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APAARI Newsletter

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Contents

1. Recent Contributions of the Chair, APAARI

Prof. Lindsay Falvey
Chair of EC
APAARI

Professor Lindsay Falvey, Commissioner for International Agricultural Research at ACIAR and Chair of the Executive Committee, APAARI highlights the growing urgency of the global debate surrounding meat consumption, animal welfare, and the environmental impact of livestock production. As the world confronts challenges like climate change, zoonotic diseases, and food security, there is a critical need to rethink current practices.

Recent Article

A Rational Balance to Livestock-Sourced Food Products: Integrating Sustainability, Health, and Economic Viability May 2025

2. Editorial

The Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI) continues to work closely with its members and partners to advance agricultural research and innovation. Our ongoing initiatives focus on strengthening institutional capacities of national agricultural research systems (NARS), higher education institutions, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Key areas of emphasis through projects and community of practices include pesticide residue mitigation, phytosanitary development, agroecology, biotechnology and bioresources, and agricultural innovation systems (AIS).

This edition of the newsletter highlights significant progress in these areas, showcasing event reports, research breakthroughs, success stories, and institutional updates from APAARI and its partners.

We hope you find the content insightful and encourage you to share your feedback to make future editions even more relevant to your needs.

Dr. Ravi Khetarpal
Executive Director,
APAARI

2. Highlights from the APAARI Secretariat

ASTI Regional Workshop in Asia-Pacific Paves the Way for Agricultural Research Data Transformation.

The ASTI Regional Workshop in Asia-Pacific, held from January 15–17, 2025, in Bangkok, Thailand, marked a significant step toward enhancing agricultural research data collection and utilization in the region. Co-organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI), the workshop convened 35 key stakeholders to explore strategies for institutionalizing ASTI and improving the policy relevance of its outputs at the national level.

As a global leader in agricultural research data analysis, FAO is spearheading the Agricultural Sciences and Technology Indicators (ASTI) initiative, with this workshop launching a series of ASTI implementation pilots in selected countries. Insights from these pilots will inform the global ASTI rollout later in 2025.

Key Discussions and Outcomes

Over three days, participants engaged in:

- Operationalizing ASTI – Deliberations on new mechanisms to improve efficiency and integration at national and regional levels.
- Policy Integration – Exploring pathways for embedding ASTI data into decision-making processes.
- Country Pilot Lessons – Sharing experiences from early adopters to refine future implementations.
- Capacity Building – Hands-on training in ASTI methodologies, including data collection, processing, analysis, visualization, and publication.
- Stakeholder Collaboration – Strengthening partnerships to ensure coordinated regional efforts in agricultural research data collection.

A significant outcome of the workshop was the development of a regional work plan to guide national ASTI rollouts, ensuring that data-driven insights effectively inform agricultural policies and research initiatives.

Looking Ahead

With strong momentum from the workshop, the Asia-Pacific region is set to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of global agricultural research data collection and utilization. This initiative promises to enhance evidence-based policymaking, strengthen agricultural innovation, and support sustainable development across the region.

DeSIRA CONNECT Days: Asia and Pacific – Advancing Agricultural Transitions

From January 14 to 16, 2025, Hanoi played host to the DeSIRA CONNECT Days for the Asia-Pacific region, an impactful gathering dedicated to fostering sustainable agricultural transitions.

Organized by the European Commission through the DeSIRA-LIFT Service Facility, in collaboration with the Vietnam Academy of Agricultural Sciences (VAAS) and CIRAD, with support from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), Vietnam, the event marked the culmination of a series of regional meetings aimed at strengthening innovation in agri-food systems.

Bringing together over 70 stakeholders from 17 countries, the event saw participation from national and international research organizations, farmer groups, NGOs, policymakers, and key regional networks. Prominent organizations represented included FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations), APAARI (Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions), CGIAR (a global partnership for agricultural research), ALiSEA (Agroecology Learning Alliance in Southeast Asia), and PROLINNOVA (Promoting Local Innovation in Ecological Agriculture and Natural Resource Management).

Showcasing Innovative Initiatives

The agenda featured 15 key initiatives, highlighting CIRAD's involvement in projects such as:

- ASSET (Agroecology and Safe Food System Transitions in Southeast Asia) – advancing agroecological practices for food security.
- STARFARM (Smart Agroecological Transformation of Farming Systems in the Mekong Delta) – integrating digital innovations for resilient farming.
- Healthy Territories – promoting holistic approaches to sustainable landscapes and rural development.

These initiatives underscored the region's commitment to knowledge-sharing, cross-sectoral collaboration, and scaling up innovative approaches to agricultural transformation.

Key Discussion Themes

The forum centered around three critical themes or strengthening research and innovation in agricultural transitions:

1. Shifting from Conventional, Linear Models of Innovation
   - Encouraging participatory and systemic approaches to agricultural research.
   - Enhancing collaboration between researchers, policymakers, and farmers.
2. From Farmer-Led to Community-Led Innovations & Research
   - Recognizing the role of local communities in driving agricultural innovation.
   - Strengthening grassroots organizations and integrating traditional knowledge.
3. Creating a Conducive Environment for Scaling Sustainable Practices
   - Aligning research, policies, and funding to support long-term adoption of sustainable agriculture.
   - Identifying key policy interventions and investment opportunities.

A Call to Action

The DeSIRA CONNECT Days in Hanoi provided not only a platform for dialogue and learning but also served as a catalyst for action, urging stakeholders across sectors to contribute to transforming food and farming systems in the Asia-Pacific region. By fostering multi-stakeholder engagement, the event reinforced the importance of collaborative solutions, farmer empowerment, and science-driven policy frameworks to achieve resilient and sustainable agricultural landscapes.

EUPHRESCO III

As the regional champion of EUPHRESCO III, APAARI is driving forward its commitment to strengthening plant health research in the Asia-Pacific region. By actively engaging stakeholders, gathering insights, and collaborating with high-level decision-makers, APAARI aims to identify key research priorities that will shape EUPHRESCO III's strategic agenda and future projects. To ensure a regionally aligned and inclusive approach, APAARI invited its members

and partners to participate in EUPHRESCO III projects by submitting an Expression of Interest (EOI).

Through extensive surveys, regional and national consultations, and international stakeholder engagement, APAARI has identified five key research topics relevant to plant health and trade compliance. These topics have been submitted to EUPHRESCO III for consideration in the 2025 research cycle. The selected topics are:

1. **Integrative approach to streamline trade compliance** for fruits and vegetables from Asia, focusing on fruit fly management.
2. **Risk assessment of anthracnose** affecting tree and chili plants.
3. **Bio-rational management of the invasive rugose spiraling whitefly** in coconut and banana.
4. **Identification and characterization of host plant resistance in maize** against fall armyworm.
5. **Eco-friendly mitigation of Phytophthora root rot in vegetables** using biostimulants and biopesticides.

Vignan University, India – A two-day International Conference on Plant Health in Asia commenced at Vignan University, bringing together global experts to discuss research priorities and partnerships in plant health. The event, supported by APAARI and EUPHRESCO, aims to foster collaboration, align research efforts, and develop sustainable solutions for plant health challenges across Asia.

Dr. Ravi Khetarpal, Executive Director of APAARI, emphasized the need to strengthen plant health research by integrating National Research Systems, industry, and academia. He highlighted APAARI's expansion into agroecology in collaboration with Andhra Pradesh Community Managed Natural Farming.

Chief Guest Shri Vijay Kumar, Executive Vice-Chairman of Rythu Sadhikara Samstha, underscored the climate crisis, urging a shift towards Natural Farming as a resilient, chemical-free alternative. He stressed practices such as 365-day green cover, multi-cropping, and no-till farming as vital for soil regeneration.

Mr. Baldissera Giovani, Coordinator of EUPHRESCO III, called for global collaboration to bridge gaps between research institutions and industries worldwide. Dr. K.S. Varaprasad, Former ICAR Director, highlighted the need for natural pesticide development as a key research priority.

Dr. Ramesh Babu, Director of Agricultural and Horticultural Sciences, closed the event by commending APAARI's role in fostering industry partnerships and global networks for plant health research.

The conference marks a crucial step in **enhancing cross-border cooperation and advancing sustainable plant health solutions** in Asia.

Dr. Kodeboyina Varaprasad, Risk Mitigation Coordinator and Senior Consultant of the Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI), has been actively involved in the EUPHRESCO III project. He participated in the following key meetings;

- EUPHRESCO III Kick-off Meeting, held in the Paris region, France, on 20–21 March 2024
- EUPHRESCO III General Assembly Meeting, held from 2–4 April 2025 in Madrid, Spain

Strengthening Agricultural Innovation through APAARI's Communities of Practice on ABCOP and PPP

APAARI is fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange through its Communities of Practice (CoPs) on Asia Pacific Biopesticide CoP (ABCoP) and Public-Private Partnerships (PPP). These platforms aim to bring together experts, practitioners, and stakeholders to accelerate agricultural research, innovation, and sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region.

APAARI launched the Asia-Pacific Biopesticide Community of Practice (ABCoP) in May 2024 which serves as a dynamic platform that brings together key players from the biopesticide sector —spanning industry leaders, researchers, policymakers, government agencies, NGOs, and other stakeholders from the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. The primary objective of ABCoP is to facilitate the exchange of knowledge, foster collaboration, and advance biopesticide promotion and trade opportunities across the region.

Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) in Agriculture
APAARI's PPP Community of Practice is focused on leveraging partnerships between public institutions, private enterprises, and research organizations to drive agricultural transformation. Through collaborative efforts, PPP initiatives aim to mobilize investments, enhance technology transfer, and build sustainable business models that benefit smallholder farmers and rural economies.

Why Join the CoPs?

- Knowledge Sharing – Access insights, case studies, and best practices from experts across the region.
- Networking & Collaboration – Connect with key stakeholders, investors, and policymakers to explore joint initiatives.
- Capacity Building – Participate in training programs, workshops, and policy dialogues to enhance skills and expertise.

APAARI invites **members and stakeholders** to actively engage in these **dynamic Communities of Practice** to co-create **innovative solutions** for a resilient and inclusive agricultural sector.
Register to be a member of ABCoP
Register to be a member of PPP-CoP

International Conference on Biodiversity, Climate Change, and Sustainability

Dr. Joanna Kane-Potaka at the International Conference on Biodiversity, Climate Change, and Sustainability

Dr. Joanna Kane-Potaka represented APAARI at the International Conference on Biodiversity, Climate Change, and Sustainability, held on January 17-18, 2025, in India, organized by the Indian Council of Social Science Research and Mt. Carmel College. She participated in the session titled "Navigating Cross-Functional Collaboration for Ecological Security Patterns."
During her presentation on Smarter Food Systems, Dr. Kane-Potaka highlighted the evolving complexity of food systems, shifting from food security to nutrition security, sustainable diets, and resilient diets. She introduced the concept of Smarter Food Systems, emphasizing a triple bottom line approach that benefits consumers, farmers, and the planet.

A key focus of her talk was the Food System Divide, which limits staple crop diversification. She emphasized that addressing this divide requires a targeted approach, starting with millets as a Smart Food due to their nutritional and environmental advantages. She concluded with nine key points for Smarter Food Systems, including:

- Implementing a Smarter Foods triple bottom line for all solutions

- Diversifying staples for greater impact
- Selecting varieties based on nutrition levels
- Incorporating nutrition in breeding programs
- Promoting whole grain solutions
- Adopting healthy processing and cooking methods
- Encouraging nutrient-rich food combinations
- Establishing a level playing field and incentives for Smart Foods
- Marketing strategies to drive demand

APAARI's Role in the Food Business Action Lab under COFTI

In February 2025, Dr. Joanna Kane-Potaka was invited to join the Food Business Action Lab under the Coalition for Food Systems Transformation in India (COFTI). This initiative, led by the Food Future Foundation (FFF) with support from GIZ, emerged from the United Nations Food Systems Summit 2021 to accelerate food systems transformation in India. Welthungerhilfe (WHH) and WASSAN coordinate COFTI's activities.

The Need for Food Systems Transformation in India:

India has successfully transitioned from a food-deficient country in the 1960s to a self-sufficient and marginally surplus producer today. However, challenges such as climate change, resource depletion, fragmented land holdings, urbanization, and malnutrition persist. Addressing these requires a shift towards sustainable, nutrition-driven policies that encourage agricultural diversification, value chain efficiency, and environmental sustainability.

The Role of the Food Business Action Lab:

The Food Business Action Lab under COFTI aims to foster sustainability-driven business solutions by:

- Developing knowledge commons to support sustainable enterprises
- Exploring value chains for plant and animal proteins
- Encouraging diversified value addition for high-end supply chains
- Strengthening community and farmer producer institutions for equitable participation
- Promoting multi-stakeholder collaboration among academia, experts, entrepreneurs, and FPOs

Through this platform, APAARI will engage in fostering a more sustainable, inclusive, and resilient food system for the region.

Transforming Seed Systems for Sustainable Agriculture in Odisha

Dr. Kodeboyina Varaprasad, Senior Consultant with APAARI, highlights the vital role of traditional seed systems in fostering resilient, sustainable, and inclusive agricultural development in Odisha. Smallholder farmers in the region conserve diverse indigenous rice landraces, which are adapted to local ecological conditions and support biodiversity. Despite threats from climate change, market monopolies, and genetic erosion, initiatives like the Odisha Landrace Seed System and the Odisha Millets Mission are strengthening community-managed seed centers to provide affordable access to high-quality, heritage seeds. These efforts combine traditional knowledge with scientific support to enhance livelihoods while conserving agrobiodiversity.

Collaboration among farmers, researchers, and policymakers is key to integrating traditional seeds into formal markets, supported by digital tools, improved policies, and awareness of farmers' rights. Dr. Varaprasad emphasizes that empowering farmers as stewards of seed diversity is essential to safeguarding food security, cultural heritage, and ecological balance for future generations.

3. Institutional Updates

APAARI Expands Partnerships: Collaboration with CIRDAP and Vignan University

APAARI is pleased to announce two key institutional developments—a strategic partnership with CIRDAP (Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific) and the induction of Vignan University as an Associate Member. These collaborations mark a significant step in strengthening agricultural research, rural development, and institutional capacity in the Asia-Pacific region.

Strengthening Rural Development with CIRDAP: The partnership with CIRDAP aims to foster joint initiatives in agricultural research, rural development, policy advocacy, and capacity-building. With CIRDAP's vast network and expertise in integrated rural development, this collaboration will drive impactful programs that benefit smallholder farmers and rural communities. By working together, APAARI and CIRDAP will enhance knowledge exchange and innovation, ensuring sustainable solutions for the region's agricultural and rural challenges.

Welcoming Vignan University as an Associate Member: APAARI also welcomes Vignan University, a leading institution in agricultural education and research, as an Associate Member. Vignan University's expertise in plant health, sustainable agriculture, and agri-technology will contribute significantly to APAARI's mission of strengthening agri-food research and innovation systems. This membership will open new avenue for collaborative research, student engagement, and academic partnerships, fostering future-ready agricultural professionals.

These new collaborations reinforce APAARI's commitment to strengthening partnerships and building a more sustainable, knowledge-driven agricultural ecosystem in the Asia-Pacific region.

Key Meetings

APAARI Charts Path to IGO Status in Strategy Planning Meeting

Bangkok, November 21-22, 2024 – The Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI) convened a two-day Growth Strategy Planning Meeting in Bangkok, themed "APAARI – Towards IGO and Beyond." The meeting brought together agricultural leaders, researchers, and stakeholders to refine APAARI's strategic direction and strengthen its role in the region.

Key discussions focused on APAARI's transition towards becoming an Intergovernmental Organization (IGO), enhancing global partnerships, bridging research with policy, and advancing agricultural innovation systems. Participants emphasized strengthening knowledge management through digital tools, AI-driven solutions, and knowledge brokerage to improve accessibility and collaboration.

A significant outcome was the development of a roadmap for resource mobilization, prioritizing sustainable funding, donor engagement, and innovative fundraising strategies.

The sustainable funding, donor engagement, and innovative fundraising strategies. The meeting also highlighted the need for enhanced capacity-building initiatives and policy frameworks tailored to regional agricultural challenges.

APAARI reaffirmed its commitment to driving impactful collaborations, fostering innovation, and positioning itself as a key player in Asia-Pacific's agricultural research landscape. The strategic insights from this meeting will guide APAARI's transformation and long-term sustainability efforts.

APAARI and HUC Strengthen Collaboration on Agricultural Research and Institution Building

Bangkok, Thailand – 7 February 2025 – A high-level bilateral meeting between the APAARI Secretariat and the Himalayan University Consortium (HUC) leadership took place in Bangkok to explore synergies in institution-building, governance, and strategic transformation for sustainability and independence.

The discussions aimed at fostering collaborative pathways between APAARI and HUC to address shared challenges in agricultural research and development. Key takeaways included insights on strengthening institutional governance and identifying concrete modalities for future cooperation.

The HUC delegation included Professor Dr. Attaullah Shah (Vice Chancellor, Karakoram International University, Pakistan), Professor Dr. Sara Nowreen (Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology), and Dr. Chi Huyen Truong (Executive Officer, HUC Secretariat). The meeting laid the foundation for long-term partnerships to drive research excellence and sustainable development in the region.

APAARI Special Executive Committee Meeting Addresses Challenges for moving towards Renewing Legal Status

Bangkok, March 28, 2025 – The Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI) convened a Special Executive Committee Meeting to discuss the organization's legal status and future direction. Chaired by Prof. Lindsay Falvey, the meeting reviewed APAARI's ongoing engagement with the Royal Thai Government for registration and alternative options, including relocation, annexation with an international organization, or registration as an international NGO.

Dr. Ravi Khetarpal, Executive Director of APAARI, outlined key challenges, including new requirements from Thailand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which could delay the process by up to three years. Members, including representatives from GFAiR, CABI, ICAR, and RDA, debated possible solutions and agreed on a consultation

period to explore hosting alternatives.

Discussions also touched on APAARI's engagement with ASEAN, CGIAR, and regional institutions to ensure continuity. The meeting concluded with a commitment to finalizing a General Assembly date and continued collaboration to secure APAARI's legal standing.

AARINENA Executive Committee Meeting in Türkiye Strengthens Regional and Inter-Regional Partnerships

The AARINENA Executive Committee Meeting was successfully held in Şanlıurfa, Türkiye in May 2025, hosted by the General Directorate of Agricultural Research and Policies (TAGEM) under the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of the Republic of Türkiye. The meeting served as a strategic platform to advance cooperation in agricultural research and innovation across the West Asia and North Africa (WANA) region and beyond.

Key participants included:

- **Dr. Mustafa Altuğ Atalay**, Director General, TAGEM, Türkiye
- **Dr. Hamdan Al Wahaibi**, President, AARINENA
- **Dr. Rida A. Shibli,** Executive Secretary, AARINENA
- **Dr. Ravi Khetarpal**, Executive Director, APAARI and representative of GFAiR
- Senior representatives from ICARDA, ICBA, KISR (Kuwait), NARC (Jordan), ARC (Sudan), and GFAiR

The event focused on promoting collaborative initiatives, knowledge exchange, and cross-regional innovation to address shared agricultural challenges. Emphasis was placed on building synergies between regional organizations, enhancing food systems resilience, and reinforcing the role of agricultural science in sustainable development.

For more insights, access the meeting documentation and photo highlights below links:

Document 1
Document 2
Document 3
Photos

For further information, please contact:
Dr. Rida A. Shibli, Executive Secretary, AARINENA

4. Highlights from the APAARI Network

Gender Responsiveness Can Make Climate-Smart Agriculture Even Smarter!

By **Ranjitha Puskur & Aayushi Malhotra**

Climate-smart agriculture (CSA) has emerged as a crucial solution to global food security challenges exacerbated by climate change. However, its success hinges on gender inclusivity, ensuring that women—who make up a significant portion of the agricultural workforce—are actively involved in decision-making and implementation. Despite their vital contributions, women continue to face systemic barriers such as restricted land ownership, limited financial resources, and a lack of access to critical agricultural inputs and technologies.

This article delves into how gender norms shape CSA adoption and why gender-responsive interventions are necessary to break down these barriers. It highlights successful initiatives by organizations like FAO and CGIAR that have integrated gender considerations into CSA strategies, demonstrating that empowering women leads to a triple-win outcome: increased agricultural productivity, enhanced resilience, and lower greenhouse gas emissions.

By investing in targeted policy reforms, capacity-building programs, and participatory approaches, CSA can become a powerful tool for both climate resilience and gender equality.

🔗 **Read more:** Agriculture Today - March 2024 Edition.

Research Highlight

Rethinking Climate-Smart Agriculture for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

By **Ranjitha Puskur & Aayushi Malhotra**

A new research brief underscores the critical need for gender-intentional approaches in climate-smart agriculture (CSA). While CSA aims to enhance productivity and sustainability, women—despite being key contributors—often face gender-specific barriers that hinder their participation and benefits from CSA interventions.

Compiled by the CGIAR GENDER Impact Platform, this research highlights gaps in existing knowledge and offers recommendations for integrating gender into CSA policies and programs. It emphasizes that factors such as social status, wealth, and access to resources significantly shape women's engagement in CSA. By addressing these disparities, policymakers and practitioners can design more inclusive strategies that strengthen food systems while advancing gender equality in the face of climate change.

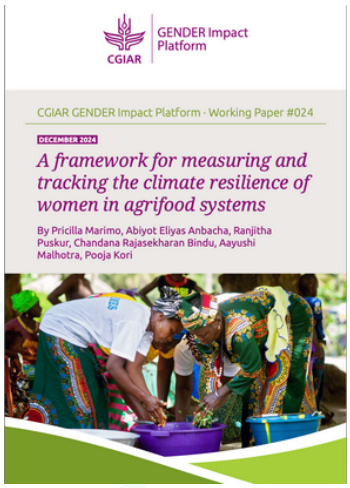
🔗 **Read more**: CGIAR Repository

New Publications and Conferences

Strengthening Women's Climate Resilience in Agrifood Systems

By Pricilla Marimo, Abiyot Anbacha, Ranjitha Puskur, C.R. Bindu, Aayushi Malhotra & Pooja Kori

Despite increasing recognition of gender disparities in agriculture, there remains a lack of frameworks and tools to specifically measure and track the climate resilience of women in agrifood systems.



A recent working paper addresses this gap by reviewing 83 studies to develop a new resilience measurement framework centered around four key capacities:

✅ **Anticipatory Resilience** – The ability to foresee and prepare for climate risks.
✅ **Absorptive Resilience** – The ability to withstand and recover from shocks.
✅ **Adaptive Resilience** – The ability to adjust farming practices to long-term climate changes.
✅ **Transformative Resilience** – The ability to drive systemic change and long-term sustainability.

The study finds that most existing frameworks focus on community or household-level resilience, with only a few explicitly addressing women's resilience. The newly proposed framework provides adaptable indicators that can help researchers, policymakers, and development practitioners design more effective strategies to **enhance women's resilience against climate risks**.

🔗 **Access the full working paper**: CGIAR Repository

SEARCA Announces Regional Training Programs and International Conference for 2025

The Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA) is set to organize three regional training programs and an international conference in 2025. These initiatives aim to enhance the capacities of faculty, extension agencies, government and private institutions, and civil society organizations (CSOs) across Southeast Asia.

- **Leadership Development for HEIs (April–June, Indonesia**): Empowered university leaders to design future-ready institutions.
- **Executive Program on Agriculture and Development (May–June, Philippines)**: Strengthened leadership in the agrifood sector.
- **TrAInS Workshop (June 16–20, Philippines)**: Focused on collaborative innovation in agriculture.
- **3rd Women Empowerment Conference (May 14–16, Butuan City):** Highlighted women-led innovations in AANR sectors.

SEARCA thanks all partners and participants for making these initiatives a success.

More at: www.searca.org

TNAU Sets Benchmark in Agricultural Education and Innovation

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) has become the first in India to introduce a 'Blended Learning' system, connecting students across campuses through online courses. Supported by World Bank funding under NAHEP-ICAR, TNAU has developed smart classrooms and advanced labs in AI, Big Data, AR/VR, and digital teaching.

The university has strong global ties, with dual degree and research programs through MoUs with institutions like Dalhousie University (Canada), Western Sydney University, and Cranfield University (UK). Over 130 students and 50+ faculty members have undergone international training, while TNAU also hosts foreign students studying tropical agriculture.

TNAU promotes innovation through dedicated cells for research publication and patents, with over 100 patents filed.

It also regularly conducts workshops and conferences on emerging agri-technologies, drone use, and sustainable farming.
With scholarships from industry partners like Mondelez and MoUs with global universities, TNAU continues to empower students and researchers, driving excellence in agricultural education and research.

JIRCAS Launches Technology Catalog for Sustainable Farming in Asia-Monsoon Region

JIRCAS, through its Green Asia Project, has released a "Technology Catalog" featuring practical, sustainable agricultural technologies developed in Japan and through international collaboration. Tailored for the Asia-Monsoon region, the catalog addresses challenges like high humidity, rice-based farming, and smallholder dominance. It serves as a guide for policymakers, researchers, and farmers to adopt and adapt these solutions for transforming food systems.

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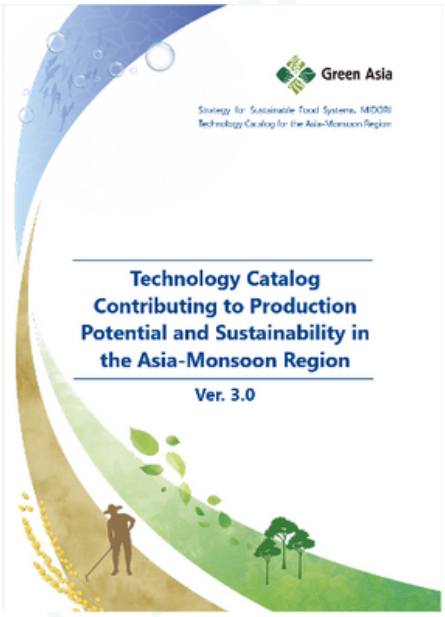


Explore the catalog

JIRCAS Highlights Scalable Innovations in the Green Asia Report Series

The Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Sciences (JIRCAS) has released two new reports in its Green Asia Report Series, focusing on adaptable technologies for sustainable agriculture in the Asia-Monsoon region. The first report explores ratoon rice cropping, a low-input cultivation method that utilizes regrowth from the initial rice harvest to reduce labor, inputs, and turnaround time—offering a promising solution for regions prone to seasonal flooding. The second report emphasizes the use of biochar, a carbon-rich byproduct of biomass, for improving soil health and contributing to climate change mitigation through carbon sequestration.

Both reports aim to support regional efforts to transform food systems through the dissemination of practical, science-based innovations.

Read the Reports

ILRI Advances Digital Tools and Climate-Resilient Livestock Systems in Asia

The International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) is enhancing livestock health and climate resilience through targeted initiatives in Southeast Asia. In Vietnam, ILRI collaborated with animal health professionals and stakeholders to assess the performance of the FarmVetCare mobile application, designed to strengthen veterinary service delivery at the farm level. Additionally, ILRI actively contributed to the Climate-Resilient Agriculture Conference in Bhutan, sharing approaches to integrate livestock into sustainable and resilient agrifood systems. These efforts highlight ILRI's continued leadership in promoting innovation and sustainability in the livestock sector.

Vietnam Update
Bhutan Update

ILRI Advances Sustainable Food Systems and One Health in Asia:

ILRI has actively contributed to several significant events and initiatives across Asia in the past two quarters, showcasing efforts in sustainable food systems, animal health, and food safety.

In Vietnam, ILRI participated in the CGIAR Science Week, including a high-level session on mobilizing investment for sustainable food systems. The Sustainable Animal and Aquatic Foods Inception Workshop marked a strategic step towards more resilient food systems in the region. ILRI also co-hosted a One Health side event, emphasizing integrated approaches to tackle global food system challenges.

- IMobilizing Investment for Sustainable Food Systems
- Sustainable Animal and Aquatic Foods: A New Direction
- One Health: Addressing Global Food System Challenges

ILRI also joined World Food Safety Day 2025 activities in Hanoi, under the theme "Food Safety – Science in Action."

- World Food Safety Day Coverage – Vietnam News

Animal Health Camps and Capacity Building in Three States:

ILRI and ICAR-CIWA conducted 10 Animal Health Camps and 5 Capacity Development Programmes in Odisha, Bihar, and Andhra Pradesh from April to June 2025 under the project "Gender-Livestock-Climate Analytic Approach for Livelihood Improvement in Distressed Areas of India."

The camps helped diagnose diseases in dairy animals and goats, while training women livestock keepers on disease identification and preventive care. Veterinary experts provided consultations and essential medicines. Extension materials on best practices during climatic and economic stress were also shared to boost resilience and animal management. These efforts have strengthened women's capacity and veterinary service linkages in underserved areas.

Strengthening Agroecology Transitions in Southeast Asia:

Regional Workshop Held in Hanoi

From March 31 to April 4, 2025, Hanoi hosted the Agroecology TPP 2025 Members Forum and a Regional Multistakeholder Workshop on ASEAN policy guidelines for agroecology transitions. The event gathered stakeholders from across the region to advance dialogue and cooperation on sustainable agriculture.

ASSET partners, in collaboration with ALiSEA, AFA, and regional platforms such as AsiaDHRRA, organized a key multistakeholder policy workshop during the forum. The workshop brought together institutions including DaLAM/LICA, APAARI, IPSARD, VAAS, GDA, DoPC, CIRAD, FAO, UN ESCAP, and GRET. Participants discussed strategies to strengthen and expand ASEAN-level policy dialogue in support of agroecology transitions. The workshop aimed to build consensus around the development and implementation of regional guidelines, promoting more resilient, inclusive, and sustainable food systems across Southeast Asia.

Find out more about AE-TPP: https://www.agroecologytpp.org/

CABI Strengthens Regional Collaboration for Sustainable Agriculture

1. **CABI and CIRAD Forge Partnership to Advance Sustainable Agriculture in Southeast Asia**

CABI has signed a strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD) to enhance sustainable and resilient agriculture in Southeast Asia. This partnership emphasizes translating research into practical solutions, particularly for women and youth in rural communities. It brings together CABI's expertise in plant health systems and CIRAD's strengths in tropical agriculture and One Health. The collaboration directly supports global goals on food security, climate resilience, and biodiversity.

Read more

2. **Fiji Visit Strengthens CABI Partnerships for Food Security and Climate Resilience**

A recent high-level CABI visit to Fiji, led by Dr. Feng Zhang, deepened partnerships to promote sustainable agriculture, food security, and climate resilience. The team engaged with government officials, including the Hon. Vatimi Rayalu, Minister for Agriculture and Waterways, to align efforts with Fiji's Strategic Development Plan (2024–2028). Key focus areas include invasive species management, digital agriculture, biosecurity, and inclusive capacity building. The visit reaffirmed CABI's commitment to co-developing innovative, climate-smart solutions tailored to Fiji's unique challenges and opportunities.

Read more

Spotlight on Agroecology: Visit to Krishna Sudha Academy, India

Agricultural Extension in South Asia (AESA) recently published a compelling blog reflecting on a visit to the Krishna Sudha Academy for Agroecology in Andhra Pradesh, India. The academy stands out for its innovative approach to agroecological education and its steadfast commitment to sustainable farming practices rooted in local knowledge systems. The visit offered insights into how the academy is building capacity among farmers, youth, and practitioners by blending traditional wisdom with modern ecological principles. It also highlighted the academy's potential to serve as a regional learning hub in promoting agroecology as a pathway to resilient and inclusive rural development.

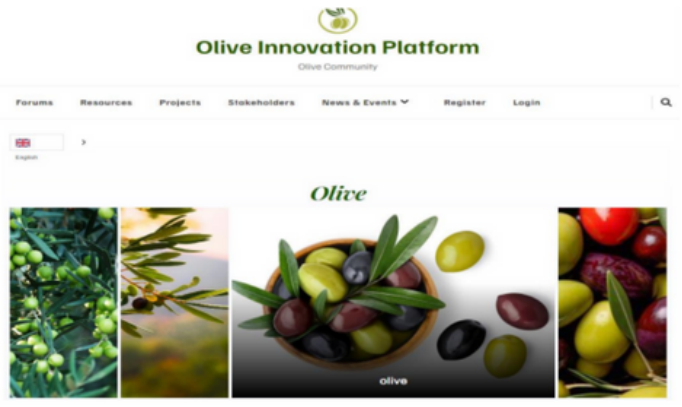
Read the full article here: https://bit.ly/44u07vO

APAARI encourages members and partners to explore such initiatives that align with our shared goals of transforming agri-food systems in the Asia-Pacific through innovation and sustainability.

AARINENA Launches the Olive Innovation Platform to Transform the Olive Sector

With support from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Association of Agricultural Research Institutions in the Near East and North Africa (AARINENA) has launched the Olive Innovation Platform (olive.aarinena.org). This dedicated hub aims to drive innovation, collaboration, and knowledge sharing in the olive industry across the region.

As part of the initiative, AARINENA organized four interactive webinars, ensuring stakeholders had the opportunity to provide feedback, which was actively incorporated into the platform's



Participants also engaged with the platform during these sessions to familiarize themselves with its features.

Key Features of the Olive Innovation Platform:

✅ Knowledge Repository – A comprehensive collection of research papers, articles, and case studies on olive cultivation, pest management, harvesting techniques, and more.

✅ Interactive Forums – Dedicated spaces for stakeholders to exchange insights, discuss challenges, and collaborate on innovative solutions.

✅ Training & Workshops – Access to expert-led online courses, webinars, and hands-on workshops.

✅ Innovative Tools & Resources – Advanced tools for soil analysis, irrigation management, and disease detection to enhance production efficiency.

Join the Platform

Stakeholders, whether individuals or organizations, are invited to register and become part of this transformative initiative: olive.aarinena.org

For further inquiries, contact AARINENA at:

📧 r.shibli@cgiar.org | a.aarinena@gmail.com

Let's work together to revolutionize the olive sector! 🌿

Highlight from Private Sector

The Solution Finder

The Solution Finder offers worldwide access to existing solutions for pest, disease, and weed solutions across approximately 90 countries and from 350,000 products. It relies on data from the Homologa® database, where information about approved crop protection products from national authorities is digitized. By harmonizing this data, the Solution Finder enables users to explore possible pest treatments globally. It even translates pests' scientific names where feasible.

Additionally, the tool also allows comparisons between traditional solutions and biocontrol options. The presenter will showcase the user-friendly dashboard accessible via the Lexagri platform.

🔗 Link : Solution Finder

Homologa: Enhancing Transparency in Agricultural Inputs and Food Safety

Homologa, developed by Lexagri, is a leading global database offering high-quality intelligence on agricultural inputs. Designed to support food companies, labs, and supply chain actors, Homologa provides critical data for compliance, risk management, and traceability. The platform covers crop protection products, seeds, fertilizers, and biostimulants—along with tools such as Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) and GMO classification filters.

One of Homologa's standout features is the Solution Finder—an intuitive dashboard that enables users to explore globally approved crop protection and biosolutions, including RNA-based biopesticides. Users can search by crop, pest, or product type to identify alternatives across countries and ensure regulatory alignment.

To support seed transparency, Homologa categorizes seeds into GMO, Probably GMO, and Non-GMO, with a new filter for New Genomic Techniques (NGTs), such as CRISPR, currently in development.

For key crops like cotton, the platform offers data from 15 countries, enabling comprehensive insights into one of the most regulated commodities in agriculture.

📧 For more details, contact: **Pablo Cid Quintas**

Email: pablo.cid.quintas@lexagri.com

Bangladesh Embraces Nano Urea: Cutting Costs, Boosting Efficiency

Nano urea is emerging as a game-changer in Bangladesh's agricultural landscape. Offering comparable crop yields to traditional urea but with a fraction of the quantity, this innovation delivers up to 90% nitrogen-use efficiency through foliar application. A 500 ml bottle of nano urea can replace an entire 50 kg bag of conventional urea, helping farmers reduce usage—and costs—without compromising productivity.

Field trials conducted by IRRI and BINA have shown 8–20% yield increases in rice and mung bean. In districts like Jashore, farmers have reported fertilizer cost savings of up to Tk 4,000 per bigha.

With national urea demand expected to reach 4 million tonnes by 2035 and imports currently covering over half the supply, nano urea presents a strategic solution to reduce subsidy burdens and environmental impacts, including up to 50% fewer greenhouse gas emissions.

However, challenges remain. Outdated fertilizer regulations and restrictions on liquid input imports must be addressed to ensure wider adoption. Updating these policies could unlock significant economic and environmental benefits for the country's farmers.

Contributed by Syed Zahid Hasan, Coordinator – Research & Development, Banglamark Limited

Uttar Pradesh Advances Agri-Biotech Agenda at State-Level Workshop in Ayodhya

A state-level workshop on "Biotechnology Applications for Crop Improvement" was held on 22 May 2025at Acharya Narendra Deva University of Agriculture and Technology (ANDUAT), Ayodhya. Organized by Biotech Consortium India Limited (BCIL) and supported by the Federation of Seed Industry of India (FSII), the event marked a strategic milestone in promoting agricultural biotechnology in Uttar Pradesh.

Keynote speaker Dr. K. V. Raju, Advisor to the Chief Minister, emphasized the urgency of leveraging biotechnology to overcome stagnating yields in staple crops and to drive crop diversification. He highlighted the State's ambitious plans, including international collaborations and the development of a 200-acre seed park.

The workshop featured thought leaders from ICAR, CSIR, NABI, and the private sector, advocating for the adoption of gene-edited and GM crops to enhance productivity and resilience. FSII's Executive Director, Mr. Raghavan Sampathkumar, underscored the need for swift deployment of precision biotech solutions to address climate change and resource challenges.

Participants called for enhanced capacity building, improved science communication, and policy alignment to accelerate biotech adoption. The recent release of gene-edited rice varieties was spotlighted as a positive indicator of India's potential in agricultural innovation.

View Workshop Highlights

Plantwise Plus, CABI : Chilli Black Thrips Awareness Campaign Empowers Farmers in India

Plantwise Plus led a successful awareness campaign on chilli black thrips—an invasive pest affecting chilli crops—in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu. Through workshops with extension workers, women farmers, students, and agro-dealers, the campaign promoted Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and introduced digital tools for early pest detection.

Reaching over 28,000 farmers, the campaign had strong impact. In Tamil Nadu, farmer awareness of chilli thrips rose from 12% to 100%, knowledge of biological control increased from 5% to 100%, and use of digital tools grew from 5% to 64%.

The initiative marks a key step in supporting sustainable pest management for smallholders.

5. Upcoming Opportunities

The FAO Family Farming Knowledge Platform

This platform has opened a Global Call for Stories to highlight the vital role of family farmers in building climate-resilient and sustainable agrifood systems. The call, open until 14 July, invites contributions from farmers, pastoralists, fisherfolk, forest communities, agricultural advisors, researchers, civil society, and other stakeholders actively engaged in family farming initiatives.

Participants are encouraged to share stories that reflect their work in:

✅ Conserving and restoring biodiversity
✅ Adapting to climate change
✅ Managing natural resources sustainably

Submissions are welcome in multiple formats, including written narratives, audio clips, videos, and photo reportages—offering diverse ways to capture impactful experiences and lessons from the field.

🔗 Find full details and submit your story
This is an opportunity to give voice to local action and innovation shaping the future of food and farming.

3-Minute Horticulture Thesis (3MHT) Competition – Now Open for Applications

The organizing committee of the International Horticulture Congress (IHC2026) is inviting young researchers to take part in the newly launched 3-Minute Horticulture Thesis (3MHT) Competition.

This exciting initiative offers early-career scientists a platform to present their research in a concise and impactful format, with the final round to be held at the IHC2026 Opening Ceremony on 23 August 2026 in Kyoto, Japan. Universities across the Asia-Pacific region are encouraged to participate by nominating one or two outstanding students (preferably one female and one male) to represent their country. National selection processes are expected to begin in July 2025.

The competition is designed to highlight academic excellence in horticultural science and raise the profile of emerging talents in the field. Submissions will be reviewed by an international jury chaired by Prof. Yukio Ozaki.

🔗 For full guidelines and key dates, view our website: **3MHT Competition Details**
📩 Inquiries: 3mht-competition@ihc2026.org

Event: International Fusarium Laboratory Workshop 2025

📅 **Dates:** November 2–7, 2025
📍 **Venue:** Agharkar Research Institute (ARI), Pune, India

The International Fusarium Laboratory Workshop 2025 promises to be a landmark event for researchers, practitioners, and professionals working at the intersection of agriculture, health, and microbiology.

This intensive, lab-focused workshop will delve deep into the identification and characterization of Fusarium species, which are critical to managing crop diseases and ensuring food security.

Read more and register: https://bit.ly/43fyrbM

Organized by:

- National Fungal Culture Collection of India (NFCCI), Agharkar Research Institute
- ICAR – National Bureau of Agriculturally Important Microorganisms (NBAIM)

Co-organized by:

- Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI)

Led by internationally renowned experts, participants will receive hands-on training in advanced morphological, genetic, and molecular diagnostic techniques. This workshop is an excellent opportunity to gain practical skills, engage with global peers, and advance collaborative research on Fusarium.

APAARI E-Learning Academy Initiative

APAARI's E-Learning Academy Initiative is moving forward with plans to build a unified platform for agricultural e-learning across the Asia-Pacific.

The working group confirmed the formation of two sub-groups—Content Development and Platform Governance. A need assessment survey has been conducted to assess member countries' capacities, with results guiding next steps. The group will now draft a blueprint and finalize the governance model, marking steady progress toward a shared regional learning platform.

Collaborate with the APAARI E-Learning Initiative for Facilitating a Collaborative Digital Learning Ecosystem for Agricultural Education and Knowledge Sharing in the Asia-Pacific Region.

Stay connected with APAARI for further details on how to participate!

FEEDBACK & SUGGESSIONS

Provide a way to get in touch and encourage readers to share feedback, suggestions, or ideas by contacting the team

Editorial Team

Ravi Khetarpal | Editor
Samitha S.Haldar | Editor
Darshika Senadheera | Editor, Design & Layout
Sokharath Samnang | Design & layout
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APAARI acknowledges the support of all the members and partners

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APAARI, 182, Larn Luang Road, Khlong Mahanak, PomPrab Sattrupai, Bangkok, Thailand 10100
Contact us: apaari@apaari.org | ravi.khetarpal@apaari.org | samitha.haldar@apaari.org