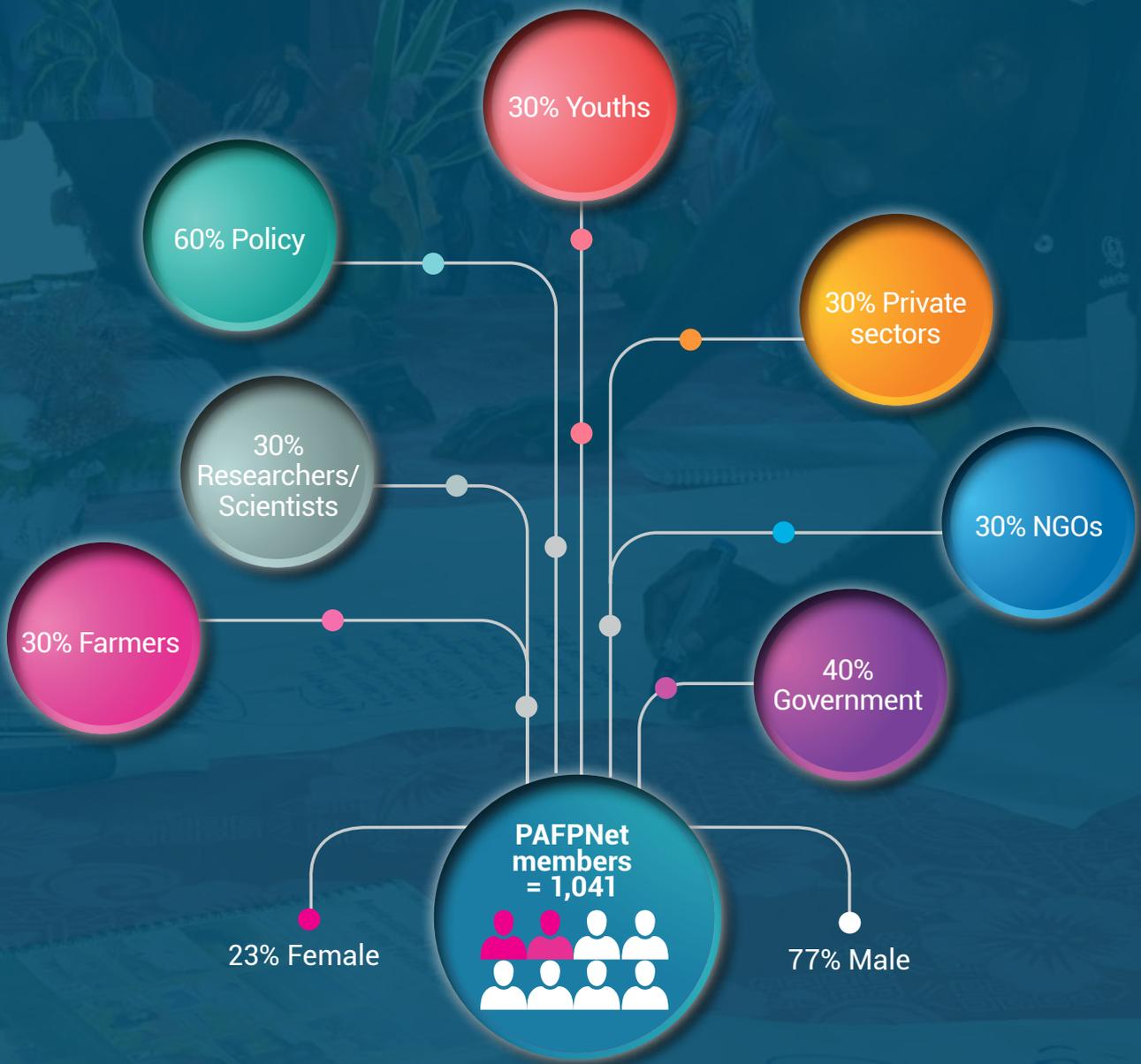


PAFPNet UPDATE

Connect. Share. Grow.

JOIN the Pacific Agriculture and Forestry Policy Network (PAFPNet)

and engage in constructive dialogue and exchange with a variety of stakeholders! You will have the opportunity to widen your network scope by connecting with people who share common interests and goals. As a member of the network, you will also have access to various types of information such as job opportunities, fellowships, training and you will be kept up to date on issues related to agriculture and forestry policy. Help us grow the network.



PAFPNet portal: 41, 706 + page views with 3132 users.

To become a PAFPNet member, please send an email to miriamak@spc.int



WHAT'S COMING UP

DATE	EVENT	VENUE
May 2017	Presentation on ICT4 Agriculture Initiatives	SPC, Fiji
May 2017	Pacific internet Governance Forum – Presentation of the Pacific Agriculture Policy Bank and ICT4Agriculture Initiative.	Vanuatu
June 2017	Biosecurity/ Quarantine Training Workshop	Guam
June 2017	FSM Agriculture Yap & Pohnpei draft strategic action plan consultations	FSM – Yap and Pohnpei
(Dates TBC)	Fiji Launch: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy Bank;• Livestock Strategy; and• Ginger & Dalo Industry Plans. Regional Extension Strategy Country Consultation Process.	Fiji

PAPP operates in the 15 Pacific ACP countries (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 improve 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 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

For additional information on the PAPP project, visit our
website PAFPNet web portal:

<http://pafpnet.spc.int>

For feedback, comments and contributions please contact:

SPC – Land Resources Division helpdesk

lrhelpdesk@spc.int

or

SPC – The Pacific Community

3 Luke Street, Nabua

Private Mail Bag, Suva, Fiji

D I S C L A I M E R

Despite all efforts to ensure that all information in this document is correct at the time of completion, PAPP does not assume and disclaims any liability to any party for any loss, damage or disruption caused by errors or omissions.