

Petition for a New Western Coordinating Committee

NUMBER WCC-Pacific Basin Tropical Agriculture

TITLE Committee to identify and address tropical agricultural practices and marketing needs of the Pacific Basin

DURATION 1 October 2000 to 31 September 2003

DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION

Tropical agriculture in the Pacific Basin, including Guam, American Samoa, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and Hawaii, is undergoing major transitions in crop production and marketing of raw and value-added products. Global marketing has increased world trade opportunities but constraints, including quarantine barriers, have limited expansion. Stakeholders in the Pacific Basin agricultural community, including ethnically and culturally diverse native populations, are under-represented and not well-served by current research, extension and instructional programs. Research and extension personnel in Pacific land grant institutions have no direct forum for discussion of their clients' agricultural needs. This has led to an inefficient use of scarce resources and failed attempts to obtain competitive grants. Information produced by Pacific land grant institutions may be narrow in scope, not address all ecosystems in the region, and be poorly distributed. Research and extension efforts are often duplicated: for example, there was no coordination or collaboration against the rapid invasion and spread of the silverleaf whitefly, *Bemisia tabaci* biotype B or the melon thrips, *Thrips palmi*. These pests are having a serious impact on Pacific agriculture. Tropical crop-pest complexes are unique compared to the western United States and principles of temperate ecosystem management may not apply.

OBJECTIVES

1. Establish a coordinating committee to address critical tropical agriculture issues.
2. Form partnerships among faculty, scientists, and extension specialists at Pacific land grant institutions to develop research projects and extension and educational programs specific to tropical crops, such as taro, bananas, kava, and yams.
3. Select a consortium of agricultural professionals to develop funding initiatives.
4. Monitor the committee's progress and facilitate access by stakeholders to new research and extension information in tropical agriculture.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

1. Identification of critical agricultural research, extension and educational issues in the Pacific Basin.
2. Prioritization of cooperative research and extension projects in the Pacific.
3. Increased competitive ability of land grant scientists to obtain funding by submission of collaborative research proposals.
4. Maintain an effective, responsive WCC through self-evaluation and stakeholder input; improve agricultural practices and increase health and longevity of island stakeholders.

EDUCATIONAL PLAN:

Education of Pacific islanders will be the ultimate goal of the committee. Because of long distances between Pacific islands and major educational institutions, the committee will develop an interactive distance learning and continuing education system for the Pacific Basin. Stakeholders with an interest

in tropical agriculture, including farmers, extension agents, specialists, researchers, students, professional agriculturists and consumers, will be able to receive current information electronically and by traditional methods. This information will include new agricultural technologies, management, marketing, problem-solving techniques, and food safety information. The committee will also use the ADAP (Agricultural Development in the American Pacific) website for listing summaries of recent research, publications, and other agriculturally related information <http://www.adap.hawaii.edu/adap/>.

PARTICIPANTS

A. Lee Eavy, PhD, IPM Coordinator
College of Northern Mariana Islands
50% research/50% extension

Robert L. Schlub, PhD, Extension Plant Pathologist
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25% research/60% extension/15% teaching

Yasuo I Yamada, PhD, Vice-President Cooperative Research and Extension
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Arnold H. Hara, PhD, Entomologist
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American Samoa Community College
70% research/20% extension/10% teaching

Fred Brooks, PhD, Plant Pathologist
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OPERATIONAL STRUCTURE

Chairperson: responsible for coordinating meetings, writing reports and communicating with administrative advisors.

Secretary: responsible for meeting notes, distributing minutes to WCC members and advisors.

Project Number: WCC-206

Project Title: Pacific Basin Tropical Agriculture


SIGNATURES:

Administrative Advisor

Date



Chair, Western Directors Association



Date