

Quarantine E-News

Issue 8

August 2012

Quarantine Awareness targets colleges in Savaii

A first ever Awareness was targeted to the colleges in Savaii, with a total of 7 Government colleges scheduled for presentation. The initial scheduled program was to target all 9 listed government colleges in the big island, but unfortunately, the program could not be carried out to 2 colleges within the village of Salelologa, due to unforeseen circumstances. The colleges visited were Itu o Tane, Vaipouli, Alofi o Taa, Asau College, Palauli, Palauli i Sisifo, and Savaii Sisifo College. The general welcome by the schools for this campaign was responsive, where much time was allocated for answering questions of concern, such as, the issue on the prohibition of turkey tails, the continuance of the operation carried out at Mulifanua wharf, although GAS is now found abundantly in parts of Savaii, the procedures carried out at the borders, and so forth.

This initiative was a success and recommendations for further awareness to target community levels and other organizations in Savaii is required.



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Keep in Mind!

- ◆ Safe storage, safe use, monitoring, register and import permit for Pesticides
- ◆ An apple a day keeps the doctor away
- ◆ Farming looks easy, but it requires a lot of hard work with rewarding results.

Quarantine Invited for Presentation to Pulenuu

The Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSD), as part of their annual Awareness programs for the village mayors (*pulenuu*), held its target initiative on the 21st-22nd August at the Tooa Salamasina Hall, where a total of approximately 160 pulenuu attended to participate in the seminar. Quarantine and the Nuu Crops Division were fortunate enough to present. The opening remarks was conveyed to the participants by the senior representative of the ministry and coordinator of the program, Mrs Meia Sua while the prayer was conducted by a senior pulenuu. The formalities, were followed by powerpoint presentations and judging from the response of the audience, it was rather informative, as many learnt **the importance of Quarantine and its' many functions, apart from duties carried out at the border.**



Pulenuu from the village of Faleula enquiring about the issue of turkey tails prohibition, as others look on awaiting the response to this hot topic.

Successful bid awarded for Clearance of Seized Pesticides

An overseas based company, Tredi SA, was awarded a contract with the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization tender, safeguarding of obsolete pesticides in Samoa. This was basically to clean and clear out all obsolete formulas seized, that have been in storage at the Quarantine office. The Tredi SA personnel packed the pesticides into a container bound for Transpacific Technical Services NZ Ltd. All seized pesticides, were intercepted and collected from general stores, wholesales, retailers, and from points of entries at Faleolo International Airport, Fagalii Airport, Post Office, and other depots. Allocated shipping staff underwent on-site training on the handling and proper removal of these obsolete pesticides.

Pesticides are toxic to both pests and humans. However, they need not be hazardous to humans and non-target animal species if suitable precautions are taken. Most pesticides will cause adverse effects if intentionally or accidentally ingested or if they are in contact with the skin for a long time. Pesticide particles may be inhaled with the air while they are being sprayed. An additional risk is the contamination of drinking-water, food or soil. Special precautions must be taken during transport, storage and handling. Spray equipment should be regularly cleaned and maintained to prevent leaks. People who work with pesticides should receive proper training on their safe use.

Storage of pesticides must be in a secure place that can be locked and is not accessible to unauthorized people or children. They should never be kept in a place where they might be mistaken for food or drink. Keep them dry but away from fire and out of direct sunlight. It must not be carried in a vehicle which is also used to transport food.



Personnel from Tredi SA in proper safety wear packing Obsolete pesticides awaiting safe and proper disposal.

USP Final Year students visit Quarantine Office

As part of their internal assessment activities and end of semester employer observations, Mr. Falaniko Amosa and his university students undertaking AG364; Sustainable Crop Production Technology visited the Quarantine office to hear about the importance of the relationship between Quarantine and Crop production. Students from diverse backgrounds, within the Pacific e.g. Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu, Kiribati, Nauru etc participated in the session.

Additionally, the class were eager to learn about the import and export requirements, as they have reached the end of the semester, and many were to return back home.



Local Businessman ships second Taro Container to New Zealand

Due to tough Quarantine regulations in New Zealand, and after a long wait for the local exporters and taro farmers alike, a taro shipment from Samoa finally made its way through the borders.

This is good news to many local farmers, as they have waited for a long time for the revival of the taro industry. This effort has been hugely impacted by local businessman, Mr John Lo, in joint collaboration with Mr. Charlie Ah Liki, whom initially made the first shipment of taro and now a second round is gearing up for the New Zealand market.

There is a huge market in New Zealand for this Samoan delicacy, as a huge part of the population consists of Samoans and other Pacific Islanders residing there hence the high demand.

The Ministry of Agriculture's initiative goal to revive the exports of taro and increase our market access, works closely together to ensure the stability and pest free status of the consignments that is scheduled to be exported.



Crops research staff assisting with taro preparations for the New Zealand Market.



The on site inspection and packing of the taro consignment to be exported to New Zealand.



Gramoxone use a concern for the local farming

Members of Samoa's farming community say they are increasingly concerned over the use of a herbicide known as gramoxone, which was banned in the European Union in 2000 because it did not meet health standards. Gramoxone is still widely used in Samoa on food crops, including bananas.

Samoa's Ministry of Agriculture says the government has implemented the necessary procedures to ensure the safety of Samoan farmers.

Quarantine's Assistant Chief Executive Officer, Lupeomanu Pelenato Fonoti, stated that gramoxone will remain on the market as long as there is a demand and no suitable alternative method.

"You have to measure the demand by the people, of the users of the chemical and those who are not in favour of using the chemical," he said. "If you disallow the importation of gramoxone then you have to come up with a much better alternative, which is environmentally safe."

The division's Pesticide section monitors the imports and use of this herbicide through registration and awareness to the public on its safe use. Understanding and following the instructions on their label is vital. Monitoring via regular spot checks are carried out at retailers, wholesales and unregistered pesticides found are seized. Penalties may also be applied for these non-compliance.

Gramoxone is widely used for farming in Samoa, and is found to be affordable compared to many other commercial herbicides.



NUS Open Day-Career paths for the future

The annual National University of Samoa Open Day was held on the 17th August, and this usually is put forth as a Career Day for students from various schools within Samoa. There were booth displays from various ministries and private departments. Furthermore, there were various student association food stall and displays. The NUS Open Day activities were spread throughout the Papaigalagala campus. There were designated tour guides to each participating 10 schools. These activities included displays, demonstrations, food stalls and booths and much more. A 'Pop Quiz' was also given to the visiting college students. There were also prizes to be won and which were proudly sponsored by Digicel.

There were many interesting questions asked by the eager students visiting the display booths put up by the Ministry of Agriculture. Agriculture's theme on display was, 'Faming and fishing first'.



Displays by the Crops, Livestock and Quarantine Division