



Food Miles: Going on Distance to African Farmers



Kenyan fresh produce is popular with British retailers and consumers.
This may change with the introduction of a new eco-label.

A small sticker on agricultural products sold in the UK is supposed to separate good from bad vegetables, or eco-friendly from those with a heavy ecological footprint, and it may decide the economic success or failure for farmers in developing countries. The so-called “Food Miles Label” in the distinctive shape of an airplane marks those vegetables or fruits that have traveled long to reach the shelves of retailers and thus have contributed greatly to carbon emissions. The impact of measuring the environmental cost of food by the distance it travels could have serious cost and supply chain implications for farmers and producers in developing countries. This week Kenyan producers and government officials raised alarm, fearing that the UK’s biggest retail chain Marks & Spencer (M&S) would cut imports of fresh produce from their country.

Kenya is an ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific States) member, and exports to the UK make up a major portion of the country’s total export. According to the Lomé convention, the EU gives preference to products from ACP states, but now the limiting factor comes from the private sector and consumers, Kenyan spokespersons say. Kenya’s main sales to M&S include vegetables such as peas, beans, broccoli and baby salad leaves as well as flowers, tea and coffee. Although M&S is committed to

making the company a carbon neutral business according to the corporation’s statement, it has reassured Kenyan agricultural exporters that imports would not be cut and that Kenya would remain an important trading partner. But will vegetables and fruits with the stigmatizing airplane label will stay being popular with consumers? The buying patterns will show.

M&S and other retailers already offered to monitor closely the symbol’s impact on sales and indicated their willingness to launch initiatives that promote Kenyan fresh produce in the UK. M&S officials are quoted in the news that the company would work together with Kenyan suppliers to develop high-quality horticulture through investments in new crop varieties and production techniques while emphasizing social and environmental standards.

Tesco, another British retailer has declared that it will introduce a more in-depth labeling system to show the total amount of carbon emissions caused by every product and announced that it was determined to boost trade volumes in agricultural produce beyond the current mark of US\$400 million.

The “Food Miles Label” reflects a growing trend of consumers demanding more information about the products they buy. European countries, including Germany, are now beginning to make similar considerations as the debate on shipping goods grows. However, with regard to eco-auditing, it is not yet decided that African consumers are automatically on the weaker end. A recent study by the University of Cranfield in the UK reassures critics of the label. It shows that flowers from Kenya use less than one-fifth of the energy than those produced in the Netherlands, because they are not grown in heated greenhouses.

- Communications

Further reading: *The Africa Channel*
<http://www.theafricachannel.co.uk>

New Publications (Articles & Books) Received by the Library

Hong, J.K., Choi, H.W., Hwang, I.S., Hwang, B.K. (2007). Role of a novel pathogen-induced pepper C3-H-C4 type RING-finger protein gene, CaRFP1, in disease susceptibility and osmotic stress tolerance. *PLANT MOLECULAR BIOLOGY*. v.63(4):571-588.

Islam, M.R., Hamid, A., Khaliq, Q.A., Ahmed, J.U., Haque, M.M., Karim, M.A. (2007). Genetic variability in flooding tolerance of mungbean (*Vigna radiate* L. Wilczek) genotypes. *EUPHYTICA*. v.156(1-2):247-255.

Lefsrud, M., Kopsell, D., Wenzel, A., Sheehan, J. (2007). Changes in kale (*Brassica oleracea* L. var. *acephala*) carotenoid and chlorophyll pigment concentrations during leaf ontogeny. *SCIENTIA HORTICULTURAE*. v.112(2):136-141.

Li, Y., Xu, S.Y., Sun, D.W. (2007). Preparation of garlic powder with high allicin content by using combined microwave acuum and vacuum drying as well as microencapsulation. *JOURNAL OF FOOD ENGINEERING*. v.83:76-83.

Mazhar, F., Buckles, D., Satheesh, P.V., Akhter, F. (2007). Food sovereignty and uncultivated biodiversity in South Asia: essays on the poverty of food policy and the wealth of the social landscape. New Delhi: Academic Foundation. vii, 75 pp.

Suenaga, K., Kudo, H., Oshio, S. (2007). Comprehensive studies on the development of sustainable soybean production technology in South America. Tsukuba: JIRCAS. ii, 112 pp.

Wang, G.C., Zhang, F.L., Yu, Y.J., Zhang, D.S., Zhao, X.Y. (2007). Identification of SCAR markers linked to orange head leaf gene in Chinese cabbage (*Brassica rapa* L. ssp. *pekinensis*). *ACTA HORTICULTURAE SINICA*. v.34(1):217-220.

Zechmann, B., Zellnig, G., Urbanek-Krajnc, A., Muller, M. (2007). Artificial elevation of glutathione affects symptom development in ZYMV-infected *Cucurbita pepo* L. plants. *ARCHIVES OF VIROLOGY*. v.152(4):747-762.

Zhang, Q., Huang, L., Cao, J.S. (2007). Cloning, characterization and expression of a polygalacturonase gene BcMF6 from Chinese cabbage-pak-choi (*Brassica campestris* L. ssp. *chinensis* Makino). *ACTA HORTICULTURAE SINICA*. v.34(1):117-124.

Singh, M.P., Abbas, S.G. (2005). Essentials of plant taxonomy and ecology. Delhi: DAYA Publishing House. viii, 454 pp.

New Popular Magazines Now Available in the Library

The Economist: Biology's Big Bang – 16th-22nd June 2007

National Geographic: Malaria Stopping a Global Killer – July 2007

PC World: How to fix the 12 biggest PC disasters – July 2007

Time: We Are What We Eat – 25 June-2 July 2007



Recommended Web Link of the Week:

IRAC – Insecticide Resistance Action Committee

IRAC was formed in 1984 and works as a specialist technical group of the industry association CropLife providing a coordinated industry response to prevent or delay the development of resistance in insect and mite pests. The IRAC Mission is to facilitate communication and education on insecticide resistance and to promote the

development of insecticide resistance management strategies to maintain efficacy and support sustainable agriculture and improved public health.

Please visit <http://www.irac-online.org/home.asp>

- Source: Fang-chin Chen/Communications



Of SWOTs and Logframes: Successful Pre-Proposal Workshop for a CGIAR Challenge Program on Fruits and Vegetables:

Designing the Challenge

The potential CGIAR Challenge Program on High Value Crops - Fruits and Vegetables is further taking shape. Having initialized the process during the Annual General Meeting in Washington DC last December, AVRDC - The World Vegetable Center built on positive feedback from stakeholders. After further planning and coordination, the next steps were taken.

The Center worked with Bioversity International and ICRISAT to submit the concept note which was selected, with two others, to move forward to the pre-proposal stage. Two weeks ago, AVRDC organized a workshop in Nairobi, Kenya, to provide input into the pre-proposal for the proposed Challenge Program.

The workshop, which was partly funded by CIDA from Canada, was held at the World Agroforestry Centre in Nairobi and was attended by Thomas Lumpkin, the Center's Director General, DDG-R Jackie Hughes, Detlef Virchow, Warwick Easdown and Ekow Akyeampong from AVRDC. In addition there were 40 participants, representing a wide range of institutions, such as APSA, ASEAN, CABI, ICUC, CIAT, CIMMYT, CIP, CIRAD, FAO, GHI, ICARDA, ICIPE, ICRISAT, IFPRI, IITA, IWMI, MIGAL, NARO, PROTA, University of Florida and World Agroforestry.

The workshop was also attended by Dr Romano Kiome, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Kenya, a past member of AVRDC's Board of Directors.

AVRDC is now working with Bioversity (representing the CGIAR Future Harvest Alliance) and ICRISAT to develop a pre-proposal with input from the workshop participants to submit to the Science Council of the CGIAR by the end of August 2007.

If successful, the pre-proposal will be expanded to a full proposal for a new Challenge Program through which AVRDC hopes to coordinate the diverse fruit and vegetable research activities being done by partners both within and outside the CGIAR. The cooperation and synergy between the many partners will assure more global public goods and greater impact through fruit and vegetable research and development.

- Source: Jackie Hughes, DDG-R



Challenge Program:
High Value Crops – Fruits and Vegetables

May 2007

CP Pre-Proposal workshop: The presentations given by AVRDC are available on the intranet

New Staff — Mr. Jan Helsen, vBSS Project Administrative Manager

Mr. Jan Helsen has been appointed as Project Administrative Manager of the Project “Vegetable Breeding and Seed Systems for Poverty Reduction in Africa” (in short: vBSS Project Administrative Manager) for an initial period of two years, effective 1 August 2007.

Jan has more than 20 years experience in rural development, specifically in the preparation, appraisal and management of natural resources management projects and studies. He received his MSc in Agricultural Economics at Imperial College, London in 2005 and is now pursuing his MBA at the same college. Jan will report directly to Detlef Virchow, Director, AVRDC-RCA.

Jan’s major responsibilities are (1) work closely with the vBSS Project Research Manager to develop the research and development components for the establishment and implementation of the breeding, variety testing, dissemination, demand creation, and adoption of new vegetable varieties efforts through both private and public seed systems; (2) within the vBSS Project: establish, implement, and refine National Breeding Units (NBUs) for vegetable breeding, breeding support, and seed production in four African countries, as well as one unit for seed health and marketing; build vegetable seed system capacity in those countries as well as in neighboring countries; network the national vegetable breeding programs, private African seed companies and vegetable seed supply systems; promote increased and sustainable vegetable production, marketing and consumption in these countries; (3) ensure coherence,

fiscal accountability, and project quality in the pan-African activities and ensure smooth and productive relationships in the interaction between the public and private seed sectors, and the vBSS Project and other AVRDC staff; (4) ensure the preparation, conduct and quality of the training activities within the scope of the vBSS project; (5) lead the financial management of the vBSS Project with the support of the Financial Administrator at AVRDC-RCA and the Comptroller at AVRDC’s Headquarters; (6) coordinate the work of a team of personnel to be recruited within the project (in particular with the Liaison Officers of the four NBUs in Tanzania, Cameroon, Mali and Madagascar), as well as with AVRDC’s current staff members at AVRDC-RCA, the Sub-regional Office in Bamako, Mali and scientists and staff at AVRDC’s Headquarters in Taiwan; (7) initiate and monitor project activities with both the public and private sectors, and ensure open and productive dialogue with policy makers, and regional and sub-regional organizations; (8) ensure the establishment and implementation of seed system linkages between vBSS Project and AVRDC, within the NBUs and the other stakeholders working directly with the NBUs; and (9) design and ensure logframe compliance with timely production of necessary documentation for vBSS Project related activities (especially the reports to the donor).

We wish Jan success in his new appointment with AVRDC.

- Source: Lilia Tan Habacon/Human Resources Manager



Enter the Dragon: AVRDC Team Shows Its Teeth

AVRDC-The World Vegetable Center’s dragon boat team entered the competition of this year’s Dragon Boat Festival in Tainan last Tuesday. The team gave all, but competing with all-male, young, muscular teams, the team did not make it into the final round. Although another boat won, our team showed better gender and age balance, and everybody had fun. Hurray for the team!!

亞蔬龍舟隊參加台南市政府舉辦的年度龍舟賽，未能進入總決賽，雖敗猶榮！因為所有隊員盡力了，加上我們的隊伍是男女選手各半，而對手卻都是年輕力壯的肌肉男，別氣餒！我們明年捲土再來吧！

- Source: Kartini (Iin) Luther/R&S Committee

New Staff —Dr. Rémi Nono-Womdim

vBSS Project NBU Liaison Officer for Tanzania

Dr. Rémi Nono-Womdim has been appointed as Liaison Officer for the National Breeding Unit based in Tanzania of the Project “Vegetable Breeding and Seed Systems for Poverty Reduction in Africa” (in short: vBSS Project NBU Liaison Officer for Tanzania) with additional responsibility as the project Research Manager, for an initial period of two years, effective 18 July 2007.

Rémi received his PhD in Life Sciences with the highest distinction of French Universities (*Mention Tres Honorable avec les Felicitations du Jury*) from University Paris XI-Orsay in 1992. He was formerly an Associate Plant Pathologist of AVRDC at AVRDC-RCA (which was then the AVRDC's African Regional Program) from 28 January 1994 to 31 July 2001. He has more than fifteen years experience in vegetable research and development in sub-Saharan African countries, France and The Netherlands, involving a wide range of crops and other household food security activities. His experience includes crop improvement, production and protection, seed production and processing, technology dissemination as well as staff management and training. He has experience in the growth and promotion of agribusiness development and business support organisations in Africa. Rémi will report directly to Jan Helsen, vBSS Project Administrative Manager.

Rémi's major responsibilities as vBSS Project NBU Liaison Officer for Tanzania are (1) overall management, coordination and leadership of the national breeding unit (NBU) in Tanzania for the vBSS Project; (2) coordinate activities with NARES, regulatory agencies (including variety release, seed health and quarantine) and the private sector in the country to facilitate and accelerate the variety release process of new vegetable varieties; (3) coordinate the program's in-country vegetable breeding operations, and support the outreach to the neighboring countries; (4) support demand creation activities, which will be conducted mainly through the relevant NARES agencies and in partnership with NGOs and the private seed sector; (5) be responsible for the links with vBSS Project's Tanzanian NBU and AVRDC, to the other NBUs and the other stakeholders working directly with the NBU (e.g.

advanced breeding institutes, international seed companies); and (6) ensure timely production of necessary documentation of the vBSS Project related activities.

As vBSS Project Research Manager, Rémi's major responsibilities are (1) take initiative to design and then work in close partnership with the vBSS Project Administrative Manager to establish, implement, and refine the research and development aspects for breeding, variety testing, demand creation, and seed business systems; (2) ensure scientific coherence and quality in the pan-African activities of the vBSS Project as well as in the scientific collaboration with other AVRDC staff; (3) ensure smooth and productive scientific relationships in the interaction between the public and private sector and all relevant organizations; (4) represent the vBSS Project Administrative Manager and/or the Director of RCA, when requested, in scientific, policy and administrative meetings and discussions; (5) establish and maintain breeding and variety testing linkages between and among vBSS Project activities and NBUs, AVRDC, ARIs, NARES, seed companies, seed associations, and other Gates and/or Rockefeller seed programs; and (6) undertake all other project responsibilities and instructions as requested by the vBSS Project Administrative Manager or the Director of AVRDC-RCA.

Congratulations, Rémi!

- Source: Lilia Tan Habacon/Human Resources Manager

Travel

Ms. Mei-ying Lin, 26 June-25 August, to USA, to undertake a special purpose training on the evaluation of the impact of Bt transgenic crucifers on natural enemies of DBM at Cornell University.

Dr. Warwick Easdown, 29 June-28 July, on annual leave.

Dr. Jaw-Fen Wang, 1-25 July, on annual leave.

- Source: Yvonne Ting/ASU

Welcome



Ms. Hemali C. Batra, this year's Borlaug Ruan Intern and Summer Student from USA, arrived at our Center on 17 June 2007 for two months of training. Ms. Batra will work on "Molecular Genetic Relationships

among subspecies of *Brassica oleracea*" under the supervision of Dr. de la Peña. She can be contacted at ext. 374 (office) and ext. 873 (dormitory).

E-mail: hemalibatra@gmail.com

- Source: Rose Chan/Communications

Farewell Party for Dr. George Kuo, Director, ICO

The International Cooperation Office and the R&S Committee will hold a farewell party for Dr. George Kuo on Thursday, 28 June 2007. The party will be catered in the Cafeteria from 1500 to 1630 hours. To honor him, scrumptious food will all be prepared using indigenous vegetables. Come and join us to bid warm farewell and show our appreciation for Dr. Kuo and his family.

6月28日(星期四)下午3時至4時30分國際合作室及康委會在餐廳將聯合為郭博士舉辦一場盛大的歡送會，會中餐點食材都取自原生蔬菜，請全體同仁踴躍蒞會，以表達我們對郭博士及其家人的敬意。

- Source: ICO & R&S Committee

What's New in the AVRDC Websites?

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

▽ Jobs: Olericulturist/Horticulturist, Horticultural Economist, Project Site Coordinator, and Research Assistant-Socio Economics

▽ Presentations: Conservation and Utilization of Biodiversity - Vegetable Seed Production for Farmers in Lao PDR by Matthias Plewa

▽ Telephone Directory (PDF)

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

Note: To log in the Intranet please contact

Hsien-yang Tien (ext. 510; e-mail tien@netra.avrdc.org.tw) or

Shirley Chen (ext 511; e-mail shirley@netra.avrdc.org.tw)

- Communications

▽ Policies & Procedures

Mr. Kanza's New E-mail Address

Mr. George Kanza, Financial Administrator of AVRDC-RCA, <george.kanza@avrdc-rca.co.tz>.

- Source: Communications

Dr. Acedo's Cell Phone Number

Dr. Antonio L. Acedo, Technical Advisor, ADB-funded RETA 6208 Project, Lao PDR, whose cell phone number is 856-20-2883275.

- Source: Olivia Liang/Socio-economics Unit

