



FAAILOA



"... enhancing partnerships to develop and sustain agriculture and fisheries...."

June 2021

FAAILOA NEWSLETTER



TALANOA about Food!

"Food and nutrition security exists when all people at all times have physical, social and economic access to food, which is safe and consumed in sufficient quantity and quality to meet their dietary needs and food preferences, and is supported by an environment of adequate sanitation, health services and care, allowing for a healthy and active life'. It covers availability, access, utilization and stability issues in a food system."

- **World Food Summit Declaration, 1996.**

The National Dialogue on Food is led by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries with the Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Tilafono David Hunter as the National Convener with the support of the National Curator Matatumua Taimalietane Matatumua leading a Multi Sectoral Coordinating Committee (MSCC) to ensure the successful design, implementation and reporting of Samoa's dialogue to the global Food Systems Dialogue Summit.



NATIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS DIALOGUE CONTINUES

Tuesday, 8th June, 2021

Lava Hotel, Conference Room

The United Nations will organize a Global Food Systems Summit in September 2021, to bring together stakeholder groups to explore, debate and shape pathways to sustainable food systems that will contribute to all Sustainable Development

Goals. Samoa, recognizing the value of food systems as part of its culture, environment and economy has answered the call by agreeing to undertake the Member States or National Dialogue.

The future and driving force behind the growth of our economy is in the four main focus areas. One of these areas is Agriculture and Fisheries.

Food system dialogues are not all about what to eat. Rather a more in depth discussion on the interplay of all activities involved in producing, processing, transportation and consumption of food.

According to the Samoa Household Income and Expenditure Survey (2018 HIES) in 2018, less than 1 person out of 20 is undernourished. However, the analysis of the information collected in the same survey also finds that about one person in four does not have access to safe and nutritious food. This puts a one quarter of the population at greater risk of various forms of malnutrition and poor health than a food secure population, which has better access to safe and nutritious food.

In this third dialogue it's main purpose is to inform stakeholders and development partners who were invited of the challenges and opportunities supporting initiatives that contribute to the sustainable development and enhanced performance of Samoa's Food System.

The discussion session started with welcoming and opening remarks by the Chairman and Convener; CEO for the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Tilafono David Hunter. The first presentations were by the Curator and ACEO for MAF Policy, Planning and Communication Division; Taimalietane Matatumua, on the message from the UN Special Envoy and then a Progress Update of the Samoa National Food System Summit Dialogue. Taimalietane also emphasized on the challenges; solutions and areas of trade offs, in the access to safe and nutritional food for all, shift to sustainable consumption patterns, boost nature positive production, advance equitable livelihoods and building resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress.

The forum discussion was facilitated by Afuamua Lafaele Enoka; a private consultant and is also a former project coordinator for SACEP Project which is now known as SAFPROM.



MARKET ACCESS FRESH TARO TO AUSTRALIA

24th June, 2021

Tanoa Hotel Conference room



The PHAMA Program was first established in Samoa in 2011 to maintain and improve existing market access, and create new markets by developing the capacity of the public and private sectors to meet export market requirements. It is currently in its third phase that started in 2018 through to 2022.

PHAMA and MAF have been working together to identify challenges and create solutions to support sustainable development through Agricultural initiatives to ensure food security, income generation and enhanced export capacity.

As a contribution to this focus, the PHAMA Plus program organised and coordinated a one day meeting.

A presentation was delivered by Samoa Coordinator for PHAMA Plus, Asua Kirifi Pouone giving stakeholders an update on the Market Access Process. Senior representatives from the relevant divisions also gave presentations outlining the Operations Manual and the use of Hot Water Treatment as a potential measure to manage TLB.

Samoa's taro industry was greatly affected by the Taro Leaf Blight in 1993 for the first time. In 2011 our export was prohibited due to TLB and in 2012, a request was then made to re-open the export of taro from Samoa to Australia.

In 2014, the new Market Access for frozen pathway was opened and was commercialised in 2016 by Samoa Tradition Farmers and Growers (STFG) scaling up opportunities with other exporters, Samoa Agromarketing, USO Agrifoods, Savaii and Produce.

In September 2019, a technical submission was made for the market access request of fresh taro highlighting on the systems approach and biosecurity protocol to manage TLB. In March this year, Australia was satisfied with their review of the Biosecurity Protocol as it can adequately mitigate the biosecurity risks including those associated with TLB.

In his speech, the Caretaker Minister explained that current exports of Samoan taro varieties which are highly resistant to TLB, are valued at WST \$38.2 million presenting a more valuable and cost-effect option than frozen taro due to its high refrigeration costs - which is why exporting fresh taro to Australia is a priority for Government of Samoa.

In his concluding comments, Lopao'o emphasized the importance of holding stakeholder consultations as being vital to opening Samoa's pathway to fresh taro exports into the Australian Market.

"Our farmers are now producing high yielding taro varieties with tolerance to TLB, excellent eating quality, high quality nutritional profile and good shelf-life" he said. "These varieties are well positioned to meet the market demand from the Polynesian community in Australia who are seeking high quality taro from Samoa.

"This is why our consultation this morning is so very important because the success of your consultations will mean fresh taro exports being allowed back into Australia. It will also mean more money for our farmers; more money to meet family commitments; more money to develop our economy, and more money to improve the quality of life of our people."



MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO BENEFIT LOCAL FARMERS:

PPCR Handover Ceremony

25th June 2021

Crops Division, Nu'u Station



A ceremony was held at Nu'u for some 800 registered farmers under Serendi Coco and Women in Business Development Inc. The farmers will benefit from the Pilot Programme for Climate Resilience (PPCR ECR Project) and will receive tools and equipment from the project through the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and will be distributed to Serendi Coco farmers and WIBDI eligible organic farmers.

Items including machetes, drainage spades, planting sticks, secateurs, pruning saws, sharpening tools, chainsaws and pig fencing, are to be distributed.

In his opening remarks the Caretaker Minister Lopao'o Natanielu Mua thanked Serendi Coco and WIBDI for their work and on-going support to farmers and called for the local organisations to focus on helping their most vulnerable farmers when distributing the tools and equipment,

“Thank you to our Non-Government agencies Serendi Coco and WIBDI for the work well done and on-going support – we have proven that the multidisciplinary approach worked and as a team we have assisted each other achieve and successfully completed this project. I call upon your organizations to please help the most vulnerable farmers because those farmers who have little or no jobs are working hard to develop their plantations” said Lopao'o.

With 147 eligible farmers in their registry, WIBDI Representative, Fuimaono Rosalia Polataivao said the assistance was timely given that the organization had recently invited new families to join the organic farmers under their coconut replanting scheme and the tools and equipment would encourage them to work the land rather than rely on chemicals,

“We are very happy with the help MAF has given us especially since our work is targeting the most vulnerable families in our registry whom we have invited through our replanting scheme to join the organic farmers. All these farmers are new except the ones from our certified villages in Savaii who have been working with us for almost a decade now and are included in our replanting scheme so we want to encourage these new organic farmers to keep on planting coconuts because this niche market is the most sustainable for them and for Samoa as a whole.”

Local business Serendi Coco had the largest share of beneficiaries in their registry with 860 farmers set to receive new tools and equipment. Co-Managing Director of Serendi Coco, Tuai Peter Ripley said operating under organic principles has been a challenging concept for Samoan farmers to adopt after years of using chemicals to clear the land but equipping farmers with resources can help towards breaking those habits.

“We thank the donors that we have another avenue to reward our farmers, especially our small holder farmers who supply 80 percent of our coconuts,” said Tuai. “We appreciate KVA Consultants for having the confidence in us to deliver this project and we also salute the Minister and Ministry for their continuous support and recognition of the private sector as a trusted partner in developing agriculture in Samoa.”

“We hope for more opportunities and funding to stimulate our farmers to develop the land with the attitude of the most respect to the environment and the systems existing in and around ‘Her’. We will continue to work with our farmers and encourage them to replant coconuts because if we don’t do it now, our industry will face enormous struggles in the future. We are looking first to assess what our farmers need and strike a balance between rewarding the farmers who have supplied the most while also helping those who are trying to develop.”

The tools and equipment were funded by the PPCR ECR Project through the World Bank which began in 2009 and officially closed last week after benefitting 100 villages and 22 districts through sub-projects aimed at enhancing community resilience by developing and implementing immediate and urgent activities to assist targeted communities of Samoa adapt to climate variability and climate change.

