



**AVRDC**

The World Vegetable Center

# Newsletter

Published by the Communication and Training Office

25 May 2007

## A Choice That Does Not Give Many Options to All

Predicted to close ranks with the world's strongest economies within the next decades, India is increasingly a land of major contrasts. The rapid changes in its economy are already having an impact on shopping habits. For generations Indians have shopped for food and groceries at open markets and from roadside vendors. However, this is now undergoing a profound transition as a number of large Indian companies are setting up western style supermarket chains to cater to India's growing middle class. What the urban elite acknowledges as a gain in comfort and choice affects the lives and limits the choices of millions of Indians who work in the large, unorganized retail sector.



Empty carts, lack of customers: Will this be the future for India's small vendors?

The advent of new shopping and consumption styles puts local vendors out of business. There are 40 million people employed in India's retail economy. In places where supermarkets have become established, studies have shown small retailers are losing up to 40% of their business and income. "I'm struggling to sell most of my vegetables. Whatever is left over is simply sold at half-price or thrown away. I cannot store them," a street vendor recently complained in an interview with BBC. Earlier this month, vegetable sellers smashed and vandalized three new supermarkets in the city of Jharkhand giving vent to their frustration at being unable to compete with the new chain's low prices.

By the time New Delhi hosts the 2010 Commonwealth Games, there will be one supermarket every kilometer throughout much of the city. In addition to the national retail companies Reliance or Big Apple, global players like Wal Mart - No. 1 in the business worldwide - or Carrefour also stand ready at the starting gates.

Not all analysts believe that the recent eruption of confrontation truly reflects the business reality. Urban residents still enjoy the convenience of buying vegetables right outside their door from sellers who trundle around neighborhoods with carts laden with produce. They argue that half of the country's fruit and vegetable produce rots before it reaches consumers, and that it is the emerging modern retailers that invest in cold storage and refrigerated transport.

The supermarket revolution is not confined to India, and its significant effects will not only be felt by small vendors, but also by millions of smallholder producers. In 2003, a FAO report warned that small farmers in Africa risked being swept out of agriculture by a wave of supermarkets unless they found ways to participate in the new economy. To make the dramatic changes manageable, training and knowledge dissemination will be essential for small farmers to not only to survive but have their share of the business.

The need to help farmers become more "market smart", is an integral component of AVRDC's post-harvest strategies. "Supermarkets could provide a stable, dependable market for farmers' produce and may boost employment in cities and surrounding areas by providing jobs in transport and distribution. In addition, they will also improve the quality and lower the price of food for urban populations," the FAO report concluded. One cannot stop change, but one can shape it. That saying may be the strongest motivation to elaborate ways that include, and not exclude the resource poor from the future economy

*Oliver Hanschke, Communications*

## New Publications (Articles & Books) Received by the Library

Han, S.H., Lee, D.W., Kim, E.H., Lee, M.K., Park, Y.D., Kim, S.H., Yoon, B.S. (2007). Selection of tobacco plants expressing Chinese cabbage myrosinase gene and quantification of myrosinase gene expression level using quantitative real-time PCR method. KOREAN JOURNAL OF HORTICULTURAL SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY. v.25(1):29-36.

Jeong, C.S., Park, J.N., Kyoung, J.H., Kang, J.P., Won, J.M., Lee, S.J., Jo, T.S., Ahn, B.J. (2007). Effects of functional tray in MA packaging on the absorption of ethylene, odor compounds, and quality of broccoli florets. KOREAN JOURNAL OF HORTICULTURAL SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY. v.25(1):1-5.

Ladjal, M., Deloche, N., Huc, R., Ducrey, M. (2007). Effects of soil and air drought on growth, plant water status and leaf gas exchange in three Mediterranean cedar species: *Cedrus atlantica*, *C. brevifolia* and *C. libani*. TREES: STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION. v.21 (2):201-213.

McConchie, R., Rogers, G. (2007). Proceedings of the international symposium on cucurbits; Townsville, Australia - September 11-17, 2005. Acta Horticulturae Number 731. Leuven: ISHS. 504 pp.

Crozier, A., Clifford, M.N., Ashihara, H. (2006). Plant secondary metabolites- occurrence, structure and role in the human diet. Oxford OX: Blackwell Publishing Ltd. x, 372 pp.

Yang, G.H., Zhong, K., Cui, C.S. (2006). Sequence analysis of CP genes of CMV from pumpkin in Yunan and Heilongjiang Provinces. ACTA HORTICULTURAE SINICA. v.33(6):1237-1240.

Yu, H.F., Cao, J.S., Wu, T. (2006). Physiological response of dwarf pumpkin on exogenous GA3 treatment. ACTA HORTICULTURAE SINICA. v.33 (6):1331-1334.

Onyilagha, J.C., Grotewold, E. (2004). The biology and structural distribution of surface flavonoids. In: Recent research developments in plant science: vol.2. Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University. P.53-71

Miller, N.J., Ruiz-larrea, M.B. (2002). Flavonoids and other plant phenols in the diet: their significance as antioxidants. JOURNAL OF NUTRITIONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL MEDICINE. v.12:39-51.

Iwashina, T. (2000). The structure and distribution of the flavonoids in plants. JOURNAL OF PLANT RESEARCH. v.113:287-299.

## New Popular Magazines Now Available in the Library

**The Economist:** How will history judge him?

12th–18th May 2007

**The Economist – America's fear of China**

19th–25th May 2007

**Time:** The last temptation of Al Gore

28 May 2007



## Recommended Web Link of the Week:

### AgEcon Search – Research in Agricultural and Applied Economics

**AgEcon Search** – “Research in Agricultural and Applied Economics” is a World Wide Web site developed and maintained at the University of Minnesota by the Magrath Library and the Department of Applied Economics. AgEcon search collects, indexes, and electronically distributes full text copies of scholarly research in the broadly defined field of agricultural

economics including sub disciplines such as agribusiness, food supply, natural resource economics, environmental economics, policy issues, agriculture trade, and economic development.

Please visit <http://agecon.lib.umn.edu/index.html>

- Source: Fang-chin Chen/Library Services Unit

## News from the AVRDC-Asian Regional Center

### Meeting with BIOTEC – A Thai Agency Providing Grants

On 11 May, the Regional Director, accompanied by Dr. Apisit Eiumnoph, had a meeting with the Director of BIOTEC, Prof. Dr. Morakot Tanticharoen, along with the Deputy Director and the Director of the International Cooperation Division of BIOTEC. The work of ARC in the field of mungbean breeding, organic vegetable farming and study of biochemical functionalities of native

vegetables were seen as areas of particular interest to BIOTEC for future collaboration. BIOTEC is a Thai center that provides grants to projects including capacity building in agricultural biotechnology ([www.biotec.or.th](http://www.biotec.or.th))

### Meeting with Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA)

The Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA) is a regional alliance of farmer federations and organizations in ten Asian countries, representing 10 million farmers. Currently AFA has nine member organizations from nine Asian countries.

After a recent visit to headquarters in Taiwan eight representatives of the association made a follow-up visit to ARC to discuss future collaboration. They were keen

to work with ARC in supporting sustainable rural development, with particular emphasis on promoting organic vegetable production in their member countries. They were also interested in participating in future training programmes organized by ARC focused on vegetable production and marketing.

### Outcomes of the Monthly Staff Meeting on 22 May

**Highlights of the meeting included:**

The successful closure of the HRDP IV activities held on 14-17 May 2007; Enhancing collaboration with Kasetsart University (KU) through the Research and Development Institute of Kamphaengsaen campus (RDI-KPS); New project proposals being developed by the RD and a briefing on the IFAD-funded SOVP which had an initial discussion with the collaborators from

Northern and Southern Vietnam last 17 May; and Preliminary planning for the 26th Regional Training Course which will run from 5 November 2007 to 31 January 2008.

- *Source: Dr. Peter A.C. Ooi/AVRDC-ARC*

## Upcoming Seminars

There will be two seminars in headquarters next week. The venue will be Library meeting room. All are welcome!

**Speaker 1:** Dr. Greg Johnson, Consultant, EWS/ VEG Impact project

**Topic:** Vegetable Farming in Tropical Asia: Preliminary findings of the AVRDC/EWS study

**Time:** 1530–1630 hours, Monday, 28 May

**Speaker 2:** Dr. Madhusudan Bhattarai, Candidate for the position of Agricultural Economist

**Topic:** Impacts of Low-Cost Water Storage Tank Based High Value Vegetables Production on Rural Livelihoods in Mountain Communities in Nepal

**Time:** 0915-1015 hours, Wednesday, 30 May

- *Source: Communications*

## Making Human Resources Development sustainable: The HRDP IV Experience



**Dr. Viravanh Phannourath**  
Director General,  
Department of Agriculture  
Lao PDR

The Human Resources Development Project for the Mekong Region Phase IV (HRDP IV) was a 4-year project (2003-2007) sponsored by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and managed by the AVRDC-ARC.

At its final meeting in Bangkok, Thailand from 14-17 May, HRDP IV NARS collaborators described the progress

made towards the goal of increasing income from vegetable production and increasing consumption of vegetables in upland and remote areas of Vietnam, Lao PDR and Cambodia.

The final year of the project involved refresher courses for extension workers, and farmer field schools to educate farmers in advanced vegetable production technologies and impact assessment studies. Conducted by consultant economists, the impact studies showed increases in both household income and consumption of vegetables in the project areas. Improved linkages between research and extension services and farmer education programs have helped to make these changes in vegetable production and consumption sustainable.

Director General Dr Thomas Lumpkin shared the vision of the Center and the achievements of the project with 23 participants in the final meeting of the Steering Committee. Dr. Michel Evéquoz, First Secretary for Development and Cooperation of the Swiss Cooperation Office for the Mekong Region, thanked AVRDC and ARC as well as the project partners for a successful implementation of HRDP IV.

- Source: AVRDC-ARC



### Visitor

**Dr. Greg Johnson**, Consultant, EWS/VEG IMPACT project on “Impact of Improved Vegetable Farming Technology on Small Farmers’ Income in Tropical Asia, and a Strategy for a Horticultural Green Revolution”

will visit the Center from 26 May to 4 June. His purpose of the visit is to discuss major outcomes and findings of EWS vegetable impact study.

- Source: Olivia Liang/Socio-economics Unit

## Travel

**Dr. Thomas Lumpkin**, 24 May, to Bangkok, Thailand, to meet with the new President of Kasetsart University; 25-26 May, to Tashkent, Uzbekistan to meet the Country Director of ADB's Uzbekistan Mission and visit AVRDC's trials at Uzbek Research Institute of Vegetables, Melon Crops and Potato; 27-31 May, to Dushanbe, Tajikistan, to visit the Aga Khan Foundation and to attend the 10th Steering Committee Meeting of CGIAR-CAC Program; 1-9 June, to Nairobi, Kenya to co-host the Interest Group Meeting on High Value Fruits Research with ICRISAT; to attend the Pre-Proposal Meeting for the Challenge Program on High Value Crops - Fruits and Vegetables with Bioversity International at ICRAF HQ.

**Dr. Paul Gniffke**, 27 May-7 June, to Vietnam, to accompany Cambodian researchers in visiting selected vegetable production regions in Southern Vietnam; to identify innovations that could be transferred to Cambodia, and to identify collaborative research opportunities between Vietnam, Cambodia and AVRDC.

**Dr. Jackie Hughes**, 31 May-14 June, to Arusha, Tanzania, and Nairobi, Kenya, to work with Dr. Detlef Virchow on Gates/VBSS Africa Project, recruitment of Liaison Officers; to run the pre-proposal workshop for CGIAR Challenge Program on "High Value Crops-Fruits and Vegetables" in Nairobi.

- Source: Yvonne Ting/ASU

## Awards for Young Agricultural Researchers

The Japanese Ministry of Agricultural Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) has recently called for nominations for commendation awards to young agricultural researchers. The awards are to recognize outstanding achievements in agricultural research and technological development for the developing world, and to promote further work.

The awards are open to researchers under 40 years old who are affiliated with international agricultural research centers such as AVRDC. The application must be made by the institution on behalf of the individual.

Applications will be evaluated based on the researcher's contribution to the development of technologies which

lead to the solution of food and environmental problems in developing countries as well as their contributions to technological development being supported by the Japanese government.

The award will include a prize from the Chairman of MAFF and a financial incentive from the Japan International Center for Agricultural Sciences (JIRCAS). Full details can be found on the JIRCAS website: [http://www.saffrc.go.jp/docs/award/announce\\_1.pdf](http://www.saffrc.go.jp/docs/award/announce_1.pdf)

- Source: Communications

## What's New in the AVRDC Websites?

### Internet: <http://www.avrdc.org>

- Jobs: Research Assistant (Mycology), Secretary (Training), Publications Manager, Webmaster
- About AVRDC: Organizational Structure
- Updated Pages: Extension Materials, Research Themes, Regions, Germplasm, Training, Publications, and Contact Us

### Intranet: <http://www.avrdc.org/intranet/home.html>

- Annual Leave Travel Allowance Applications (revised May 2007)

### Indigenous Vegetables of Southeast Asia: [http://203.64.245.173/iv\\_sea/](http://203.64.245.173/iv_sea/)

- News: AVRDC Links Up with Philippine Program to Mitigate Hunger, Poverty, and Malnutrition in its Most Calamity Stricken Region

- Source: Communications

## News from the Recreational and Social Committee

### Sign up for AVRDC Sports Day at Headquarters Next Week!

We know a lot of you play sports regularly on campus, but not a lot of people have signed up for the May Sports Day being held next week on Wednesday from 3:00-4:30 pm. Starting today, there will be sign-up sheets hung in front of the cafeteria. Come on and put your name down! For the rest of you who do not want to play, come and join the fun just the same at the tennis court (for basketball/volleyball/tennis), the service building/motor pool (for table tennis) and in front of the guard house (for the fun-run).

很多同仁都有運動的習慣，但是截至目前為止來報名參加五月份運動會的人卻不太多，自即日起報名表張貼在餐廳前大家請踴躍報名！不參加賽事的同仁5月30日下午3時至4時30分，也一起來加油—網球場有籃球賽、排球賽及網球賽，工作棚有桌球賽，警衛室前則是趣味競跑。

### Happenings around AVRDC Headquarters

#### A Touch of Zen 優人神鼓 2007《正版 禪武不二》

U-Theatre, the Taipei-based drumming performance group has invited China's famed Shaolin Temple martial arts monks to perform with them. Both groups use traditional Chinese martial arts and qi gong as the basis for their craft, their approach to their work — and life.

- ✓ Time: 1930 hours, Saturday, 2 June
- ✓ Place: Tainan City Cultural Center
- ✓ Ticket: NT\$2000/1600/1200/1000/800/600/400/350

台北優表演藝術劇團與嵩山少林寺武術館攜手共創世界舞台藝術經典—禪武不二！重新架構禪與武術的藝術境界，以抽象手法重新詮釋，闡述一位武林高手如何在殺戮、潛修、執傲、疑惑的矛盾衝突中參悟生命的終極意義。

- ✓ 時間：6月2日(星期六) 晚間7點30分
- ✓ 地點：臺南市立文化中心
- ✓ 票價：2000/1600/1200/1000/800/600/400/350元

#### Alban Berg Quartet: String Quartet Concert 阿班貝爾格弦樂四重奏訪台音樂會

The Alban Berg Quartet is an Austrian string quartet founded in 1971 in Vienna. They will perform Beethoven's String Quartet Op.130/133, J.Haydn: String Quartet Op.20/4 and W. Rihm: Grave (dedicated to the ABQ) in Kaohsiung

- ✓ Time: 1930 hours, Tuesday, 29 May
- ✓ Place: Kaohsiung City Cultural Center, Chih-The Hall
- ✓ Ticket: NT\$800/1000/1500/2000

阿班貝爾格四重奏睽違六年再度訪台！曲目除了他們最拿手的海頓 Op.20/4 與貝多芬的 Op.130/133 以外，還有現代作曲家寧姆 (W. Rihm) 為 ABQ 量身打造、今年才首演的極緩板。

- ✓ 時間：5月29日(星期二) 晚間7點30分
- ✓ 地點：高雄立文化中心至德堂
- ✓ 票價：800/1000/1500/2000元

### Water Tower Clean-up Continues on Saturday, 26 May

Because of the rain, the contractor couldn't finish the water tower clean-up work at headquarters on 19 May. They will continue to work on this coming Saturday, 26 May. It will take around 4 hours starting from 0830 hours. During this period the water pressure will be lower.

中心水塔清洗工作，上星期六因雨未能如期完成，廠商將於本週六(5月26日)繼續作業。自上午8時30分開始，工作時間約需4個小時，屆時水壓較低。

- Source: Janice Chou/TSO