



SIDS in Samoa



Sandhya with Celebrity Chef Robert Oliver at SIDS

FRIEND products were showcased at The Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States held in Samoa early this month.

With over 3000 visitors from around the world visiting Samoa for this conference, Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation (PIPSO) put together a Trade Exhibition showcasing only select unique products from the Pacific.

“We had our fair share of visitors going through our booth. My stocks of dried fruits were all sold out in the first two days. Lemon Grass Tea also proved to be a popular product,” says Sandhya Narayan FRIEND Publications Officer.

“We also had some very high level delegates who were aware of FRIEND and its work in Fiji. One such guest was the Executive Director of International Trade Center, Arancha González. She is a renowned expert in international trade and development, and has previously held leading positions at the World Trade Organization and the European Commission.”

“The Exhibition also provided an opportunity to meet with a number of other Pacific Entrepreneurs who are making their mark around the world. One of the major highlights of the forum was being able to participate in a panel discussion on Organics that featured a number of reputed personalities sharing their work and thoughts on the topic. The panelist included the Executive Director of IFOAM, Samoan Prime Minister, Celebrity Chef Robert Oliver, Executive Director of WIBDI and a representative from Fiji’s own Cicia Islands, the only Organically Certified Island in the Pacific.”

Organics Work Advances



FRIEND Staff in training with SPC POET.Com

Farmers in Viti Levu have joined the Organic Certification processes despite their initial reservations. Organics is part of the EU-funded GROW cash crop program.

“When the concept was first introduced at a FRIEND farmer conference two years ago, most farmers in the Western Division said it was impossible with the increasing diseases in their crops. However, slowly the concept has taken root and around 20 farmers from three villages in Sigatoka have taken up organic farming,” says Makareta Tawa, organics officer at FRIEND.

This is in addition to the initial 30 farmers who had started working towards obtaining Organic Certification in the North.

“Initial training for these farmers was carried out by the Women in Business Development from Samoa, while the Pacific Organic and Ethical Trade Com-

munity assisted with capacity-building for staff.”

“There has been positive feedback from hotels keen to purchase organic produce for their restaurants to cater to the demand of increasingly health-conscious global consumers.”

We are hoping to get certification for around 20 farmers before the end of the year.

“Certification is a lengthy and a challenging process and very closely related to the Good Practices of Agriculture. Farmers will be required to maintain quality standards once certified,” says Makareta .



Certified farmers will carry the Organic Pasifika Trade Mark.

GROW Awards

GROW farmers are now invited to submit application for GROW farmer awards.

The key award criteria include following of best integrated farm management practices applicable in local context.

For 300 poultry project holders a key criteria is use of local feed

and growing of local feed. Imported feed has been seen to make the business unsustainable. Stock management and staging will also be looked at.

For each project holder income and savings records will checked as part of the judging process to ensure proper record keeping throughout the project. The top-

pers will be awarded organic farm tour in India.

Farmers will be vying for awards in Apiary, Poultry, Horticulture and Organic Farming. Best clusters will also be awarded.

The awards will acknowledge the hard work by farmers despite various disasters and will be held in Vuda on November 14th.

TC Evan Rehabilitation Work Ends

Housing Rehabilitation assistance after TC Evan has wrapped up with construction of a total of 62 houses.

The project was implemented through funding assistance from NZ AID.

While initial assessments had revealed more than 200 homes of vulnerable families destroyed in TC Evan, FRIEND recorded reaching out to 348 households with emergency housing assistance immediately after the cyclone.

Through NZ AID Fiji, Post Tropical Cyclone Evan Rehabilitation Program 2013, FRIEND reached out to a total of 62 families to build stronger homes depending on the need expressed by families. This included assistance with roof, walls and other improvements.

14 families were assisted with construction of complete houses with dimensions of 16ft by 18ft.

“NZ AID has been a development partner for FRIEND since 2006 and we look forward to continue working together,” says FRIEND Founder/Director Sashi Kiran.

The Rehabilitation Project also set up around 150 livelihoods projects comprising of poultry, beekeeping, solar dryers, sewing machines, crafting equipment, baking oven, shelf gardens and set up of backyard gardens and cash crop farming.

SMILE Health Program extended its services to 25 communities as it reached out to provide after cyclone health care and prevention and management of non communicable diseases like diabetes and high blood pressure.



GROW YEN WRAPS UP

The GROW YEN Program aimed at enhancing employability skills of unemployed youths from Cane belt areas wrapped up this month with the final group from Sigatoka completing their training.

The EU funded program has seen a total of 200 youths undertaking life skills classes and completing the mandatory work attachments before being certified from USP.

“While FRIEND has been running the Youth Employment

Network training with youths since 2006, the financial support from EU allowed us to forge a partnership with USP and take the program to youths outside Lautoka,” says Sandhya Narayan,

GROW YEN commenced in 2012 in Lautoka, followed by a session in Nadi in the same year.

This was followed by sessions in Ba, Tavua and Rakiraki.

The second round of trainings were held in Lautoka, Nadi, Ba,

**Product of the Month—
Friend's Fiji Style®
Grated Cassava**



Friend's Fiji Style® Grated Cassava is made from fresh local Fiji Cassava and can be substituted into any recipe calling for freshly grated roots.

In Fiji majority of the people are able to plant and enjoy the crop fresh from their backyards or from the readily available supply at the markets, however our product has been developed in an attempt to introduce an easier option for the busy cooks in the kitchen.

"I love cooking and believe in good food and good taste but at the same time I would use anything that can reduce the dreariness of being stuck in the kitchen for hours. I have been using Grated Cassava in a number of my dishes and nobody is able to say it is anything other than fresh cassava that I have used," says Sandhya Narayan, FRIEND Publications Officer.



Kristina Dimatai

Food Drying Trainings for Communities.

A number of communities are participating in a series of Food Drying Workshops aimed at sustainable incomes from resources available in their communities.

"Drying is one of the oldest methods of food preservation and Drying foods at home is a convenient way to preserve food. You can sell your surplus for income.," Kristina Dimatai, FRIEND Food Drying Trainer.

These Food Drying Trainings are part of the EU Funded GROW project.

"As word of markets provided by FRIEND is spreading, more and more communities are calling us for information."

One of the farming communities delivered a tonne of good quality Dried Cassava within weeks of a Food Drying Workshop held in their village community.

"It is very heartening to see people recognizing the income potential from such trainings and using it to better their quality of lives."



Chopping and dicing fruits and root crops for drying



Recipe Corner—Cassava Coconut Balls



Ingredients

- 2 Cups Friend's Fiji Style® Grated Cassava
- 1 Cup honey
- 1 1/2 Cups Water
- 1 Tbsp Grated Ginger
- 1 Tsp Cardamom powder
- 1/2 Cup Friend's Fiji Style® Desiccated Coconut.

Method

Boil 1 1/2 cups of water. Let cool.

Add honey, ginger and Cardamom and mix until dissolved. Stir in grated cassava and mix well.

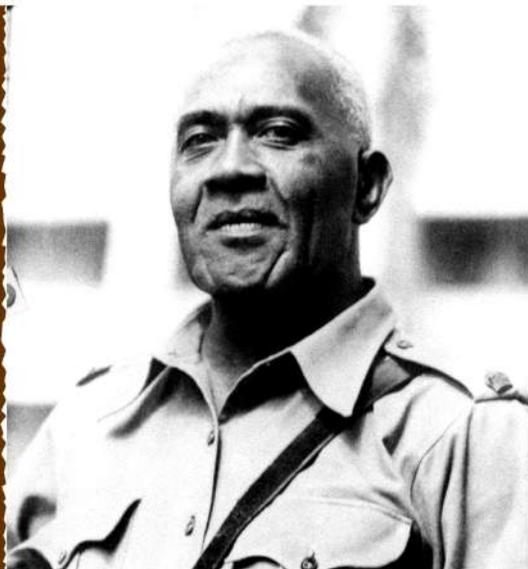
Pour into mold and steam until the mixture becomes translucent for about 35-40 minutes.

Remove from mold. Coat in Friend's Fiji Style® Desiccated Coconut and serve.

Words of the Wise

"We are the leaders of the people. On us is the duty of pointing out to them the right course. Bear this in mind. We have to lead on two points- hold back those who advocate radical changes (for which we are not sufficiently educated) and enliven the laggards before their ignorance destroys us."

Ratu Sir Lala Sukuna



Organic Gardens At FRIEND



The broccoli and cauliflower gardens at FRIEND have been in full bloom this month yielding the freshest of the vegetables for staff and friends.

"Our test gardens prove that these high value crops can be grown locally and serve as an income opportunity for farmers who are willing to work at it," says FRIEND Director Sashi Kiran.

"Our supermarkets are importing broccoli and are retailing at the price of \$18.00 per KG. There is no reason why our local farmers cannot produce this."

The garden also has a healthy crop of herbs, beans, bora, red raddish and cucumbers.

"We do not use any chemical preparations in our gardens. All it takes is poultry manure, various organic pest control methods and water."

FRIEND has always been advocating on backyard gardens in communities.

"Families who have their own gardens are eating healthier and are relying less on highly supermarket produce like noodles and tin fish for their meals," says Sashi.

Did You Know?

- ◆ There is one diabetic amputation every 12 hours in Fiji (MOH).
- ◆ This means more than 700 amputations per year.
- ◆ If not arrested this means 7000 people with disabilities in 10 years....
- ◆ One in every 3 persons in Fiji has diabetes,
- ◆ The youngest type 2 diabetic in Fiji (caused by life-style) is 11



The disease is now catching up young because of our lifestyle...

Diabetes can result in a number of peripheral health complications, including high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and a build-up of plaque in veins and arteries.

This means that the risk of having a heart attack or stroke is significantly higher in people with diabetes, which is why it is so important for diabetics to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

It depends on you whether you want to share health with your children and families or feed them junk and share diabetes!

FRIEND SMILE Health encourages backyard organic gardens, regular exercises and regular screening to ensure community members know their disease status and are able to control their diabetes.

Fiji has local healthy foods and healthy local fruits... we have options to processed sugars.

Fiji and the Pacific have been declared in crisis...
Make a choice and ACT NOW!

