

Radio, a means to empower farming

Rural radio production is an ongoing training that IRETA has conducted over the years. The emphasis on radio as an effective means of communication, as according to the Director IRETA, Mohammed Umar, is due to the fact that radio will continue to provide the coverage (through radio ownership), penetration (its use), reach (reception), listenership and promote effective socio-economic development of our island nations.

Uatea Vave of Tuvalu interviews one of the vendors at the Suva Market.

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stories



The art of
flowers in the
Solomon Islands



Cocoa moth
causing
trouble in
PNG



Preparing the
Pacific for
Avian
influenza
.....more

Growing radio programmes with farmers

Wansolwara Online

What do farmers want from radio and how do you give them what they want? This was the main question being discussed at a two-week Institute of Research Extension and Training Agriculture (IRETA) workshop on rural radio held at the USP Media Centre, Suva, from 3-14 July.

There were twenty participants, all with a wide background in agriculture. Some are broadcasters, some are extension officers and two are quarantine officers. The two workshop tutors come from Britain and New Zealand. Both have an extensive experience of working in developing countries.

These experienced farming officers spend each day talking with one another about communication, research, interviewing, scripting, handling tape recorders and finding new and better ways to make interesting radio programmes for rural listeners.

Among the first small revelations on day one was the realisation by the participants that most farmers in the South Pacific, Africa and Asia and probably elsewhere liked to listen to their radios early in the morning and early in the evening.

By day two the participants were working in pairs with their portable



Pat Craddock, (second left) Course Director with participants during market interview session

tape recorders conducting interviews around the USP campus.

By day four they were seen in the Suva fruit and vegetable market talking and recording radio interviews with the vendors.

Radio is still the most efficient way of communication within the South Pacific. In a research paper presented after the opening of the workshop, Mohammed Umar, the Director of IRETA told the participants that in Fiji, the average amount of time that farmers spent listening to radio was about three hours per day.

When asked to rank drama,

music and songs, market report, news and weather report with rural radio programmes, the respondents placed news and weather report and rural radio programmes as first and second priority respectively.



Umar said radio was the most dynamic of all communications media. "The other unique features of radio is that it's competitive, it shifts to public taste and habits, incorporates

development in marketing techniques, programming and establishing station image," he said.

The workshop was funded by the Centre Technique de cooperation et Rural (CTA) which is based in the Netherlands.

This organisation was established under the Lome Convention to enhance access to information, research results and innovations in rural development.

Since 1990 CTA has supported a number of activities for journalists and broadcasters in radio stations and agricultural information services within the South Pacific region.



Two of the participants taking time to try out their interviewing knowledge

The art of flowers in the Solomon Islands

Aterina Samasoni
IRETA Publications

IRETA again this year will continue with its ongoing floricultural workshops; an activity that has provided income generative opportunities not only for women, but men and the youth as well.

This year's floriculture workshop in the Solomon Islands follows on from the workshop that was organised jointly by CTA and IRETA in 2003. Small-scale holder flower growers from around the region gathered in Fiji three years ago, to witness and experience the potential of flowers for personal earnings and the overall economic development.

For this year, another group of new flower growers will have the opportunity to sharpen their skills and knowledge on floriculture. Most of the participants for this year's workshop are fairly new or have little experience in the flower growing and arranging business. In fact, these are the selected beneficiaries of such activity and the people that IRETA works to assist and serve in improving their quality of life.

However marketing is the overall focus of this workshop considering that Pacific farmers and marketers, particularly women, have limited capacity to seize the income opportunities

provided by floriculture. It is the reason why the workshop program kicks off with presentations and discussions focused on developing a marketing system for the floriculture industry in the Pacific.

This is the result of insufficient information, knowledge and insights into income potential offered by flowers as a commodity, the kind of flowers suitable for the internal and external markets, export requirements and regulations, as well as improved flower production techniques.

But floriculture is a booming business in some countries and is strengthened by the establishment of flower associations. Apart from Fiji and Samoa, Vanuatu has also formed a Flower Growers Association in 2005 based on training provided to Vanuatu women in Fiji and Port Vila (2004).



Orchids, one of the main flowers promoted in the workshop

Final test confirms no PRSV

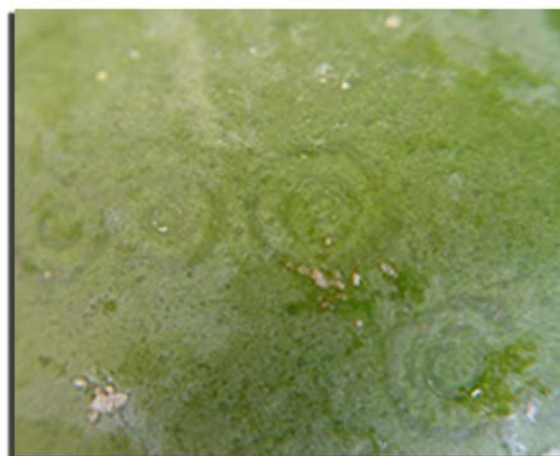
Based on Cook Island News submitted by
Noo Tokari, ALO Cook Islands

The last test carried out to determine whether the Pawpaw Ring Spot Virus (PRSV) has reappeared in the Cook Islands has brought good news for the islands agricultural ministry.

Nga Mataio, Secretary of Agriculture said that a total of 864 trees have been tested negative for the ring spot virus at the Totokoitu Research Station using cutting edge biotechnology tools.

Dr Richard Davis, Plant Virologist from the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) office in Suva, Fiji, has been carrying out the third and final test on pawpaw crops on the island of Rarotonga.

The ringspot virus causes a disease that is the worst for pawpaw in the world affecting not only the leaves but also the fruits according to Mataio. The papaya ringspot virus, is an aphid-transmitted potyvirus that causes a debilitating disease of all commercial papaya cultivars, and severely limits pawpaw production.



A magnified view of PRSV symptoms on the fruit

Symptoms of the disease were first noted in June 2004 in one of the pawpaw plots on the island of Matavera. Only a single tree was immediately destroyed by the Ministry of Agriculture Research Staff.

However, Dr Davis says that while the disease is not here farmers should still be cautious. There is one simple thing papaya growers can do to try to stop this disease from happening again.

Papaya growers are not strongly advised to practice smart intercropping, "says Dr Davis.

Smart intercropping – **DO NOT** intercrop cucurbits with pawpaw. Instead, grow alternatives like chillies, capsicums and taro.

AVOID dumb intercropping – growing pawpaw together with cucurbit crops like watermelon and cucumber.

PRSV exists in two very related forms – one strain causes disease in cucurbit crops like pumpkin, cucumber, watermelon etc, while the other is the pawpaw infecting form.

Final test confirms no PRSVfrom page 3



*PRSV symptoms on the leaves
(PRSV photos submitted by ALO Cook Islands)*

Other ways to control and manage PRSV?

The control methods used by farmers to help manage PRSV include (Swain and Powell, 2001 and references therein):

- Delayed introduction through quarantine
- Burning all infected plants and nearby ground plants and destroying all papayas within a large surrounding area once the virus appears
- Using PRSV-tolerant varieties, pesticides, and anti-aphid netting for the first three months, when available
- Pruning young plants heavily to delay flowering and to build plant strength
- Using heavy and frequent anti-aphid sprays for the first year to minimize exposure
- Introducing mild strains of the PRSV virus

into plants to prevent the symptoms of more severe strains (cross-protection)

Growth Habit:

The pawpaw is a deciduous, often narrowly conical tree growing from about 12 feet to around 20 feet.

Pawpaw trees are prone to producing root suckers a few feet from the trunk. When these are permitted to grow, the single-clone pawpaw patch comes into being. The prevailing experiences of many individuals is that the pawpaw is a slow grower, particularly when it is young.

However, under optimal greenhouse conditions, including photo-period extension light of approximately 16 hours, top growth of up to 5 feet can be attained in three months.

Yam a crop with special treatments

Based on Fiji Times report

Yams are regarded as prized food in the Fijian society. Unlike other root crops, it is harvested once a year.

The food is so sacred that its preparation required a lot of sacrifice and hard work.

In some places, the preparation of that place would be done in groups and there would be ceremonies or food prepared for the group.

At the Saint Patrick's Mission in Vuaki in Nacula, yams are given such a special treatment. That was the reason why yams dug from there were no ordinary yams. Its extra ordinary size showed the importance of the crop.

The smallest of the giant yams dug up weighed 120 kilogram.

However, the yams is given special treatment during harvest and transportation:

Harvest

Yams which you want to store must be harvested carefully. Some cultivars have very long and uneven shapes, and when digging them out, great care should be taken not to stab the tuber or cut the skin. So instead of hacking carelessly at the soil, like the man in the picture, try to feel gently around for the yam so that it can be loosened carefully. If cut or broken yams must be stored, treat the

cut surfaces by dusting with cold fire ash.

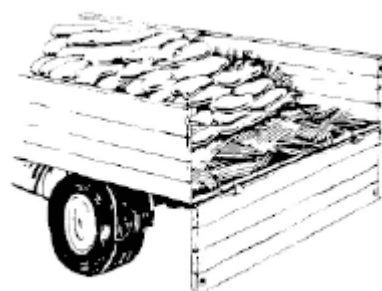


DO NOT dig yams like this

Transport

Yams can easily be damaged during transport from the field by wagon or truck. Do not clean dirt off the yams until you have transported them to the store. The dirt protects the yams from scraping and bruising. The floor of the wagon or truck should be padded with grass or mats or sacks and the yams piled in gently. Do not pile the yams very high. Passengers and other loads should not sit on top of the yams.

Harvest and Transport information extracted from IRETA Agro-facts: Careful Storage of Yams: 1987 (http://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/adap2/information/pubs/ireta_publications.htm)



A strong stand on pest and diseases

Submitted by Noo Tokari, ALO Cook Islands

Ensuring that pests and diseases are kept well out of the country is an important role for Quarantine staff.

The local quarantine effort is getting a boost as the Ministry of Agriculture hosts the Regional Workshop for the Review of Draft International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs).

Held at the Takuvaine Assembly of God hall, the workshop will focus on quarantine issues and procedures, reviewing some of the quarantine inspection and clearance procedures and to identify areas of improvements and strengthen.

Quarantine Adviser Ngatoko Ngatoko says this is the first time the Cook Islands has ever hosted the annual regional event.

Ngatoko says that the objective is to strengthen quarantine procedures and activities at the wharfs and airports to minimize the intrusion of pests and diseases that will adversely affect agriculture and the environment.

Among the participants are representatives from Fiji, Samoa, Tonga, Niue, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Wallis & Futuna, French Polynesia, New Caledonia,

Australia, New Zealand and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community.

Topics to be covered are the revision of the pest risk analysis, recognition of pest free areas and areas of low pest prevalence, phytosanitary treatments for regulated pests, debarked and bark free wood, and establishment of areas of low prevalence for fruit flies.

Ngatoko says the importance of the workshop is for countries to work together to set the necessary standards required for inspection on goods exported and imported, so that countries have the same set of standards.

Also, having the proper and updated standards in place, this should ensure minimum transfer or movements of unwanted pests and diseases from one country to another, which will significantly affect agriculture and the environment and therefore the livelihoods and food security of the countries.

The workshop is being funded by International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), a branch of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and the Cook Islands Government.

SPC to help Pacific Islands prepare for avian influenza

SPC Press Release

Human cases of avian influenza and the threat of an influenza pandemic continue to make headlines as new instances are reported from around the globe. While the disease has not yet been identified in the Pacific, SPC is taking charge of putting plans in place to deal with any incursions. A meeting convened by SPC to discuss the Pacific region's preparedness for exotic animal diseases, in particular avian influenza, will be held from 24 to 28 July at the Tanoa Hotel, Nadi, Fiji.

The meeting will be attended by country members of the Pacific Heads of Veterinary and Animal Health Production Services (PHOVAPS) and discussions will focus on the Pacific Regional

Influenza Pandemic Preparedness Plan (PRIPP) project.

SPC's Animal Health and Production Group has been working with the PHOVAPS Advisory Group and SPC's Public Health team to prepare the project document. The aim of the project is to establish immediate measures to prevent and/or respond to a possible outbreak of avian influenza and pandemic human influenza in the region. The focus will be on building capacity within Pacific Island countries for surveillance and diagnosis of avian influenza, and other emerging diseases, and emergency response planning. Activities will cover both public and animal health.

Dr Ken Cokanasiga,

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Avian influenza training in Palau : Photo -SPC Press Release

Making it easier with radio

Radio programs is one of Noo Tokari's duties in the Cook Islands Ministry of Agriculture.

As an Agricultural Liaison Officer (ALO) for IRETA/CTA, Tokari is responsible in the dissemination of agricultural information relevant and timely to assist the Cook Islanders involved in agricultural activities. Radio is a powerful means to take the information across.

In fact agricultural radio programs are very popular with rural farmers in most countries of the Pacific region.

Noo Tokari is now one man with the knowledge of producing some of the best agricultural radio programs for his country.

Advantages & Disadvantages of Rural Radio Programmes

1. Advantages:

- ▶ Quick and reliable for relaying of news etc
- ▶ Every household in the rural areas have a radio
- ▶ Cheap
- ▶ Easy to operate
- ▶ Languages (English and local)

2. Disadvantages:

- ▶ Distances e.g. in the Northern Cooks islands radios are weak and very hard to hear
- ▶ Finance to support the programs
- ▶ Languages (in PNG they have different languages)
- ▶ The way we voice our program for the people to understand
- ▶ Equipments or how to use them
- ▶ Lack of training
- ▶ Not easy for information to be memorized, e.g. ways to make cakes
- ▶ Can be a one way communication

ALO Cook Islands, Noo Tokari outlines some of the important and interesting points needed to prepare the most effective and efficient radio presentation

- ▶ Can be limited by engineering problems
- ▶ Quality sound can be poor if recording is badly done
- ▶ Paint both positive and negative actions rather than positive always
- ▶ Radio can lose credibility if it only tells ideal story

The Key Presentation Ways (e.g. Pastor or Reverend of Church)

WHY?

- ▶ They target their subjects of the day in a positive way (knowledge of choice)
- ▶ They have humor
- ▶ Short and sweet
- ▶ Freedom of speech
- ▶ Body language and appearance
- ▶ Eye contact with audience
- ▶ Enthusiasm for subject
- ▶ Sound confident

Weakness and Strength and How to Improve.

- ▶ Standing in front of audience (fear)
- ▶ Speaking out and thinking whether I am right or not
- ▶ Stage fright
- ▶ Practice makes perfect
- ▶ Must do more presentations in front of the audience or face up with the audience to get the confidence back
- ▶ Make sure that the questions you answer are correct etc

Know your Tape Recorder and Microphone

Microphones. (Good quality and understand the characteristics of different microphones, and sensitive, handle with care, don't move about and wind in surplus cable)



- **External microphones** is better for radio talk because it is on its own (sensitive)
- **Internal microphone** will record the motor of the recorder and the speaker (very sensitive)
- **Omni-directional microphone** can record from any direction (top, sideways etc)
- **Cardioids microphone** sound goes through the top only and doesn't catch the sound from side, outside or from the crowd

For interviewing recommend the use of Omni-directional microphone.

Ways of Interviewing that are carried out

- ▶ Distance from the mouth is 30cm for interview and also for the person interviewed
- ▶ Seating for interview use Love Seat Position (chairs side by side) for interviews
- ▶ Standing interview close within eye contact, 30cm microphone from you and the interviewee
- ▶ Standing in V shape (left hand stand on right side and vice versa)
- ▶ Never let the interviewee hold the microphone
- ▶ Forget that there is a microphone or that you are talking to the microphone.

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SPC to help Pacific Islands prepare for avian influenza.....from page 5

Adviser for the Animal Health and Production Group in Suva, said of the PRIPPP project, "It will give Pacific Island countries an opportunity to establish a proper framework for addressing zoonotic diseases (diseases transmitted from animals to humans) and other emerging health threats. The approach being taken is in line with international efforts by WHO, the Office of International Epizootics (OIE) and FAO to address a potential pandemic through collaboration between animal health and human health authorities. In our case, SPC's Animal Health and Production specialists will work closely with Public Health specialists based at SPC Noumea. We'll also call on expertise in other LRD teams including the Biosecurity and Trade Facilitation, Information and Communication teams, and our Regional Media Centre."

"At the meeting, we will share this project with the countries, and work out how we can collectively produce appropriate plans and what outputs are needed to ensure that Pacific Island countries and territories, and the region, are prepared to act quickly in the event of an incursion of avian influenza."

"The success of the project will very much depend on the individual PICTs claiming ownership of it, contributing to its implementation and ensuring that all stakeholders are involved," said Dr Cokanasiga.

In the Pacific, human influenza outbreaks can happen at any time of the year, being more influenced by the flow of people from temperate regions than by the local climate. Many islands are visited by large numbers of tourists and there is the potential for new strains of influenza to be transported back to Pacific Island communities in the Northern and Southern hemispheres.

Although there is no certainty that an influenza pandemic will occur, it is a potentially serious threat that must be addressed. The Pacific is vulnerable to the introduction of pandemic influenza through the movement of people, migratory birds and legal and illegal trade in poultry and poultry products. To respond to such a threat, Pacific Island countries need effective preparedness plans and the resources and capacity to implement them. While some countries have developed, or are in the process of developing preparedness plans, and some surveillance and laboratory capacity, none of these have been tested for a pandemic scenario. The priorities identified by regional governments include improved surveillance, development and testing of plans, strengthened public health measures, and inclusion of more sectors/stakeholders in planning and implementation.

The PRIPPP project is fully funded by Australia and New Zealand with Australian Prime Minister John Howard making a firm commitment at the Forum Leaders meeting in PNG last year. SPC's Animal Health & Production Group will coordinate the animal health component of the project with its Public Health team in Noumea coordinating the human health component.

For more information please contact, Dr Ken Cokanasiga, kenc@spc.int.

Cook Islands import pigs have arrived

Submitted by Noo Tokari, ALO Cook Islands

Earlier this year, pig farmers in the Cook Islands were given funding to enable them to import the best breed from New Zealand. This time, the pigs have arrived and have been distributed.

Pig Farmer	Breed
Vaitoti Tupa	LW x D
Tupou Faireka	LW & LW x LR
Charlie Brothers	LW & LW x LR
Dr Tereapii Uka	Duroc
Eddie Matenga	LW x LR
Walter Marearai	LW x LR
Tom Marsters	LW x LR & Duroc

Keys: LW	Large White
D	Duroc
LR	Landrace

The Large White, Duroc, Land Race were the three specific breeds, which farmers all agreed were the best for the islands as they were familiar with the rearing and breeding of these stocks.

The pig improvement stock arrived Saturday 15th July 2006 and was received by Tiria Rere, Chief Livestock Officer, Arapati Rani, Livestock Officer, and Edwin Apera of the Ministry of Agriculture, Rarotonga.

The Chief Livestock Officer inspected the pigs and he found out that they were in the best of health on arrival and that the ship's crew has taken good care of it during the trip down under.

After all the clearance of the live pigs were carried out by Custom Officials, Quarantine Officers the crate containing the live pigs was discharged from the vessel onto a waiting truck and were distributed to targeted pig farmers around the island of Rarotonga.

These pig farmers will look after these pigs and feed them and to make sure that they are taken care of until they are ready for breeding. Those pig farmers who need to take their pigs for cross-breeding must arrange with above pig farmers for time availability before they can cross-breed their pigs.

These pigs will remain under the Ministry of Agriculture on checking for their health (pest & disease care) for a year before it can be given away to the Pig Farmers Association.

New market for Tonga squash

Matangi o Tonga reports

Tonga this year has secured a second market for its squash, Korea, and it is hoped this will encourage growers who have lost confidence after their worst year in 2005.

The Secretary General of the Tonga Squash Council, Stephen Edwards said today that the advantage of the Korean squash market is that it provides a market for light-weight Tongan squash, ranging from 900 grams to 1.3kg. The Japanese would not buy squash that is less than 1.2kg each.

Despite an increase in the demand for Tongan squash in Asia, Stephen said that it was unfortunate that fewer growers were growing this season, "because many of the growers have lost their confidence in the squash industry, and have withdrawn".

The 2005 squash season was the worst ever, so bad that the Squash Council had to borrow from the Tonga Development Bank to give the growers some cash. The total export to Japan in 2005 was 12,000 tonnes, some 1000 tonnes less than their target, and then tonnes of Tongan squash were presumed to be rotten and were dumped in Japan.

Stephen said that the trend this year was for the 16 exporters to grow more acres of squash. One new exporter this year is Quality Exporters Ltd.

The Tonga Development Bank this year has earmarked \$3.2 million to be lent to growers but according to Steve, so far a substantial amount of the squash loan allocation has not been taken up.

He said that land preparation for squash growing was already well on the way and the planting was set to start on July 1.

Journal of Organic Systems launched in Sydney

Press Release: www.organic-systems.org.

The web-based publication Journal of Organic Systems will be launched at the Organic Federation of Australia's annual conference dinner in Sydney on the 22nd of July.

This long overdue initiative provides the first opportunity for those committed to 'organic' approaches to publish their work in English in a southern hemisphere refereed journal. It is a significant step in the maturity of Organics in the Oceania Pacific region. Though international, it has a distinct pulse of 'down under'.

"Researchers and practitioners of 'organic approaches' can publish their findings and ideas. These may relate to the design and management of agricultural production systems, problem-proofing and problem solving, produce handling and marketing, policy issues and associated organisational and technological issues, and supportive approaches to education, research and development," explained Australian co-founding Editor Professor Stuart Hill.

Though two years in the making, the initiative came as an integral part of a bigger vision for Organics. Founding director Brendan Hoare believes that, "If we want the world Organic, then we have to believe that every part of the world is going Organic. We need rigour in our applied practices, science and its communication to help us achieve our vision."

The initiative has been fully supported by the Organic community throughout Oceania and Pacific region and by the international research community. The editorial board comprises some of the most respected and active researchers in their field currently from Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific.

Founding editors Professor Neil Macgregor is a retired soil ecologist from Massey University in New Zealand and Professor Stuart Hill is

Founding Chair of Social Ecology at the University of Western Sydney, Australia.

"The systems approach to the Journal of Organic Systems is significant" says Professor Neil Macgregor. "It becomes increasingly clear that conventional approaches are unsustainable and have inherent negative impacts on individuals, communities and ecosystems. The Journal of Organic systems will provide a valuable communication tool in this necessary cultural transformation. It is a significant step in our history."

The Journal will be free and electronic based on www.organic-systems.org.

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Organic workshop at IRETA

IRETA also will host at the end of this month a workshop on organic certification and marketing in the Pacific.

The International Federation for Organic Movements (IFOAM) will participate in this workshop. IFOAM is the mother organisation for all certified organic movements.

The Pacific Organic Producers Association will also be actively involved in this event.

This workshop will run for a week with presentations, discussions and field visits to some of the certified organic farms in Samoa.

More articles and stories on organic developments in our August issue.

Making it easier with radio.....from page 6

Improving interviewing techniques – the human factor

- ▶ What do you want to know
- ▶ Who do you want to talk to
- ▶ Why do you want to do the interview
- ▶ When can interview can be done
- ▶ Where is best/most convenient venue
- ▶ How do you prepare for the interview

Preparing Questions

- ▶ What problems do farmers typically face in this area/subject
- ▶ What aspects at this subject do most farmers not understand correctly
- ▶ Other reasons why they don't follow best practice
- ▶ What do farmers need to know about **This at This Time**

DRAMA is a story.

What is realism about DRAMA? Or Why should I listen to DRAMA for radio recording?

DRAMA can relay in a natural way and directly or get the reality (then What happen next?) That is why DRAMA is good for recording it keeps on asking questions until you get the reality of what you want to know.

Digital Recording and Editing Software.

Editing interviews.

- ▶ The technical factor
- ▶ Recording quality is more often affected by the interviewer than by the equipment
- ▶ Common faults are:
 - ◆ Low level – low signal to noise ratio
 - ◆ High level – distortion
 - ◆ One speaker louder than the other
 - ◆ Distracting background sound
 - ◆ Wind in the microphone
 - ◆ Micro movement – bumps

Why Edit?

1. to get rid of what you don't want. e.g. pauses, distortion, or unwanted background sound
2. repeated words or phrases, coughs, ummmms, errors etc
3. reduce length of interview to fit in programme
4. take out unwanted statements. e.g. irrelevant to your topics, lessons or language too simple or inappropriate to your audience, too simple, too complex, boring, etc

How do you Edit an Interview?

1. Listen once and make notes at the questions and brief notes of answers
2. Listen again. This time tick the bit that sound good and interesting
3. Think about the order of questions and answers (may need to be changed) e.g. bringing background into rear to the background)
4. Where is the strongest place to start the interview?

Editing Systems

1. Cut Editing – Cutting actual tape (razor editing)
2. Dubbing Editing – re-recording from one tape to another, the bits you want
3. Digital Editing – Using a computer programme software called **AUDACITY**. (on internet for simple version of the software Other software are **COOL EDIT** or **ADOBY**.

We would like to acknowledge our sincere thanks to Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Co-operation (CTA), Mr Mohammad Umar, Director, Institute of Research, Extension and Training in Agriculture (IRETA), Ms Senetima-Samau, Training Manager, IRETA, Ritesh Prasad, ALO Coordinator, IRETA, and Nga Mataio, Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Rarotonga, Cook Islands for allowing us to attend the above workshop. Last but not least to the two professional resource persons, Mr Patrick Craddock and Mr Michael Davison many thanks.



Michael Davison one of the Course Directors(second left), explaining to the participants how to operate recorders use for radio interviewing.

Aquaculture strike interest in the Cook Islands

Submitted by Noo Tokari
ALO Cook Islands

The aquaculture farm currently under construction in Titikaveka has generated strong local interest.

Two fish ponds to breed tilapia fish have already been constructed by biologist Tap Pryor (Papa Tap) and business partner Teava Iro Jnr, chairman of the Takitumu Growers Association assisted by microbiologist Dr Daniel Martinelli.

As well as breeding a hybrid of tilapia in the ponds which held up to 500 cubic metres of water, the farmers will also cultivate Pacific oysters in four raceways between the two fish ponds.

The oysters can be reared to market size in just a nine months compared with four to six years in New Zealand.

Despite not conducting any in-depth marketing research, the team has a fair idea of what it will cost to run the operation and how well their products will do on the market.

"Revenue is based on Daniel's projection of harvest rates," says Pryor.

"The two ponds will yield 3000 fish per month and the four raceways will yield 40,000 oysters per month. If the fish sell for New Zealand \$5.00 each and the oyster for \$0.75 each, then the monthly gross for fish will be \$15,000 and monthly gross for oysters will be \$30,000 for a total of \$45,000 revenue from half acre of land."

Pryor hopes the project will be operational by the end of the month, which means the tilapia fish will be on the market in February 2007, followed by the oysters in May 2007.

So look out for locally farmed seafood next year.

PNG fighting off cocoa pod borer

Based on Rural Industry Weekly reports

Eradication work on the cocoa pod borer in parts of East New Britain (ENB) province will wind down in September and the focus will shift to West Sepik Province following recent confirmation of the pest in the province.

The National Response unit chairman Hosea Turbarat said the activities against the occurrence of the cocoa pod borer in ENB would wind down in September with surveillance work to continue to prove that the pest had been completely eradicated. Mr Turbarat said at this time they could not say yet as to whether or not the response work was successful.

"The operation cannot be confirmed as a success until we are sure that the cocoa pod borer is no longer attacking cocoa," he said.

Conopomorpha cramerella Snellen, the pod borer (CPB), also known as the cocoa moth; causes the loss of cocoa by boring in the placental tissues and the wall of the pod, disrupting the development of the beans.

Moths lay their eggs on the surface of the unripe pods; larvae emerge and tunnel to the center of the pod where they feed for about 14-18 days before chewing their way out of the pod to pupate. The feeding results in pods that may ripen prematurely, with small, flat beans, often stuck together in a mass of dried mucilage. The beans from seriously infested pods are completely unusable and in heavy infestation over half the potential crop can be lost. (Matlick, B. K. Project Consultant,

American Cocoa Research Institute)

CPB is present on most of the larger cocoa producing islands in Indonesia, with the exception of Java. It is also present in Malaysia and the Philippines and, whilst it remains present in an isolated island of Irian Jaya, the pest poses a serious threat to Papua New Guinea.

Tubarat said the attention



Cocoa pod borer

Picture: [The Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center](#)

now would be on the provinces sharing land border with Indonesia, in this case the West Sepik following recent confirmation of pest occurrence there.

With limited control, production losses in infested areas are significant (between 20-50%) for smallholders who rely on the year-round cash income provided by cocoa.

Vudal University farm estimated cocoa loss will be more than K41,000 as 18,000 cocoa trees, from the 32,000 on the campus's 41.15ha plantation, was heavily pruned during the eradication exercise.

Recommended Control

In Indonesia the most important techniques to eradicate the moth included the practice of 'Complete, Frequent, Regular Harvesting' (CFRH) at weekly intervals and pruning trees every six months to achieve an open canopy at a maximum height of 3m. These improved farm practices quickly resulted in increased yields leading to a two to three-fold rise in income.

Extension information provided on village boards was made available at the demonstration plots for visiting farmers and the impact was quickly noticed with the spread of techniques being practised by smallholders in the region.



Policy Brief to strengthen agricultural radio production in the Pacific

One of the outcome of the recently held CTA/IRETA workshop on rural radio production is the production of a Policy Brief. A Policy Brief according to IRETA Director-Mohammed Umar, is a document helpful to guide policy makers at all levels when deciding on policies. This Policy Brief in particular has a focus on rural radio production to improve and strengthen extension services and communication in agricultural development. The Policy Brief has identified the problems, the cause and recommendations that would help the policy makers decide and take full advantage of the effectiveness of radio in improving agricultural development.

EFFECTIVENESS OF RURAL RADIO PROGRAMS IN DEVELOPMENT OF THE PACIFIC

A Policy Briefing for Governments and CEOs of Radio Stations in the Pacific Region

The Problem

Sixty to eighty percent of the population in the Pacific region live in rural areas and are dependent on agriculture for their livelihoods. Agriculture is also the major source of employment and the largest contributor to GDP in the region. The nations of the Pacific region are widely scattered over a vast area of ocean, and even within individual nations, the population is dispersed across many – sometimes hundreds – of small islands. Up-to-date, accurate information is widely acknowledged to be the key to rural and agricultural development. However, the dissemination of such information to the dispersed population continues to present a significant challenge to governments. Duplication and distribution of printed materials is both expensive and subject to long delays, particularly given the need for multiple language versions. Television and online information channels are inaccessible in many parts of the Pacific where electricity is unavailable.



The case for rural radio

Despite the development of new information and communication technologies, radio remains the most cost-effective means of communication with widely dispersed populations.

In a survey conducted in 2006, radio was ranked as the number one as the most preferred medium of communication (comparing radio, TV and print) in 11 out of 12 countries surveyed.

Compared to other media, such as print and television, radio programmes can be compiled quickly, allowing up-to-date information to be disseminated promptly.

Recent surveys reveal that there are an average of 2-3 radios per household in the Pacific region, with an average household listening to 3 hours of radio each day.

Radio coverage – the availability of radio signals – is estimated to be over 90% across the countries of the Pacific.



Through the use of a variety of frequencies, radio stations in the Pacific are able to target a wide range of different audience demands, including youth, older listeners, women, language, religious and ethnic groups.

Radio is a tried and trusted means for communicating announcements, notices and warnings, including cyclone and flood warnings, and other weather information essential to fishing and farming communities.

Radio can be listened to during other activities (e.g. household chores, driving, farm work), with no 'time cost' to the listener.

Radio is already extensively used as a means of communication for rural development throughout the 14 Pacific-ACP countries.



Recommendations

- Include the strengthening of rural broadcasting capacity within the information policy framework of the agricultural ministry.



- Increase 'air time' for agricultural programmes to reflect the popularity of radio and meet the high demand for information among rural audiences.
- Train relevant information/extension staff, and equip rural broadcast units to enable production of varied, attractive and up-to-date programmes for rural audiences.
- Strengthen linkages between broadcasters and providers of information, such as subject matter specialists, extension and scientific personnel.

- Evaluate staffing requirements to produce high quality radio programmes of appropriate frequency and duration.
- Assess the audience preferences for information required, programme format, time and length of broadcast.
- Assess transmission reach and strength of national radio broadcast services.



For further information

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JOSPA invites interested authors to submit research work or other related papers to be published in the upcoming volume. Interested authors can be provided with Guide to Authors Instructions upon request made to: JOSPA Managing Editor, USP-SAFT, Private Mail Bag, Alafua Campus, Apia Samoa. Email: ullah_w@samoa.usp.ac.fj or samasoni_a@samoa.usp.ac.fj

South Pacific Agricultural News (SPAN)

Interested writers are more than welcome to have their articles on agricultural benefits for men, women and youth published in our monthly publication of SPAN.

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Submit your articles or request to receive SPAN to:

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QUESTION AND ANSWER SERVICES

QAS is available to provide stakeholders, students, science teachers with information they require on agriculture. QAS is able to research and distribute information as demanded by its recipients. To fill information gaps, a form is available below to contact IRETA for your informational needs. Further contact can be made with: Research Officer: lautua_s@samoa.usp.ac.fj

Information Networking Department

The Information Networking Department (IND) has a wide collection of gray literature on agriculture and its Regional Resource File (RRF). The community is encouraged to make use of these materials as they have relevant and timely information on agricultural developments.

For more information:

uspireta@samoa.usp.ac.fj

Research Department

IRETA's Research Department has a Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) service which provides registered member with an ongoing provision of information at the time of issue and availability. IRETA invites those interested in receiving agricultural information to register ask for more information:

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VIDEOS AND PUBLICATIONS

IRETA holds a wide collection of agricultural educational videos and books. These materials are made available on request at a cost or free distribution. For more information contact the following addresses: For videos and publications write to: uspireta@samoa.usp.ac.fj

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Please contact the following address:

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IRETA's 2006 Workshop and Training Calendar

Rural Radio Production	July 3-14 Fiji (USP)
Organic Agriculture	July 31-4 Aug IRETA
Floriculture production	August 16-21 Solomon Islands



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