

Ministry of Agriculture



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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

World Food Day 1

2019 Juniors Classes Careers Expo 2

Vaka Pride Judging 3

White Ribbon Campaign 3

Agriculture Wins Tiare Week 4

Staff & Family Retreat 4

Coconut Industry Development for the Pacific (CIDP) 5

3 Excavators for the Pa Enea 6

PSC Merit Award for Agriculture 7

MOU signed with Bluesky & now Telecom Cook Islands Ltd 8

World Food Day 2019

The annual World Food Day was celebrated on Friday 18th October 2019 at the Punanga Nui Market. This years theme was "Healthy Actions for Zero Hunger" focusing on healthy diets – Our actions are our future!"

World Food Day 2019 calls for us to take action to make healthy and sustainable diets accessible and affordable to everyone.

For this, partnerships are fundamental. Farmers, women, emerging farmers, government Ministries, the private sector, consumers. We all have a role to play!

Farmers need incentives to increase and diversify the production of high quality food.

Government Ministries need to adopt policies, food standards and regulations that prioritize the availability and affordability of safe and nutritious foods.

The private sector can positively influence the food environment by adapting its products to modern nutritional recommendations.

Individuals need to think about their food choices and eating patterns through awareness and learning.

The Ministry of Agriculture wants to increase the production and consumption of high quality foods through increased agriculture activities, technology and innovations.

Following the official opening by the Secretary of Agriculture Mrs Temarama Anguna-Kamana, the sale of produce commenced.

Partners in this years WFD included Cook Islands Tourism, BTIB, Health, organic farmers Io Vakapora, private entrepreneurs – Teava Iro, Sunshine George, Kaota Tuariki, June Hosking. The Chefs Association also held a cooking competition for primary school students.



Sale of Organic Vegetables

The Ministry would like to offer its appreciation to Cook Islands Tourism CEO Mr Halatoa Fua, Mr Metua Vai'imene and Aunty Nane Matapo for their assistance with this years World Food Day 2019.



Cooking Competition for primary students

2019 Junior classes Careers

Expo

A 2019 Junior classes Careers Expo was held on the 20th and 21st of November at the Auditorium Domes in Avarua, hosted by the Ministry of Education.



The theme for the expo was *'Inspire and Inform'* students on the range of exciting opportunities available to them in the Cook Islands.

For the Ministry's booth, Day 1 focused on the Biosecurity division. Students were presented with a tray of insect specimens under a microscope to take a closer look. The students expressed their enthusiasm and awe as they got to

see tiny details of insects that they would not normally get the chance to see.

The students were also very keen on receiving prizes and when told that they would only be given prizes if they could correctly answer agriculture based questions, they were more than willing to try their best to answer them. This helped to initiate conversations between students and the agriculture team about agriculture and the variety of areas the ministry covers.

Students were surprised to learn that agriculture was not solely based on planting and that it had a hand in almost every aspect of their lives.

Day two focused on Crop Research and the roles involved in this division. The Ministry's tractor was displayed for the students to see and learn about how it is operated and used on the field.

The second part of demonstration for Crop Research was headed by Teariki Turua who demonstrated his role as a nursery technician. He had brought a variety of seedlings, trays and soil that is used by the Ministry for planting. The students were able to witness the process of transplanting first-hand.

Thank you to the Ministry's Careers Expo team of Ake, Aru, Tino, Teariki & Lawrence.



Titikaveka students posed for a picture at the Agriculture booth.

Vaka Pride Judging

The 13th round of the Vaka Pride judging for the Peu Maori category included:

Flower Gardens

Boys Brigade & Boys Scouts

Blue Light Program for the Tupuranga Tangata

Selected clinics for the community services categories.

Aketairi Roberts joined Arumetua Parima as one of the judges on the Vaka Pride committee.

Flower gardens was the main focus for this round of Vaka Pride and the Ministry acknowledges these "Women in Floriculture", Mrs Takau Moekaa of Ruatonga, Mrs Ingrid Caffery of Atupa, Mrs Jane Strickland of Tupapa and Mrs Teremoana Rongokea of Vaka Puaikura.

These women were ranked in the top four prize pool of the judging.

Congratulations!

Women in Floriculture



Takau Moekaa

Meet Takau Moekaa, talented in planting varieties of beautiful flowers. Her flower gardens are located at her residence in Ruatonga.

Takau's interests entail planting different varieties of Anthurium and Heliconia flowers. You will also find her at the Punanga Nui market selling her flowers and weaving head eis for visitors and locals.



Ingrid Caffery

Ingrid Caffery is well-known for her love of orchids. Her orchid garden comprises an amazing variety of colors and types. She spends most of her time in her garden tending to her flowers. Ingrid was the sole supplier of flowers for the Miss Cook Islands Pageant event held in October 2019. Ingrid is supported by her husband in maintaining her garden.



Jane Strickland

Jane Strickland has a keen interest in flowers. She plants flowers to complement the costume designs for the Te Maeva Nui Celebrations. Jane has a greenhouse that contains local ferns and varieties of Anthurium. She uses her flowers to decorate community halls, the church and private events.



Teremoana Rongokea

Teremoana Rongokea has a passion for planting flowers including medicinal plants. She grows flowers organically using compost from her own gardens. Teremoana's garden contains flowers and medicinal plants that she uses for local medicine such as the avaava plant to treat eczema and many more. She also uses her flowers for church and special event decorations.

White ribbon Campaign

The prize giving for the Vaka Pride competition held at the Punanga Nui Market coincided with the Cook Islands White Ribbon Awareness Campaign hosted by the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

The purpose of the White Ribbon Campaign is to raise awareness of domestic violence within our homes against women and children. The march was led and advocated by special guest, Tofiga Fepulea'i of the Laughing Samoans.



The march commenced from the Ministry of Justice building, through town and ended at the Punanga Nui Market.

Say No to Domestic Violence!!

White Ribbon Awareness campaign hosted by Ministry of Internal Affairs—"Say no to domestic violence!"

Agriculture wins 2019 Tiare week competition

The Ministry of Agriculture achieved 1st placing in the Government departments judging for Tiare Week 2019.

Held on Tuesday 26th November, eight government agencies joined the competition of decorating their offices.

The event was judged on how the theme of the Ministry was reflected in the use of flowers.



The Ministry's theme was to promote healthy lifestyles in the Cook Islands.

The beautiful display of flowers, fresh fruits and vegetables accompanied with vibrant colors wowed the judges on the day.

A huge Meitaki Maata to all staff for your contribution and excellent effort in winning us 1st prize.

Staff & family retreat

What a awesome way to wrap up a very busy month of November — Tiare week, Coconut Steering Committee meeting, CePACT visit!

Agriculture staff joined by their families and friends had a fabulous day on Captain Tama's Lagoon Cruise.

A cruise on the lagoon, swimming with giant trevally and ending with a scrumptious BBQ feed.



The participants of the CIDP meeting also joined the cruise with the Ministry staff.



The Head of Ministry would like to acknowledge all staff who organized and arranged this event.

Coconut Industry Development for the Pacific (CIDP)

The Cook Islands Ministry of Agriculture hosted the Coconut Industry Development for the Pacific (CIDP) meeting in Rarotonga.

The Minister of Agriculture, Hon. Rose Toki Brown welcomed participants from Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands to the final meeting of the project.

“The coconut makes positive contribution to health and nutrition, Pacific livelihoods, traditional medicines, climate change and coastal protection. We must replace our old trees with new and more productive varieties that will enable farmers to participate in the many new markets for coconut.”

“On my home island, Atiu, we have established a 4-hectare coconut orchard as the start of a coconut replanting program, and we will do the same on our other southern group islands.”

“Governments also have a vital role in

the Cook Islands,” the Minister noted.

CIDP Team Leader, Mr Naheed Hussein, from the Pacific Community (SPC) presented market study data and noted that there are strong opportunities for the Pacific as a major global exporter of copra.

“For the Pacific to compete in the global market it is critical that we work together as a region, sharing new varieties of coconuts, techniques for processing and market intelligence that will enable access to global and domestic markets”.

“Key issues for the future are to replant old plantations with early yielding, high-bearing and disease resistant varieties” he noted.

Mr Hussein said, “The (CIDP) programme is funded by the European Union and administered by the Pacific Community (SPC). Key achievements over the past four years include supporting training of more than 400

Roadmap of three priority products for the Pacific: Virgin Coconut Oil, Quality Copra Oil and Coconut Veneer”

“We have developed manuals of coconut production and replanting, organic certification, risk management, and E-marketing.”

“Most importantly, we have funded development of improved seed systems in five countries to ensure that better coconuts are available for planting programs.”

“Finally, it is important to note that the programme has provided support to Pacific countries on the management of Coconut Rhinoceros Beetles, an invasive species which has already caused significant damage in a number of countries.”

The meeting has identified the need for better data on coconut production for Pacific Island Countries, incentives for replanting programs, better market data and on-going work on biosecurity as key priorities. While the CIDP is finishing, other initiatives are underway in the Pacific on coconut genetic resource improvement, veneer processing, value-chain analysis and biosecurity.



Photo caption: Coconut Industry Development for the Pacific meeting hosted by Ministry of Agriculture, Cook Islands. Front (L to R): Mr Gibson Susumu (SPC), Hon. Patrick Arioka (Assoc. Minister of Agriculture), Hon. Rose Toki Brown (Minister of Agriculture), Mrs Temarama Anguna (Head of Ministry), Mr Naheed Hussein (CIDP Team Leader, SPC). Back row (L to R): Mr Rudolf Dora (Solomon Islands), Dr Viliami Manu (Tonga), Mr Roneel Prasad (SPC), Ms Aswin Lata (SPC), Mr Douglas Maip (PNG), Ms Iva Roberto (RMI).

supporting national biosecurity programs, and inter-island biosecurity control, so that pests such as Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle do not spread to

farmers and government officers from 15 countries, completing a Market Study on Coconut Products for Pacific Producers, and developing a Value Chain

3 Excavators for the Pa Enua

The Ministry of Agriculture is pleased to receive three excavators destined for Atiu, Mauke and Mangaia Agriculture departments.

In June 2018, a diplomatic level agreement was mutually agreed and signed between the Governments of Japan and the Cook Islands. Through this agreement the government of Japan confirmed a provision of a grant through its public sector economic and social development programme, for the purchase of products and/or services for the implementation of programmes to enhance public sector agencies functions. Priority items were identified through the use of the capital plan and in collaboration with public sector ministries and agencies identified as grant recipients.



The Ministry of Agriculture wishes to express its appreciation to the governments of Japan and the Cook Islands for being selected as a grant recipient to receive support through the economic and social development programme. Through the programme, 3 excavators have been procured for Atiu, Mangaia and Mauke.



The excavators will be used to support various agriculture projects on these islands.

To ensure sustainability through proper use and maintenance of the excavators, the operators and mechanics from the respective agriculture departments on these islands received training.

The excavators will be transported to the 3 islands on the next available vessel.

Photos:

1. 3 Excavators destined for Atiu, Mauke & Mangaia Agriculture departments
2. Minister of Agriculture Hon. Rose Brown with participants of the training program held at ICI premises

PSC Merit Award for Agriculture

Mr Russell Thomas, the Public Service Commissioner (PS Commissioner) was pleased to reward Mrs Temarama Anguna-Kamana (Agriculture), Ms Tapaeru Herrmann (Foreign Affairs & Immigration) and Ms Diane Charlie-Puna (Infrastructure) with their Public Service Performance Merit Awards for the 2018/19 Financial year.

These awards were in recognition of their performance as Public Service Leaders or Heads of Ministries (HOMs), whose performance exceeded expectations.

This is the first for the Ministry of Agriculture!

The performance of the HOMs were assessed according to the Agency's contribution towards, their specific sector and management priorities.



In particular, they are assessed according to their leadership; direction and delivery; people development; relationship management; engagement with stakeholders; and financial and resource management.

The conduct of HOMs is also considered and comprises four critical elements- that they serve as role models by living and promoting the Public Service and Agency specific values; there is minimal public or stakeholder complaints that are valid and upheld; they are innovative and practice good stewardship of public resources to achieve results and there are minimal employment disputes reported to the PS

Commissioner.

"Message from the Secretary of Agriculture"

I accept this award on behalf of all staff employed at the Ministry of Agriculture, because without your hard work, support and assistance, we would not have "exceeded expectations" with our performance! There are times when I do ask repeatedly for quality work, that is because we have standards to achieve. I do not believe in mediocre work, but the pursuit of excellence!!

I therefore acknowledge our Directors and all our staff. This is an excellent award and a fabulous end to a great year, but the hard work starts all over again when we resume in January 2020, because our mid-year report for financial year 2019-20 is due on the 17 January 2020!!! Thus bring on the newsletters, the reports, the meetings, the work-plans and the activities, so we can achieve another award for 2019-2020!!

Kia Rangatira!!

MOU with Bluesky & now

Telecom Cook Islands Ltd

Ministry of Agriculture Biosecurity Services have for the first time signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Bluesky to inspect all incoming and outgoing postal items.

The MOU was signed at the Agriculture head office in Arorangi on the 09 October 2019.

Secretary for Agriculture Temarama Anguna-Kamana said although this was the first time an MOU was signed, Biosecurity has been providing this service for some time. "I am happy to acknowledge this cooperative partnership with Bluesky through this MOU to minimise quarantine risks and enhance biosecurity and safety. The MOU gives the biosecurity team access to inspect regulated articles (both incoming and outgoing postal items), both parties would share information in order to prevent breaches or likely breaches and to cooperate in any matters of common concern. Bluesky would inform Biosecurity if anyone was removing packages without prior consent. Postal items would be checked by the biosecurity team and the owners informed if any issues arose. She thanked Bluesky Ltd for their support and looked forward to a cooperative working relationship.

In January 2020, Bluesky was bought by Vodafone. As a result a new MOU was signed between the Ministry of Agriculture and Telecom Cook Islands Limited. The new MOU was signed between the Secretary of Agriculture and the Chief Operating Officer of TCI Ngatama Aniterea effective 20 January 2020.



Bluesky staff Lahaina Kiely & Leanna Tupai with Ministry of Agriculture Secretary, Temarama Anguna