



15 May 2009

MEDIA RELEASE

Earning a Living from Agriculture – Agriculture Ministers Meeting in Niue

Addressing food security issues, making sure farmers are part of the solution to climate change, and countering food and fuel prices in the Pacific are some of the topical development issues that will be high on the agenda during the 8th FAO South West Pacific Ministers for Agriculture's meeting in Niue from 20 to 22 May 2009. The biennial meeting of agriculture ministers from 14 South West Pacific countries will also assess the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations' programmes over the past two years in the Pacific, and identify national and regional agriculture and fisheries priorities for the next two years.

The theme, "**Earning a living from Agriculture**", reflects the need for Pacific people to shift the focus back to their environment, sustainable livelihoods and ensuring quality of life.

Other areas to be discussed during the meeting are the regional programmes for food security in the Pacific, and increasing partnerships with key development agencies such as SPS and IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development).

A communiqué will be adopted by the member states at the end of the meeting outlining priority areas for FAO support in the Pacific.

According to the FAO Sub Regional Representative, Dr Vili Fuavao, "FAO will be focusing on the impact of our assistance to the Pacific Island countries instead of focusing on just implementing activities. Such a result-based approach will further aid us all in determining the effectiveness of our assistance and its value to the villages, communities and countries."

The FAO sub regional office in Samoa (www.faopacific.ws) was set up in 1996 as part of FAO's strategy to have its expertise placed closer to countries and regions where the need is the greatest and also utilise national capacities.

The office coordinates the work of FAO to the Pacific providing timely response for assistance to 14 Pacific Island Countries (Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu).

Ends

For more information, please contact:

Fetika Faafua
Senior Secretary
Food and Agriculture Organization
Ph: (685) 22127
Email: Fetika.faafua@fao.org

Elisapeta Kerslake
Communications Associate
UN Resident Coordinators Office
Ph: (685) 23670
Email: Elisapeta.kerslake@undp.org