

# Training Course Report



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*Course* Regional Training Course in Agribusiness Management for Farmer organizations – GCP/INT/045/EC

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# 1 Foreword

The “All ACP Agricultural Commodities Programme” ([www.euacpcommodities.eu](http://www.euacpcommodities.eu)) was launched in September 2007 as an initiative of the European Commission and the ACP Secretariat. Its roots can be traced to the EU Action Plan on Agricultural Commodities, Dependence and Poverty (COM (2004) 89), the EU-Africa Partnership on Cotton (COM (2004) 87) and a number of ACP initiatives linked to agricultural commodities identified during the Cotonou and Doha negotiations. As a result, the programme fully acknowledges the link between production, value addition and trade in agricultural commodities and poverty reduction.

The overall objective of the programme, which ends in December 2011, is to reduce poverty while improving and stabilising the revenues and living conditions of agricultural commodity producers in ACP countries. To achieve its objective, the programme is working to develop the capacity of all stakeholders involved in the industry to design and implement sustainable strategies.

In order to fully understand their needs, producers, industrialists, financiers, government representatives and regional organizations were consulted through five regional workshops held during the first half of 2008. A Coordination Unit based in Brussels coordinates the implementation of the programme, five international organizations partner in the implementation of activities: Common Fund for Commodities (CFC), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Trade Centre (ITC), UNCTAD, and the World Bank.

The “kick-off workshop” for the EU all ACP Commodities Programme (EU AAACP) held in Samoa, February 2008, identified the fruits and vegetable sector as a high priority and focus sector for support in the Pacific Island region. The sector offers considerable employment and income earning opportunities for formerly commodity (e.g. sugar, coconut, cocoa) dependent farmers, and scope for import substitution. Farmer organizations play a critical role in assisting their members to access formal markets for their projects, and secure and create employment and income opportunities in rural areas. Under the EU all ACP Commodities Programme, FAO has the mandate to strengthen the organizational and management capacities of small farmers and farmers organizations in this role.

Following the initial regional farmer organizations workshop held in the Solomon Islands (October 2008), this regional training course in agribusiness is the second of a sequence of three regional activities under the EU AAACP for farmer organizations in the Pacific and coordinated by FAO:

- Workshop on strengthening the capacities of farmer organizations to respond to trends in agricultural markets (October 2008)
- Regional Training Course in Agribusiness Management for Farmer Organizations (May 2010)
- Lessons learnt workshop (planned for July 2011).

To reinforce the development of the fruits and vegetable sector development, support is being provided at national level and to national level based farmer organizations in four countries: Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu. The Melanesian Farmers First Network (MFFN) has been supported to do the regional coordination, promote networking and sharing of lessons learned. A regional coordination is required to ensure that lessons learnt are shared across the region for the benefit of farmer organizations in all EU ACP. The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) functions as the Focal Point for all EU AAACP activities in the region and has, i.e. the mandate to

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## 2 Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank FAO and the EU all ACP Agricultural Commodities Programme (EU AAACP) for funding this regional training course.

Mr. Heiko Bammann from FAO AGS was the catalyst for launching this training course. The Melanesian Farmers First Network coordinated participation in the training workshop and also providing a valuable network to the farmer organizations in the region. Natures Way Cooperative (NWC) was the coordinator and host of the training course. A special thanks to NWC General Manager Michael Brown for his efforts in planning the training program and also for his valuable inputs as a resource person.

The resource persons who played an integral role in making the training course a success. Those who contributed are:

- Kyle Stice, Livai Tora and Timote Waqainabete (Fiji Papaya Project)
- Sant Kumar (Managing Director, Bula Agro Enterprises)
- Pierre Watas (Manager Vanuatu VCOGA Manager)
- Saten Kumar (GM Mahens Exports)
- Barry Ladewig (Operations Manager PSL)
- Charles Eaton (Contract farming specialist)
- Aileen Burness (Owner Manager South Sea Orchids)
- Sanfred Smith, Tim Martyn , Talei Goater and Api Cegumalua. (SPC FACT)

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## 3 Introduction

As farming becomes more commercial and market oriented, small farmers struggle to maintain their share in the market. The formation of farmer groups and organizations and coordinated marketing is one way to overcome the problem of ‘smallness’ and supply produce to expanding markets. Coordinating production and marketing in groups potentially reduces costs and helps to generate sufficient quantities/volumes of supplies to maintain competitiveness at domestic and/or overseas markets.

Farmer organizations play a role in linking farmers to input dealers, traders, processors and consumers as well as other actors along the supply chain. This creates opportunities to capture value and distribute benefits to their members as a result of closer integration into competitive value chains. Through farmer organizations, members are given greater ‘voice’ and associations of farmers are responsible for advocating the rights and concerns of their members.

National level farmer organizations are particularly well placed to assist local level organizations and their member farmers to access seeds, fertilizer and other inputs, engage in bulk buying of inputs, utilize and manage water for irrigation, facilitate farmer to farmer learning, and link farmers to markets. Collective action by farmer organizations and cooperatives is fundamental to generating economies of scale, reducing transaction costs, and increasing power for collective bargaining.

However, the above outlined areas of support activities/services require good management and strong coordination and planning skills. Any marketing support activity has to generate profits at the level of the farmer organization to cover overhead costs. Overhead costs may include the salary of an additional person to coordinate the production and marketing, communication and other office running costs. It also requires to build up savings at the level of the farmer organization in order have sufficient capital at hand to advance marketing related expenses such as packaging material and transport costs.

Farmer organization will have to become more “professional” - an agribusiness. To run an agribusiness efficiently, skills beyond the traditional production advisory and advocacy role are required. These skills include, e.g. sound financial management, record keeping and farm management, marketing and post-harvest handling and group management.

Through the technical support of FAO, funded under the EU all ACP Agricultural Commodities Programme (EU AAACP), the training course programme has been designed to strengthen the role and support services provision of national farmer organizations in the areas outlined above. The target audience are the farmer organizations managers or production and marketing advisers and service providers from the region working directly with farmer organizations and its members.

Learning means gaining understanding and insight about concepts, principles and building practical skills. The training course uses both practical examples as well as experiential and participatory learning i.e. by experiencing mostly in interactive groups. Each session of the training course has specific learning outcomes for knowledge, understanding and/or skill. This enables the participants to track progress in learning throughout the programme.

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## 4 Session 1: The Natures Way Cooperative Case Study

The objective of this session was to introduce participants to Natures Way Cooperative, which represents one of the more successful producer organizations in the region. The session was delivered by Andrew McGregor (Koko Siga Fiji) and Michael Brown (NWC – GM). It was fitting to review the Natures Way Cooperative case study as the first session because the training was being held at Natures Way Cooperative and the organization is now in its 14<sup>th</sup> year of operation and has endured many of the problems and setbacks, that other producer organization could expect to encounter, and has emerged as a significant financial viable agribusiness.



**Natures Way Cooperative members at the 2009 AGM**

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### 4.1 Session outline

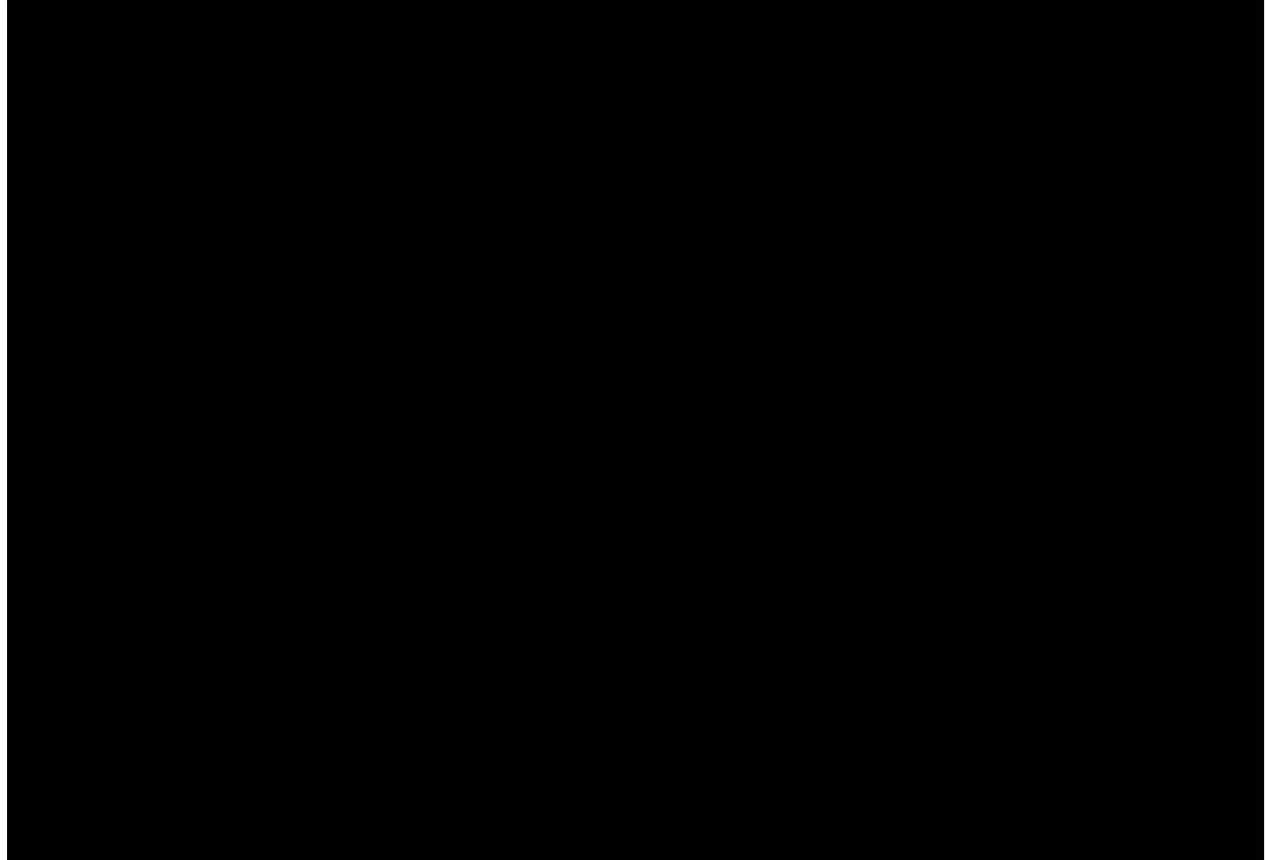
- Brief history and background – what is Natures Way and why was it created?
- HTFA Quarantine Treatment – what is it?
- Why a cooperative?
- From small business to a substantial agribusiness
- Current status
- Factors contributing to success
- Throughput and viability
- Success requires a public private partnership
- Future role for NWC
- Taking advantage of NWC strategic position

Power point presentation (available on reference CD)

Handouts - FAO Agriculture Growth study – NWC (available on reference CD)

## 4.2 Group exercise

The group exercise for Session 1 involved the participants having to calculate out treatment costs based upon different levels of throughput. The outcome of the exercise is that participants were able to see firsthand the important relationship between throughput and financial viability.



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## 4.3 Major lessons drawn from case study and discussions

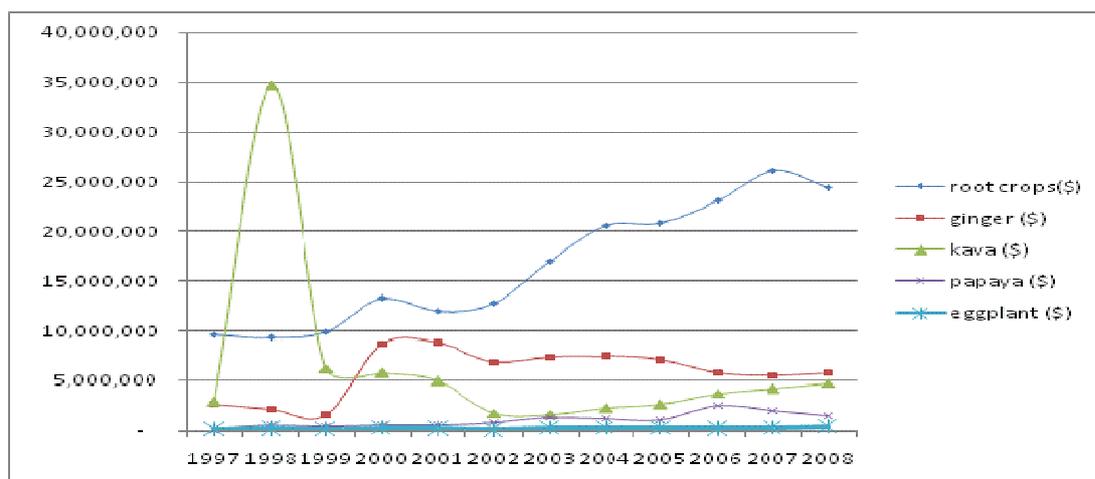
- Marketing facility development needs to be private sector led – however, with an appropriate Private Public Partnership (PPP) for infrastructure and securing market access.
- There must be industry ownership and management from the outset – government developing the business and then passing on to the industry is not a viable option.
- Long term sustainability is more likely with a diverse range of produce for treatment to maintain year round throughput (for NWC the addition of eggplant into the treatment process and enhance overall throughput made the difference between failure and success).
- Quality and continuity of management is critical for success.
- No government interference is critical despite the need for a PPP.
- No shareholder interference in day to day operations.
- Viability depends on throughput – verified in the group exercise.

- Organizations such as NWC should facilitate improved marketing – not be involved in marketing. NWC is not seen as a competitor for markets, it is purely a service provider the philosophy of Natures Way is to “improve the middlemen don’t replace them”.
- Natures Way has been able to diversify into a number of activities built around its core business of quarantine treatment – but which don’t interfere with the core business. These include the bulk imports of field crates and the importation of seed and organization and facilitation of workshops and training courses.
- For the Pacific Island Countries it is important to work together on marketing access and negotiate rules for BQAs.
- NWC weakness is that it is undercapitalized – a pitfall that needs to be addressed from the outset .
- At the formative stage a lot of thought is required and a proper analysis has to be carried out before deciding on the business structure of a farmer organization (i.e. cooperative vs. limited liability under the companies act)! The choice depends on individual countries laws and the purpose/objectives of the organization. It is hard to change once a decision on structure and legal status has been made.

## 5 Session 2: Overview of Fiji’s Horticultural Export Industry: Current Status and Future Prospects

The objective of this session was to introduce participants to the horticulture industry in Fiji to help them understand the context under which the different agribusinesses are operating. The session was delivered by Sant Kumar (Fiji Fruit and Vegetable Industry Council) and Kyle Stice (Fiji Papaya Project). Fiji is recognised around the region as having a successful horticulture export industry, this session focused on the critical success factors necessary to develop this type of industry in other countries around the region.

**Figure 1: Value of various horticulture export products from Fiji (1997 – 2008)**



### 5.1 Session outline

- Fiji in the global context
- The main commodities
- Nature of the Fiji ethnic market
- Fiji private sector – middlemen and exporters
- Growers/exporter relationships
- HTFA
- Availability of freight
- Market access
- Key success factors
- Competing on export and local markets
- Finding your niche
- Achieving sufficient volumes – PICs ‘the land of samples’
- Consistency and quality of supply

Power point presentation (available on reference CD)

Handouts - Pacific Economic Bulletin Report, CD of papaya market studies, Fiji Ag Marketing Policy paper (available on reference CD)

## 5.2 Group exercise

Participants are to work together in country groups to evaluate their countries' opportunities and capability to export horticultural products.

### Factors to be considered

1. Suitable agronomic conditions to produce products with identified markets and ready access to an international airport or seaport
2. Sufficient freight capacity
3. Private sector marketing capability
4. Quarantine pest status and management, in particular, fruit flies
5. Ability to negotiate market access and resolve market access issues

### Ranking system is on a scale of 1 – 10.

1 = Very poor

5 = Reasonable

10 = Excellent

At the end of the exercise each group had to present their rankings for the various countries. Participants were then handed a published paper from the Pacific Economic Bulletin Report that evaluated each of the countries by ranking them according to the same factors.

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## 5.3 Major lessons drawn from case study and discussions

- Fiji private sector with its market links a key factor in success
- Fiji (Viti Levu) has relatively good marketing infrastructure – particularly airfreight linkages
- Horticulture is growing into a significant industry – but has a long way to go to substitute for sugar
- Further growth requires access for new products and markets – true for other Pacific islands countries
- Challenge of meeting market standards – quarantine, quality and food safety
- Challenge to be competitive – must improve quality and reduce prices

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## 6 Session 3: Training in Supply Chain Management

The objective of this session was to present to the participants a methodology and set of training materials on supply chain management. The case for papaya in Fiji was used as an example for this training. The participants were exposed to the process of addressing issues in a supply chain through a simple analysis, development of extension materials and training. The session was delivered by Livai Tora and Kyle Stice (Fiji Papaya Project).

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### 6.1 Session outline

- Analysing the supply chain to identify key problem issues
- Importance of good production and marketing planning coordination to provide consistence supplies of high quality produce to the market
- Importance of good communication among all actors of the value chain
- How to deal with misinformation and improve producer-buyer relationships
- Post harvest handling and good practices
- Packaging, transport and labelling
- Importance of contracts and what needs to be in there

Power point presentation (available on reference CD)

Papaya Information sheets (available on reference CD)

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### 6.2 Major lessons learned

- Importance of good communications
- How to deal with misinformation and improve producer-buyer relationships
- Importance of contracts and their honouring

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## 7 Session 4: Farm tours

A farm tour was arranged with commercial papaya farmer/exporter Produce Specialty Ltd. (PSL) located in the Sigatoka Valley. The objective of this visit was for the participants to see firsthand commercial horticulture production and discuss the supply chain and agribusiness issues associated with this crop.



**PSL's Operations Manager, Barry Ladewig describing papaya harvesting and purchasing with participants.**

A farm tour was also arranged to see the Fiji Papaya Project trial site which is aimed at addressing production issues through applied research. The objective of this visit was to demonstrate how farmer organizations can carry out on-farm research and demonstration plots to assist their members. Of particular interest to the group was the organic papaya economic viability trial that was underway



**Fiji Papaya Project trial site - Sigatoka**

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### 7.1 Major lessons learned

- Substantial investment and long term commitment required for success
- Risks (cyclones) involved and the need to make provisions for a “rainy day”
- What is involved with organic horticulture – costs and benefits need to carefully calculated

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## 8 Session 5: Briefing on Mahens Exports Operations

The objective of this session was to introduce participants to the issues surrounding a commercial export operation. Mahens Exports is involved in a variety of export products and buys from a large number of small farmers. General Manager Saten Kumar explained to the participants the critical factors that must be in place to consistently supply the export market.



**Participants discussing agribusiness with Mahens Export General Manager Saten Kumar at their Sigatoka packing house.**

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### 8.1 Session outline

- Commodities handled
- Supply chains
- Buying arrangements
- Grading
- Pricing
- Keeping costs low and quality high
- Business relationships

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### 8.2 Major lessons learned and discussion

- The nature of the Fiji private sector exporting to niche markets – multiple products exported to family businesses. Gradual growth from a small beginning and continual investment of retained earnings.
- Marketers and traders are the strength of Fiji's horticultural marketing system. Middlemen -champions and not villains.

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## 9 Session 6: Continuation of Supply Chain Training – Farming as a business (The Entre Farm Game)

The objective of session 6 was to provide yet another tool for supply chain training that participants could use with their farmer members. Sanfred Smith from the SPC/FACT Project facilitated the session along with Livai Tora (Fiji Papaya Project). Through the Entre Farm Game, participants were able to experience the realities of running a farm and managing money, the game aims to provide real life examples of on- and off-farm events that can have a significant impact on whether a farmer is successful or not.



Participants playing the Entre Farm Game led by Sanfred Smith and Livai Tora.

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### 9.1 Session outline

Good farm management principles and sound marketing skills – understanding these concepts and being able to teach them in the participant's context.

- Assessing your market
- Record keeping
- Costs of production
- Gross margin and profit calculations and benchmarking
- Cash flow
- Marketing tools
- Marketing costs and margins
- Integrating the business into family decision making

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### 9.2 Group activity

Divided into groups the participants play the Entre Farm Game and experience a hypothetical farm household situation over a 1 year period.

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## **10 Session 7: Standards and certifications – a key tool for marketing and market access**

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### **10.1 An overview**

Lead trainer Andrew McGregor provided an overview of the topic as it relates to agribusiness in the Pacific. The objective of session 7 is not to conduct an intensive training on the various standards and certifications but rather to give participants an introduction to the topics so that they can be in a better position to respond to queries/requests from their members. In most cases the role of standards and certifications as it relates to horticultural exports is on firstly securing market entry and access and then achieving price premiums. The purpose was to present a realistic overview of the various types of certification – the benefits and costs.

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### **10.2 New product quarantine certification – The Natures Way Case Study**

Natures Way General Manager Michael Brown covered quarantine certification for fresh produce. In recent years NWC has taken a lead role, on behalf of industry, in the preparation of market access submissions.

#### **10.2.1 Session outline**

- Failure to secure market access has resulted in substantial losses to farmers and the nation
- Realistic markets identified USA (papaya and breadfruit), New Zealand (wi, bitter melon, other gourds, jackfruit) and Australia (breadfruit, eggplant and baby ginger)
- What is being done to address the quarantine market access constraints
- The industry led market access initiative:
  - Papaya and breadfruit to the US; wi, jackfruit and gourds to NZ
  - Koronivia experimental HTFA unit
  - Pacific Horticultural Agricultural Market Access Project (PHAMA)

Power point presentation (available on reference CD)

#### **10.2.2 Major lessons learned and discussion**

- The Natures Way market access initiative provides lessons for all Pacific island countries.
- There is scope for collaboration between Pacific island countries for sharing information on market access submissions as many of the products and markets are the same and therefore the protocols are likely the same.
- Farmer organizations can have an important role to play in market access issues and this is a great service to members as it opens up new income generating opportunities.

## 10.3 The VOCGA Organic Certification Case Study

The Vanuatu Organic Cocoa Growers Association (VOCGA) has been successful at setting up an organic certification scheme that includes a large number of smallholder cocoa farmers. Pierre Watas, VOCGA's operations manager, presented the case study of VOCGA and the important role to organic certification has played in securing a strong, rewarding market for their cocoa.



VOCGA members at a cocoa collection centre on Malekula, Vanuatu.

### 10.3.1 Session outline

- Brief history and background - how was it initiated?
- Role of sustained, long term private sector involvement.
- Influence of government.
- How does certification work?
- Price premiums – conventional cocoa vs. organic cocoa?
- Importance of scale of production.

Power point presentation (available on reference CD)

### 10.3.2 Major lessons learned and discussion

Why has VOCGA been successful?

- a commodity that fits into a traditional farming system
- substantial long term investment of the private sector promoter
- intensive ongoing management supervision
- traditional crops (cocoa, coconut, coffee) are easier to certify than horticulture crops since they rarely received high external inputs – for this reason the price premiums are likely to be less



Organic cocoa on route to France

## 10.4 Fair Trade Certification

The purpose of this session was to introduce participants to Fair Trade certification and how it could be relevant in the Pacific. Discussion was lead by Talei Goater and Tim Martyn from the SPC FACT Project.

### 10.4.1 Session outline

- What is fair trade certification? Where is it applicable? Why?
- PNG Coffee case study
- Pros and cons of fair trade certification
- Scale requirements
- New opportunities

Power Point Presentation (available on reference CD)

### 10.4.2 Major lessons learned and discussion

- Fair trade is a different medium to get market access
- The problem for the Pacific islands agriculture is usually not the market (demand), the problem is the supply (volume and consistency). If there is inadequate supply fair trade can be a diversion (a number of recent examples from the Pacific).
- Much misinformation around Fair Trade, disruptive to Ag sector development. There is a need for correct supply information!
- So far, fair trade hasn't done much for the region, a question of if it is really worth it? Single origin certification – may be a better option.

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## 10.5 Food safety certification the Natures Way Case Study

The objective was to give participants an overview of what Food safety certification is all about and how it is becoming increasingly important for export industries. Discussion was led by Michael Brown ( NWC General Manager ) and Api Cegumalua (SPC FACT Project).

### 10.5.1 Training outline

- Why certification/ requirements of supermarkets?
- The most appropriate type of certification - Food processing facilities vs. produce packing. (GMP, HACCP etc.)
- Core management – relationship between food safety standards and BQAs.
- What has NWC done? What the rest of the industry needs to do?

Power Point Presentation (available on reference CD)

### 10.5.2 Major lessons learned and discussion

- Need to take on board if we want to participate in segments of global markets.
- Increasingly applies to fresh produce – not just processed food
- When deciding on rules and regulations for market access try to meet the purpose. Certify to purpose – don't set certification requirements above what the market wants. Consider implications on time, human factor and required investments. Fiji bilateral quarantine agreements were over specified initially by Fiji Quarantine and we continue to pay the price.
- Food safety has to start at the field

- HACCP and food safety are very important to access new markets (i.e. supermarket requirements).
- BUT: what does HACCP do to imports into Pacific Island Countries (i.e. examples of contaminated food)

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## 11 Session 8: Organising and managing small commercial out-growers

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### 11.1 An overview

Andrew McGregor provided an overview of organising and managing small commercial out-growers in the Pacific. Many horticulture industries in the Pacific depend entirely on small-holder farmers for their supply, which is important for rural livelihoods. There are a number of constraints that have to be overcome in working with outgrowers and this session was aimed at trying to bring out these issues from different case studies and presenting different management models.

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### 11.2 South Sea Orchids Case Study – Grower organization and wholesale marketing system

Aileen Burness, Manager of the SSO Women's Project presented her experience in establishing and managing a grower organization and wholesale marketing system. SSO now has over 120 out growers most of whom are rural women.

Power Point Presentation (available on reference CD)



**Aileen Burness, Manager of the SSO Women's Project with an out grower at Koroipita**

#### 11.2.1 Major lessons learned and discussion

- The need for contracts – grower loyalty cannot be assumed. Developing ethics a role for farmer organizations
- The importance of wholesale markets.
- Need to learn to crawl (supply domestic market) before attempting to run (export)
- Large hotels often don't support local producers, have their own production base and pay late (3 months after delivery!)

- Importance to develop wholesale markets
- Encourage farmers to do what they can do best: growing produce and leave marketing to marketers !
- The need to have enforceable contracts.

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## 11.3 Contract Farming – Fiji and global experience

Dr Charles Eaton, Foundation Fellow Institute for Regional Development University of WA), presented a general overview of contract farming in the Pacific and globally.

Power Point Presentation (available on reference CD)

### 11.3.1 Major lessons learned and discussion

Lessons from the Fiji tobacco industry – management and discipline are critical. Indigenous Fiji farmers have proven they can be amongst the best in the world however from a management point of view there are many issues that need to be resolved.

The requirements for success:

- Identified and established markets
- Suitable physical and social environment
- Secure land tenure for farmer & sponsor
- Adequate financial backing and support
- Readily available inputs
- Public utilities
- Appropriate production plan.

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## 11.4 The Vanuatu Organic Growers Association Case Study- Village Growers meetings international market standards

This section was presented by VOCCA operations manager Pierre Watas and aimed at sharing the VOCCA experience of managing small holder farmers to meet international market standards.

Power Point Presentation (available on reference CD).



Rural cocoa farmers on Malekula, Vanuatu

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### 11.4.1 Major lessons learned and discussion

- The participation of village youth in managing project
- Importance of getting the buy in of elders for youth project
- Strict enforcement of contracts
- Cash payment essential
- Management intensive.

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## 11.5 Tutu Rural Training Centre – Farming as a Business on Village Land

Fr Donato Kivi from the Tutu Rural Training Center presented on their experience working rural farmers who are moving from subsistence farming to supplying a commercial export market.



**Students planting and harvesting dalo at the Tutu Rural Training Center, Taveuni.**

Power Point Presentation (available on reference CD)

### 11.5.1 Major lessons learned and discussion

- Establishing commercial farmers in their home villages.
- Selection of the right people and the right crop.
- Agreement of family and clan essential for the success of the Young Farmers - close similarities between the VOCCA and Tutu experience.

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## **12 Session 9: Producer Organizations - Communications and Information**

This session is aimed at addressing the issue of communication and information flow. This broad topic includes the interpersonal communication within the farmer organizations as well as accessing information from outside sources relevant to the running of the organization.

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### **12.1 Facilitating communication between farmers, exporters and other stakeholders**

Kyle Stice and Livai Tora of the Fiji Papaya Project delivered this section aimed at providing practical information on their experience facilitating communication amongst stakeholders in the papaya value chain. It was stressed that farmer organizations have a critical role to play in assisting with this flow of information.

#### **12.1.1 Training outline**

- Importance of good communication
- Facilitating communication between farmers, exporters and other stakeholders
- Communication etiquette
- Professionalization of farmer organizations.

Power Point Presentation (available on reference CD)

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### **12.2 Utilising information in providing market and marketing information**

This section was delivered by Tim Martyn (SPC FACT) focused on the various information marketing systems that are available and how these might be relevant to Pacific farmer organizations.

Power Point Presentation (available on reference CD)

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### **12.3 Major lessons learned and discussion**

- The major problem observed during the work on the “Fiji red papaya” value chain is misinformation.
- VOCCA is a positive example, which is transparent and everyone appears to be well informed.
- Importance of using mobile phones and e-mail, but use them wisely (ref etiquette print out)
- Importance of being professional – show professionalism and stick to a certain level!
- What you send out is an indication of your professionalism! Watch out, e-mails can’t be taken back!
- E-mails are still something new! Remember to stick to professional rules and proper etiquette. Teach the people in your FOs to do it properly.
- Texting much cheaper and more generally accessible than email.

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## **13 Session 10: Financing investments in sustainable commercial farming and producer organizations**

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### **13.1 Overview**

Lead trainer Andrew McGregor provided an overview of this session and stressed the importance of financial sustainability and moving away from dependence on donors. The session was aimed at presenting several different models from the Pacific that participants could learn from.

Power Point Presentation (available on reference CD)

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### **13.2 NWC experience as a PPP**

NWC, General Manager Michael Brown presented the NWC experience operating as a public private partnership and how this can be a useful way to generate start-up and expansion capital. The NWC model has set very strict boundaries as to what is funded by the public sector so as not to allow for interference from the public sector in the running of the business.

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### **13.3 Applying the Tutu “oscillation” principle**

Fr Donato Kivi of the Tutu Rural Training Center presented on their experience working with root crop farmers to generate start and expansion capital for commercial farming and to meet family housing needs. The oscillation principle allows the Tutu students to move back and forth between their farm at the training centre and their farm in the village and results in a significant return from these farming efforts at the end of the course.

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### **13.4 VOCGA raising funds to invest in village agriculture**

This section was presented by VOCGA operations manager Pierre Watas and was aimed at sharing the VOCGA experience of raising funds to set up cocoa drying facilities in rural Vanuatu villages. Many of the lessons learnt by VOCGA are very applicable to other farmer organizations in the Pacific.

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### **13.5 Major lessons learned and discussion**

- There are many different models for generating income as a farmer organization and also as small holder farmers. The goal is to see what is applicable in the various situations.
- Farmer organizations need to move away from donor dependency and must have some way of supporting themselves if they are going to be viable in the long term.

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## **14 Session 11: Agriculture for Growth: Learning from experience in the Pacific – drawing conclusions for the Regional Training Course and the Recent FAO Study**

This session was facilitated by Andrew McGregor and was aimed at bringing together all of the information and case studies that were covered in the training course and allow participants to do some self reflection.

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### **14.1 Session outline**

- What is the purpose of your organization?
- How do you directly meet the needs of your members?
- What is our membership base and how can it be expanded?
- Do middlemen have a role?
- What is the most appropriate institutional structure for your organization?
- How does my organization contribute to the development of agriculture in my country?
- Is long term sustainability achievable without donor and government assistance?
- How do you generate income? Is this income sufficient for the operation of your organization in the long term?
- How do we contain overheads and other costs?

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### **14.2 Group activity**

Participants were asked to break up into country groups and reflect on the various sessions covered in the training course. The participants were also asked to record the most relevant information from the sessions and explain how they were going to apply this information when they return to their home.

The findings of this group activity are presented below:

#### **14.2.1 Samoa Group**

- People management: disciplinary action dealing with breaching of contracts
- Action/projects have to be long term (i.e. Tutu is running for 30 years, VOCCA took 10 years)
- Need for proper information flow, especially about market related issues.
- Farmers need to understand the complexity of marketing systems, its costs, etc.
- Programmes/Projects need to be adapted to match countries need. Simple copying of approaches working in one country, do not necessarily work under the socio-economic and cultural conditions in other countries.

#### **14.2.2 Vanuatu Group**

- Outgrower agreement, members not supplying through the buyer.
- Importance for buyers to have own farm/supply to ensure minimum supply in case out growers cannot supply or side selling.
- Importance for buyers to be strict

- Define clearly what needs to go into the contract to provide business security for both sides/partners: buyers and growers!
- Linkage between tourism and agriculture – important to study and learn to take advantages of the linkages.
- Tutu: take the lessons learnt home and adopt for home situation (method, direction). Importance to understand your own people first!!!

### 14.2.3 Papua New Guinea Group

- Tutu experience as well as VOCCA cooperative: building long-term trust is the foundation for cooperative action. Churches can play an important role to built trust relation-ship.
- NWC treatment facility: in Fiji more exporters are proactive and having a driving role than in PNG.
- Important of elders willingness to hand over leadership and responsibilities in farming and marketing to young generation.
- Crucial role of farmer organizations to take on important standards. Drive the process in order for the Government to institutionalize standards.

### 14.2.4 Solomon Islands Group

- Trust between farmers and the organization and/or exporters.
- Commitment to comply with signed agreement (i.e. support contracts)
- Follow the rule of the game (like in soccer or netball), then there is a reasonable chance of success.
- Refers to the lessons learned from the three case studies.

### 14.2.5 Fiji Group

- Teaching skills should not depend on others (i.e. don't wait for donor or government or projects)
- Most important for business success: documentation and recording system: investments, margin (financial and process oriented, BQA) – Record keeping
- Certification under HACCP compliance would provide comparative advantage for NWC in the international market.
- Tutu: economics of scale, example yaqona, if you have sufficient # of plants in the ground you still have reasonable returns and cash flow to keep the business going.

### 14.2.6 Tonga Group

- Difficult to access export markets
- Create and develop initiatives to promote management of value chains
- Ensure all stakeholder involved
- Investment needs to be recovered.

## 15 Annexes

### 15.1 Programme

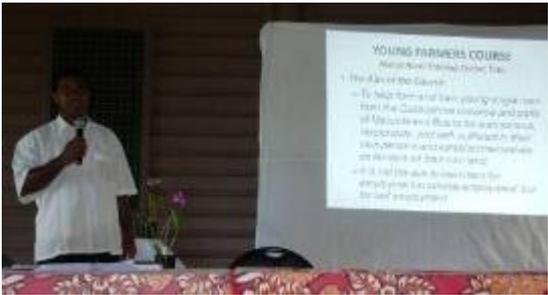
Dates	Time	Activity
May 1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup>		Participants arrive in Fiji and are transported to Tanoa International Hotel.
May 3 <sup>rd</sup> (Monday)		Breakfast at hotel.
	8:30 am	Bus pick-up from Hotel – drop off at NWC facility.
	8.45 – 9.30am	Registration (in Marque)
	9:30 am	Official opening - Sant Kumar (Chairman of the Fiji Fruit and Vegetable Council). Michael Brown MC
	10.00 am	Morning tea
	10:30 am	Introduction to workshop participants', resource personnel and program (in Marque). Michael Brown (GM Natures Way Cooperative) Andrew McGregor (Koko Siga Fiji Ltd.) /Heiko Bammann (FAO)
	11:30 pm	Comprehensive Tour of NWC treatment facility -Michael Brown, Shameem Khan (Leading Hand NWC)

	12:30 pm	Lunch
	2:00 pm	Introduction to national activities –MFFN Secretariat/Heiko Bammann FAO
	2.45 – 4.30 pm	National activity reports (Chairperson - Inia Barry) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Solomon Islands (Kastom Gaden)</li> <li>- Vanuatu (Farm Support Association)</li> <li>- Samoa (Women in Business Inc. and Samoan Farmers Association)</li> <li>- Fiji Papaya value chain activity (Session 4)</li> </ul>
	4.30 - 5.30 pm	Discussion of National Activities
	5 pm	Bus departs NWC for Tanoa International.
<b>May 4<sup>th</sup> (Tuesday)</b>		Breakfast at hotel.
	8:00 am	Bus departs for NWC
	8.30 am	<b>Session 1 : The Natures Way Cooperative Case Study</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Presentation</b> (Andrew McGregor and Michael Brown)</li> <li>- <b>Group exercise</b> (Andrew McGregor Facilitator) – relating case study to my own organization</li> </ul>
	10 – 10.30 am	Morning tea
	10.30 am	<b>Presentation of group findings</b>
	12:00 pm	Lunch

	<p>1 – 2.30 pm</p>	<p><b>Session 2: Overview Fiji Horticultural Export Industry: Current Status and Future Prospects</b></p> <p><b>Presentation</b> - Sant Kumar and Kyle Stice (Activity Leader, ACIAR Fiji Papaya Project)</p>
	<p>2.30 – 5 pm</p>	<p><b>Session 3: Training in Supply Chain Management</b></p> <p><b>Presentation – The Fiji Papaya Value Chain Project</b> - Livai Tora (Fiji Papaya Project Farm Manager) and Kyle Stice</p> <p><b>Group activity</b> (Facilitators Heiko Bammann, Kyle Stice and Livai Tora) Participants are to pick a product and a market close to their organizations, describe the value chain and identify key constraints and inefficiencies.</p> <p>Presentation of homework exercise in preparation for - <b>Using the Entre Game - Farming as a business (The Case of Fiji Papaya)</b> - (Sanfred Smith (SPC/FACT Project) and Livai Tora(Fiji Papaya Project)</p>
	<p>5:30 pm</p>	<p>Bus departs NWC for Tanoa International hotel</p>
<p><b>May 5<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday)</b></p>		<p>Breakfast at hotel.</p>
	<p>7.30 am</p>	<p>Depart Tanoa for Sigatoka Valley.</p>
	<p>9.00 – 11.15</p>	<p><b>Session 4: Farm tours</b></p> <p><b>- Observe the Fiji Papaya Project trials</b> (Livai Tora and Timote Waqainbete) – with particular emphasis on the organic papaya economic viability trial.</p>

		<p>– <b>Observe papaya harvesting and purchasing by PSL</b> – Barry Ladewig (PSL’s Operations Manager) and Kyle Stice</p>
	11.15 am	Depart for Mahen Exports
	11.30 – 1.00	<p><b>Session 5: Briefing on Mahen Exports Operations</b> (Saten Kumar - Mahen Exports GM and Sant Kumar )</p> <p>- commodities handled, supply chains, buying arrangements and relationships with farmers, grading and packaging.</p>
	1.00 -2.00 pm	Lunch at Mahens Export
	2.30 – 5:00 pm	<p><b>Session 6: Farming as a business (The Case of Fiji Papaya) - Using the Entre Game</b> (Sigatoka Research Station Bure)</p> <p><b>Facilitators</b> - Sanfred Smith and Livai Tora</p> <p>Good farm management principles and sound marketing skills – understanding these concepts and being able to teach them in the participant’s context.</p> <p><b>Presentation and group discussion in economics of organic production/certification</b> - Fiji organic papaya case study (Livai Tora/Sanfred Smith)</p>
	5:00 pm	Bus departs Sigatoka Valley for Tanoa International
<b>May 6<sup>th</sup> (Thursday)</b>		Breakfast at hotel.
	8:00 am	Bus departs Tanoa for NWC

	<p>8:30 am</p>	<p><b>Session 7: Standards and certifications – a key tool for marketing and market access</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>An overview</b> (Andrew McGregor)</li> <li>- <b>New product quarantine certification</b> – The Natures Way Case Study (Michael Brown)</li> <li>- <b>The VOCGA Organic Certification Case Study</b> (Pierre Watas VOCGA Manager )</li> <li>- <b>Fair Trade Certification</b> (Talei Goater and Tim Martyn)</li> <li>- <b>Food Safety certification</b> – the Natures Way Case Study (Michael Brown/Api Cegumalua) Fiji Vanilla Case Study (Andrew McGregor/ Api Cegumalua)</li> <li>- <b>PHAMA update</b> – Andrew McGregor</li> </ul>
	<p>1:00 pm</p>	<p>Lunch</p>
	<p>2:00 pm</p>	<p>Depart NWC for South Sea Orchids (SSO)</p>

	<p>2:15 pm</p>	<p><b>Tour and overview of South Sea Orchids operations</b> (Don and Aileen Burness)</p>
  	<p>2:45 pm</p>	<p><b>Session 8: Organising and managing small commercial out-growers</b></p> <p>Presentations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>An overview</b> (Andrew McGregor)</li> <li>- <b>South Sea Orchids Case Study – Grower organization and wholesale marketing system</b> –Aileen Burness (Manager of the SSO Women’s Project) and Kyle Stice</li> <li>- <b>Contract Farming – Fiji and global experience</b> - Dr Charles Eaton Foundation Fellow Institute for Regional Development University of WA)</li> <li>- <b>The Vanuatu Organic Growers Association Case Study- Village Growers meetings international market standards</b> –( Pierre Watas)</li> <li>- <b>Tutu Rural Training Centre – Farming as a Business on Village Land</b> (Fr Donato Kivi and Livai Tora)</li> <li>- <b>A group exercise</b> – lessons learnt from the case studies</li> </ul>
	<p>5:30 pm</p>	<p>Return to Tanoa Hotel</p>

<p><b>May 7<sup>th</sup> (Friday)</b></p>		<p>Breakfast at hotel.</p>
	<p>7:00 am</p>	<p>Depart Tanoa for NWC</p>
	<p>7:15 am</p>	<p>Observe grading and treatment of PSL papaya</p>
	<p>8:30 am</p>	<p><b>Session 9: Producer Organizations - Communications and Information</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Overview</b> – Kyle Stice and Levai Tora</li> <li>- <b>Facilitating communication between farmers, exporters and other stakeholders</b> – Kyle Stice, Livai Tora and Pierre Watas</li> <li>- <b>Sources of market and marketing information</b> – Tim Martyn</li> <li>- <b>Utilising information in providing market and marketing information</b> – Tim Martyn</li> <li>- <b>Hands on exercises in communications and information technology</b> (Facilitator Tim Martyn )</li> </ul>
	<p>10:30 am</p>	<p><b>Session 10: Financing investments in sustainable commercial farming and producer organizations</b></p> <p><b>Presentations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Overview</b> – Andrew McGregor</li> <li>• <b>NWC experience as a PPP</b> – Michael Brown</li> <li>• <b>Applying the Tutu “oscillation” principle</b> – Fr Donato Kivi and Livai Tora</li> <li>• <b>VOCGA raising funds to invest in village agriculture</b>– Pierre Watas</li> </ul> <p><b>Group activity</b> (facilitator Andrew McGregor) – lessons from the case studies and achieving sustainability for own organization</p> <p><b>Presentation of group findings</b></p>

		
	12:30 pm	Observe unloading and packing of PSL papaya (Kyle Stice, Livai Tora and Shameem Khan)
	1:00 pm	Lunch
	2.00 pm	<b>Session 11. Agriculture for Growth: learning from experience in the Pacific – drawing conclusions for the Regional Training Course and the Recent FAO Study</b> (Facilitator Andrew McGregor)
	3:00 pm	<b>Update on Regional initiatives that relate to producer organization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SPC FACT</li> <li>• PARDI (Amos Gyau)</li> <li>• PHAMA (Andrew McGregor)</li> </ul>
	3:30 pm	<b>Determining priorities for next phase of the EU AAACP programme</b> (Facilitator Inia Barry and Heiko Bammann).
	5:00 pm	Participants return to Tanoa International
	7:30 pm	<b>Closing dinner</b>
<b>May 8<sup>th</sup> (Saturday)</b>	Breakfast	Breakfast at hotel.
	Schedule TBD	

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## 15.3 Summary of Training Course Evaluation

### SECTION 1

### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

N=19

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree	No reply
	1	2	3	4	5	
1.1 Overall, you were satisfied with the training course				4	11	4
1.2 Your initial expectations were met			1	3	11	4

#### What are the key lessons learnt?

- starting small
- The little things that count
- Importance of business in farming
- Commitment and hard work are key
- Record keeping is the main key for any organization.
- Understanding the risk of running your business and be able learn to from them.
- How to deal with misinformation, improve producer-buyer relationships.
- Using Entre game to teach farmers about agribusiness
- Importance of creating a good network with farmers.
- The lessons I have learnt are communication in all forms, restructure of our management, and the importance of developing and implementing a strategy for financial sustainability.
- Determination is important for the success in any agribusiness
- Proper facilitation and regular monitoring is important.
- Trust and information flow through to farmers from the top down. Everyone on the chain plays significant roles that can be complimented by each other.
- I have learnt that people management is the main key to success.
- Working as team and finding support to get information/ go out and look for information.
- How to build positive relationships with all the stakeholders and how to address the issue.

**What will you take back with you to your organization and counterparts?**

- Importance of presentation of produce
- So many crops we can export which lies rotten on trees
- keeping records
- A clear communication with farms.
- Meeting all the necessary HACCP standards
- Take back the training material and information and teaching farmers about agribusiness
- Run the association in agribusiness. Follow up on market access for our members.
- To empowering farmers to produce quality products and create cooperative and market access.
- Learning from other projects and utilizing the problem solving they have done.
- Marketing value chain and strengthening the linkage between customers to farmers.

**How useful have the sessions been to you personally?**

- Very helpful - there are so many areas for improvement
- Social experiences and knowing what other organizations have achieved in their countries.
- Excellent workshop and wish to attend more of these workshops in the near future.
- Workshop has given me a lot of important information about networking.
- I learn a lot from the workshop on agribusiness as I'm a farmer.
- A lot of the material was very important and useful as they are real life experiences.
- Gained a lot of knowledge to encourage others with.
- Highlight the main issue that are present in the agribusiness and ways to deal with them.
- Most important session was the case study about Natures Way Cooperative, exporting, certificate issues and the market study.
- Learning different approaches of capacity building and creating good contacts for networking.

**What can the Organisers do to improve the next workshop?**

- We can invite more successful farmers from the grass root level that suits the Pacific.
- Finding a better venue

- Programme was compact
- Too noisy
- Everything was excellent, however, would like to see more field trips.
- To provide participants with more time and an outline for their presentations.
- It is important to rotate the workshop around the Pacific islands.
- Include more case studies and field trips.

## **SECTION 2WORKSHOP PROGRAMME AND PRESENTATIONS**

Please rate the following according to the presentations that were made and your initial expectations.

		Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree	No reply
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	
2.1	Structure of programme was well organised around the expected results of the workshop			4	4	10	1
2.2	Training course introduction was clearly outlined		1	4	4	9	1
2.3	Adequate time was devoted for each presentation topic		2	3	5	9	
2.4	The interaction amongst the participants and facilitators/presenters/trainers were good			2	10	7	
2.5	The topics covered were relevant to course objectives			3	5	11	
2.6	The balance between different topics was satisfactory		1		9	8	1
		Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree	No reply
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	
1	Introduction to the EU AAACP and capacity building activities for Farmer Organizations in the Pacific			2	4	12	
2	Presentation by National Organizations (individual FO reps)			3	6	9	1
3	Natures Way Cooperative Case Study (Andrew and Michael)			1	3	15	
4	Group work: relate the NWC case to my own organization (Andrew)				3	16	
5	Overview of Fiji Horticultural Export Industry (Kyle and Sant)				7	12	
6	Group work in Supply Chain Management (Kyle)			3	3	13	
7	The Entre Game: Farming as a Business			3	2	14	

	(Sanfred)						
8	Session 7 on Standards and Certification (Andrew/various)		1	3	7	8	
9	Session 8 on Organizing and managing small commercial out-growers (Andrew/various)			2	7	10	
10	Session 9 on Producer Organizations – Communications and Information (Kyle and Levai/various)			3	3	13	
11	Session 10 on Financing investments in sustainable commercial farming and producer organizations (Andrew/various)			2	6	9	2
12	Session 11 on Agriculture for Growth: learning from experience			2	4	11	1

<b>SECTION 3 FIELD VISIT, Tours, Catering</b>							
		Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree	No reply
		1	2	3	4	5	
1	NWC – Comprehensive Tour of NWC treatment facility				3	15	1
2	PAPAYA TRIALS and DEMONSTRATION – East Bank, Sigatoka River			1	5	12	1
3	PSL: harvesting of papaya and visit of productive plot - East Bank, Sigatoka River			2	5	11	1
4	Mahen Exports Operation - West Bank, Sigatoka River			2	6	10	1
5	Tour and Overview of South Sea Orchids operations				2	16	1
7	Snacks			2	4	12	1
8	Lunch			2	2	14	1

**SECTION 5 METHODOLOGY**

		Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree	No reply
		1	2	3	4	5	

1.	Training methods used were appropriate			2	9	7	1
2.	Presentations were clear			5	7	6	1
3.	Theory and practice were well-balanced			4	7	7	1
4.	The pace during the course was adequate		1	6	5	6	1
5.	Intensity was satisfactory		1	3	7	7	1

## **SECTION 6 LOGISTICS AND ORGANIZATIONAL ASPECTS**

		Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree	No reply
		1	2	3	4	5	
1.	Background information was timely and sufficient		1	4	1	13	
2.	The organization of your trip was satisfactory (travel, arrival, welcome)			3	4	12	
3.	Accommodation was satisfactory				3	15	1
4.	In general, the working conditions were acceptable		1	3	1	13	1
5.	Training facilities were adequate (equipment, materials)			2	2	15	
6.	Catering conditions were satisfactory			4	4	11	
7.	Lunch was satisfactory			4	1	14	
8.	Coffee break was satisfactory		2	2	2	13	

### **Other comments on Logistics and organizational aspects, if any?**

- Workshop was intensive and if coffee could be available at all times.
- I think the logistic and organization for this workshop was good.
- Allow more discussion on certain presentations.

## **SECTION 6                      FOLLOW-UP ACTION**

**What follow-up action would you suggest for your own organization as it relates to the workshop?**

- Sending more key people to these types of workshops.
- Take all the information from the workshop and utilize them in my future plans.
- To have a cooperative structure in helping link up with small holders for markets access.
- Vegetable nursery techniques.
- Farming as business - keeping records.
- Revisit our value chain, work hard on the production, identify any new or niche markets locally or export for members & build up linkages to all parties involved.
- To link up with participants for collaboration and information sharing.
- FAO to monitor the progress and support the organization to improve market access.
- Get people to build a HTFA facility in Tonga and bring them to NWC to learn the operational function of this type of facility, with the assistance of a donor organization.
- Information sharing.
- Educating farmers about market demands and specifically producing to what the market needs with clear communication.

## **SECTION 7                      GENERAL COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS**

- It was a good experience for every organization to meet together and build networks to communicate what has been successful and what problems each other are facing.
- This workshop is very important for farmer's organization in upgrading their skills; government in our country does not provide this type of vital information to farmer's organizations.
- To provide participants an opportunity to present about their organization; important issue and ideas on how to better achieve our targets.
  - Linkages and communication between all players in the trade is very important. It is good to share with other organizations on their success like Natures Way Cooperative.
  - This workshop was very enlightening. Hope to continue participating in the future workshops. Overall, it was really great.
  - The workshop was well organized and meeting different participants on what they have achieved. If there were possibilities in creating an organization that would support, do training workshops for pacific countries and market access as well.

- Really help me in developing and understanding ways of improving communication with farmers.
- The training overall is very helpful, resourceful and effective for me to apply on my organization. Will be better if more of these regional trainings take place.