

## **Farmer Chef Alliance Conference Notes**

**Day 1, July 26, 2012**

Bob Bishop opened the conference and welcomed and thanked everyone for coming to the workshop.

### **Opening Remarks - Green Revolution: Coconut, Goat, Swine & Jungle Fowl Supporting Projects Fred Sengebau, Director Bureau of Agriculture**

Director Sengebau welcomed everyone for coming to the first ever Farmer-Chef Alliance conference and stated that this would hopefully be an annual event in Palau if funding permits. Fred recognized the off-island participants, Chef Kevin Dietrich – Guam Community College’s Culinary Arts Program, Chef Geoffrey Perez -PROA restaurant, Dr. Bob Barber UOG Cooperative Extension Service/USDA Western SARE and Frank Cruz, Horticulturist. He gave a presentation on the various national government initiatives and the President’s “Green Revolution” for Food Security.

Main points:

- The right of everyone to have access to safe and nutritious food, consistent with the right to adequate food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger. (Rome Declaration on World Food Security) According to FAO, that the first freedom should be freedom from hunger.
- About 90% of Palau’s foods are imported.
- Constraints include that there are very few markets.
- Green revolution started with planting 10,000 coconuts to support high demand for coconut juice, coconut oil and coconut milk.
- Green revolution Phase 2 is the livestock improvement project.
- Construction of the Agriculture Development Support Center and nursery.
  - Importing planting materials from Taiwan, Hawaii and the Philippines.
  - Large scale compost and litter shed built at Nekken.
  - Swine gene pool improvement project. Frozen semen from Iowa has been brought in to improve the gene pool in Palau. Artificial insemination was successful.
  - Bureau is currently building facilities to accommodate pig feed mill.
  - Construction completed of goat pens in Nekken and other states in Babeldaob.
  - Have imported 120 goats from Philippines for meat.
  - Planning to build a slaughter house and poultry farm in hopes of eventually reducing Palau’s dependence on imported meat and eggs.
  - There is an increasing need to commercialize farms in Palau.

**Introduction of Farmers’ associations: P-T Farmers Asn. (Florencio Adelbai), Palau Organic Growers Asn. (Mark Vereen), OISCA (Roberta Louch)**

**Farmers Associations:**

**Bob Bishop gave a brief summary of the Palau-Taiwan Farmers Association’s work and objectives.**

**Main Points:**

- Chartered as a non-profit nationwide organization by farmers for farmers in 2009 but began before that. We have meetings every other month and everyone is welcome to join. Our motto is: “Promoting Environmentally Friendly and Farmer Friendly Agriculture.”
- We have started a “Klaingeseu” [joining hands to help each other] Program to encourage better links and communication between farmers, buyers and consumers. Mutual enrichment for the betterment of Palau. On-going and planned activities of the “Klaingeseu” program are:
  1. establishment of a small market at Bethlehem Park in cooperation with PVA.
  2. help build farmer-chef alliance through conferences and other activities to educate and build relationships,
  3. trainings on marketing, processing, preserving, value adding and environment enhancing agricultural practices
  4. study tours of farms by farmers, chefs, cooks and other buyers;
  5. joint marketing and joint value adding
  6. promote farming as a noble profession.
  7. promote local produce.

**Mark Vereen gave a brief summary of the Palau Organic Growers’ Association (POGA) work and objectives.**

**Main Points:**

- Palau Organic Growers Association – grow out of a committee of the Chamber of Commerce initially to find out why it’s so difficult to have agriculture developed in Palau.
- Originally thought that a market was needed, but found out that the markets that currently exists don’t get enough produce to sell therefore we[POGA, PCOC, and Food Security & Sustainable Livelihoods Project Steering Committee] now understand the problem to be production.
- Any large scale farms in Babeldaob are going to have problems with erosion because Babeldaob is so hilly. From here we thought it would be good to help improve production by putting together greens and browns organic materials with pig manure (which the environmental health people want to have disappeared anyways) and growing food on plot tables.
- Are close to getting FAO funding for a project to create compost bins, collect browns and greens organic materials(carbon and nitrogen), make and distribute compost and pilot new methods and technologies for growing produce.
- Expressed the desire to target schools and have them grow lettuce and tomatoes in order to teach our kids early on to eat healthy food and grow their own food.
- Most of our NCDs are related to lack of nutrients. Doctors are not taught nutrition, they are taught pills. We are the unhealthiest humans the planet has ever seen. We would have been much better off if we were cave people but we are not.

-A comment from the audience was to look into the slow food movement and emphasized that Mark hit the nail on the head regarding the need to start with kids.

**Roberta Louch gave a brief summary of OISCA’s work and objectives:**

**Main Points:**

- OISCA – stands for Organization for Industrial Spiritual and Cultural Advancement.
- It started back in the 1980s with Dr. Ueki and some people in Aimeliik. They recruited young people who were interested in farming. About five years later they opened their doors to students from FSM and Marshalls. Unfortunately, the kids from FSM and Marshalls kept coming but the Palauan kids started to decline.

- OISCA is located in Aimeliik near Nekken and started with a lot of hard labor from older people. OISCA closed down for a while in 1990's but then members continued in 2001 when the youth opened up the time capsule from 1986 Asia/Pacific Youth Conference.
- Not many people are interested in farming so OISCA hired three Filipinos who are working at OISCA and growing produce.
- Yapese Agriculture teachers come to OISCA for six to eight weeks during the summer for training on how to grow and prepare vegetables.
- Last year there were 8 people from the States in Palau who stayed at OISCA for 8 weeks and received basic training on agriculture.
- We now have a very good building but not many Palauans want to do farming. We occasionally have Kinrohosi (volunteer work) where we get together and clean the farm.
- In the past if students maintained their grades and exhibited good work ethics, they were sent to Japan for one or two years to learn more. Most of them upon their return couldn't get loans so they usually switched professions from agriculture to something else. Only a small numbers stayed in agriculture like Trebkul Tellei from the Bureau of Agriculture. He is one of the ones who went to Japan.

### **Bob Bishop**

#### **What is a farmer chef alliance and why have one?**

##### **Main Points:**

- When Farmers join hands with chefs, cooks and other buyers so farmers grow what chefs, cooks and other buyers want/need plus chefs, cooks and other buyers learn what produce is available, when its available, how to select and prepare the produce and how to include more local foods in their dishes, services, products and other preparations.
- Farmers, chefs/cooks and other buyers are the three stones of the cooking hearth which holds up the cooking pot. Each stone is equal and has shared responsibility. The stones work together to uplift and provide balance
- The alliance is more than just farmers, chefs and cooks. It for everyone who buys produce - for schools, hospital, etc.
- Currently there is a mismatch between what farmers grow and what chefs, cooks and other buyers want/need.
- Farmers, chefs, cooks and other buyers hold damaging misconceptions about each other. This leads to mistrust.
- Very little local produce is featured on restaurant menus, in 'bento' [boxed lunches], customs and in school lunch programs. Food dollars leave the country on the next available flight.
- Creates mutually supporting relationships.
- Strengthens social capital (our customs, our families, and our relationships), farmers' livelihoods, the local economy and food security.
- Enhances the visitors stay and improves the probability of return visits by 'sharing the tastes of Palau'.
- Supports cultural identity (which is bonded to food). (A mesei a delal a telid)
- Lessens adulteration of traditional customs. A custom basket is not Palauan if most of it was imported.

- Palauans, residents and visitors want safe, healthy and health promoting food. Imported food leads to imported diseases. Some imported produce is contaminated, e.g. PRC produce may be contaminated with cadmium.
- 'Farming in Calf.' [buying produce from farms in California] makes already rich Calf. farmers richer. They do not need our support; the local farmers need our support.
- Improves the image of farmers and farming. There is currently a low image of farmers... kind of like a pig, but need to recognize that the pigs feed us, the pigs are good. Pigs are not dirty, that's a misconception....they are as clean as you keep them.
- There is a common misconception that farmers are slow. This is not true, they are deliberate and do want to pre-sell. They want to avoid growing produce that's not going to sell.
- Provides training and livelihood opportunities for local people rather than Mexican farm hands.
- Supplies a buffer in times of emergencies, e.g. strikes.
- Fosters resiliency in general and especially unpredictable weather.
- Cuts down on the carbon footprint (damage done to the environment in sending the food to us), food waste (30% of imported produce arrives damaged or soon spoils) and introduced pests and diseases.
- Lessens the dangerous overdependence on imported food.
- Local food are probiotic, i.e. they promote digestion
- Slow vs. fast food; whole vs. partial/dissected food; convenient vs. health promoting, e.g., white "stripped" rice... "enriched" foods aren't really enriched, they are still lacking, impoverished and are not as healthy as the originals.
- May be geared to address micro-nutrient deficiencies e.g. B vitamins, iron & major nutritional imbalances e.g. too much simple carbohydrates, not enough fiber & other nutritional disorders or the metabolism.
- Fresh crispy with vitality vs. stale limply with jet lag
- Local food is generally nutritional superior.
- Traditional produce is ecologically and culturally attuned.
- The alliance may be tasked to correct food misconceptions, e.g. cholesterol in coconut and avocado; coconut oil and milk is bad for you, etc. **Note there is no cholesterol in either coconut or avocado or any plant plus the fat in coconut is a medium chain fatty acid which is easily digested.**
- Reconnect children to the sacredness of food and the creator.
- It would be good to change Palau from an allergy hazard area to an allergy free food paradise. Look into the 'dinner friendly' market (e.g., make an effort to include "gluten free" type information in menus).
- Increase customer satisfaction and patronage through meeting religious/moral restrictions e.g. vegan, halal, kosher, SDA (no pig), Jehovah Witnesses (no blood), etc...
- Using local produce can help in expanding and adding value to the chefs/cooks culinary repertoire.
- Build synergistic cooperative efforts rather than cut-throat competition.
- Support "green Revolution": Revolutionize Your World, Go Green, Eat Local Foods!
- There are many ways to add value to the servers' services e.g., educate and entertain by stories about the food, farm, and farmer, etc.

### Comments:

-Ken Love commented that with respect to imported foods often times being cheaper, while the cost may be cheaper the quality may also be less and you may lose 30% of what you buy. "I don't like jet lagged lettuce."

-Mark Vereen commented that by the time imported produce arrives in Palau, you have lost a lot of the nutrients and it may only have 30 – 40% of the nutrients it originally had.

### Morning Break

#### History, Activities and Successes from Kona Farmer Chef Movement

##### Chefs and Farmers, The Aloha Connection – Ken Love

- **1993 After the Pacific Rim started**
- Chefs are busy people, keep this foremost in mind. Call to make appointments be prompt, concise and friendly.
- Key to all of this is communication.
- These are the questions they asked in 1993. Can farmers ask for a base price? No, they need to consider cost of production based on market price. For example, people at the market selling six lemons for a dollar. It costs thirty five cents to produce one lemon. How can they sustainably sell lemons for more than what it costs to produce them?
- Need a cooperative effort on the farmers' part to try to get a consistent price structure. There is a need to do an accurate cost of production and then you can ask the chef what price they will pay you.
- The Twelve Trees Project had time trials to do accurate cost of production. Cape gooseberry's cost of production was determined. Timing them at \$12/hour. \$8.49/lb. was the cost and I was selling them for \$7. The ladies at the market were selling them for \$3. If you have this information, it's easier to justify your costs.
- Nike logo... "Just Do It!!!" The National Culinary Review – promotes buying local. It is mutually beneficial for farmers to working together with chefs to develop an island cuisine with supporting products.
- Need to come up with something memorable something that will bring them back visitors and residents.
- Diversity is really important - by species, by variety, by seasons and by niche.
- It is advantageous to develop 'flavor profiles' i.e. Description of the tastes of the product and 'favor profiles' that is which customers favor which produce e.g. Asians favor soft jack fruit and Americans favor crunchy jackfruit.
- Hearts of Palm are a hot selling item in Hawaii. It is a tourist favorite. Need to ask Fred to bring some [peach palms] out here. Originally from Costa Rica. The point here is to develop something new and different. Now very big in Hawaii, they are growing this and exporting it all over the world.
- Figs in Hawaii are about .75 cents each or \$7/lb. What's great about figs is they lend themselves to a lot of other value added products. From cuttings, Ken had fruit within one year.
- From a chef point of view, one of the most important things is the servers are knowledgeable? If your servers don't know what's going on, they aren't able to market it. Let them be able to tell a story. The inside story makes eating a personal adventure.
- People who "just did it" in 1993 are some of the top chefs now in Hawaii.
- Use the QC<sup>3</sup> Principle - Quality, Communications, Commitment, and Community.
- Quality is the best selling point and advertisement.

- Ken stated that as growers, we are the ones who need to facilitate this communication. When he grows something new or different, he himself calls the chefs to tell them about it.
- Chefs don't want to have fifty farmers show up at their place all trying to sell to them at once. The best way is to call them up and say "Hey I have all these great new varieties...", and then use a wholesaler for distribution.
- Never talk stink!
- Started tracking all the fruit and make guides for chefs so they can understand when things are available, how to select and how to prepare. For chefs, fruit is not just for the buffet lines and in room amenity baskets; they can cook with it too.
- We are all consumers and all buyers... We need to think as consumers to make sure the quality is there...
- Mandatory curriculum at culinary school, 80% minimum local ingredients from farm, land and sea. This is what is served. For example, guava French toast stuffed with banana with rambutan and Surinam cherry syrup....
- Recipes improve demand for products.
- Vinegar has zero nutrition whereas bilimbi is nutritious and may substitute for vinegar in most recipes.
- Sell the sizzle. Visitors want to share local products and their stories with others.
- Sizzle Symbiotics – Ken makes over 150 value-added products co produced with farmers and chefs.
- Themed menus e.g. 'mountain to sea' are great public relations.
- 'Farm to Fork' Hawaii i.e. on-farm dinners– Ken stated that you can start doing some of these things and jump over the 20 years that it took for HI to figure this out. An ad from 1917 states "buy local, eat fresh," - it sounds like something you read in today's morning paper.
- Farmer-chef presentations at farmers' market build better relationships between farmers, chefs and consumers.
- Ken's friend in Japan switched careers from science to agriculture because he came home one day and his daughter was drawing chickens with four legs. We are getting further and further removed from what we eat and where it comes from.
- Seasonal diversity - make sure the chefs know what you have at what season for fruits, roots and vegetables. Make farmer-chef calendars with recipes so chefs don't forget to order and know what types of things they can do to preserve.
- Adopt a chef gardens approach – Japan has many examples of this. They are now doing hydroponic lettuce and there are restaurants where you pick your own live fish, lettuce and other ingredients for a stir fry for example. How much more fresh can you get?
- Edible landscaping at restaurants, hospital, schools, etc. can lower food costs. It is attractive and educational.
- Value added product development and the master food preserver course – it would be great to get a course like this going in Palau. Ken conducts these intensive 8-day courses.

**We submitted to USDA a preproposal for a master food preserver's course in Palau with Ken as the trainer. It was 'not selected'.**

**Guam's Farmer Chef Efforts of the Past 4 years (Chef Kevin Dietrich – Guam Community College's Culinary Arts Program, Chef Geoffrey Perez -PROA restaurant, Frank Cruz - horticulturist and Dr. Bob Barber)**

**Bob Barber – UOG Cooperative Extension Service**

## USDA Western SARE

### A Five Year Review of Guam's Farmer/Chef Program Efforts

#### Main Points:

- When they began, they said “we need grants, we need money.” However they realize now that many of their projects they actually didn't need grants to do when you look at the heart of what was accomplished. There is already so much support.
- Palau is blessed to have many farmer organizations.
- Agriculture marketing issues in Guam ranked among the top issues they needed to address.
- The Micronesia Chefs Association (MCA) - has links to hospitality and business community. It's best to find the closest industry group to work with and start talking with it whether it's the Chamber of Commerce or something else.
- Guam Hotel and Restaurant Asn. – said we need an MOA. We four organizations [ MCA, GHRA, UOG and Dept. of Ag.] signed an MOA saying we are going to work together to try and get more local produce and products in use especially the tourist industry. We opened our doors to each other's meetings. The soursop was the first product and we made soursop ice cream that was delicious. Beginning activities included 'Pastries in Paradise' & 'Taste of Guam'.
- One of the first things we learned is the need to do some educational issues. Chefs need to know what's available and when and farmers need to know how to best supply chefs... don't bring a bunch of stuff at once, need smaller quantities but on a regular basis...
- Seasonal calendars lets them know that certain months of the year you aren't going to see for example watermelon in November, you'll see a lot in June and July. Giving chefs an idea of a market basket, local produce centerpiece, the coops periodically brought displays of “What's fresh now!” to the MCA meetings.
- Why try to build a separate infrastructure? Why not work with the wholesalers who already distribute to the chefs. Chefs want deliveries once every two days.
- The key lesson is that for this to work all parties have to work together: buyers, farmers, chefs, wholesalers and purchasing people. All that was really needed was for each of these people to talk to each other. Farmer Chef events continue to expand and so many interested people attend who aren't chefs or farmers.
- What we hope to do in these conferences is really just get you all to talk and work together.

#### Comments from people from Guam

**Frank Cruz** – What Frank thinks is the most important component of this program is communication. He commented that University of Guam doesn't talk to the Ag Department much less talk to the chefs. They're just a totally different breed of people, and that's what they thought until they started talking to each other. The more people you have who step up and say “let's work together,” the faster it will go. Farmers have to be conservative and slow because if they were big risk takers they'd be broke. Grill nights are a big success now and they are actually going to make money off of them. Also important for the younger generation – Guam has young Chamorro people who don't know what to do with taro or yams. You need people who are going to “just do it” and start talking.

**Chef Kevin Dietrich** - Teaches at the GCC (Guam Community College) three year culinary program – Loves his job, promotes local fruits and vegetables and teaches them how to use local produce and products and where to get them. The Slow Food Movement all comes back to eating locally and eating sustainably and slowing down to prepare food with your family for dinner and not going to McDonalds. He is very happy to be working with these guys on these projects.

**Geoffrey Perez** – PROA restaurant in Guam, near the Guam Visitor's Bureau.

Owns and operates a restaurant called PROA which is a small restaurant, seats about 52 people and has 8 staff. Back in 1999 the Micronesia Chefs Association was established. Geoffrey became a member in 2006 and found out there's a lot of good things about it. Being an independent small restaurant he gets to work with a lot of the hotels and farmers and is able to form partnerships. Mission statement for the MCA is to promote culinary awareness. Benefits include the networks that one can establish by being a part of the association. They partner up with GHRA every year to do several events and almost always have some kind of culinary competition. These collaborative events work well to promote our island cooking and restaurants on Guam. The "Taste Guam" event has been going on for five years now and he has seen much more use of local foods which has made it so much better. This event usually involves around 500 persons for a five course meal - tickets are \$200 per plate. The latest event is the MCA "Chaser" (snack) event. It was exciting because they took six farmers who were farming in that village and had six stations, each farmer would have a dessert and a drink. The booklet-like ticket was like a little passport and you could see the way that papaya was grown and see different ways to do papaya as a drink and realize that it does taste good. Featured were papaya, coconut, mango, calamansi, and even fresh basil. At the grocery store, when he sees something local that he wants, he will ask the store manager for the contact number for the person who supplies them. The store manager many times will want him to get it from the store, but he says to them, "if I buy from you I will wipe you out, I need ten pounds of this stuff and I want to get it at a better price." He also commented that as a chef and restaurant owner, he needs to know what's available in the U.S. and this information he can get fairly easily from the internet but he'd like to also know what's available locally and in our region.

Bob Barber commented that in Pohnpei, they are a little ahead of us in one area, they have a chefs' asn.

Frank Cruz – when multiple industries come together to support one another, it's much more powerful to influence policy and get attention of politicians. One unified strong voice is better than a hundred people shouting.

Often times, grocery stores won't get what's available because they don't think it will sell or the farmer does not have enough for the grocery store.

MCA can be found on Facebook.

Director Sengebau thanked all of the off-island participants on behalf of the government.

Regarding establishing a Chefs Association, they offered help with any chefs who might want to organize. They informed that there are more independent chefs than hotel chefs and that chefs will need to understand that being part of the association and getting it started will take some time. And the organization is only as good as the people that are in it and the time they put into it.

Bob Barber commented about the goal of having preschoolers eat more fruits and vegetables and expressed the need to first change, parents, teachers, cooks and those who are responsible for what the preschoolers eat.

**Bob Bishop – Farmer Chef Alliance Project Brief**

- Need Assessments of farmers/ agricultural professionals rank market and marketing on top!!!
- Tourism growing in Palau.
- Little local produce used in tourism industry.

- Farmers, chefs, cooks, caterers and other produce buyers not aware of each other's needs/wants and specifications.
- Hawaii has a well developed farmer chef alliance
- People learn well from their peers.
- We will learn well and quickly from Hawaiian and Guamanian Farmers and Chefs.
- Educational materials developed in Hawaii and Guam easily adapted to Palau.

Project Scope of Work:

For professionals including farmers:

- Survey the tourism industry's aggregate weekly demand for each fruit, root crops, spices and vegetable grown on Palau;
- Survey markets, agricultural professionals, and farmers identifying produce seasonality;
- Develop food processing methods to extend the availability of highly desired products and severely underutilized crops e.g. wax gourd
- Develop "What's Fresh Now" calendar/guide or point-of-purchase recipe cards;
- Farmer/Chef education on product standards, market logistics, seasonality and other shared constraints/issues
- Help Farmer/Chef Alliance Consultant and an Extension Consultant develop a situational analysis and plan of action and
- Update and reprint "Local Foods are Best" cookbook.

For the consultants:

- Develop a situational analysis including an SWOT analysis.
- Develop a plan of action and project strategy.
- Review survey tools, techniques and framework and provide suggestions for improvement
- Assist with team building and farmer/chef education and promotional and relationship building activities.
- Provide samples of products and ideas for value adding.
- Provide suggestions for improvement for the planned taro festival.
- Provide suggestions for 'signature' products for Palau and a "Made in Palau" exhibit.
- Deliverables:
  - Weekly demand survey reports,
  - list of produce in demand,
  - situational analysis,
  - seasonality charts and calendar,
  - plan of action,
  - 'text based' cell phone information/marketing system

cookbook, point of purchase support materials including selection card: how to know what's ripe and what's not ripe.

- and a "Made in Palau" exhibit.

### **Bob Bishop – SWOT Presentation**

#### **STRENGTHS**

- Key elements in place: Gentlemen Gourmet Endowment Event PCC; OBF Fair; Rock Island Chef Competition & Night Market PVA, Food Processing Training PCC CRE, Food Handlers Training DEH&S, Value Adding Training: TTM, Taro Festival, Virgin coconut mills
- Agro-tourism demonstration site
- Establishment of Agriculture Development Support Center with AgriFund
- Eat Local Food Program: Ministry of Health, Belau Medical Clinic, Family Surgical Clinic, UAK

- Nutrition for Children Law
- Green Revolution Initiative including coconut planting program and goat feeding program
- Ministry of Health issued a Declaration of Emergency on Non-communicable Diseases
- Fresh Produce and Unique produce available
- Several “Palauan” fruits have high culinary potential e.g. football fruit, bilimbi, wax apple, amra,
- Potential for import substitution
- Abundant supply of local produce in season
- More Partnerships established / working together :BOA, PCC, MOH, TTM, MOE, Palau-Taiwan Farmer’s Association, PVA, Palau Organic Growers Association, Food Processors’ Association, Flair Tending Association, Food Security & Sustainable Livelihoods Project Steering Committee, Sustainable Land Management Project, OISCA, PCAA, UAK
- More tourist flights to Palau
- Big diversity of produce to offer
- High demand for local food for custom and other social events
- Year round distribution of rainfall
- Few/no typhoons
- Relatively fewer crop pests and diseases
- Restaurants interested in how to make their dishes unique

#### WEAKNESS

- Pests and diseases (Fruit flies, rats, wild chicken, monkeys)
- Chefs unaware /unfamiliar of local produce
- Lack of chef-farmer alliances
- No Chef Association
- High cost of crop production
- Cost of imported inputs for crop production and value adding are prohibitive
- Price dumping of imported foods from developed countries
- No grades/standards for quality control
- Preference for imported products
- Inconsistent production and distribution of produce
- Weather is changing and unpredictable, more frequent extremes in weather render production unpredictable, inconsistent and unreliable. The farmer is more endangered than the environment.
- Lack of central market
- Lack of market /production information and communication
- No cost of production information for local produce
- Production information is not shared
- Insufficient support from national/state leadership and NDBP
- Newly transfer skills in food processing technology are seldom applied due to various constraints
- Insufficient support to agriculture from lending institutions and grantors
- Land tenure is complicated
- Poor /challenging soil conditions
- Asian fruits and vegetables undercutting local markets in Palau and may lead to the introduction of new pests especially viral diseases
- Consignment system of marketing local produce is very discouraging to farmers
- Palauans are comfortable due to a strong and high social/cultural safety net. The price or other trigger which motivates action is relatively high. This leads to the mistaken perception that Palauans are lazy.

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Within our ability to bring all the players together because only a few people are involved
- Increasing tourism industry
- Large biodiversity of produce / crops
- More value adding activities / opportunities/ people
- Can adapt existing materials from Guam and Hawaii due to similarities of produce
- Have opportunities for exporting commodities due to proximity to Asian market
- 'Suitcase exports' through Duty Free Shops, markets and direct to tourists
- Climate suitable for diversification by season and new crops
- Opportunity for signature products
- Palau: The Totally Organic Nation
- Ability to put 'culture' back into agriculture
- Mark of authenticity/quality for produce/products meeting "made in Palau" criteria
- Create a Palauan identity for fruits, i.e. name and develop Palauan cultivars like New Zealand
- Establish a "Farmers' Bank"
- Link local food to wellness, health promotion, & disease prevention plus cultural identity
- Revive "Palauan Food: Naturally the Best" training of cooks/chefs
- Need to find innovative chef to introduce new uses of existing produce and new produce - other chefs will see and adapt!

## THREATS

- New pests and diseases
- Chefs are mostly Asians who use their own produce
- Chefs patronize their countrymen growing the local produce
- Entry and use of illegal pesticides by Asian farmers
- Front businesses for crop production
- Consignment system of marketing local produce
- Use of 'night soil' by Asian farmers
- Poor image of farming and farmers
- Many useful and/or desired plants are incorrectly classified as 'invasive' and banned.
- 'Retired person/Pensioner' farmers, Gentlemen farmers, recreation farmers drive down price of produce
- Imported food leads to imported diseases
- Underground (cell phone linked) economy based on the sale of stolen produce, tools and machine parts.
- Foreign farmers and foreign farm hands not assimilating. They disrespect and abuse Palauan cultural values.

## Other points:

- Taro festival not just about taro but also about culture and deference and reverence. Not just for tourists, also for local people and especially younger people and the "me, me" generation.
- The average farmer doesn't have any idea how much it costs to produce their crops and then they go out and sell it. When we calculated actual costs, we found out that out of four things we were selling, only two of them made a profit.
- Citrus from the Philippines if it gets here and brings the 'greening' disease is big trouble for the disease will wipe out citrus in Palau within two years.
- New Zealand grows the Chinese gooseberry and calls it 'Kiwi fruit'. Market demand increases tenfold.

**Fred Sengebau – Cell Phone based marketing**

**Main point:**

- P-T Farmers Association is now using text messages on cell phones to inform about meetings, trainings, Palau Night Market and other events and also when farmers have something to market, they will text to various buyers to try to help market the produce /products.

**Chef's Point of View – Alex Suzuki**

- Palau Pacific Resort is committed to providing each customer an enjoyable memorable experience. Quality of the food and service builds repeat customers and good 'word of mouth' promotion.
- Visitors want to savor the foods of Palau. As such PPR is committed to purchasing good quality local produce
- We try our best to source our foods locally from local farmers. We have a keen interest in local foods especially fruits.
- Constraints we face in sourcing locally are: inadequate supply; frequently run out e.g. soursop, banana, pineapple, papaya, avocado, giant starfruit; inconsistent supply and quality; inaccurate information, sometimes farmers skip them and go straight to markets [despite prior commitments].
- Willing to try new produce and develop recipes.
- PPR stands ready to join farmers in farmer-chef presentations.

**Purchaser's Point of View**

**Tino Faatuuala, Ministry of Health, Hospital Kitchen**

**Main points:**

- Fresh is best! We aim to provide fresh tasty nutritious meals to our patients.
- Palau is weigh down with the heavy burden of obesity and other nutritionally related maladies.
- Before we picked up fruits from Honto. We stopped because it was too costly.
- Frequently local produce in insufficient to meet our needs. Farmers are not planting sequentially so there are production gaps.
- Quality varies.
- We are willing to use underutilized produce if it is available in the quantities we need.
- We would like short-term training of our cooks.
- The number of tourists is going up therefore we need to increase production to meet this increased demand.
- Farmers' can't wait too long to get paid.
- Need big taro because labor to peel a bunch of small taro is too expensive.
- Peter from Payless commented that Payless doesn't mind the P.O. system but does mind not getting paid.

**Farmer's Point of View – Bob Bishop**

**Main Points:**

- Sometimes farmers don't understand what's going on and are not aware what is in demand because they need to be on the farm. They also need to market their produce so there is some lost of production when farmers market their own produce. This is a vicious cycle compounded by the lack of a famers' market or farmers marketing system. Farmers will only significantly increase production when there is a farmers market to ensure the increased production is sold.

- People must understand that there is a tradeoff between either using pesticides and looking nice or not using pesticides and not looking as nice (e.g., some holes from insects, etc.). If the produce looks perfect it was grown either in a screenhouse or using some persistent very nasty illegal chemical pesticide e.g. lindane was used. The vast majority of family farms in Palau do not use illegal pesticides. Avoid poisoning yourself by not buying from profit hungry 'cut throat' street vendors who you do not know use what pesticides.
- National government and federal procurement systems are difficult to work with. Understandably we were unable to 'volunteer' any government officials to speak about them.
- Some farmers perceive chefs as 'fussy', wanting more quantity than we can produce, and do not understand 'seasons' and production schedules.
- Chefs and cooks are instrumental in our aim to increase local consumption of local produce. We need their helping hand.

Comments:

Frank Cruz – Buyers always complain when they don't get what they want ahead of time but when it comes to paying sometimes it's the other way around?? Chefs need to understand that in the tropics, seasonality and the weather is more difficult/complicated and sometimes we don't know if we have one crop or three crops or no crops.

**Commercial Retailer Point of View – Peter Gaymann – Payless Market**

**Main Points:**

- Challenges include sometimes we have no product and sometimes we have way too much. For example, there are tons of cucumbers right now but no eggplant.
- The other challenge is a lack of the variety.
- We get mostly from local owned farms but run by people from the outside. There's no connection between the farmers and the people at the store. Communication between the stores and the farmers is absent.
- Some farmers bring their excess bananas and want to sell them to us on a cash basis. We simply can't do that. We don't have people to cut checks every day. We pay vendors including farmers on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month, not 30 or 60 days but on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.

Comments:

-Ken asked about the cost of production compared to how much it's being sold to a wholesaler or retailer above the cost of production. People responded by saying that in Palau, there's really no significant wholesale for local produce. No one has approached 'produce wholesaling' and put it together.

-Frank Cruz, traditional foods have a different status. He commented that when he was young his father said don't waste your time taking avocado to the store; just feed it to the pigs. Now avocados sell well.

-Jessica from Payless commented that they adjust what they order from the U.S. based on seasonality in Palau. For example, there are pineapples twice a year in Palau, so they don't order the imported ones but pineapple is in season and vice versa. When it's not available locally, they order them from outside. Same with avocado. Right now, there's no eggplant and no watermelon. Our challenge is to meet the needs of the hotels. We need to know in advance and we can try to work with the farmers.

-Sisca Vogt commented that Payless is essentially providing wholesaler services so the question is whether or not and how the farmers associations can step up to the role they need to play.

-Frank Cruz commented on the need to establish standards. For example, you never want to see soil on produce.

**PVA's Point of View - Melson Miko, Community Support Services PVA**

**Main Points:**

- Shared PVA's mission which includes promoting Palau's heritage and this includes our farmers and food.
- Three essentials to the tourist industry – accommodations, entertainment and food. PVA markets Palauan food when they market Palau. They tell visitors or potential visitors that when they come to Palau they will be able to taste Palauan food that is unique only or distinctive to Palau (like the fruit bat).
- PVA also does travel shows abroad as well as familiarization tours where they bring people here to Palau to share Palau with them and they go back and write about Palau in their magazines or talk about Palau in their media shows.
- That's why it is very important for PVA to support and encourage the farmers so that we can have something that is exclusively Palauan. When PVA travels, they get coconut candy from Roberta Louch to give away as enticing samples.
- Recently, Long Rainbow contracted a Palauan women group in Ngardmau to prepare all local food for their guests when they visit the Ngardmau waterfall. One of our biggest challenges however is consistency.
- We are able to use local produce to make all kinds of local products in Palau and the Palauan Night Market is an opportunity to showcase local vendors, local produce and local products. This also provides a venue where tourists can have the opportunity to taste local food.

**Comments:**

-Geoffrey asked where other than the Palauan Night Market can visitors get local food? He suggested that PVA also promote these local markets and restaurants.

-Melson commented that last week PVA held our first "International night market" to showcase the various foods in Palau and recipes and also include our Palauan Night market vendors. If there is someone that can be consistent, PVA is happy to promote them.

**What Produce is Available? Bob Bishop**

- Fruits:** banana, papaya, pineapple, avocado, soursop, citrus, mango, breadfruit, rambutan, melons
- Vegetables:** spoon and Chinese cabbage, chilies, eggplant, bitter gourd, wax gourd, pumpkin/squash, bottle gourd, okra, cucumber, green papaya,
- Roots:** cassava, taro, giant swamp taro, sweet potato, xanthosoma taro, yam, dasheen, yam bean,
- Palauan spices and seasonings:** red ginger, turmeric, 'titimel' (Spondias) leaves, 'tilol' [wild gracinia] leaves, lemon leaves, bilimbi, hot pepper, papaya seeds, lemon zest, lemon juice, coconut milk/ oil, coconut syrup, coconut curd, coconut apple, curry leaves, nutmeg, cinnamon, mace, lemon grass, *daikon* [Japanese radish], *uasech* [fish paste], tamarind, santol rind,
- Nuts:** coconuts, Polynesian almond, Tahitian chestnut,
- Why chefs will pay \$7/lb for imported HI papaya but not locally grown papaya? The price for locally grown does not provide sufficient incentive to grow it [considering the high risk for crop failure].
- Local drinks:** lemon, hibiscus, roselle, lemon leave, soursop, bilimbi, *marbou* [fermented mountain apple], green mango, starfruit, sugarcane, drinking coconut [*mengur*], sparkling coconut [*medecheduch*], meat w/*mengur*, coffee,
- Teas:** noni, guava, '*delal a kar*', '*yamel*', marigold, beggar ticks, mint, lemon grass,
- Greens:** kankong, pumpkin tips & leaves, *markoso* tips & leaves, '*ysaol*' sunset hibiscus, 'nappa' Chinese cabbage, lettuce, climbing spinach, sweet potato leaves, cassava leaves, pak wan, mustard, wild mustard, horse radish tree leaves,
- Dessert:** '*chelang*', '*titimel*', green banana w/coconut milk, burnt cassava, burnt '*medecheduch*', coconut caramel, coconut ah-ho, hilo hilo, burnt sugar or caramelized banana or sweet

potato., buko pie, coconut candy, cassava candy, chips, sundried fruits, Manchu, roasted and candied 'miich', candied ginger, taro paste, *telib*, *chemlol*, *merkou*, prak paste, *chelas*, Hawaiian taro fudge,

- Some fruits and vegetables are seasonal in that they are not available all year-long. Predicting the 'seasons' is now difficult as traditional patterns are no longer reliable.

### **Food Technology and Products Developed in Palau**

#### **Palau Community College – Cooperative Research and Extension, Lydia Marero**

- Taro flour can keep for up to one year at room temperature. Can be used to make pancakes, bread, steam cakes, donuts, etc. Have made packets "just add water" as an idea to sell to tourists.
- Taro cookie mix, taro brownie mix, cupcakes, taro ice cream have all been developed and tested.
- After boiling taro, they peel it and pack it in vacuum bags (retort pouches will also work) that can be boiled or put in the microwave.
- Taro salad, pasta, chowder, pastilles or candy, hash browns, and pie have all been developed and tested.
- She also made some spam sushi and maki with taro instead of using rice. Taro 'rice' may be made for ease of cooking.
- Prak hash browns, taro chips, turnovers and also she showed how it can be fermented and turned into wine, vinegar or a sauce like soy sauce. They did the same thing with cassava and sweet potato and coconut which is very abundant in Palau.
- If you can bottle the coconut drink it is very saleable to the tourists. They put the water of the coconut and the meat together and blended it. They have also made coconut wine and vinegar.
- You can also bottle coconut cream and freeze it and take it out when you want to use it. Nata de coco may be made by adding the proper microorganism to coconut water.
- Coconut cream can be used in so many dishes. We added the yogurt organism to the coconut cream to makes a fine yogurt. Cheese may also is made from coconut cream.
- Can also make fish sausage. Rabbitfish marinated, can be frozen and used when needed.
- Bananas can also be made into so many different products. Banana preserves – keeps for a very long time. You can make croquette from the banana blossom - can also make banana wine and vinegar.

### **Richard Hung- Taiwan Technical Mission**

#### **Main Points:**

- Why do we need food processing? Makes the life of food products longer. Benefits include preservation, taste, transportation and storing.
- Jams, jellies, cordials, liqueurs, wine, drinks, candies, teas, may be made from local produce.
- Some of these include: Tea and candies from roselle; Pitaya (Dragon fruit) jam; bilimbi candy, etc.
- Roselle tea is an easy way to preserve it (drying). Just take out the seeds out of roselle flower wash the flower, dry at 60 degrees C.
- Noni juice – many Palauans don't really want to drink this one but the tourists buy it.

#### **Comments:**

-Ken Love provided advice on dragon fruit jam/jelly and the need to mix in the sugar and pectin separately for better results.

-Tarita asked if roselle can be made into jelly/jam and Ken Love responded that it can and the color stays.

-Tarita also commented on wine experience with ladies in Ngardmau and the difficulties with the license requirements costing \$450 per fiscal year. Another problem is that licenses aren't on a yearly basis (pro rata) but rather "fiscal year" therefore, if you start your operation in July, you will need to pay another \$450 in October. She also commented that perhaps organizations like the "Made in Palau" Association could help request a waiver for small local entrepreneurs who are starting out.

### **Go Local: Cooking Up Good Health – Judy Otto**

#### **Main Points:**

- Judy commented that she felt a bit like she was preaching to the choir.
- Take home message in the presentation: Local foods are better for people, environment and the economy.
- The NCDs today were virtually unknown diseases here in the islands in the 1970s (e.g., Hypertension, Diabetes, Obesity, Gout, etc.)
- NCDs then became widespread in the 1990s and now are an epidemic.
- One of the main causes of this is that imports have replaced local foods. For example, the increased reliance on rice and it replacing taro has led to increased caloric density in the average diet.
- Food is not the only thing changing. Office work, cars, speed boats, alcohol, tobacco, etc.
- Food is not the only piece but a very important piece and one that we do have control over. We might not have control over the type of work we do but we do have control over the type of food we eat.
- Local staples are more than starch. Prak is highest in Niacin, Kukau is highest in Magnesium. Prak also provides calcium. Sweet potato is highest in vitamin C and E. Kukau and prak also have some protein. Protein is also found in green leafy vegetables
- Community Transformation. People perceive that eating local or eating healthy is more expensive. Also, they perceive that eating local is more time consuming. Asks that food technology people help in this regard. Would like to work with chef farmer alliance with regards to policy change. Getting local into school meals; pricing structure to promote local produce; evaluating special issues like MSG and transfat.
- Environmental change, how to make local food sexy, menu labeling in restaurants, social marketing campaign. Would like to work with some of the restaurants to demonstrate menu labeling.

#### **Comments:**

-Bob Barber commented that this is an area that they're discussing in Guam, the potential for menu labeling and asked how Palau is. Judy commented that Palau is not far at all, just starting and that she has seen only one example at PPR. They have "heart healthy" labels on certain menu items.

### **Ken Love's presentation Master Food Preservers Program, Value Adding and Potential Products.**

#### **Main Points:**

- Completed certification course for one week at University of California. This course includes food safety, food security, small farm and chef sustainability, value added product development and marketing e.g. jams acid canning, fermentation, pickling, drying, freezing, vacuum sealing, etc. Products included guava ketchup; infused vinegars, wax apple relish, etc.
- University of CA. text, *Ball's Blue Book of Canning* and *So Easy to Preserve*: University of Georgia.
- Examinations are oral and written.
- Value adding starts with choices, inspiration and imagination. Images are important.

- Packaging is important; people want to see pictures of the fruit you are selling. Take homes, postcards, posters and seasonal guides; labels, packages and POP (Point of Purchase) materials are help you market.
- Give customers something extra to build patronage and goodwill like the bamboo containers for the coffee. You really need to develop a Palau online internet store. You can set up a store and sell pretty much anything.
- Juicy fruit gum flavor comes from Jackfruit.
- Competitive Intelligence – research what other producers are doing, watch for trends; don't rely completely on the internet.
- Things to remember: choice, sizes, packages and products change, product and package evolution – keep yourself informed.
- FARM CIA – Palau has the potential to be ahead of other nations by developing an agency/organization which promotes farms and farming and keeps farmers informed of the latest trends, skills, etc.
- Bar codes for new products may be bought on-line.
- Chefs add value to farmers' produce. Chefs add aesthetics, develop signature products, popularize underutilized produce, etc.
- Take advantage of occasions like weddings, etc. and provide private and custom labels.
- Avocado oil is a fastest growing product.
- USDA Canning Guide is useful, also good to use pH meters;
- Very important to learn safe ways to preserve food so you don't make someone sick or kill someone.
- Give people choices. Your products may be developed for specific people e.g. fig trees in milk crates for the elderly or occasions e.g. weddings.
- Products to entice children to eat healthy foods: Lunar loquats, Shooting stars starfruit, Alien embryos with "out of this world taste"!
- Recipe postcards and point of purchase materials to educate and inform.
- Round ice cubes with fruit inside or fruit juice ice cubes.
- Young jackfruit is called 'tender jack' and is used to make curry, chutney and other products.

Comments:

-Tarita asked about what labels Ken uses. "A-One" labels – glossy, from Japan. Only problem is these are not sold over the internet. He has someone in Japan send them to him. Avery labels don't have the same high gloss type of finish.

**Day 2: July 27<sup>th</sup>**

Dishes made from local produce

Bob Bishop

**Main Points:**

- Bob explained that there are several Palauan cookbooks and the older ones are out of print. Surangel's printed and donated copies of "Palauan Food – Naturally the Best!" to the conference participants.
- He proceeded to go over various recipes in the cookbooks.
- Stuffed papaya recipe has one mistake – you need to put the cover back on to cook it but this is not stated. The authors thought this would be common sense but it wasn't for some people.
- The cookbook also, shows how to cook corned beef by first draining the fat.
- Local Tahitian chestnut (*keam*) to makes a good bread.

- Cassava rolls, cassava cereal. Cassava can be converted to a cereal for kids.
- Prak sandwich, slices of kukua and prak may be used as a substitute for bread in sandwiches.
- 'Yam Delicious' is a tasty dessert which may be used as a baby food
- 'Flairtenders' are good at converting local produce to exotic fancy drinks. Signature drinks may be developed featuring local fruits e.g. football fruit.
- "Palauan Food – Naturally the Best!" has a substitution guide which has rates for using garlic chives instead of garlic, using local nuts instead of peanuts, etc.
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> cook book is from Tova at Fish N Fins and she got a lot of recipes from local people to prepare this book. It includes sections on appetizers, fish and seafood, salads, side dishes and desserts (e.g., Sweet potato lasagna, *demok* [taro leave soup], chicken and green papaya stew, tapioca raisin bread, taro croquette, etc.)
- The next cookbook is called "Best Cuisines of the Pacific" and was developed by the Belau National Museum from recipes by the Pacific Arts Festival participants that came to Palau.
- Quite a few recipes which are quite good but be careful with these because some of the ingredients seem to be missing - Experiment with them and add if it seems bland.

## **Community Gardens**

### **Bob Barber**

#### **Main Points:**

- NCDs group on Guam that includes many groups such as, Sanctuary – which is an organization that provides a place for women and girls suffering from spousal abuse.
- None of the members of the group had a clue about agriculture but knew the importance of getting more fruits and vegetables into the diet. They had \$30,000 to work with to create "community gardens" and none of them knew what a community garden was. As a result, they bought gift certificates for \$250 from hardware stores and distributed them to communities but never checked up on them. It turns out there was not one community garden anywhere. There were some "communal" gardens not funded by this project.
- There are some "Edible landscapes" for seniors – which are mainly perennial crops.
- Island Girl Power is an organization that had a plot the size of these four chairs, mainly a demonstration so kids can see plants and watch them grow.
- Different things are meant when you say "community garden". Developing a landscape where people can come and visit and pick fruit. A Garden plot so someone can see a garden. Previous First Lady's People's Garden– everybody is supposed to share a plot the size of this room. In the end the whole garden became one persons' farm.
- Main problem with community gardens is that it's usually unclear who is going to do what.
- Block of land that has been divided by a group of participants that agree to what's going to be done.
- There are many funding sources for community gardens –Organizations wanting to fund activities for young children or seniors would provide for community gardens. Grants trying to mitigate the high cost of food or trying to revitalize culture will fund community gardens.
- Handouts with this information were distributed.
- First identify the people who want to participate. Don't put in a penny until you have people committed and saying they want a plot. Think about all the potential problems that might arise like theft. May need to invest in some low cost security cameras – I have had zero theft once security cameras were put in.
- Taro patches are already community gardens.

- Bush cutters are the number one killer of fruit trees on Guam. Therefore use sheet mulching six feet around perimeter of trees so there's no weeds growing. New technologies like sheet mulching are things grantors want to fund. Sheet mulching is also known as 'lasagna gardening'. Sometimes a 'bark patch' can save trees damaged by line trimmers.

Comments:

- Frank commented that sheet mulch eliminates a lot of labor of pulling weeds but one of the most important benefits of sheet mulching is that it creates a good healthy soil. All of our soils are naturally low in phosphorus.
- All of these practices we are talking about we have presentations/information/instructions for and may be access on the website: University of Guam's Sustainable Ag. website.
- More produce stands are needed in Guam's communities. Most Mom and Pop stores have only three vegetables in the stores and most of what they have is canned.
- Can have breadfruit, jackfruit, and/or calamansi [*kingkang*] around the perimeter to provide wind breaks.
- A rototiller as part of a demonstration in a grant is often ok as long as it's under \$1500.
- There are lots of public spaces that aren't used that could be used for community gardens like at schools or the Mayor's office. They are also often paired with playgrounds so parents can be working in the gardens while their kids are playing at the playground.
- The same community garden can be 'marketed' to so many potential funders (e.g., those interested in seniors, youth, dept. of agriculture, health, culture, etc.).
- Initially you want to start small and grow slow as your garden grows. Don't put the playground in before the community garden is up and running.
- Need to show how you are going to handle the money and need to have at least three people doing this.
- How can you gear your proposal so you are accommodating all of the different funders? All of this can be adapted for your taro patches.
- Sisca Vogt commented that in Palau, it is the State Public Lands Authorities that administer and manage use of public lands. These bodies may be able to provide spaces for these types of activities.
- How can the Chamorro Land Trust know who knows how to farm? It's good to propose that applicants go through at least one grow cycle probation. Some people apply for a 20 acre farm and have no clue about farming. What do they end up doing? They end up subleasing illegally.
- Frank commented that an accountant may want to be involved and may not have farming skills to contribute but their money management skills can be very valuable for the project and to grantors.
- School gardens should be manageable and each student should be given two square feet to manage.
- Non-Palauans also want a place to garden.
- Actual membership's dues of community gardens are one funding device but can also have sponsorships. You can have for example a \$500 donation from a restaurant or hotel (like a Hyatt) to be able to say on their menu that the food came from a community garden that supports a women's group, etc.
- In Pohnpei, the participants make a pledge to spend one day a month with their children in farming and gardening at the community garden.
- Also include special activities into the grant like have a few days where a chef comes down and prepares food from the garden. Always have a donation box.
- Want you to think of community gardens in a different light.... Having a place to grow is important for many people. Neighbors in Guam have these Styrofoam coolers painted and they're growing all kinds of produce in them.
- The three documents from Bob Barber were distributed ranging from the "quick and dirty," to one with more detail, and the last one is about how to put together a good planning document, etc.

## **Suggestions for Galvanizing and Improving the Farmer Chef Alliance**

### **Facilitated by Bob Bishop**

#### Comments:

- It would be good to have exchanges such as: Chefs in schools, farmers in the kitchen, farm tours, restaurant tours, chef on the farm, etc.
- Also, signature products/dishes/drinks.
- In-process surveys – seasonal chart and chefs/purchasers demand
- Need to have more community supported and chef supported Agriculture.
- Need to find funding for Lydia who has over 200 recipes to put these into a nice book. These will help the farmer chef alliance.
- Bob Barber commented on how to plan how much you grow. If a chef needs 30lbs of eggplant per week, then plan to grow 50% more than this and cover each other if something happens. Cherry tomatoes example on Guam. Also, sweet corn, Ernie didn't want anybody else growing sweet corn but this isn't the way to go. Should include more so that each other can cover the shortfall and maintain the supply (thus maintaining the demand).
- Frank commented that after Tino's talk, he thought wow, three guys could go to talk to Tino and make a contract so that the three of them can supply Tino.
- Geoffrey stated that for business plans, people should go and see the Palau Small Business Development Center.

## **Morning Break**

### **Strategic Planning Focus Group session and Prioritize Ideas (combining sessions)**

#### **Facilitated by Bob Barber**

#### Comments:

- Suggestion from Bob Barber-Have farmers groups sit on the planning committee for things like Palauan Night Market, etc.
- GS suggests that maybe Fred call and make arrangements with PVA.
- Desiree commented that there is already a Bartenders' Association and maybe this could be expanded.
- Sisca commented that there were three Chefs here yesterday and one is here today and the question is really for the chefs of whether they think it is feasible to have a Chefs organization in Palau.
- Chef Kevin commented that he doesn't know really how to start a Chefs Organization.
- Geoffrey stated that there needs to be a mission and something that the organization ultimately wants to achieve. For us (MCA) it's mainly fundraising.
- Sisca commented that for Alex the main issue is consistency of supply and wanting to best support local farmers.
- Bob Barber commented that it's difficult for a Chef to invite another Chef. It may be better to have an outside organization like Palau Visitors' Authority to convene meetings.
- Sisca commented that BTA might be a more appropriate organization to get this started and PPR is already a member.
- Desiree stated that the Bartenders' Association has existed for three years like the Tri-Org (PVA -BTA and Chamber of Commerce) so it's going to take a lot of time. Not very many executive chefs in Palau, most are smaller restaurants like Emamelei.
- Chef Kevin commented that most small restaurants won't see the benefit but the main thing is to emphasize local pride, etc.
- Frank commented that Chefs are now celebrities in Guam; they used to only be the guy in the back of the kitchen with the big hat that nobody sees.

- Key thing here is that you have identified three key organizations: BTA and PVA and the Chamber of Commerce
- Tino commented that if there was a certificate that people would earn through completing a level one chef course then people could feel more attached to the word "chef."
- Home economics are now called ProStart (Professional Start) in High Schools.
- Chef Kevin, it's very hard to get people to see the value of doing all this extra work... It has to come from the heart and you have to really want change. It's not just chefs that are part of our organization; farmers are becoming members, people from the hospital, etc.
- Tino commented that government doesn't recognize cooks.
- Geoffrey commented that what is needed are people with a "can do" attitude. Tino and Alex would be a good match.
- MCA is motivated to promoting chefs, their industry, local produce, etc.
- Desiree commented that we are small and it will take time, GCC culinary program wasn't around ten years ago.
- Culinary arts should be made a priority at PCC – Sisca
- Chef Kevin commented that it doesn't need to be a whole program at PCC, it can even be one program to cover the basics of flavoring and the basics of how to sauté, how to boil, how to steam properly, etc..
- Six high schools on our island (Guam) were selected with the lowest numbers of students who go on to high school. Over 300 high school culinary students. 20% of them are going on to college to continue to study the culinary arts.
- \$100 cash prize to high school students who come up with the best use of local fruit. 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade students have chefs coming into their classrooms to talk about nutrition and cooking.
- Ken commented that the main thing is to figure out how to get all of you working together, that's who the collateral will serve. You can all rally behind getting a slogan done or calendars, etc. He was shocked that Penthouse was using Wishbone for their salad dressing. Link up graduates from PCC and OISCA with local chefs.
- Frank commented that you can be the initiator of something great that moves you forward and you don't even need an organization.
- Mark Defley commented that with pricing always being a challenge – Palau has an opportunity that Guam and Hawaii don't have since it is not a member of WTO and any so-called free trade agreement. The whole 'Free Trade' pretense is protectionism for the big guys. Palau is 'free' now to imposed import tariffs on foods that are imported that are bad for people.
- Ken commented that they can't have import tariffs but like in California can call them "inspection fees"; "container fees" ... It's all about how you word it. He can bring almost anything from any country into the States but illegal to bring citrus seeds from Florida or China.
- Back to the main reason we're here. If not a Chefs organization, maybe a local food producers organization or a healthy living organization.
- Chef Kevin commented that a sin tax should go on candy, soda, Kool aid and similar harmful food and drinks. He mentioned that Singapore charges a \$15 for a beer or \$30 for a mixed drink.
- Roberta commented that she organized a group for food processors and has recently received their Charter.
- UAK – Judy commented on how UAK programs are working on these issues and suggested forming a 'Healthy Eating' group...
- It's so much easier to have someone sponsor a task rather than to start a new organization.
- Start a Farmers-Chef Alliance – this could be the biggest success of this program.
- Judy asked, what is the one concrete, small project or product so that we can achieve something in the next three months.

-Bob Barber mentioned that in Pohnpei, each person prepared a dish with small samples they could give out. Maybe Palau could do something like this. Choose something that you can focus on over a six month period.

-Farmers, Chefs, Stores need to work together.... Be careful not to focus on just putting on events because it may just end up only being about the events.

-Sisca commented that she can make a pitch to the Tri-org for a culinary program/class or school. Also need to get farmers and chefs together so maybe getting a seasonality guide would be the best way to start.

-Bob Barber offered to help with the layout and to convert our seasonality guide into pdf format.

-Frank – farmers have all of this in their head but not good at putting it on paper, many of you are good at this and can have a meeting over some food and get this done in one meeting.

-Chef Kevin stated he would be honored to do a basic cooking course and would be willing to do this but wouldn't be available to do this until December 2012.

-American Culinary Federation – Hawai'i Chapter. Ken Love is Vice President for this. Forming a chefs' association starts with a phone call. ACF has a mission, goals and by-laws which seem suitable to Palau. Chefs can form a Palau chapter of ACF and/or join MCA.

-PVA may be a local food advocate by featuring farmer-chef presentations at night markets and other special events and by calling a meeting of chefs to form a chef association.