

# fresh

News from AVRDC – The World Vegetable Center



7 December 2011

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Taiwan's 15<sup>th</sup> Seed and Seedling Festival and Exhibition: a showcase of agricultural achievements

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## Amaranth and kangkong: two crops for a changing climate



(Top): Field Day opening address by **Andreas Ebert** (r) and **Kan-shu Chen** to stress the value of amaranth and kangkong for farmers and consumers.

(Right): Examining the many leaf shapes and colors of amaranth.



As the Earth's climate shifts and changes, farmers need resilient vegetable crops to produce well under drought, flooding, high winds and other extreme weather conditions. To highlight the benefits of amaranth and kangkong, two hardy indigenous vegetables that thrive in a range of climates, the **Fongshan Tropical Horticultural Experiment**

**Branch - Taiwan Agricultural Research Institute (FTHEB, TARI) and AVRDC – The World Vegetable Center** hosted a **field day** on 18 October 2011 at FTHEB in Fongshan, southern Taiwan.

**Kan-shu Chen** (陳甘澍), FTHEB Director, and **Andreas Ebert**, AVRDC Genebank Manager, addressed the 45 participants

during the opening ceremony and stressed the important role the two crops play in climate change adaptation strategies in Taiwan. In recent years the increasing number of typhoons to hit the island with torrential rainfall in their aftermath have made it more difficult to produce vegetables during the summer months and to guarantee a steady supply to consumers.



Water spinach, known as kangkong, and amaranth are indigenous vegetable crops that grow fast, have a high yield over a relatively long period of time, and are less affected by insect pests and diseases, high temperatures, and heavy rainfall than other vegetable crops. Popular in Southeast Asian countries, these leafy vegetables also are high in micronutrients. The combination of these qualities put the two crops in the forefront of research studies for strategies to help Taiwan's farmers cope with climate change.

**San-tai Wang** of FTHEB gave an overview of the field trials carried out with the two crops and discussed the results obtained. Participants then toured the kangkong trials, which were arranged in replicated plots (3 replicates per line) under nylon-mesh netting. A total of 115 kangkong accessions, 70 of which came from the AVRDC genebank, were included in the trials.

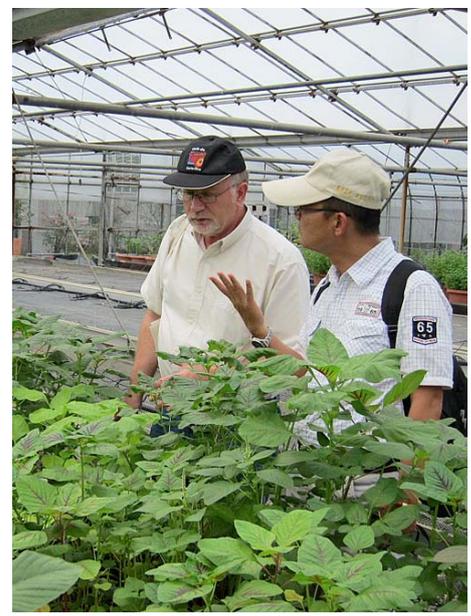
In a greenhouse, a total of 85 amaranth accessions and breeding lines with quite distinct leaf shapes and colors were on display. Participants discussed the trials

and exchanged their views, carefully evaluating each line for leaf shape, size, color and other attributes.

Participants viewed a salt tolerance experiment conducted with all of the kangkong accessions. The plants were exposed to a nutrient solution with 200 mmol l<sup>-1</sup> NaCl. All lines tolerated this salt level. Rising sea levels due to changing climates are increasing the salt in soil in low-lying coastal areas.

After the field tour, participants joined in a question-and-answer session. **Y.-K. Huang**, AVRDC Genetic Resources and Seed, introduced the participants to the Center's seed distribution policies, and AVRDC's **Ruby Hsiao** explained how to order the Center's breeding lines. San-tai Wang discussed a new seed distribution policy implemented by TARI during the Q & A session.

-- *Tien-hor Wu and Andreas W. Ebert, Genetic Resources and Seed*



**(Clockwise):** Participants view salt tolerance trials of kangkong accessions.

**Hui-ling Ho** from FTHEB introduces the Kangkong trials.

**Andreas Ebert** (l) in a discussion about the potential of amaranth to yield well under extreme conditions.

## AVRDC and partners mark World Diabetes Day



(top): “Walking the talk” at HQ (l) and in India (r) on the World Diabetes Day, 14 November

(center): Dr. Arun Karthik (l) at M.V. Diabetic Center, India giving patients bitter gourd pamphlets during clinic sessions.

(bottom): Dr. Mark Swai (r) of the Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Center (KCMC), Tanzania handing out bitter gourd pamphlets during Diabetes Clinic on 14 November.

On 14 November 2011, AVRDC staff and partners “walked the talk” around the globe to observe **World Diabetes Day** and help create awareness of the importance of diet and exercise in controlling the disease.

At Center **headquarters** in Taiwan, more than 40 staff members set off for a brisk 30-minute Walk for Health among the pepper, *Moringa*, tomato and cucurbit research fields—a visual reminder of the nutritional benefits vegetables provide. Carrying signs that read “Out with Diabetes,” AVRDC got on its feet to show how simple actions such as a daily walk and consuming a diet rich in vegetables can help in diabetes control.

The **AVRDC South Asia** team joined staff from the **International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT)** for a Global Diabetes Walk on the ICRISAT campus in Hyderabad, India. **Dyno Keatinge**, AVRDC Director General, and **William Dar**, ICRISAT Director General, gave briefings about the disease and its

control. Bitter gourd recipe brochures were distributed to participants, and the ICRISAT Medical Unit organized free screenings for blood sugar and diabetic retinopathy for staff members. DG Keatinge gave a presentation on “Why vegetables are vital” after the walk, emphasizing recommended nutrient intakes, indigenous vegetables for on-site vitamin consumption, and the antidiabetic properties of bitter gourd (*Momordica charantia*).

At **Avinashilingam University for Women (AUW)** in Coimbatore, India, Bitter Gourd Project team members **Amirthaveni Subramanian** and **S. Premakumari** organized activities across the city to educate the public about diabetes management and prevention. Students from the Food Service Management and Dietetics Department held nutritional counseling sessions where healthy diets for diabetes control, including bitter gourd recipes, were discussed. At the Arunachala Diabetic Center and M.V. Diabetic Center, bitter gourd was introduced as an effective antidiabetic food and recipe



brochures were given out to patients. Graduate students promoted bitter gourd consumption to households in nearby villages.

In Tanzania, where diabetes is one of the most rapidly growing chronic diseases, **Mark Swai** of the **Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Center (KCMC)**, a partner in AVRDC’s Bitter Gourd Project, observed World Diabetes Day by engaging the hospital community in discussions on effective diabetes management and how bitter gourd can help. Interested patients are now asking for seeds to grow their own “insulin plant.”

## Festival features seeds, seedlings, and vegetables



*(left)* Tomatoes of many colors brightened AVRDC's booth at the festival. *(center)* Demonstration Garden Manager **Deng-lin Wu** (r) explains grafting to an interested visitor. *(bottom, l)* **Ruby Hsiao** with the Center's heat-tolerant broccoli hybrids. *(bottom, r)* Colorful and informative posters and bountiful baskets of high beta-carotene cherry tomatoes at the Center's booth.

Taiwan's 15<sup>th</sup> Seed and Seedling Festival and Exhibition on Agricultural Achievements, held 3-4 December 2011 in Tainan, highlighted the value of solanaceous vegetable crops—eggplant, tomato, pepper, and potato—to the country's economy and culture. Staff from AVRDC's Global Technology Dissemination, Genetic Resources and Seed, Tomato, Pepper, Indigenous Vegetables, and Communication & Information groups collaborated on a colorful and engaging display of fresh vegetables and live plants to show visitors new varieties and mature production technologies, including grafting. Government agencies, seed companies, organic farms and equipment vendors also hosted booths to promote their work, and plenty of wholesome agricultural products were on sale for tasty snacking. The festival featured games, free seedling distribution, and attractive arrangements of vegetables and fruits.



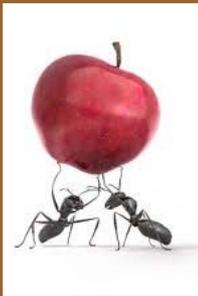
The Center in the news



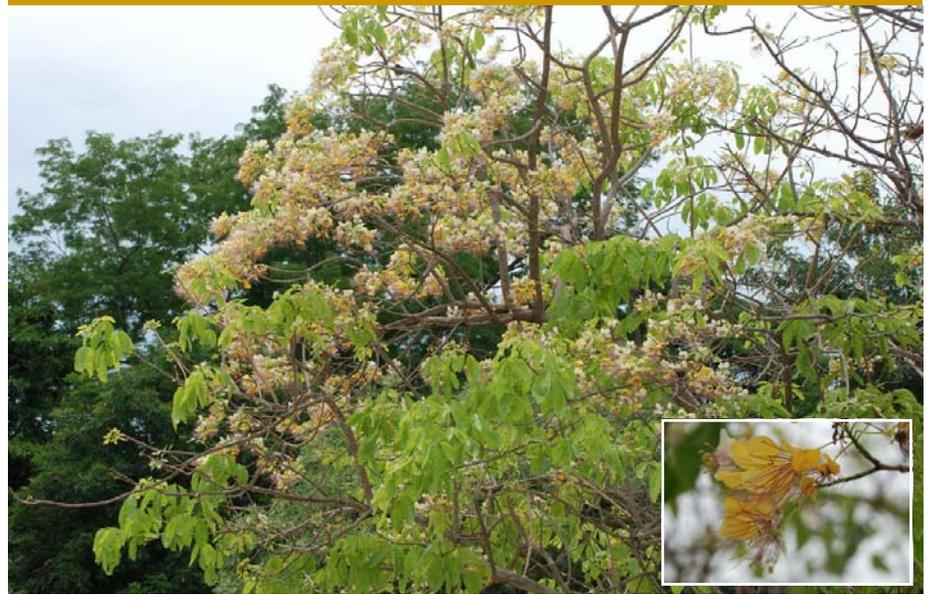
AVRDC's **World Diabetes Day** activities captured the attention of bloggers and newspapers in India. According to the International Diabetes Federation, the number of people suffering from diabetes in India is expected to rise from approximately 40 million today to almost 70 million people by 2025.

The answer man!

How are ants able to move objects heavier than they are? Ask an entomologist — in this case, AVRDC's **Srinivasan Ramasamy**, who provided the answer for The Hindu newspaper's *Question Corner*. See <http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/article2675004.ecf> for the details!



A tree grows in Kamphaeng Saen



A recent AVRDC study on fermented vegetables in Thailand conducted with financial support of the **Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Sciences (JIRCAS)** describes the garlic pear tree (*Crateva adansonii*), whose flowers and soft leaves are cooked or fermented and eaten as vegetables in the central and southern provinces of Chumphon, Ranong, Krabi and Phang Nga, where the

tree is commonly found along rivers or creeks. The small tree, which belongs to the Capparaceae family, reaches a height of 4-20 m with a gray to grayish brown stem and relatively smooth bark. *Crateva adansonii* also can be found in tropical Africa, India, Myanmar and the Malay Archipelago as well as in front of AVRDC's **East and Southeast Asia Research and Training Station** in Kamphaeng Saen, Thailand.

## Safety first in the lab



- *Prevention is better than cure*
- *Safety is everyday and everyone's business*
- *Safety at work is to protect us, the community and the environment*

A training course on “**Laboratory and Chemicals Safety**” held on 16 November 2011 at AVRDC headquarters emphasized these three points with 29 staff members from various labs, Purchasing, and the Technical Services Office who are directly or indirectly involved with handling hazardous chemicals.

With assistance from **Merck**, a major producer and supplier of chemicals, speakers discussed laboratory management and chemical safety, Globally Harmonized System (GHS) regulation and labeling of hazard and harmful chemicals, and selection and application of analytical reagents. The GHS symbol denotes the nature of hazard in a chemical package, and anyone handling chemicals should look for the symbol before using the product. Participants were encouraged to refresh their knowledge on chemical storage, safe practices, and handling of

spills, injuries and accidents.

Participants also identified 2-3 key safety measures that need improvement in their work area; all will discuss the measures with their supervisors and team members and work together to find solutions. Staff will develop Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for hazardous chemicals used in their respective laboratories and display them. This will help build awareness of the hazards and safety measures required when handling or storing chemicals.

## Welcome



On 23 November 2011 **Clemens Richert**, M.Sc. Geography, of the Department of Physical Geography, University of Freiburg, Germany, arrived at AVRDC's East and Southeast Asia Regional Office to start his 4-month assignment as a Research Fellow. Clemens will prepare a joint research project with the tentative title “*Enhancing capacities for sustainable information and geo-communication technologies for urban and peri-urban vegetable systems in Southeast Asia*” in close collaboration with Kasetsart University and other universities in the region. The Department of Physical Geography at the University of Freiburg has a broad range of competencies combining local and global research approaches, particularly on issues relating to global change in the context of natural hazards and vulnerability.

## Seminars



AVRDC staff enjoyed a bumper crop of seminars over the past few weeks. On November 10, Soil Scientist **Chin-Hua Ma** presented a talk on “Starter Solution Technology (SST): Development and Application.” SST—developed in the early 1990s and now being widely disseminated—helps reduce fertilizer use while increasing fertilizer efficiency and productivity. Small amounts of very concentrated inorganic fertilizer solution are applied to soils near roots immediately after transplanting, providing young plants with readily available nutrients before their root systems are well-established; this enhances root development and promotes growth.



Also on the 10<sup>th</sup>, **Richard Hughes**, a photography intern in

Communications and Information, introduced the audience to his unique view of the AVRDC campus in “I Am the Machine that Shows You the World as I Alone Can See It.”



Agricultural Economist **Madhusudan Bhattarai** took the podium on November 17 to discuss “Impact Assessment of Farmer Field Schools (FFS) in Aceh, Indonesia.” The broad, long-term economic, social and environmental effects resulting from research are challenging to quantify. FFS is under debate in the literature due to its somewhat high cost. However, Madhu noted it is a strategy that is working in Aceh, where extension workers have learned skills in FFS which they have passed on to thousands of farmers.



Plant Pathologist **Jaw-Fen Wang** updated colleagues on “Pathology research on pepper fruit anthracnose at AVRDC: current status and future prospects” on November 24. Host resistance offers the most environmentally sound means to control the disease,

which is caused by multiple pathogens at preharvest and postharvest stages. Researchers are developing efficient procedures to identify and detect the disease; selecting stable resistance sources for breeding pepper lines with durable resistance; and designing host resistance-based integrated disease management packages for different agroecosystems.



Genebank Manager **Andreas Ebert's** December 1 presentation on “Promotion of Indigenous Vegetables in Asia (Indonesia, Philippines, Taiwan)” covered community-based seed multiplication in the Philippines; multilocation trials for vegetable soybean, amaranth, roselle and Malabar spinach in Indonesia; capacity training in conservation and germplasm management at AVRDC headquarters; and information dissemination activities through publications and field days (See “Amaranth and kangkong: two crops for a changing climate” on page 1 in this issue of *Fresh*).

### Visitors



**Professor Gynheung An**, inventor of pGA vectors famous for plant transformation from Korea with **Seonghoe Jang**, Assistant Research Fellow/Assistant Professor, Academia Sinica Biotechnology Center in Southern Taiwan of Agricultural Biotechnology Research Center (AS-BCST) met Plant Pathologist Jung-Sup Lee and Pepper Breeder Paul Gniffke on 10 November 2011.



**Alice Huang** (l) and **Marion Alard** (r) and from the Merchandising Division of Carrefour visited the Center on 22 November.

On 22 November 2011, **Marion Alard** and **Alice Huang** from the Merchandising Division of Carrefour met with Director General Dyno Keatinge, Deputy Director General-Administration and Services Yin-Fu Chang, Global Technology Dissemination Head

Greg Luther, and Communications and Information Head Maureen Mecozzi to discuss issues of farmer compliance with the global retailer's quality standards.



**Tatsua Mochizuki**, Director General, National Institute of Vegetable and Tea Science, National Agriculture and Food Research Organization, Japan visited the Center on 23 November with **Ming-hsien Shieh** from the Taiwan District Agricultural Research & Extension Station. The visitors met DG Keatinge, and toured the genebank and demonstration garden.



Visitors from Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, PRC.

A group of 11 visitors from **Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region**, People's Republic of China also visited headquarters on 23 November; the group received a

briefing from DDG-A&S Chang. A delegation from the **Vegetable Research Institute** of the People's Republic of China toured campus headquarters on the 28<sup>th</sup>.



Nine Gambian agribusiness students led by Assistant Professor Wen-I Chang from NPUST listen closely to the genebank briefing by Yung-kuang Huang.

Also on the 28<sup>th</sup>, a group of Gambian agribusiness students attending **National Pingtung University of Science and Technology** accompanied by Assistant Professor **Wen-I Chang** saw some plants native to their home country flourishing in the demonstration garden, and received a close look at the inner workings of the genebank, guided by Yung-kuang Huang.



To all *Fresh* readers: This issue will be our last for 2011. Season's greetings and best wishes for a healthy and happy 2012!

## IVTC Module III: *Vegetables for Sustainable Development*



Course participants get hands-on practice in ecological sanitation methods and vegetable seedling nursery preparation and care. Module III also covered project management, community development, nutrition, gender issues, and geographic information systems.

Defying the flood crisis in Thailand, 10 participants from Indonesia, Bangladesh and Myanmar joined the final module “*Vegetables for Sustainable Development*” of the **30<sup>th</sup> AVRDC International Vegetable Training Course (IVTC)** hosted by AVRDC East and Southeast Asia. Through lectures and field exercises the participants gained a better awareness of the contribution of vegetables to different sustainable development issues.

During first two weeks of the module, the trainees participated in the final two sessions of the Vegetable Farmer Field School organized by the Thailand Department of Agriculture, specifically using Chinese kale as the demo crop for various integrated crop management strategies.

Lectures covered various development issues as well as the tools that can be used to enhance food and nutrition security in both developing and developed countries. **Shakuntala Thilsted**,

senior nutrition adviser to the WorldFish Center, emphasized the importance of impact-oriented research and development initiatives for enhanced food and nutrition security. **Sheila de Lima**, AVRDC Training and Administrative Officer, presented an overview of the Millennium Development Goals and other sustainable development issues as well as community-based development approaches and leadership principles for effective implementation of development projects. **Kruewan Chonlanai**, Chairperson of the Asian Women in Cooperative Development Forum (Thailand) discussed gender and development, and **Atiq Ahmed Kainan**, Climate Information Application Specialist of the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center in Bangkok, addressed disaster risk management. AVRDC East and Southeast Asia Regional Director **Robert Holmer** and Executive Assistant **Steve Kebasen** facilitated lectures and practice on ecological sanitation, demonstrating the importance of

closing the nutrient loop by linking sanitation and agriculture.

To enhance the participants’ skills in project management, AVRDC Socioeconomist **Victor Afari-Sefa** discussed the essentials of project monitoring and evaluation. Lectures and practical exercises on the use of geographic information systems (GIS) and remote sensing as modern tools for efficient natural resource management were given by **Kumut Sanklasila** and **Foyfa Shutidamrong**, both from Kasetsart University’s Kamphaeng Saen campus.

A tour of Kasetsart University’s Center for Agricultural Biotechnology was facilitated by **Julapark Chunwongse** of KU’s Department of Horticulture, Faculty of Agriculture, to increase awareness of the contribution of biotechnology to food and nutrition security. The final two weeks of the IVTC will be devoted to essentials of development communication and project proposal writing.

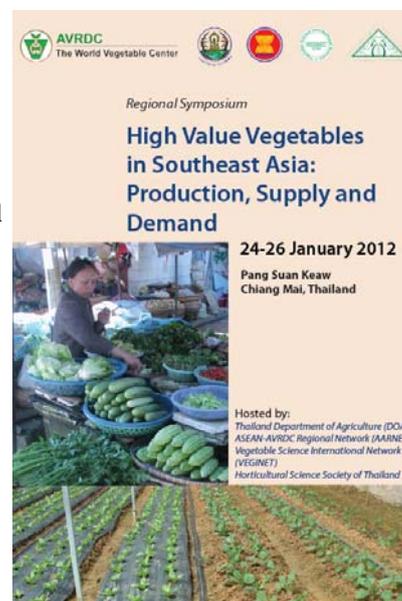
## Symposium: Value of vegetables for nutrition, food security, economic development in SE Asia

Preparations are underway for **High Value Vegetables in Southeast Asia: Production, Supply and Demand**, a regional symposium to be held 24-26 January 2012 in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Agriculture, and in particular horticulture, is a major contributor to the continued economic growth of most Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member states. Identifying recent scientific advancements and their relevance to the current needs of millions of smallholder vegetable farmers, larger vegetable production companies, market agents and consumers will help the region's vegetable industry grow and thrive.

The Organizing Committee has selected 75 papers for oral and 50 for poster presentation. **Hiroyuki Konuma**, Assistant Director General and Regional Representative of the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, will deliver the keynote speech, "Growing Role of Vegetables in Food and Nutrition Security and Income Generation in Asia." Among the other invited speakers are **Jacqueline d'Arros Hughes**, AVRDC Deputy Director General for Research; **Prem Nath**, Former Assistant Director General, FAO and Chairman of the Vegetable Science International Network (VEGINET); **Olivia la O' Castillo**, Board Member, UN Secretary General's Advisory Board on Water & Sanitation (UNSGAB); **H.P.**

**Singh**, Deputy Director General, Department of Horticulture, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR); **K.V. Peter**, Director, World Noni Research Foundation; **Michael Boehme**, Humboldt University of Berlin; **Wilfried H. Schnitzler**, Technische Universität München; and **João Carlos da Silva Dias**, Technical University of Lisbon.



Full papers and posters are due for submission on 15 December 2011. Please submit to [info-eastasia@worldveg.org](mailto:info-eastasia@worldveg.org).

For further details, visit the symposium website: <http://www.seaveq2012.com>

### Keynote speakers

#### Dr. Hiroyuki Konuma

Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative  
FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific  
Keynote speech: *Growing Role of Vegetables in Food and Nutrition Security and Income Generation in Asia*

#### Dr. Jacqueline d'Arros Hughes

Deputy Director General for Research  
AVRDC – The World Vegetable Center  
Keynote speech: *The Nourished Millennium: How Vegetables Put Global Goals Within Reach*

### Invited Speakers

#### Session 1: From Seed to Table

##### Prof. Dr. Anupam Varma

INSA Senior Scientist, Division of Plant Virology, Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI)  
Presentation: *Emergence of Whitefly transmitted geminiviruses: A major threat to vegetable production in Southeast Asia*

##### Prof. Dr. Michael Boehme

Humboldt University of Berlin, Dept. Horticultural Plant Systems  
Presentation: *Comparison of Cultivation Systems for Asian Leafy Vegetables and Herbs in Greenhouse*

##### Prof. João Carlos da Silva Dias

Technical University of Lisbon  
Presentation: *Transgenic Vegetables for Southeast Asia*

##### Dr. O.P. Dutta

Director- R & D, NAMDHARI Seeds Pvt. Ltd. India  
Presentation: *Cucurbits in India-Emerging Trends and Achievements*

#### Session 2: From Harvest to Table

##### Dr. P.G. Chengappa

Professor, Department of Marketing and Cooperation, University of Agricultural Sciences, India  
Presentation: *Improving the Supply Chain Management of Vegetables through Group Action of Farmers and Contract Farming: The Indian Context*

#### Session 3: Vegetables for Sustainable Development

##### Dr. Prem Nath

Former Asst. Director General, FAO  
Chairman, Dr. P.N. Agricultural Science Foundation (PNASF)  
Presentation: *Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture and Vegetables*

##### Dr. Olivia la O' Castillo (Requested)

Board Member  
UN Secretary General's Advisory Board on Water & Sanitation  
Presentation: *TBA*

##### Dr. H.P. Singh

Deputy Director General, Department of Horticulture  
Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)  
Presentation: *Trend of Horticultural Research Particularly Vegetables in India and its Regional Prospects*

##### Prof. Dr. Kirti Singh

TD College Main Gate  
Presentation: *Vegetable Science - Indian Scenario*

##### Prof. Em. Dr. Wilfried Hermann Schnitzler

Professor Emeritus, Institute of Vegetable Science, Technische Universität München  
Presentation: *Urban Hydroponics – Visions, Investigations, Implementations*

##### Prof. Dr. K.V. Peter

Director, World Noni Research Foundations  
Presentation: *Potentials of Aquatic Vegetables in Asian Diet*

##### Dr. Sirikul Wasee

Director, Tropical Vegetable Research Institute, Kasetsart University, Kamphaeng Saen Campus  
Presentation: *Pepper (Capsicum spp.) germplasm management under Thailand conditions*

##### Prof. Dr. M.L. Anothai Choomsai

President and R & D Director, Almatha Seeds Co. Ltd, Thailand  
Presentation: *From farm to table- how to reduce insecticidal residual in vegetables to WHO's standard- a proposal to Asian government*

Tropentag 2011: Development on the margin



The annual **Tropentag Conference on Tropical and Subtropical Agricultural and Natural Resource Management** was held at the University of Bonn, Germany from 5-8 October 2011. About 1,100 participants from 82 countries attended the conference, which aims to address issues of resource management, environment, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, food, nutrition and related sciences in the

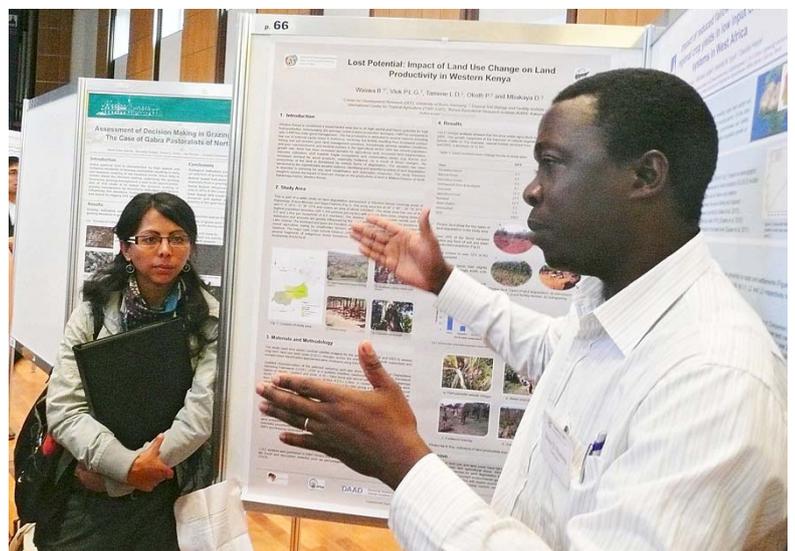
context of rural development, sustainable resource use and poverty alleviation worldwide. This year's theme was marginalization: Specifically, *What is the future of marginal environments, to what extent can or should marginalised people and communities become key players in increasingly globalised resource use?*

Former AVRDC Socioeconomics Postdoc **Simone Kriesemer** in cooperation with Entomologist

**Srinivasan Ramasamy** and **Katinka Weinberger**, Director, UN Center for Alleviation of Poverty Through Sustainable Agriculture (UNCAPSA) - Indonesia, presented a poster entitled "At the edge of farmer's health: Pesticide use in intensive vegetable production in three Indian States." In an oral presentation **Hamdou Amadou**, University of Kassel, Goettingen, presented the results of a study assessing the safety of horticultural and livestock products originating from urban and peri-urban enterprises in Bobo-Dioulassa, Burkina Faso and Sikasso, Mali. The researchers concluded that a holistic approach to improve hygiene along the production, processing, and marketing chain will be needed to reduce health risks to consumers.



(clockwise): Poster presentations about urban gardens in Burkina Faso, nutrition management in West Africa, urban gardens in Sudan, and home gardens.



## Managing risk in the Pacific



### PACIFIC DISASTER NET



Disaster risk management partners working in the Pacific region can turn to the **Pacific Disaster Net (PDN)** website for up-to-date information, documents, maps and alerts. Developed and maintained by the **Applied Geoscience and Technology Division of Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SOPAC)** and

partners UN Development Programme Pacific Centre (UNDP), UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), Pacific Sub Regional Office of the Secretariat for the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR), and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the website provides support for decision makers in government agencies, regional bodies, nongovernment organizations and international agencies in American Samoa, Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji Islands,

France, French Polynesia, Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Pitcairn Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, United States of America, Vanuatu, Wallis and Futuna.

<http://www.pacificdisaster.net>



## 40 years of service to tropical agriculture



AVRDC recently received a letter from a former resident...

My father, **David MacKenzie**, worked at AVRDC from 1973-1974 as a plant breeder and we lived in the AVRDC community while it was just being developed. I just happened to go to your website to see how it changed. Wow, was I surprised.



*Shanhua used to be a dirt road with mostly bikes. There was an annual town festival and a long table would be set up on the road. I remember all sorts of different foods on the table—including a full pig with an apple in its mouth. Blond-haired children were very strange so we'd be stared at and touched quite a bit. There was no medical care or 7-11 close. To go to school, we took a car to the US military base in Tainan and*

*attended school there. It has changed so much!*

*As an extension from my living internationally as a child, I now own Rapport International, a foreign language translation company based in Sudbury, Massachusetts, USA.*

*Congratulations on the success of AVRDC!*

*-- Wendy Pease*

## Partners in the news



Philippine Journalist **Bong Fabe** won the Brightleaf Agriculture Journalism Award for his feature on urban container gardener **Jojo Rom** in the Philippine *Business Mirror*. **Robert Holmer**, AVRDC's Regional Director for East and Southeast Asia, was quoted in the story. The award recognizes print articles, radio segments, television features, and photographs that create awareness of current agricultural issues, best farming practices, environmental care, and crop sustainability in the Philippines. Congratulations, Bong!

Forbes Magazine recently published the Impact 30, a list of the world's leading social entrepreneurs. **KickStart** was #7 on the list. The NGO develops low-cost, high-impact products, including a brick press, a machine that makes cooking oil from sunflower seeds, and manually operated "MoneyMaker" pumps that allow farmers to pull water from a river, pond or shallow well and irrigate up to 2 acres of land. KickStart was a key partner with AVRDC in a Mali microirrigation project supported by the Taiwan Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Congratulations, KickStart!

<http://onforb.es/KSImpact30>



KickStart's Martin Fisher (l) and Nick Moon.

## USAID in Taiwan



On 2 December, Director General **Dyno Keatinge** and Deputy Director General – Administration & Services **Yin-Fu Chang** attended an international

conference on "American Footsteps in Taiwan, 1950-1980" hosted by the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) at the National Central Library in Taipei. **Rajiv Shah**, Administrator of the **US Agency for International Development (USAID)** was the keynote speaker. Dr. Shah and the USAID delegation were accompanied by **William Stanton**, Director, American Institute in Taiwan. Drs. Keatinge and Chang attended a reception for Dr. Shah hosted by Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) Deputy Minister Dr. Shan, where USAID and MOFA discussed potential cooperation for international development. Dr. Shah discussed USAID's Feed the Future Program and made special mention of AVRDC's nutrition promotion project in Africa. He also noted USAID is interested in helping South Pacific Island countries combat malnutrition and enrich dietary diversity. Dr. Keatinge mentioned the Center's work in Africa and in the South Pacific Islands to help alleviate poverty and improve malnutrition.

Dr. Shah spoke well of the Center's work and mentioned future support and cooperation with AVRDC. Other speakers and participants engaged in promoting the USA-Taiwan relationship included former AVRDC Board Chair Dr. **Paul Sun**, who spoke about USA aid to reconstruct Taiwan agriculture from 1950-1980; he noted the creation of the Joint Commission on Rural Reconstruction (JCRR), the predecessor of the Council of Agriculture, and the financial support it received from USAID. Former Taiwan Education Counselor to the USA, Dr. **Chen-ching Li**, now Professor of the Department of English, Shih Hsin University, gave a presentation on the education relationship between Taiwan and USA.



(above) Rajiv Shah. (r) Dyno Keatinge, Dr. Chen-ching Li, and Yin-fu Chang.