



NWC Research and Extension News

Issue 6

May 2015

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Nature's Way Cooperative hosts Value Chain Training for BQA farmers

Nature's Way Cooperative (NWC) through its Research and Extension Programme has begun a series of value chain trainings for its farmer/exporter members with an overall objective of improving information flow along the chain that is anticipated to lead to an increase in exports.

The trainings are funded through a partnership agreement between NWC and New Zealand Aid and utilize a newly launched SPC/EU/CTA training manual entitled 'Agricultural Value Chain Guide for the Pacific Islands'. Specific objectives of the training include identifying all the actors in the chain, their roles and how each contributes to the final product and the returns they would receive. Strengths and weaknesses along the chain and identifying key action areas was the highlight of the VC training. Information about the market for NWC's BQA products is also provided.

Trainings have been completed in Nadi, Ba and Kavanagasau (Sigatoka) and Keiyasi (Sigatoka), further trainings have been scheduled for Bila Levu (Sigatoka) and Nadi farmer cluster groups. An estimated 150 stakeholders are expected to participate in this series of trainings.

A key feature of these value chain trainings is that they involve a wide range of the 'actors' along the chain: to date all of the trainings have been attended by at least one nurseryman, farmer, exporter, extension officer, biosecurity officer and NWC officer

NWC Research and Extension Officer Livai Tora facilitates a value chain training at NWC complex in Nadi. Trainings are attended by nurserymen, farmers, exporters, extension officers, biosecurity officers and NWC staff.





Research Update

Commercial hot water treatments improve postharvest quality of papaya

After official commissioning of the new hot water dipping unit at NWC, over 14 commercial consignments have completed using this unit treating over 14 tonnes of fruit. This optional postharvest quality treatment is now being used regularly by four exporters. The availability of this commercial treatment comes after four years of research under the Fiji Papaya Project and a grant from New Zealand Aid.

The objective of the treatment is to reduce the levels of postharvest rots in papaya caused by Anthracnose and Phytophthora, which is the leading cause of post harvest losses. and significant investment, Fiji papaya exporters now have a way forward in the battle against post-harvest rots during the rainy season.

Trial work on post-harvest disease management in eggplant will begin soon using the newly commissioned hot water units.



New exporter entrant Nabaka Exports is regularly using the hot water treatment in order to reduce levels of post harvest rots.

New papaya boxes to reduce costs and improve 'Fiji Red' branding

Two exporters are now utilizing the new 'Fiji Red' brand on their papaya boxes. The 'Fiji Red' rebrand came as a result of consumer analysis in target markets of New Zealand and Australia. The design of the new logo was done in collaboration with a NZ design company, industry stakeholders and carton/sticker manufacturers—this activity was supported through the Auckland office of Pacific Island Trade and Invest (PT&I).

A specific partnership with a local carton manufacturer has resulted in a new box that is available at 20% cheaper than the average export carton. This achievement is directly inline with the goals of the NWC Research and Extension Programme which aims to improve efficiency and reduce costs for all actors in the supply chain.

The concept of an 'industry standard' carton has been proposed to stakeholders however the consensus is that each exporter prefers to distinguish themselves in the market place. Plans are underway to offer various exporters design support to incorporate the new 'Fiji Red' logo into their own carton design.



New Fiji Red boxes bound for Melbourne. The design and manufacture of these boxes came as a result of having good market information and collaborative efforts from industry stakeholders.

Project Overview

The Fiji Papaya Project (FPP) is an applied research project aimed at improving the competitiveness of our industry for the benefit of its members and the broader community. The FPP began in July 2009 and has just been granted another 6 months of funding to continue research activities. Funding for the Fiji Papaya Project is provided through the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) in partnership with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), NWC, KSF and the Fiji Ministry Of Agriculture (MOA).





Research Update

Fiji National Breadfruit Symposium — another milestone for breadfruit research locally and internationally

Fiji has been at the forefront of breadfruit research and development regionally and internationally. Breadfruit is an important traditional staple crop that has been a part of Fijian farmers systems for millennia. In 1966, Fijian botanist Dominiko Koroveibau named 70 breadfruit varieties in Fiji. The development of breadfruit as a commercial crop began in the year 2000 when Fiji successfully negotiated a bilateral quarantine agreement (BQA) with New Zealand for fresh exports.

The BQA centred around NWC HTFA quarantine facility. Indicative market research carried out around this time identified a market of 300 to 400 tonnes annually in New Zealand, selling largely to the Samoan community. A series of research and development activities by public and private sector partners between 2000 – 2005 culminated in a NWC publication 'A manual for the growing and marketing of breadfruit for export' (March 2005) which was launched at the first National Breadfruit Conference at Legalega Research Station (2005) – a decade ago.

In March 2007, Fiji hosted the First International Symposium on Breadfruit Research and Development, which was attended by participants from over 20 countries. The despite the research and development activities carried out over nearly 10 years, exports of breadfruit grew only marginally due to the fact that breadfruit was not being grown as a commercial crop. To facilitate the transition from a wild harvest subsistence crop to a commercial industry based on fresh exports and processing, NWC obtained assistance from the ACIAR Pacific Agriculture Research Development Initiative (PARDI). The PARDI Pacific Breadfruit Project (PBP) commenced in 2011. The PBP is assisting in bridging the gap between a subsistence and commercial industry through an effective public, private partnership.

The Fiji National Breadfruit Symposium will be held in Nadi on May 27th.



FIJI NATIONAL BREADFRUIT SYMPOSIUM

Breadfruit for economic growth and food security
May 27th 2015 - Tokatoka Resort, Nadi



Pilot cottage industry breadfruit processing initiatives

The demand for gluten free flour and by products found in breadfruit (*artocarpus altilis*) has been increasing. Even though the demand is high and growing and the technology and the expertise for producing marketable gluten free flour is available, gluten free breadfruit flour is being produced on a very small scale in Samoa, Pohnpei, Tahiti and the Philippines.

The lack of knowledge in processing breadfruit into flour has been the major drawbacks for most of the resource owners particularly in Vanua Levu and Taveuni where an elite variety has been identified and has a good fruiting season compared to the other 69 breadfruit varieties. The Balekana ni Samoa variety fruits 4 times in a year and has fruits available mostly all year around. The problem is that there is more breadfruit wastage during each season and this training will help breadfruit farmers, family members etc. identify some of the key areas to fully utilise breadfruit when in surplus amount.



From the knowledge gained on breadfruit flour processing from the North Pacific Breadfruit Conference a special training was implemented at Tutu Rural Training Centre (TRTC). This training was in collaboration between the TRTC and the Pacific Breadfruit Project in training the community members, facilitators, trainers in the school. Since breadfruit is surplus in this province (Cakaudrove) this pilot initiative aims to enable farmers

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**Australian Government**
Australian Centre for
International Agricultural Research

PARDI

IMPACT WORKSHOP AND MARKET DAY

The Pacific Agribusiness Research for Development Initiative (PARDI) has completed its first phase of research activities. Come and learn about the impacts of our work including incredible developments in horticulture, fisheries and forestry.

29 – 30 June 2015 Suva, Fiji (Venue to be advised)

IMPACT WORKSHOP – LEARN
Monday 29 June 12:00-5:00pm & Tuesday 30 June 9:00am -12:00pm
Learn about the impacts of Pacific agribusiness research.

MARKET DAY – NETWORK, DISCOVER, INNOVATE
Tuesday 30 June 12:00 - 5:00 pm
Join us for lunch showcasing Pacific produce
Browse PARDI Market Stalls
Network with researchers, farmers, and agribusinesses.



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REGISTER NOW! Email [Rebecca Wayne, ACIAR. Rebecca.Wayne@aciar.gov.au](mailto:Rebecca.Wayne@aciar.gov.au)

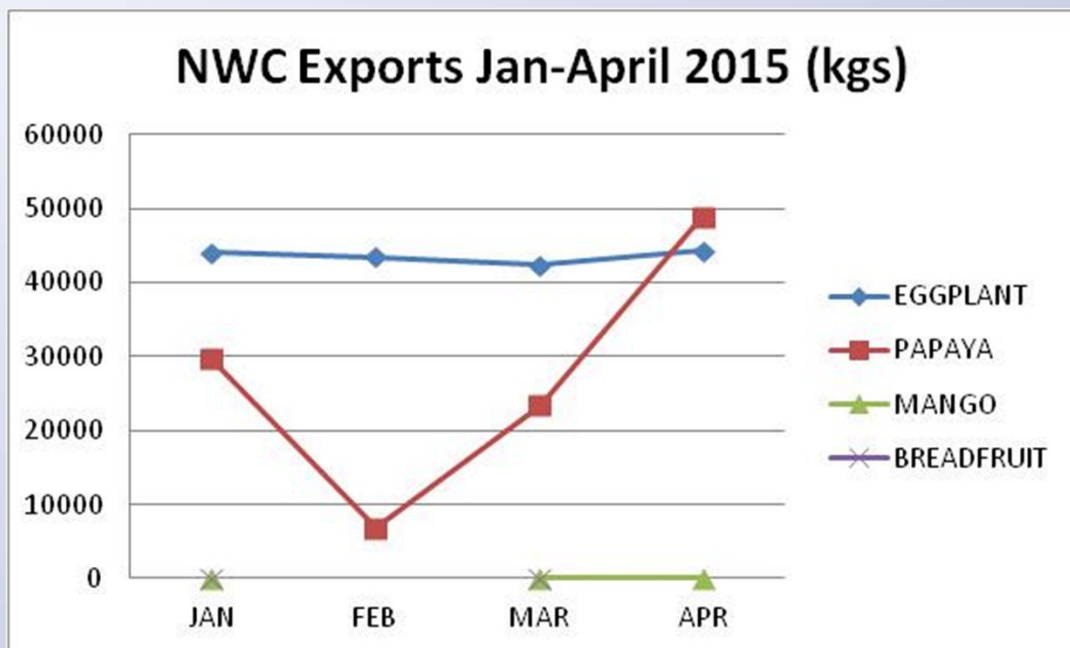
Project Overview

Established in May 2011, the four-year Pacific Agribusiness Research and Development Initiative (PARDI) project, “Developing commercial breadfruit production systems for the Pacific Islands”, aims to assist small-holder farmers to move to growing breadfruit as a commercial crop. The first stage of the project will deal with commercial orchard production and post-harvest handling for fresh exports. The second stage will deal with commercial processing of breadfruit. The project is funded by the Australian Centre for Agricultural Research (ACIAR).

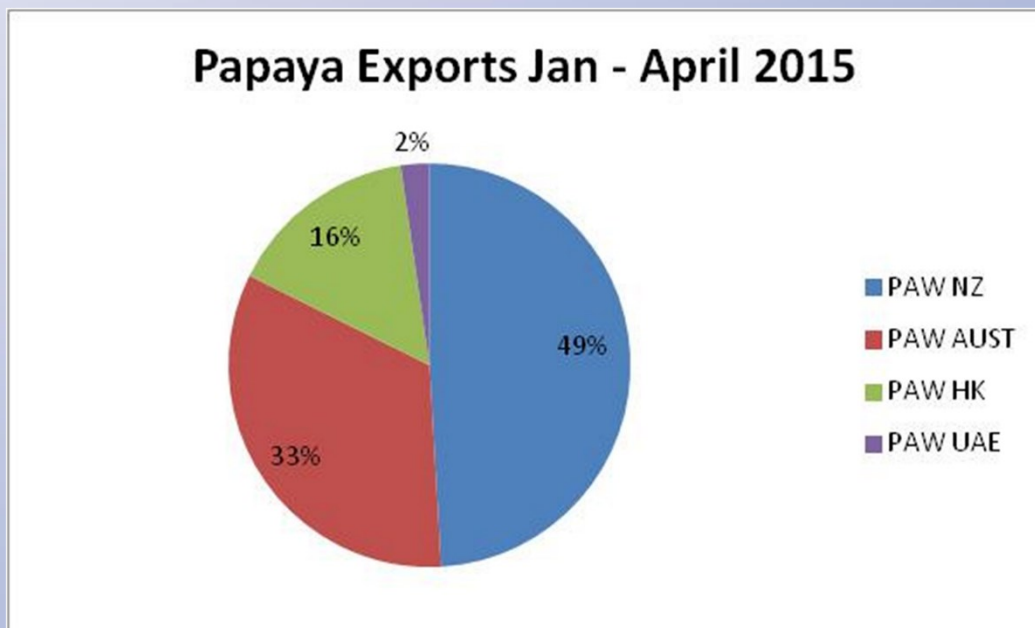




Export Update



Source: NWC



Source: NWC

NWC Research and Extension Partnership Committee:

