

Enhanced fruit production and postharvest handling systems for Fiji, Samoa, and Tonga



Key details

Location

Fiji, Samoa, Tonga

Duration

Start Jan 2016

End Dec 2020

Budget

AUD 2,300,001

Commissioned organisation

University of the Sunshine Coast

Partners

Fiji National University; Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Forests and Fisheries; Scientific Research Organisation of Samoa; Secretariat of the Pacific Community; Sigatoka Research Station; University of Queensland

Project Leader

Steven Underhill, University of the Sunshine Coast

Program

Horticulture

Project code

HORT/2014/077

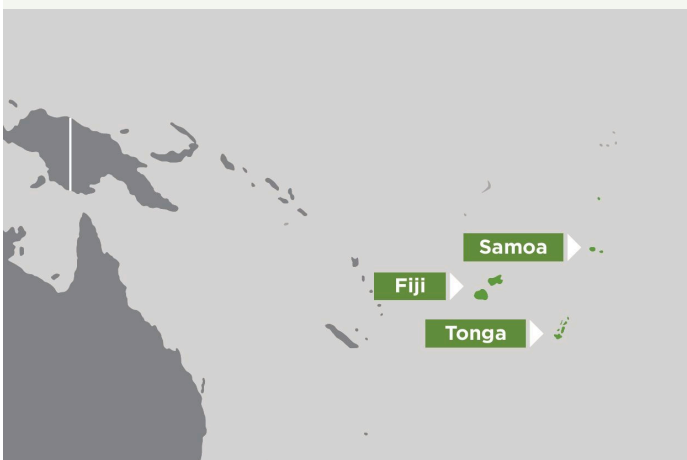
Overview

This project aimed to increase the efficiency of fruit value chains; improve climatic resilience of breadfruit; provide targeted capacity building to the private sector and government extension services in support of identified fruit value chains; and enhance the engagement of smallholder farmers and communities in functional supply chains in Fiji, Samoa, and Tonga.

Fruit production in the Pacific represents less than 10% of overall horticultural output. Low-intensity and semi-commercial fruit production systems, poor postharvest handling practices and limited value chain development are factors contributing to a decline in output.

There is an emerging focus on fruit crops that enhance and diversify horticultural production to capture domestic and export market opportunities. These crops include papaya, pineapple, mango, breadfruit, and citrus.

Improved economic and disaster resilience of domestic and/or export fruit value chains in Fiji, Samoa and Tonga will also aid rural economic development, alleviate poverty and create more resilient and diverse domestic food security.



Project outcomes

- Increased experience and technical knowledge of Extension Officers in support of mango, pineapple, and citrus production in the region.
- Strengthened capacity building of staff to provide post-project technical support to farmers through smallholder farmer-training workshops.
- The establishment of a tropical tree fruit block in Tonga to provide a long-term asset for industry demonstration and fruit agronomic and postharvest training.
- Support for Scientific Research Organisation of Samoa to be a regional leader in food and postharvest horticultural research.
- Postharvest research undertaken in Fiji through the Fiji National University to promote wider institutional capacity building.
- Opportunities through the Centre for Pacific Crops and Trees to undertake additional capacity building training associated with molecular-based methods.
- The establishment of a packing shed on `Eua, and a community-owned fast ferry between `Eua and Tongatapu Islands to provide critical infrastructure and logistics.



ACIAR

**Australian
Aid** 