



## *Summary Outcomes*

*Regional Farmers Knowledge Exchange*

*Workshop*

*and Buyers Sellers Mart*

*29<sup>th</sup> June- 3 July 2015*



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## 1.0 Introduction

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 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.

## 2.0 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.

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.

### **3.0 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.

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. This report should be read in conjunction with the full Summary Report and the Joint Communique from the Agribusiness Forum held during the Week. The Fiji Regional event built on similar agritourism and market exchanges convened by SPC, SPTO and USP in Samoa (November 2014) and Tonga (April 2015). Common findings from these national interventions will be consolidated in a separate report including a combined video. In addition, **a Farmer-Chef Mart Toolkit/Guide is being developed.**

#### 4.0 Farmers Knowledge Exchange Workshop

A farmers knowledge exchange Workshop was organized for farmer representatives to hear directly from hoteliers, chefs and private sector providers about the vast opportunities within the culinary tourism market, learn from good practices and exchanges within Fiji and the region. The premise with culinary tourism is that consistent supply by farmers and quality of local fresh food can be a limiting factor and those farmers, suppliers, agribusiness and other actors in the supply chain needed to strengthen their networks, business approach, linkages and understanding of hotel culinary demand and requirements. At the same time chefs also needed to constantly engineer and serve local food in interesting ways and that there were tools and training opportunities available to support them. Young chefs in particular were key to understanding the supply options for local food and how to prepare and serve more local content in their dishes.

These exchanges culminated in a 'Buyers-Sellers Mart' which brought together 20 farmers and 20 chefs from Samoa, Cook Islands, Tonga, Kiribati Vanuatu, Solonin Islands, Palau and Fiji to eat, exchange ideas and discuss hotel requirements for food, standards and procurement process and also any direct-supply opportunities. The format of the Mart was 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. Importantly the Mart was also demonstrative 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.

Chris Cocker, Project Manager, PRTCBP, SPTO observations were that these marts were 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 were from all different countries and so could use this opportunity to share ideas and possible cross-country business transactions - encouraging a regional approach to agritourism and inter-country business encouraged.

This Report notes the key common findings drawn from chef-farmer exchanges in Samoa, Tonga and Fiji convened by SPC, SPTO and USP. Also key lessons and suggestions going forward for improving farmers knowledge and capacity to supply to tourism markets.

## 5.0. Key Findings

Key findings and possible national and regional interventions going forward are noted in this report.

### Institutions, training business

- 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) 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.

### Data, Market Knowledge

- e) 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.
- f) Data indicates significant, multi-million dollar opportunities for profits and savings across the agriculture and tourism sectors if they work more closely together. Exporters and agricultural entrepreneurs often focus on increasing exports but there was agreement of the significant opportunity to develop more local market opportunities.
- g) ensure hotel managers and chefs are familiar with the local markets and suppliers and understand the value of fresh and local produce.
- h) encourage and educate tourism owners and staff, especially chefs, about the socio-economic benefits of sourcing more produce locally.

- i) educate chefs, especially those employed from overseas, to better exploit the growing culinary tourism market with contemporary Pacific cuisine on menus.
- j) 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.
- k) 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.

*Spotlight on Hoteliers, Chefs*

- l) Important that future hotel managers and chefs are familiar with the local markets and local suppliers.
- m) 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.)
- n) Large resorts have primarily employed 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.
- o) Chefs realised a strong opportunity to source and/or grow – even within neighbouring local communities to produce locally, or alternatively source imports from other Pacific Island nations rather than further afield such as Australia, New Zealand or Asia.
- p) 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.
- q) 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).

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Business Culture

- r) 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.
- s) 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.
- t) 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.
- u) increase direct business transactions with chefs and farmers, such as with initiatives like the Buyers Sellers Mart.

Some challenges

- v) 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).
- w) 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.

## **6.0. Main Points of Presentations (in Fiji) – Day 1**

### **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 farmers. 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.

### **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.

## **7.0. Main Points of Presentations (in Fiji) – Day 2**

### **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. Sinaiei 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.

**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.

## **8.0 Some Observations**

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”.

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.

