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ISTRC-PB established a network of frontline root crops experts in the Pacific Region

The International Society for Tropical Root Crops –Pacific Branch (ISTRC-PB) under the auspices of CTA and the Institute for Research, Extension and Training in Agriculture (IRETA) conducted a week-long training workshop at Nadi, Fiji from the 14th to the 18th of October 2013. The activity was designed to bring together frontline root/tuber crop extension and research officers within the Pacific Region and discuss emerging issues besetting the industry.

The training workshop proved very successful with assurance of improved cooperation and coordination between scientists, extension workers, technologists



and industry



“We need to put our efforts together to come up with a strengthened Community of Practice where we can look after our staple crop industry in the Pacific”, are Mr. Umar’s encouraging words.

persons working on roots and tuber crops in the South Pacific. With an already established network among these experts, transfer of technology for these staple crops in the region will be enhanced with the strong involvement of stakeholders in both the public and private sectors. A proceedings of this workshop will be produced later.

development of the root crop industry in the Pacific and aim for entrepreneurial growth in the region.” he further said.

Twelve experts from the five major producing countries in the Pacific, i.e. Fiji Islands, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu agreed to establish a Root and Tuber Crop Community of Practice within the Pacific using online and workshop modes of sharing ideas and success stories.

ISTRC-PB vowed to support the member countries in policy development, capacity building, research and development, empowering women and youth towards agribusiness and organising meetings/ symposia to showcase champion initiatives.



“We will exert efforts to sustain the network and assist countries in going beyond subsistence farming of root and tuber crops. It is totally upon the Pacific countries to nurture the industry that they live on.” Prof. Satish Chandra, Councillor of ISTRC—Pacific commented.



SAFT expert on taro industry ... p2

Farmers develop organic standard ... p3

Samoa forges links ... p4

ACIAR reviews scholarship program ... p5

What's on Campus ... pp 6—p7

Leadership Samoa ... Agro-processing ... p8

Agricultural Week in Samoa ... pp 9-10

SAFT expert continues to help the taro industry of Samoa

“I have dedicated my professional career to the cause of preventing any more taro disease plague in Samoa. Now, I am moving towards addressing drought issues which may affect the industry in the future.” These are the words of Mr.



Tolo Levi Iosefa, Assistant Lecturer and Researcher at the School of Agriculture and Food Technology (SAFT) of USP who has been involved in the taro research and breeding programme since 1998 and has been instrumental in resolving the taro leaf blight outbreak which completely wiped out the taro industry of Samoa in 1993.

Mr. Iosefa gained recognition in the Pacific because of his Participatory Plant Breeding (PPB) which made taro research and breeding more attuned to the users' needs. It allowed farmers, researchers and extensionists to partake in criteria selection and priority setting for new cultivars to be introduced in the farms. This approach enables a more resource efficient process.



PPB allows for a faster selection process, promotes a more equitable distribution of resources and stimulates the farmers to conserve and maintain their own genetic resources which will suit prevailing environmental conditions on their respective farms.

The outcomes and benefits from sharing genetic resources through networking proved the success of the Taro Improvement Program



funded by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR). While the breeding program for taro leaf blight (TLB) resistance has come to an end after 5 cycles, the recommended varieties have been widely used to boost export potential of taro. Further, the top selections from each breeding cycle in Samoa have been tissue-cultured and transferred to CePaCT for virus-indexing and wider distribution.

Building on the success of the TLB resistance breeding program, Mr. Iosefa has now commenced working on the drought resistance breeding program which he intends to pursue as part of his PhD research.

SAFT staff co-authored the Taro Leaf Blight Manual

Mr. Tolo Iosefa, is one of the two authors of a manual released recently aimed at transferring the technology of participatory taro breeding programme in Samoa to a greater number of taro growers within the country and other Pacific Island countries. This publication was made possible through funding by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) through its International Climate Change Adaptation Initiatives (ICCAI) and full support by the host institution, University of the South Pacific in Alafua, and the implementing agency South Pacific Commission.

The contents of the document are the outcome of Mr. Iosefa's successful years of taro breeding work with taro farmer cooperators. Mr. Iosefa has successfully worked with taro growers in Samoa for almost 15 years in attempting to address leaf blight disease issues which almost wiped out the taro industry of Samoa in 1993.

Currently, the Taro Improvement Project (TIP) hopes to provide Samoan taro farmers options to significantly reduce incidence of taro leaf blight and increase yields. A key element of TIP is the sustained active involvement of the taro growers representing different agro-climatic zones.

The publication discusses how Samoan farmers tackled the leaf blight disease which plagued their taro farms through significant involvement in the participatory breeding programme which eventually led to bringing this staple crop back in the fields of Samoa. A major part of the document deals with the practical steps involved in the taro breeding process from selection of parent material to seedling management. Greater focus is given on how the participatory approach is used to enable a breeding programme which can easily be replicated by farmers, researchers and extension agents and propagate good quality taro varieties which can sustain the taro-based economy of Samoa and other Pacific Island countries.

Towards the end of the document, the projected climate-based risks posed by taro leaf blight which can potentially impact other countries' taro production efforts are highlighted. Strategies are recommended to minimize these risks such as crop diversification and cross-breeding of Samoan varieties with their local varieties to adapt well in their local climatic conditions.



TARO LEAF BLIGHT MANUAL

Farmers develop organic standard

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Pacific Organic and Ethical Trade Community (POETCom) and three internationally accredited organic certification bodies is set to promote organic agriculture in the Pacific region through the development of organic export certification services.

Over the next three years, the MoU will guide the relationship between POETCom and the certification partners in their provision of certification services in the region. The partners are BioAgriCert, BioGro New Zealand (BioGro), and National Association for Sustainable Agriculture Australia (NASAA).

The partnership will provide, for the first time, an opportunity for Pacific organic producers to export under their own Pacific Organic Standard (POS). There are also plans to help Pacific producers develop their own auditing personnel so that they can audit to BioGro's organic programmes, including the POS.

The development is an initiative of the European Union-funded Increasing Agricultural Commodity Trade (IACT) project coordinated in the region through the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC). The 'Organic Pasifika' mark that these products will carry will help consumers in export markets to become aware of and have access to organic products from the Pacific.

A review undertaken by the International Federation of Organic Agricultural Movements (IFOAM) identified the lack of a coordinated approach and the cost of certification, as major obstacles to the development of organic agriculture in the Pacific. From that time, organic producers in the Pacific have been working to address these constraints through the development of the POS and the formation of POETCom.

The partnership will enable organic products from the Pacific to be able to access international markets through the well-recognised certification pathways established by the certification partners. POETCom is the peak organics body for the Pacific region, and its secretariat is based at SPC with funding support from the European Union-funded IACT project. (*Samoa Observer*)

SAFT initiated improvement in its research portfolio

In order to address a key priority area on USP's Strategic Plan 2013 to 2018, SAFT created a Research Committee to raise the agricultural research profile of the university. Dr. Danilo Guinto, Senior Lecturer in Soil Science, who is actively involved in supervising students at all degree levels (undergraduate, Masters and PhD) and undertaking an ongoing big research project on Soil Health Assessment for Taro Improvement, was tapped to chair the committee by the Head of School.

It is expected that the committee, composed of high calibre experts from the school, will create a research agenda designed to address the needs of the PICs particularly on food security, climate change resilience and improved rural income.

The creation of a research agenda will allow SAFT to streamline its research efforts to fill in the research gaps in the region rather than duplicate what other agencies are doing. The committee is planning to prepare capsule proposals for funding considerations by either USP or donor agencies.



Samoa forges link with Caribbean

Samoa continues to forge links with the Caribbean to find ways to improve agricultural trade, tourism and opportunities for women in their regions. Hosted by the nation of Guyana early October 2013, Caribbean Week of Agriculture featured key speakers Women in Business Development executive director Adimaimalaga Tafuna'i, acclaimed chef Robert Oliver and Karen Mapusua from POETCom. The Samoan Government was represented by Associate Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries Lautafi Fio Selafi Purcell.



Women in Business executive director Adimaimalaga Tafuna'i at the Caribbean Week of Agriculture in Guyana

The forum was aimed at finding ways to link the small-holder farmers to the local market, strengthen inter-regional linkages; link local and regional production to the tourism industry and boost agro-tourism, and in particular food tourism. Tafuna'i said that the meeting was another chance for farming and livelihood organizations to learn from each other. "There are similarities between the Caribbean and Pacific and if we share what we know, others that come after us can learn from our processes that have been refined by trial and error.

"Developing supply chains in our islands – so that we can attract domestic and international markets – takes much longer. We need to understand and work at the level of our farmers, and at the same time understand what the market needs."

Women in Business Development currently supplies cosmetic giant The Body Shop with virgin coconut oil. "We started producing the oil in 1996 and tried for years to find a stable market. We actually sought out The Body Shop but could not get a meeting with them. Then in 2007, they came to the Pacific looking for virgin coconut oil and found us. It then took us four years to build the capacity of our farmers to meet that contract volume but it can be done."

Pomeroon Women Agro-Processor Association president Rosamund Benn spoke of the challenges the Association faced trying to get markets for virgin coconut oil. She said that they were looking at a regional market where the demand for the oil was higher.

Tafuna'i said that care had to be taken when producing virgin coconut oil to protect the quality of the oil, which deteriorates when the process is upscaled to produce larger quantities at one time. "Also when production is done in the villages, small holder farmers and their communities benefit as opposed to when production is done in a central factory."

At the high-level presentations, Samoa's Associate Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries of Samoa Lautafi Fio Selafi Purcell identified possible areas of cooperation between the Pacific and Caribbean such as organic agriculture, transporting agricultural products, and adapting to climate change and curbing its effects. Lautafi also spoke about the role of women and youth in agriculture.

Robert Oliver presented on his work in the Pacific and compared it with a successful programme he ran in the Caribbean connecting farmers to hotel chefs. Oliver has been active in the Pacific region encouraging chefs to use locally grown ingredients through his TV show *Real Pasifik* and award-winning book *Mea Kai: The Food and Flavours of the South Pacific*. Pacific Organic and Ethical Trade community co-ordinator Karen Mapusua also spoke on branding the Pacific as organic.

The Women's Forum is a follow-up to SEED CAP (Supporting Economic Empowerment and Development in the Caribbean and Pacific), which was held in the Montego Bay, Jamaica in July. That forum brought together Caribbean and Pacific businesses, producers, experts and public and private sector representatives to discuss how to further strengthen economic gains for women involved in the agriculture and rural sectors. (*Faumuina Tafuna'i – Women in Business*)

Key people managing the Australian Centre for International Agriculture Research (ACIAR) in the South Pacific paid a visit to USP in Alafua, Samoa from the 28th to 29th October 2013 to reassess its scholarship programme benefitting around 20 Agriculture postgraduate students. Dr. Richard Markham, Research Program Manager - Pacific Crops headed the team of evaluators and facilitators composed of Prof. Ronald Duncan (Reviewer), Dr. Sushil Kumar (Associate Dean, FSTE), Prof. Robin South (ACIAR-USP Consultant) and Maika Daveta (GA Officer. USP's concerns at different levels from the management to the administrative and resources staff apart from the academic staff and student beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries were heard. Inputs provided will be considered in the next implementation cycle of the programme.

While it is unusual for ACIAR to support postgraduate training, the review will allow them to identify drawbacks and ascertain the need for such support to build capacities of PICs.

Acting Head of SAFT, Associate Professor Mohammed Umar, expressed appreciation to the enormous support provided by ACIAR to the school over the years. He affirmed that SAFT is trying its very best to keep the up with the standard of learning & teaching and research guaranteed to help agriculture-based economies of PICs to grow. He emphasised food security, climate change and income generation as the relevant issues SAFT is trying to fit in to their planned curriculum review and research programs. He also called for ACIAR to reconsider continuing support for potential PhD students.



Since postgraduate training is not usually supported by ACIAR, the scholarship program is in constant review to ensure that it is meeting the research needs of

the PICs. In a meeting with the academic staff who are currently or potentially supervising ACIAR scholars on their researches, ACIAR suggested to create and strengthen a triangular relationship between student, internal and external supervisors in order to ensure that researches are within the agenda. ACIAR was assured that USP now has enough capability to provide proper supervision of postgraduate students with 4 new lecturers already on board and 1 joining the brood soon, all with PhD degrees.

Dr. Danilo Guinto, Senior Lecturer and currently supervising ACIAR scholars and managing the Soil Health Project in Samoa expressed concern that stopping the intake of scholars will create a vacuum in the research field in the PICs. It is expected that ACIAR will re-consider supporting more scholars at both masters and PhD levels.

The team also conducted information sessions which expounded how ACIAR can support potential students who may consider undertaking further studies and research implementation training sessions to further build up capabilities of its scholars.

The activity culminated with a social evening where students, USP staff and ACIAR representatives gathered to forge stronger institutional partnership. A resource book on improving research management skills was gifted to the Alafua Campus as a token of the established partnership.



USP Alafua well received during the Law & Justice Open Day



A strong team from USP Alafua presented its degree offerings to the public during the Open Day of the Samoa Law & Justice sector. Alafua's booths were swarmed with interested students, parents and workers wanting to learn about potential opportunities which USP can offer.



It is motivating to note that a number of the spectators showed great interest in USP's degree offerings particularly in Law, Management, Agriculture, etc.



What's on CAMPUS

USP Savaii Satellite Centre celebrated its 1st first year anniversary

After one year of enjoying the benefit of a KU-Band satellite network, USP's Savaii Centre staff and students expressed appreciation at the IT support received from the main and Alafua campuses. To celebrate the success of the venture, USP Alafua management held a mini-Open Day at the Centre to coincide with the first year anniversary of the Satellite Centre on the 24th October 2013. Hon. Magele Mauiliu Magele, Minister for Education, Sports and Culture graced the occasion and once again emphasised the important role a regional campus such as USP play in the development of the Pacific economy.



Students from across Savaii trooped to the Satellite Centre to hear out what USP Alafua Campus can offer either through face-to-face and blended modes. The USP Alafua headed by Leatuaolevao Ruby Va'a came well prepared with promotional materials, new library acquisitions and refurbishment of the library shelving courtesy of Senior Librarian Angela Jowitt. This is expected to enable a more resource effective and efficient library system.



The promotion efforts proved successful in creating awareness of the courses offered by Alafua Campus and how the potential students can take advantage of the support services and opportunities provided by the campus, e.g. availability of 20 USP-Government Scholarships to Samoan students willing to undertake an Agriculture degree.



CAMPUS LIFE FAMILY FUN DAY AT ALAFUA CAMPUS

The Annual Campus Life Family Fun Day at USP Alafua was a huge success again this year. With more than three hundred participants in this year's event, the numbers have more than doubled from the previous events. Very evident was the diverse background of staff, students, and their families as was the visible enjoyment of all.

Children were treated with balloons, snacks and they received various prizes during their fun games. Staff and students thoroughly enjoyed taking the time away from work and studies to play sports together and socialize with one another in a relaxing environment. Everyone was treated with ice cream and island food for lunch.

Appreciation goes to the USP Campus Life Group Manager, Mr Glenn Pope, for initiating the Family Day and for supporting USP Alafua's Family Day event. Many thanks also to the Campus Life Alafua staff and support staff who assisted with the Family Day event. Last but not least, thank you to all the students, staff and families and to the Residential Assistants who played a big part in making this year's event an enjoyable and wonderful occasion for all. (Tony Siamomua—Alafua Campus Life Coordinator)



SAFT's promotional tour created awareness on the Agriculture degree offerings



A Senior Lecturer of the School of Agriculture and Food Technology (SAFT), Dr. Danilo Guinto, joined the School of Tourism and Hospitality Management (STHM) on their promotional tour to encourage more potential students to undertake their respective degree programs. The team went to Solomon Island and Vanuatu from the 21st to the 25th October 2013 where USP historically attracts most students other than Fiji Islands.

Prior to joining the team from STHM, Dr. Guinto added on Lautoka in Fiji to his itinerary and managed to visit a number of schools who realised that Agriculture is not to be neglected in the Pacific.

The team targeted secondary school teachers responsible for providing careers advice to students, to inform them of courses offered at USP by STHM and SAFT. It is surprising to note that the participant teachers in both countries knew little about STHM and SAFT courses on offer at USP.

Dr. Guinto reiterated the significance of Agriculture in the Pacific's economy, i.e. trade balance is negative in all Pacific Island countries with value of imports significantly exceeding value of exports. Apart from this, the remoteness and the small area of the island countries limit potential for other industries so agriculture is still the backbone of the economy in these countries. Food security is still far-fetched in most PICs and climate change impacts beset these countries so there is a need for more local and regional instruments to address these.

USP SAFT is a regional instrument which can provide opportunities to address issues besetting the agriculture-based economy of PICs. As a battle cry, **SAFT is here to put agriculture at the forefront in the South Pacific!**

Agriculture resource base expanded

USP Alafua Library recently acquired new materials to expand the agriculture resource base of the campus. The following are now available for reference by staff, students and the external public:

Title : **Gain methodology : diagnosis and design of change processes within producer organizations**

Authors: Elbehri, Aziz.; Lee, Maria; Hirsch, Carina; Benail, Marwan

Constraints faced by smallholders--be they women or men--in accessing markets and improving their revenues are well known and easy to enumerate.

Title : **Enhancing animal welfare and farmer income through strategic animal feeding : some case studies.**

Authors: FAO Series animal production and health paper no. 175

A properly balanced diet and water supplied in adequate amounts avoid physical and psychological suffering from hunger and thirst; furthermore correct nutrition is crucial for optimal performance and to sustain optimal fitness.

Title : **Greenhouse technology and management**

Authors: Castilla, Nicolás.; Baeza, Esteban J; Papadopoulos, A.P.

It is about protecting cultivation, eternal climate, greenhouse climate, crop physiology, management and other greenhouse production strategies.

Title : **Decent rural employment for food security : a case for action.**

Authors: FAO Series Knowledge materials: rural employment

This Case for Action urges that improving policy coherence between employment and agricultural initiatives and investigating more the promotion of decent rural employment contribute highly to the interlinked challenges of fighting rural poverty and feeding a growing world population in a sustainable way.

Title : **Conservation agriculture and sustainable crop intensification in Karatu District, Tanzania.**

Author: Owenya, Marietha; Mariki, Wilfred; Stewart, Alastair; Friedrich, Theodor; Kienzle, Josef; Kassam, Amir; Shetto, Richard, Series Integrated crop management (Rome, Italy) ; v. 15.

The case study explains the adoption process and shows impact of Conservation Agriculture in terms of agricultural production, environment and ecosystem services, livelihoods and other socio economic factors.

Title : **Light sensing in plants**

Editor : M. Wada, K. Shimazaki, M. Iin

This book presents overviews of and the latest findings in many of the interconnected aspects of plants.

You can maximise the benefit of the Alafua library resources by going online at

<http://athenasamo.usp.ac.fj/athcgi/athweb.pl>. Photocopy @50sene/page. Copyright rules apply.

Leadership Samoa group enlightened on agricultural issues

A group of middle and Chief Executive Officers of the various government ministries in Samoa visited USP in Alafua on the 4th of October 2013 to gather viewpoints from agriculture experts outside the government sector. Acting Head of SAFT and Director of IRETA, Mohammed Umar, provided valuable inputs which will be very helpful in assuming leadership roles in their respective offices.



According to Mr. Umar, the Samoans are very fortunate to have vast land with a population density of about 66 per square kilometre which equates to two hectares of land per person. Even though much of the 2 hectares maybe unsuitable for agriculture, there will still be sufficient land to produce food whereby the country can address food security and sustainable development issues.



“Agriculture is still the main source of income in Samoa and 70% are small scale farmers doing subsistence farming which contributes to their household consumption and income generation. There are entrepreneurial opportunities which will encourage farmers to produce surplus of what the internal market demands as long as cleaner pathways for exporting produce will be developed. Let us take advantage of the country’s natural ability to produce 7 out of 12 crops feeding 70% of the energy requirement of the world.” Mr. Umar commented.

“We should further strengthen the appropriate policies that will build up capacities of the farming community through promotion of research, extension and development initiatives.” he advised.

Seminar Highlights: Agro-processing in the South Pacific

Papali’i Grant Percival
Proprietor and Manager, Natural Foods International, Limited
Seminar delivered on 24th October 2013 at USP



Papali’i Grant Percival has been working in the field of food processing for 25 years. Despite inadequacy of developed infrastructure, he has elevated their company-owned Natural Foods International, Limited to ISO certified status.

Papali’i identified three major **participants** in the Agro-processing business in the Pacific:

- Agro processors reliant on imported raw materials
- Agro Processors that seem to have this as a side activity
- Agro processors reliant on locally produced raw materials

The following **constraints** limit potential for success:

- Funding - high interest rates, short term repayments, no investment environment or incentives for investments.
- High infrastructural cost – electricity, water and shipping (isolation becomes a big factor)
- Government policies are not aligned with private sector-led agro-processing
- Technology transfer and servicing – e.g. machinery with clean in place features, no trade skills available to service
- Knowledge of the markets and their movements - island producers are not dealing with the buyers on a day to day basis
- Success breeds its own problems and the Pacific Island countries frequently cannot combat the problems.
- Support Structures – such as packaging, Science laboratories, breeding programs for desirable qualities,

mitigation strategies and resources against vulnerabilities to protect the supply chain

- Past and Present failures that haunt us in our delivery to the market. PIC suppliers are deemed unreliable and it is hard to break into a market as a result.
- Price takers – bulk providers – Most of our products have been produced in bulk and sent overseas where it is marketed by the importer under his brand and when he switches supplier there is nothing we can do.
- Legislative support – New products are easier to protect overseas through patenting than they are here in Samoa.
- Novel Products are facing constraints in international markets. These need marketing muscle to be accepted by the public. No companies in the Pacific have this ability.
- Copy cat behavior by other manufacturers.

Potential **opportunities** in the Agro-processing business:

- Food Processing
- Pharmaceuticals
- Perfumery
- Beverage

The Government needs to provide an enabling environment beyond the aid that is channeled to assist the development of the companies. Any agro-processing using local raw materials is a bonus for rural development and leads to sustainable economic development. Businesses set up outside Apia should be tax free.

Youth foreseen to be future farmers in Samoa

The 3rd Annual Agriculture and Fisheries Week in Samoa provided another colourful week to celebrate the development of agriculture in the country. Staged from the 14th to the 18th of October 2013, the week-long celebration featured different facets of how agriculture is progressing in Samoa. The week's event kicked off with students invited to plant coconut at the MAF Crops Division at Nu'u Station to mark the theme for this year's event, "Youth – Future Farmers".



The week also showcased the farmers and fishermen who have contributed significantly in sustaining the place of agriculture in the economy of Samoa.



Prime Minister Tuilaepa Sa'ilele Malielegaoi delivered the keynote address. He challenged all Samoans to work hard. "If someone is hungry that person is a very lazy person," he said. He encouraged the farmers to continue helping out in the development of Samoa and pray that this will be sustained for the future needs of the country.

Tui laepa also thanked Samoa's development partners for their contribution to Samoa's agriculture especially the People's Republic of China in terms of the special training they have provided to farmers which has afforded them the required specialised skills.



Minister of Agriculture Le Mamea Ropati Mualia said the main idea behind this year's show is to attract young people to take up farming as a career and as an area for them to invest in. It is hoped that the message of Rev. Talalelei Letelemaana, that God after He created man put him in charge of the earth to till and care for, will reach a wider section of the Samoan community. The youth of Samoa should be deviated from thinking that farming is a lowly job.

Samoa being host to the only agricultural university in the South Pacific, the School of Agriculture and Food Technology (SAFT) of USP, will not find it difficult to fulfil its mission through collaborative efforts with the school. Currently, the Government of Samoa and USP-SAFT offers a joint scholarship for students intending to pursue a degree in Agriculture where 20 lucky recipients could avail. SAFT promoted its degree programs during the celebration.



The week also saw the official opening of several extension offices in rural areas like Poutasi, Falealili and Savaia Lefaga in Upolu and Saleaula and Sasina in Savaii for use in trainings and conferences. These were made possible through grants from the Chinese Government.

Chinese Ambassador to Samoa Li Yanduan said that China and Samoa have been working closely in the area of agriculture, offering training to qualified technicians to travel to China to learn extra skills in farming. The Chinese government is focusing on assistance to build up capabilities of local farmers and increase their earning potential.



Farmers given focus in the back to back celebration of Agriculture Week and World Food Day in Samoa

More than fifty farmers celebrated their successes during the Agricultural Show staged to mark the Agriculture and Fishery Week in Samoa held at Sogi Reclamation Area in Samoa from the 17th to 18th October 2013. The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) also celebrated World Food Day during the same occasion. Both the MAF and FAO encouraged the people to look at agriculture as an industry that will provide food security and income generation to the country.



After a parade of agriculture produce, the opening programme saw a huge crowd partaking in the celebration. Agriculture and Fisheries Minister, Le Mamea Ropati Mualia said the aim of the show was to showcase the best



products produced by farmers and fishers of Samoa. There were two competitions to reward the farmers and fishermen, the farm and fishery conservation areas and the best agricultural products. The Ministry identified "Real Champions" in the industry, be it crop farming or livestock farming.

FAO also commemorated World Food Day 2013 on 17th October 2013 with the FAO Sub-Regional Representative in Samoa, Dr Gavin Wall, delivered the powerful World Food Day message from Director General of FAO, Tagaloa Jose da Silva. He said FAO's mission is to contribute to ending hunger in the world and it is as valid today as it was in 1945 when the organisation was created.



The Agricultural Show received very promising feedback from farmers who vowed to support the Ministry in its mission but also raised concerns about how the Ministry can assist in certain areas of their farming activities.



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