Nius

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29 YEARS of Dedicated Agricultural Research for Sustainable Development

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Welcome to the 3rd edition of NARI Nius for 2026. If you have any comments or contributions please drop us a line at: ***naripng@nari.gov.pg*** *for an e-copy.*

NARI hosts inaugural NARS Innovations Show

As part of its journey towards transforming the agriculture landscape, NARI hosted the inaugural National Agricultural Research Systems Agricultural Innovations Show (NARSAIS) on June 12, in Lae.

The show brought various key stakeholders including National DAL, CIC, KIK, NBPOL, Livestock Development Corporation, FPDA, PNG Spice Board, NAQIA, PNG Rice, Grain and Oilseed Industry, and Rubber Industry Development Board including farmer groups, and the private sector.

This year's show was made possible through the Platinum sponsor Santos, gold sponsor Harmony Gold, and bronze sponsors; Zenag and Farmset.

Among the esteemed leaders and valued guests were Keynote Speaker and East Sepik Governor Allan Bird, and Guest of Honour, Kinoka Feo, Minister for Higher Education Research Science and Technology, and Agriculture Minister John Boito, marking a collective effort in developing the agriculture sector.



An officer with Santos speaking with school students.


Members of Mix Markham Farmers group who displayed traditional food crops and recipes.

Hosting of the NARSAIS marks an historic milestone by linking research to tangible benefits for the rural farming community and realising this year's theme, "Bridging the Gap through Research and Innovation for Market Demand."

Director General Dr Nelson Simbiken affirmed that agricultural research has been silently driving the country forward by addressing pests and diseases, soil degradation and negative climate change effects among other challenges.

"Bridging this gap means ensuring that every innovation we showcase today is directory responsive to market demand. It means empowering our farmers to evolve from subsistence producers to successful agri-entrepreneurs equipped with knowledge and tools to compete effectively," expressed Dr Simbiken.

Dr Simbiken urged all stakeholders including researchers to strive and remain committed to realise innovation, wealth and prosperity for rural farmers.

In this issue

- *NARI receives NASFUND Good Governance award*
- *Officer shares experience in making breadfruit oil and soap*



Farmer produces breadfruit oil and soap



Skipa Christopher

Breadfruit is mainly used as food and timber from its trunk and other parts have potential for other uses in Papua New Guinea.

Food Security Advisor with Alotau DAL Skipa Christopher who is also a farmer says other parts of the breadfruit tree can be used including the root for products such as oil and soap.

Mr Christopher has ventured into making breadfruit infused oil and soap. He shared his experience after attending the inaugural National Agricultural Research System Agricultural Innovation Show (NARSIS) on May 12, in Lae, Morobe province.

He says the process begins with harvesting breadfruit roots, washes them with water and carefully removes the thin outer layer. The second layer is scraped off and left to dry.

The scraped root is left to dry for three days under direct sun light and 4 days under the shade.

After drying the scraped breadfruit layer, it is slowly infused into the oil.

The process of straining commences after one week and breadfruit infused oil is bottled and ready for use or sale. This is the first of such breadfruit value added product to be developed and clients found keen interest in the product on display during the show.

Mr Christopher expresses that the NARSIS is all about innovation and felt motivated to develop value added products like the 100 milliliter breadfruit oil and soap.

“Traditionally people think breadfruit is used as food and the trunk as timber for building houses but there is so many other uses that breadfruit has. For the rural community who have breadfruit can develop value added products that can enhance your livelihood including health,” explains Mr Christopher. Mr Christopher was invited through the “More Than Just Food” Breadfruit project as a stakeholder partner to display breadfruit value added products and share his experience during the NARSIS.

Jasper Blooms attracts show goers


Mrs Janet Woyengu *(left)*

If you are a frequent traveller between Port Moresby and Lae, you will come across Jasper Blooms who provide wrapping services as soon as passengers enter the airport terminal.

Jasper Blooms was established some years back and is owned by Mrs Janet Woyengu, who started as a trainer in floriculture with the PNG Women in Agriculture and Development Foundation. She decided to venture into floriculture as a business between 2010 and 2011, and was recognised for her efforts through an award by Westpac.

Her efforts continued to flourish when she was awarded a contract by the National Airports Corporation by providing wrapping service for travelling passengers at Jacksons and NADZAB/Tomodachi International Airport.

Mrs Woyengu has expanded her business into infused oil products apart from floriculture. As part of creating more awareness and encouraging others, Jasper Blooms took another positive step by bringing her products and services to the inaugural National Agriculture Research System Agricultural Innovation Show (NARSAIS) on May 12, at NARI outside of Lae, Morobe province.

The display of various products and services also aligns with this year’s NARSIS theme in promoting food and other value chains including small business who have ventured into producing value added products.

Mrs Woyengu says their display at the NARSAIS provided her business the opportunity to interact with students, businesses and potential clients. She says, “Venturing into small to medium enterprise should not remain at one level; you have to make an effort to ensure your business grows and moves to another level.”

NASFUND awards owed to good governance

As a statutory organisation, the National Agriculture Research Institute is proud to receive the highest NASFUND awards, demonstrating the significance of good governance.

NARI credits the awards to governance strategies that were put in place 20 years ago, and the leadership that has continued to maintain transparency and accountability over the years.

Director General Dr Nelson Simbiken, accompanied by Director Institutional Services and Systems, Mr Anthony Woyengu were ecstatic to receive the "1st Runner Up, Best Employer with Employer Voluntary Contributions" and the overall "Chairman's Award" at the NASFUND Awards Night in Port Moresby on May 14th.



Dr Simbiken and Mr Woyengu



NASFUND Chairman's Award

The award was timely as NARI celebrated 30 years as a leading agriculture research organisation in PNG and the Pacific.

Between 2005 and 2006, NARI took advantage of the provisions in the Superannuation Act 2000 and increased employer contributions to 15%, while the requirement was 8.4%.

Together with the mandatory 6% employee contribution, a total of 21% was saved for an employee.

Dr Nelson Simbiken pointed out that fortnightly deductions and payment into staff NASFUND accounts has allowed NARI to stay on track.

"We want our staff to have a healthy retirement plan when they retire so releasing funds into their savings accounts on a timely basis, is always a priority for us.

"It all comes down to good governance, transparency, and accountability by the management. When funds are managed well, staff welfare such as superannuation funds are up to date."

Director Institutional Services and Systems Mr Mr Anthony Woyengu who was part of the Human Resource team that instituted the changes over 20 years ago, was a proud man receiving the award.

He said the change was a necessary solution to curb the challenges of encouraging a savings culture.

"I want to acknowledge contributions by former Director General, Dr Raghunath Ghodake for his foresight and his appreciation and understanding that our people do not have a savings culture.

"He understood that there were other better ways of helping our staff save money.

Similarly, we would like to acknowledge the former Chairmen of NARI Council late Sir Alkan Tololo and late Professor John Kola for facilitating the changes."

NARI has won similar NASFUND awards within different categories in 2020, 2021 and 2023 respectively.

Aku is reaping benefits of using PT sweetpotato


Aku Kulo

Out in the far flung village of Meteyufa confined within Asaro Valley in Eastern Highlands, hails Aku Kulo who survives on farming sweetpotato.

Planting sweetpotato has been part of Aku Kulo's life until 2015 when he was introduced to PT sweetpotato, a technology introduced through rigorous research by NARI's Highlands Regional Centre at Aiyura, Eastern Highlands. PT sweetpotato refers to sweetpotato planting material (vine) which goes through a therapy process to get rid off pests and diseases, to produces high yield for income opportunities.

Mr Kulo is farming PT kaukau and turned it into a flourishing business with a positive impact in his daily living.

"Mi gat strongpla tingting long PT kaukau. PT kaukau mi planim, karim planti na taim mi go skelim lo CPL na RH, weit blo PT kaukau em winim bikpela kilo *(I am very positive about using PT kaukau. The pathogen sweetpotato vine I farm, produces a lot of sweetpotato. When I weigh and sell at CPL and RH, it pays a very good price)* ," expressed Mr Kulo.

Mr Kulo shared this positive experience, when he joined the team at Aiyura to display how PT sweetpotato grows from a disease-free vine to harvest, during the inaugural National Agriculture Research Systems Agricultural Innovations Show (NARSIS) on May 12, at Bubia, 10 Mile outside of Lae.

"Clients at urban markets in Port Moresby and Lae are attracted to the sweetpotato which come in good sizes and sells faster," explains Mr Kulo.

His passion into farming PT sweetpotato is not confined to Asaro but has spread to other parts of Daulo, and Ungae/Bena, including other parts of Eastern Highlands, through the distribution of sweetpotato vines to over farmers.

Through such tireless initiative, Mr Kulo was able to build a network of 109 farmers, and managed to set up Hagareto Farmers' Group. This has enabled the group to mobilise farmers and sustain sweetpotato production and supply to supermarkets and urban markets in Lae and Port Moresby.

He is purchasing sweetpotato through Hagareto Farmers' Group and supplies 120 to 150 bags of sweetpotato weekly, to meet demand for sweetpotato.

"The entire Daulo district is growing PT kaukau and we have customers based at Papa and Lealea villages in Port Moresby. I was selling sweetpotato that does not produce as much as what PT kaukau produces. My family is pleased that through sweetpotato production using PT kaukau, we are realising a positive change in our lives," expressed Mr Kulo.

Mr Kulo's perseverance enabled him to pay off a piece of land and built a six-bedroom house, a new truck to freight sweetpotato. a taxi and paid off his children's school fees.

From a simple sweetpotato farmer to harvesting the benefits of growing PT kaukau, Mr Kulo is able to supply urban markets in Goroka, Kimbe, Lae, Madang, Manus, Port Moresby, Rabaul, Wewak and supermarkets such as RH and CPL Stop & Shop among many clients.

Mr Kulo's positive testament is a reminder that there are potential areas which farmers can tap in the agriculture sector, to not only their community but create positive impact in other areas through the use of a simple technology such as the PT kaukau are taken seriously.

To understand how PT kaukau is developed, Winnie Maso, Laboratory Manager at the Highlands Regional Centre in Aiyura, Eastern Highlands will take you through a thorough process from the laboratory to the field on how clean seeds are produced. In PNG, various pests or diseases are affecting sweetpotato production which affects yield and farmer income if not adequately addressed. NARI introduced PT kaukau to help farmers improve sweetpotato production since 2005. Aku Kulo is one of the many recipients of PT kaukau. Plantlets undergo a therapy process which removes diseases to ensure clean planting materials are developed and in clean 'nursery like' area. From there 'mother plants' are grown in a nursery to prevent diseases which are later distributed to farmers to produce more planting materials.





Ready to continue BSF work at Kerevat

Ben Wasika and Ano Yonda based at the Islands Regional Centre in Kerevat, East New Britain have progressed with work on rearing the Black Soldier Fly.

Both officers, after receiving BSF training at the Momase Regional Centre in Lae, have coverted a shed that caters for adult black soldier flies to mate and lay eggs, providing organic feed for the BSF larvae and received uniform sets each. The BSF research work is part of the Small Research Activities supported by ACIAR.

Rice training is transforming lives

Rice training received by officers working with the Ok Tedi Development Foundation (OTDF) Food Security Program is bringing positive changes to the lives of communities they work with.

Six officers from ODTF received rice training which was facilitated by NARI in 2023, through a team of officers under NARI's Rice and Grain program led by Rice Agronomist Anton Beko.

Speaking on behalf of participants John McCornathy during the inaugural National Agricultural Research System Agricultural Innovation Show (NARSIS) on May 12, says the Food Security team conducts extension services on rice programs by visiting communities, providing rice training and providing rice seed.

"Our team conducts regular checks with the communities to see if they are planting rice and collect reports. We help the community by gathering rice and milling rice for farmers," expressed Mr McCornathy.

Women and children are involved through the process of soil preparation, planting, harvesting and winnowing.

Mr McCornathy is pleased that farmers have extended their rice blocks from 1 to 3 hectares and with the support of OTDF, are now packaging and selling rice.



(Left to right) Lester Jag (Food Security & LDP Support Staff), Geniong Inaro (Education Officer), Manager Program Service Operations & Acting Executive Manager Program Services Philemon Nahuet, Tommy Polang (Community Development Leader), Pastor Kisua Yasum (First Rice Farmer from Sapuka), and John McCornathy (Sapuka Community Seed Bank Centre Coordinator).



John McCornathy

Samples of milled and packaged rice by farmers were brought to the NARSIS for display. Mr McCornathy says there are many positive developments through the food security program which includes rice as part of the local diet and additional income for the beneficiary communities. He is grateful to NARI for the rice training which has translated into farmers growing, milling, consuming, and selling of rice to sustain their livelihoods.

Laboratory Services offered by NARI

The Professor John Kola Chemistry Laboratory offers a wide range of analytical and diagnostic testing services. We are a national chemical testing laboratory and have been operating for over 30 years.

Our laboratory is accredited to ISO/IEC 17025 which is a general requirement set by the International Organisation for Standardization (ISO) and International Electrotechnical Commision (IEC) for the competence in testing laboratories.

It certifies a laboratory as an Accredited Chemical Testing Laboratory under the ISO/IEC 17025:2005 Guidelines.

Prof John Kola Chemistry can perform chemical testing and all methods used are recommended by American Public Health Association (water), Australasia Soil and Plant Analysis Council (soil and plant), Association of Official Analytical Chemist (food and natural products).

Prof John Kola Chemistry Laboratory Kilakila

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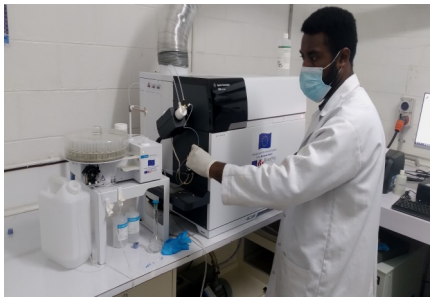


Aquatek Analyser for measuring Ammonium in water

What we test for in the laboratory in pictures



Quality Control Chemist, carrying out food testing on the Fat extraction equipment



Test to determine mineral elements such as Calcium, Magnesium, Potassium, etc and mainly used for water and environmental samples.



A high throughput & inexpensive analytical technique used to primarily test for major elements such as Calcium, Magnesium etc in food, beverage, water, plant and soils.



Extraction technique to extract from crushed, dried or ground samples with the aid of heating & refluxing to determine fats in dried nuts, grains, etc



Unit used to determine nitrogen (crude protein) content in soil, plants, food and natural products.



This is a purification system which eliminates bacteria using ultra violet radiation and provides chemical reactive water for the laboratory's daily use.

guesthouse

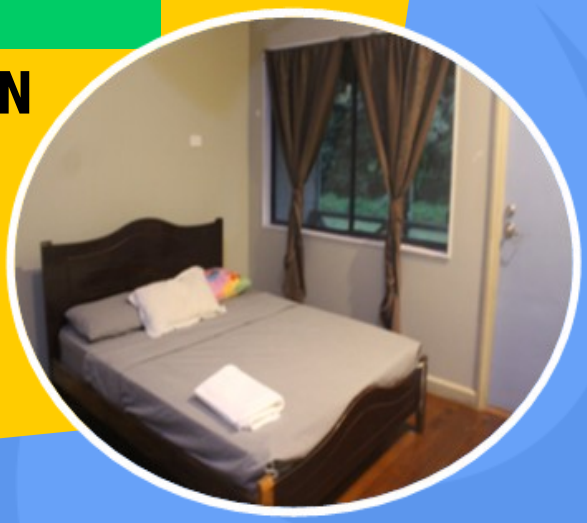
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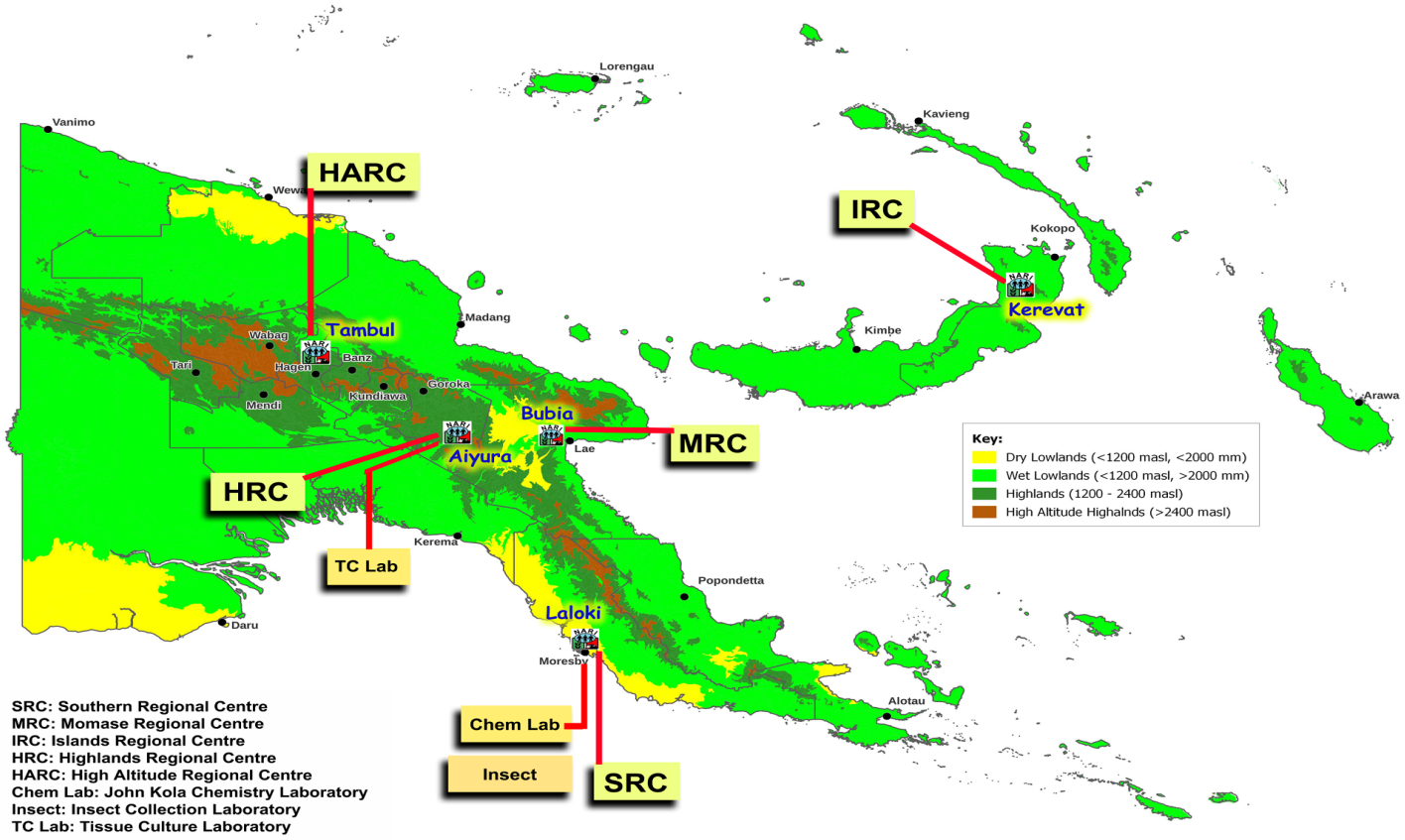
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The National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI) was established by an Act of National Parliament of Papua New Guinea (PNG) in July 1996 as a public funded, statutory research organisation, to conduct and foster applied and adaptive research into:

i) any branch of biological, physical and natural sciences related to agriculture;

ii) cultural and socioeconomic aspects of the agricultural sector, especially of the smallholder agriculture; and

iii) matters relating to rural development. and of relevance to Papua New Guinea.