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Wishing all of our staff and colleagues a festive season !

As 2007 draws to a close and we are preparing for the challenges of the coming year, this festive season is an appropriate time to reflect. This year has been one of further institutional growth, expanding range of research and development activities as well as new perspectives, and I want to express my gratitude to all of you for your strong contributions and commitment. It also has been a year of partnership with our stakeholders and partners across the world that encourage us. The year ahead presents many fresh challenges and changes. However, I am convinced that we will continue with the same motivation, vitalize our mission and help open even better perspectives to the poor in developing countries through better vegetables. Finally, may I wish you and your families a peaceful and festive season and best wishes for 2008.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Thomas A. Lumpkin".

Dr. Thomas A. Lumpkin, Director General



The Seductive Charm of Freshness

While street vendors are losing ground against an emerging supermarket sector in many developing countries, the so-called developed world may see the reverse trend already at the beginning of next year, when New York City does everything to do justice to its nickname and become truly big in apples again. Instead of further promoting such American classics as hot dogs or pretzels, the New York City Council intends to restrict sought after licences to those pushcart vendors who exclusively sell fresh fruits and vegetables.

The current fleet of 4,100 licensed carts is dominated by vendors selling soft drinks, hot dogs and platters of chicken or lamb. Fewer than 400 sell fruits or vegetables. City officials hope to get as many as 1,500 new fruit and vegetable carts onto sidewalks especially in neighborhoods where vegetable consumption is low. The idea behind this is to bring fresh produce back into areas where diabetes and obesity rates have skyrocketed over the past years as grocery stores have disappeared and been replaced with fast food and convenience stores selling potato chips and other high-calorie foods.

Although business in the outer boroughs may be more challenging to the new street entrepreneurs than catering to tourists or potentially health-concerned office workers in Manhattan, the promoters of the new strategy are optimistic. With 2,500 people on the waiting list for a street vendor's license, some of them are certain to take a chance on vegetables, rather than continue holding out for a hot dog stand.

A more subtle approach to learn about and possibly influence consumers' behavior is currently practiced in the Netherlands. The re-modeled restaurant on the campus of Wageningen University seems, at first glance, to reflect the best of contemporary Dutch design in its pleasant, practical and modernist look. However, well disguised from visitors, it is a research center, devoted to exploring a question both simple and complicated: What makes people eat and drink the way they do?

To analyze the dietary choices, the lab-restaurant is equipped with an arsenal of hidden cameras and a substantial menu of tricks. Researchers will examine environmental influences on eating behavior by making small changes in the color of the lights, in accompanying sounds, in the scents or the furniture. Over the next 10 years, a team of more than 20 scientists, including psychologists and physicists, will monitor the diners. Close to 250 students and staff members already have signed up to participate in the project.

Sources:

[NYC Proposes More Fruit, Vegetable Carts](#), Associated Press (ap), 18 Dec 2007

[Watch What you Eat: Study's Scientists Are Watching, Too](#), The New York Times, 26 Nov 2007

(www.residentialarchitect.com)

- Communications

New Publications (Articles) received by the Library

Javed, N., Gowen, S.R., El-Hassan, S.A., Inam-ul-Haq, M., Shahina, F., Pembroke, B. (2008). Efficacy of neem (*Azadirachta indica*) formulations on biology of root-knot nematodes (*Meloidogyne javanica*) on tomato. *CROP PROTECTION*. v.27(1):36-43.

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Chou, Y.L., Liang, C.W., Peng, S.D., Lin, C.M., Chu, Y.H. (2007). Effects of the fermented soybeans on delaying senescence *in vitro*. *TAIWANESE JOURNAL OF AGRICULTURAL CHEMISTRY AND FOOD SCIENCE*. v.45(4/5):237-246.

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Hazara, P., Mandal, A.K., Dutta, A.K., Sikadar, D., Pandit, M.K. (2007). Breeding pumpkin (*Cucurbita moschata* Duch. ex Poir.) for high yield and carotene content. *ACTA HORTICULTURAE*. no.752:431-435.

Lightbourn, G.J., Stommel, J.R., Griesbach, R.J. (2007). Epistatic interactions influencing anthocyanin gene expression in *Capsicum annuum*. *AMERICAN*

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Rosa, E., Pereira, F.M.V., Aires, A., Carvalho, R. (2007). Effects of post-harvest storage conditions on the levels of glucosinolates in broccoli sprouts (*Brassica oleracea* var. *italica*) grown under different temperature regimes. *JOURNAL OF HORTICULTURAL SCIENCE & BIOTECHNOLOGY*. v.82(6):974-978.

Wicker, E., Grassart, L., Coranson-Beaudu, R., Mian, D., Guilbaud, C., Fegan, M., Prior, P. (2007). *Ralstonia solanacearum* strains from Martinique (French West Indies) exhibiting a new pathogenic potential. *APPLIED AND ENVIRONMENTAL MICROBIOLOGY*. v.73(21):6790-6801.

Kamenetsky, R., Rabinowitch, H.D. (2006). The genus *Allium*: a developmental and horticultural analysis. *HORTICULTURAL REVIEWS*. v.32:329-378.

Jeon, E.J., Kim, J.S., Park, Y.K., Kim, T.S., Kang, M.H. (2003). Protective effect of yellow-green vegetable juices on DNA damage in Chinese hamster lung cell using comet assay. *KOREAN JOURNAL OF NUTRITION*. v.36(1):24-31.

Varghese, L. (2000). Organic vegetables issues and strategies. *AGRICULTURAL REVIEWS*. v.21(4):211-222.

Simmonds, N.W., Smartt, J. (1999). Breeding plans. In: *Principles of crop improvement*. Oxford: Blackwell. p.115-193.

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New Popular Magazine Now Available in the Library

Time: Best of the Year – 24 December 2007

- Source: Fang-chin Chen/Communications



News from Africa (Part 1)

Training on “Vegetable Production, Protection and Seed Production Technologies”, Niamey



Trainees at AVRDC-ICRISAT vegetable breeding field.

ICRISAT's Sahelian Centre in Niamey, Niger, organized a five-day training on “Vegetable Production, Protection and Seed Production Technologies” from 3 to 7 December. A total of 15 trainees (agriculture and technical officers) from five West African countries (Chad, Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso, Senegal) attended this training, which was sponsored by Islamic Development Bank (IDB) within a project on promotion of dates in Sahel. Trainees learned how vegetable crops can successfully generate higher household incomes, which is especially important during the first seven years after date palm planting when the trees do not produce fruits.

Sanjeet Kumar, AVRDC-ICRISAT's Vegetable Breeder, gave an overview with some specific tips on practices of vegetable production, protection and seed production in the Sahel.

Demonstrations of nursery bed preparation, seed production and protection practices constituted other integral components of the training program. The participants also discussed problems and specific needs of their individual countries with regard to vegetable crop varieties and protection management practices.

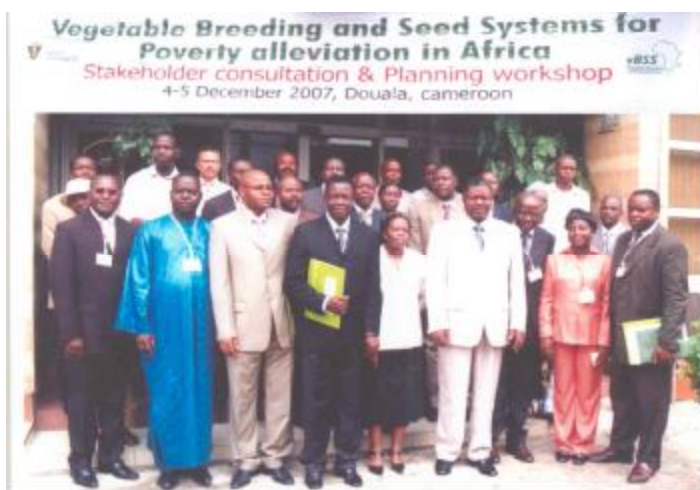
Stakeholder Workshop of AVRDC-Cameroon vBSS Program

The stakeholder workshop of the AVRDC-Cameroon vBSS program was held on 4 and 5 December in Douala, Cameroon. Organized by vBSS Liaison Officer (LO) Dr. Christophe Kouamé, a total of 24 participants from nine countries ranging from Benin to DR Congo attended the two-day workshop, which officially launched the Cameroon based regional component of the pan-African vBSS program. Workshop participants were invited from NARES (National Agricultural Research and Extension Systems), the National Seed Services, the private seed sector and Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

The workshop's main program comprised a panel discussion on Public-Private Partnerships for sustainable vegetable seed systems, country reports on the vegetable sector and activities planning sessions. In addition, the workshop assessed the status of vegetable

production, research and seed systems and analyzed opportunities to establish an innovation platform for the sustainable development of vegetables in West and Central Africa.

- Source: Dr. Shilpi Saxena/AVRDC-RCA



News from Africa (Part 2)

Seed Health And Marketing Support Unit Launched in Pretoria, South Africa

The Seed Health And Marketing Support Unit (SHMSU) was officially launched in South Africa on 3 December 2007 by vBSS Program Manager Mr. Jan Helsen at the Agricultural Research Council (ARC) - Vegetable and Ornamental Plant Institute (VOPI), in Roodeplaat, Pretoria, South Africa. The major responsibility of the unit is to ensure the production of high quality seeds that can be marketed commercially between participating hub and spoke countries in the vBSS Program, and to link with other stakeholders in the area of seed health and marketing. The unit will also organize and coordinate the training of vBSS scientists and other stakeholders in SHMS issues. At the moment, the Seed Health Specialist, Ms. Ronia Tanyongana is based at VOPI and will be joined by the Seed Marketing Specialist and the Research Assistant in due course.

Her e-mail is:

<Ronia.tanyongana@avrdc-rca.co.tz>.

AVRDC— vBSS/SHMSU (Seed Health And Marketing Support Unit)

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Bend it like Beckham: Football Games at AVRDC-RCA



Due to an outstanding performance of our defense but especially thanks to our driver Mike Nzowa who scored two goals, AVRDC-RCA could win its first “official” football game against the Selian Agricultural Research Institute (SARI) with 2:0. More than 100 supporters, most of them AVRDC staff, were celebrating the victory.

The match was also the “farewell” game for Dr. Detlef Virchow, who had initiated the football activities at RCA and made it to a regular Friday exercise. Every Friday after work between 15-25 staff members (field workers, watchmen and scientific staff) come together and enjoy playing football together. The next “official” game is already planned for 1 February, when AVRDC’s team will be challenged by the team of the Livestock Training Institute of Tengeru (LITI). Spectators are most welcome to watch!

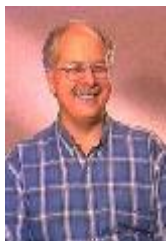
- Source: Dr. Shilpi Szxena/AVRDC-RCA



Joy breaks out at the 1:0 of AVRDC-RCA

News from Africa (Part 3)

New Staff Mr. Jerry Miner to support GlobalHort



Mr. Jerry Miner will start as a new staff member with the Global Horticulture Initiative on 7 January 2008. He holds a Master in Library Science from Toronto University and will be responsible for managing and developing all website-connected activities of GlobalHort and

be in charge of communication, using any media. He has had extensive experience with web content and management. He has also been a co-editor of a scientific newsletter, AGRISCOPE, whose function was to translate scientific research initiatives into a format that

could be understood by the general public. He is bilingual in English and French, his mother language is English. Currently he is the head of the CAL Information Centre (Kentville)/Canadian Agriculture Library, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada in Nova Scotia. He is 55 years old, has a wife and three children, the youngest is 18.

Training Opportunity

A Seed Health Testing Training Workshop will be held on 7 - 11 April 2008 in South Africa at Pretoria University. The deadline for registration is 15 February 2008. The cost for the workshop is USD 757 per participant.

Workshop Participation

Dr. Albert Rouamba participated in the evaluation of reports on research projects in horticulture at "Institut d'Economie Rurale" (IER) of Mali from 3 to 7 December 2007. IER is a National Agricultural Research Institute.

Visitors

Within the framework of the vBSS, Mr. Jim Ellis Jones of "Agriculture for Development" Consultants visited AVRDC-RCA to discuss with the Program Manager, Research Manager and RCA staff the finalization of the proposal for a baseline study on vegetable production and seed systems and modalities for its implementation. The visit was from 15 to 18 December; pending the

approval of the final proposal, the baseline is expected to start in March 2008.

- Source: Dr. Shilpi Saxena/AVRDC-RCA



New Staff

Dr. Abdou Tenkouano

Director, AVRDC's Regional Center for Africa

I am very pleased to inform you that we have appointed Dr. Abdou Tenkouano as Director of AVRDC's Regional Center for Africa (AVRDC-RCA). He will join us effective 15 March 2008 to lead and oversee management of AVRDC-RCA.

Dr. Tenkouano, a national of Burkina Faso, has a PhD degree in Genetics from the Texas A&M University, USA.

He has extensive experience in research management, multidisciplinary research team coordination, proposal development, and fund raising. He is currently a senior scientist in starchy crops breeding at IITA and is also a councilor of IITA's Council for Development.

- Source: Dr. Tom Lumpkin/Director General

Dr. Rachael Symonds

Postdoctoral Fellow, Molecular Breeding and Biotechnology



Dr. Rachael Symonds has been appointed as a Post-Doctoral Fellow in Molecular Breeding and Biotechnology for two years, effective 7 January 2008.

Rachael received her PhD in Plant Sciences in 2001 from University of Nottingham, UK.

She has worked on a number of projects as post doctoral research scientist in the fields of plant molecular biology and biochemistry. She will be based at Headquarters and will report directly to Robert dela Peña, Head of Biotechnology/Molecular Breeding Unit.

Rachael will be responsible for conducting studies on tolerance to heat and drought stress in pepper and tomato. Specific research activities include (1) development of screening assays for drought and heat tolerance, and identification of sources of tolerance in

cultivated and wild species; (2) identification of key traits associated with tolerance phenotype in response to heat and drought stress; (3) elucidation of mechanisms of plant tolerance through physiological and/or molecular characterization of tolerant genotypes; (4) participation in genetic mapping experiments to develop DNA markers for heat and drought tolerance, and development of tolerant lines; (5) report preparation which includes progress report and peer-reviewed publications among others; (6) conduct of other related research activities as assigned by the program leader.

Rachael can be contacted at extension 365 (Biotechnology office) and 641 (New Training Hostel).

We wish Rachael every success in her appointment with AVRDC.

- Source: Ms. Lilia Tan Habacon/Human Resources Manager

Welcome to Our Newest Trainee



Ms. Pue Hee Park, Research Fellow from Horticultural Biotechnology Division, National Horticultural Research Institute, RDA, Korea, arrived at AVRDC on 17 December 2007 for three months of training. Ms. Park will

work on the development of molecular markers associated with disease resistance in tomato under the supervision of Dr. Robert de la Peña. She can be contacted at 411 (office) and 874 (dormitory), [<puehee@yahoo.co.kr>](mailto:puehee@yahoo.co.kr).

- Source: Lydia Wu/Communications

Travel

Dr. Liwayway M. Engle, 28 December 2007-14 January 2008, on annual leave.

- Source: Yvonne Ting/ASU

Mr. Benjamin Rakotoarisoa, Liaison Officer for Madagascar, has been invited to attend the launch of the "Carrot Production for Exportation" initiative by the Technical Center for Horticulture (CTHA) on

19 December 2007 at Antsirabe, Madagascar. This initiative fits into the priority settings of the Madagascar Action Plan (MAP). CTHA is one of the partners to work closely with AVRDC the World Vegetable Center-Regional Center for Africa.

- Source: Dr. Shilpi Saxena/AVRDC-RCA

HQ Beach Volley Ball Court Opens Today

The newly built beach volley ball court opens today. 沙灘排球場今天啟用。

- Source: Janice Chou/TSO

Musical Performance in AVRDC HQ, 1500-1600 h, 26 December

The R&S Committee arranges a musical performance for this month's activity. We are happy to welcome the director, one teacher and two students of the Graduate Institute of Collaborative Piano from Tainan National University of the Arts to a performance of some musical scores on Wednesday, 26 December 2007 from 1500 to 1600 hours at the Cafeteria Lounge. Come and join us to relax with one hour of musical delight.

康委會12月份為同仁們準備的活動是音樂演奏，12月26日（星期三）下午3點至4點在餐廳二樓交誼廳，很榮幸地邀請到國立台南藝術大學鋼琴伴奏合作藝術研究所所長、老師及同學們來為同仁們演奏，機會難得，請踴躍前來聆聽！

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