

**GOVERNMENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF VANUATU**

**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE,
LIVESTOCK,
FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND
BIOSECURITY**

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**GOUVERNEMENT DE LA
REPUBLIQUE DE VANUATU**

**MINISTERE de L'AGRICULTURE,
de L'ELEVAGE, de la
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de la BIOSECURITE**

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OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

***Vanuatu Agritourism Festival
will become an annual event***

Port Vila, Tuesday 15th November 2016

The feedback received following the three-day Vanuatu Agritourism Festival 2016 from 9-11 November all point to one conclusion: the agritourism festival will become an annual event from 2017 onward. This view was echoed in the Hon Minister of Agriculture's official closing speech, Hon. Matai Seremaiah Nawalu on Friday 11th November at the closure of the 3-day festival.

The joint Trade/Agriculture Ministries meeting held at the Department of Forestry conference room during the event's evaluation and feedback session yesterday (Monday 14th Nov) also reached this decision.

The positive feedback received both from the private sector, other Government agencies and from the general public as reflected in the excitement echoed during the preceding and ensuing Talk-Back-Shows on FM107 and national Radio have also been very encouraging.

Despite the challenges of preparing for and hosting the 3-day festival, the benefits have been enormous, largely in terms of the visibility and exposure that the event has brought about on the work of sectors concerned – namely agriculture, tourism, trade, and the industry at large.

The subject of 'Agritourism' has also raised the profile of health and nutrition as the third pillar of the entire concept, thus forging a stronger partnership and linkages between the three Government Ministries – Tourism, Agriculture and Health.

The overarching objectives of this year's agritourism festival were largely geared to widely promoting the idea, advocating for and creating impact on both agriculture and tourism plus trade, and generating a greater interest across society to drive agritourism into the future.

Around May/June 2017, Vanuatu will host the first ever Pacific Week of Agriculture (PWA). This is a regional event combining parallel meetings that used to be hosted separately in the region by the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC).

The level and nature of participation of the PWA will be slightly different to Vanuatu's concept of the 'Agritourism Festival', which is one key reason why Vanuatu will still be hosting its own festival later in the year around November 2017.

On this note, it is only fitting to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all our sponsors for your financial and in-kind support to make our very first agritourism festival a great success.

We acknowledge the contributions of the CTA, GIZ, RBV, NBV, VIPA, VTO, VCCI, Garden Code, TVL, Wantok, Colourite Graphics, IPV Printers, SPC/PAPP project, all our other sponsors and departments under the Ministries of Trade and Agriculture, the Vanuatu Chefs Association, and the many staff from both Agriculture and Trade who contributed to delivering such a great event. We thank our participating farmers and private sector exhibitors as well for their support in showcasing what Vanuatu has to offer.

We thank the Right Hon Prime Minister and his delegation of Ministers including the Deputy PM for gracing the closing hours of the festival on Friday 11th November with their personal presence and support. We also acknowledge the presence of Vanuatu's Ambassador to the EU/ACP, HE Roy M Joy for being part of the event and for sharing his expertise and experiences on Agritourism across the ACP.

Last but not the least, we sincerely thank the media – both traditional and social media – for the very vital role that they played leading up to and during the festival to herald the powerful message of agritourism across the nation, notably the capital city and to the rest of the Pacific region and the globe, specifically the ACP which followed the event live on social media.

The latest positive news to add to the great signs of progress in Vanuatu on agritourism is that the Ministry of Agriculture and Tourism will be jointly launching Vanuatu's (and possibly the first in the entire Pacific) first ever Agritourism Strategy on Wednesday 7th December.

Thanks to the New Zealand Government for its generous support in funding this very vital document that will help to serve as a roadmap for the advancement of agritourism in Vanuatu throughout 2017 and beyond.

Long live Agritourism in Vanuatu !

YUMI GO !!!



Howard Aru

Director General

Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry, Fisheries and Biosecurity

