

# **Pacific Ministers of Agriculture and Forests Meeting (PMAF)**

**Nadi, Fiji**

**10 March 2023**

## **Introduction**

The American Samoa Government avails itself of this golden opportunity to convey our heartfelt appreciation to the organizers and regional Ministers of Agriculture for the opportunity to participate in this most valuable conference, which hopefully wouldn't be the last. American Samoa became a member of the Pacific community in 1983.

American Samoa, an unincorporated territory of the United States is 199km<sup>2</sup> (77mi<sup>2</sup>) with a coastline of 116km (72.1mi) with a population of 45,443 (2022) is located 70km east of Samoa. Like most Pacific Island Countries (PICs), it enjoys a tropical climate with an average temperature of 29-31°C. Annual rainfall is 200 inches (5,100mm).

The fish cannery, Star Kist Samoa Co., is the main contributor to the national GDP for American Samoa exporting regularly to Australia, Busan Korea, Saohsiung Taiwan; Vietnam and the United States (Minneapolis). It is the backbone of the national economy.

## **A. Priority Areas and Commitment:**

Our mission is to promote, educate and assist local farmers with the main goal to, attain, sustain, and safeguard a high level of diversified food production towards achieving and maintaining food security and safety for the population.

## **1. Sustainable food security/safety**

### **1.1 Production and Protection**

- a) Strengthening extension advisory services – DOA personnel & farmer training program
- b) Institutional strengthening programs for subsistence farmers –Improvement of cultivation methods and the value of record keeping
- c) Promote new production methods (green houses, hydroponics), and wood chips and/inoculated deep litter system of piggery waste disposal (vs. methane)
- d) Sustainable production and distribution of seeds/cuttings/animal breeds (new plant varieties
- e) Protection – promote organic farming and use of appropriate control measures against pests and diseases

### **1.2 Food safety**

1.2.1 Disease surveillance & eradication of pandemic diseases

1.2.2 USDA certified Central abattoir – wholesome meat

1.2.3 Value-added agricultural products production e.g pork products (bacon, ham, trotters, offals etc)

## **2. Biosecurity**

2.1 Prevention of exotic animal/plant pests and diseases – strong effective/efficient quarantine service

- 2.2 Prevention of exotic invasive species - quarantine
- 2.3 Eradication of endemic animal diseases (leptospirosis) introduced invasive species (e.g. *Hyptis capitatus*-knobweed) – crop protection extension service
- 2.4 Legislation review – rule reform to ensure agricultural regulations are mandated under the DOA. e.g. import/export protocol review; prepare exotic disease outbreak contingency program

### **3. Personnel Training**

A qualified and skilled workforce and sufficient funding is the requisite to achieving the ASG-DOA development goals and objectives. Recruitment therefore of appropriate personnel for the relevant positions is imperative. Refresher training to keep them abreast with current changes would be an added incentive to prevent staff turnover.

### **B. Partnership**

The department with limited budget requires capital to achieve its mission. The following areas are in dire need of assistance:

- 1) Animal and horticultural periodic disease surveillance-SPC
  - 2) Construction of a Tissue Culture Laboratory/equipment – SPC
  - 3) Research facility (laboratory) to conduct local identification of pests and diseases, chemical residues in meat and crops, soil fertility etc. - ACIAR
  - 4) Refresher on-the-job personnel/farmer training – USP, Fiji Ag Research,
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