

Special Edition

SSOAP's Task Force Team has proposed some recommendations for Policy Makers & Development Partners to hit the nail on head for Agricultural Development in Samoa for the next five years (2025-2030).

Priority Areas for Agricultural Development in Samoa (2025–2030)

By the “Samoa Society of Agricultural Professionals (SSOAP)”

Introduction

Samoa's agriculture sector is at a turning point. Confronted with declining production, rising food prices, persistent labor shortages, and growing climate-related pressures, bold and strategic action is urgently required. Achieving national food security, strengthening economic resilience, and ensuring long-term sustainability will depend on well-targeted, evidence-based interventions, with guiding policies.

From a technical and non-partisan standpoint, the Samoa Society of Agricultural Professionals (SSOAP) identifies the following ten priority areas for agricultural development over the next five years. We present these recommendations to support policymakers and development partners in making timely, effective, and impactful decisions.

Recommendations

1. Modernize Main Crop Farming

- a. Objective:** Shift from subsistence farming to mechanized, market-oriented production.
 - i.** Develop high-yield land for farmers by using agricultural machinery, supported by development partners.
 - ii.** Remove rocks from existing cultivated areas to improve land usability, enhancing productivity for current and future generations.
 - iii.** Expand plantations such as cocoa, kava, coconut, breadfruit and banana using appropriate mechanization.

2. Promote Facility-Based Agriculture

- a. Objective:** Introduce efficient production systems that save land and labour.
 - i.** Scale up opportunities such as hydroponic systems for high-value crops (lettuce, tomato, capsicum, cucumber) to mitigate labour shortages and soil-borne diseases.
 - ii.** Promote the use of plastic tunnel houses with drip irrigation, insect netting, and mini-tillage tools to protect crops from adverse weather and pests.

3. Introduce Improved Crop Varieties

a. Objective: Improve crop resilience and productivity through modern breeding techniques and access to already proven results.

- i. Develop and distribute climate-resilient crop varieties (e.g., disease-resistant banana and taro, heat-tolerant vegetables).
- ii. Strengthen the seed industry by producing and promoting open-pollinated and high-quality seeds.

4. Develop Livestock and Poultry Industries

a. Objective: Enhance local meat production and reduce import dependency.

- i. Improve pasture systems (e.g., rotational grazing, high-protein forage pastures/crops).
- ii. Promote artificial insemination (AI) to improve livestock genetics.
- iii. Support cost-effective free-range broiler production using tunnel housing and fencing for extra protection.
- iv. Upgrade hatchery, feed production, and veterinary services.

5. Adoption of Crop-livestock-biogas Agriculture

a. Objective: Promote sustainability through a recycling agro-ecosystem to increase livestock and feed production.

- i. Develop crop-livestock-biogas models: cultivate feed crops, raise pigs and poultry, and process waste into biogas and organic fertilizer.
- ii. Enhance resource efficiency and minimize environmental impact.

6. Strengthen Fisheries and Aquaculture

a. Objective: Diversify income sources and increase protein supply from marine and freshwater systems.

- i. Establish a regional fishing transit hub providing refueling, ice, and boat repair services.
- ii. Promote sustainable aquaculture (e.g., tilapia, sea cucumber, fresh water shrimp) to expand rural livelihoods.
- iii. Enforce responsible fishing to prevent overexploitation.

7. Development/Expansion of Agricultural Processing Industries/ and value added farm.

a. Objective: Add value at farm level and improve export potential of agricultural products.

- i. **Cocoa & Coffee:** Invest in technology such as solar dryers, roasters, grinders, winnowers, and packaging for premium koko samoa brand and chocolate production.
- ii. **Noni & Lemon Juice:** Upgrade processing and packaging in such commodities for export/domestic markets.
- iii. **Taro & Breadfruit:** Develop such commodities with opportunities in frozen, flour, and snack products for domestic and export use.
- iv. **Coconut & Kava:** Expand production of businesses such as cold-pressed coconut oil, kava powder and kava lactone for health and wellness industries.

8. Increase Agricultural Investment

a. Objective: Increase capital flow into agriculture through public and private channels.

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- i. Commit a fixed percentage of the national budget to agriculture (e.g., 10%) to target 6% annual growth.
- ii. Create designated agricultural investment zones and targeted developments on public land.
- iii. Attract FDI and local private investment in line with Responsible Agricultural Investment (RAI) principles.

9. Strengthen International Cooperation

- a. **Objective:** Leverage national and global expertise and financial resources for local development.
 - i. Strengthen collaboration with international agencies (FAO, IFAD, ADB, World Bank, SPC, etc.) and local agencies (i.e., SSOAP) for effective delivery.
 - ii. Deepen regional and bilateral partnerships with New Zealand, Australia and neighboring Pacific nations for technology transfer and market access.
 - iii. Agritourism: Agriculture driven tourism initiative through adopting the Italian Model at farm level.

10. Supporting More Commercial farming

- a. **Objective:** Strengthen medium and large-scale, stable agricultural production.
 - i. Support 500 commercial farms across crops, livestock, fisheries, and agro-processing.
 - ii. Aim for commercial farms to contribute 50% of national agricultural output.

Conclusion

Modernizing agriculture is no longer a choice—it is a necessity. By focusing on innovation, investment, and sustainability, Samoa can reduce food imports, raise rural incomes, and build a climate-resilient agricultural economy.

SSOAP remains committed to supporting the government, development partners, and the farming community in achieving this transformative vision.

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