

CERTLINK UPDATE December - Innovation through Collaboration - 2012 A Year of Success for Vanuatu

Halo Evriwan,....

Welcome to the final CertLink Update for 2012!

We are delighted at the progress made since the first certification workshop hosted by the Vanuatu Agriculture College in February, and are grateful for the energy and commitment from everyone involved this year.

Certification Successes

The second round of Organic Certification audits for 2012 took place during the first week of December, with an auditor from Australian Certified Organic conducting inspections on:

- **SANMA Community Coconuts** growers group, supported by **World Vision** – 216 smallholder growers, 311 plots of land, over 408 hectares
- **Coconut Oil Production Santo Ltd (COPSL)** – Vanuatu's largest agricultural processor
- **Plantation Russet du Vanuatu (PRV) Norsup & Bushmans Bay** – at a total of 1550 ha, Vanuatu's largest coconut plantation and one of the largest cacao plantations

Certification of these operations for Australian and US NOP organic status is expected to be finalised in early 2013 – a huge achievement!

The third round of multi-certification inspections – [Organic](#), [Rainforest Alliance](#) & [UTZ](#) - is planned for the beginning of **March 2013**, to include the Vanuatu Organic Cocoa Growers Association (VOCGA) and [INIK/Tanna Island Coffee](#) producers and the organic certification renewal audit for Vanuatu Virgin Coconut Oil Ltd (VVCOL) mill. If any other businesses are interested in applying for one or more of these certification streams please [contact us](#) for support and cost-sharing information.

Recent Activities

We are excited to announce that the **Vanuatu Agriculture College (VAC)** has committed to supporting the CertLink System through education, training and data collection services across the country. Norah Rihai will be the lead trainer for the program, and VAC and their students will coordinate the data requirements for the different departments and partners as they come on stream.

During December productive meetings were held with the **Departments of Livestock and Agriculture** to clarify existing baseline data & formats, establish which crops/products/commodities are to be tracked & traced, and the specific KPIs to be monitored using the CertLink system. Funding is currently being sought for 6 month pilot projects to establish baseline data management on CertLink subportals, to be followed by the set up of stand-alone, web-based departmental portals and ongoing data management. Discussions are also underway with the **Department of Trade & Industry** to develop a similarly structured pilot and clarify KPIs in the value-add and trade/export aspects of the value chain. We are also discussing with stakeholders within the **Meteorological Office** about including **Climate Change** information in all aspects of agricultural data collection, which would allow objective evaluation of climate change strategy and is a truly exciting development.

We are looking forward to working together with these and additional organisations during 2013 and beyond to achieve our Vision that “By 2015, Vanuatu to be lead innovator in small scale agricultural management systems...Globally”.

The CertLink team have also been liaising with staff at Australian Certified Organic to ensure that operations located in Vanuatu certified by ACO will be included under their **EU equivalency** accreditation. This represents a big step forward in organic market access for affected operators.

CertLink Training

September – VOCGA, Rensarie - With the support of **TRR** and the **Department of Agriculture**, CertLink and the **Vanuatu Agriculture College** conducted a workshop at the [Rensarie Telecentre](#), Malekula on 20th & 21st September. Local Network Facilitators from the six Vanuatu Organic Cocoa Growers Association (VOCGA) cooperatives surrounding Rensarie attended, along with representatives from the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Forestry. A follow up meeting is due to take place this week to support progress of VOCGA’s reapplication for organic certification in early 2013.

Upcoming – Planning is underway for a number of CertLink workshops during early 2013 for datashare partners and pilot program participants. If your organisation is interested in utilising the CertLink data management system please [contact us](#) for further details.

Certification and Organics in the News:

- [World Vision assists South Santo local farmers](#)
- [Bhutan aims to be first 100% organic nation](#)
- [Hersheys chocolates commits to sourcing 100% certified cocoa by 2020](#)
- [Australian Organic Market Report - The dynamic organic industry in Australia](#)
- [Beef leads the charge on Certified Organic food growth](#)
- [Organics marketing meshes well with Fair Trade certified programs](#)

CertLink Data Insights – December 2012

As an example, based on grower numbers for the SANMA Community Coconuts group - 216 smallholder growers, 311 plots of land, 408 hectares - some rough calculations suggest:

	Dry Copra	Organic Green Copra
Yield	1t/ha	2t/ha
Current Price to Grower	18 000+ vt/t	25 000+ vt/t
Cost of Production	12 500 vt/t	6 250 vt/t
Margin	5 500 vt/t	18 750 vt/t
Net Revenue per Hectare	5 500 vatu	37 500 vatu
Revenue across 408ha	2.2 million vatu	15.3 million vatu

This is a potential **seven-fold increase** in community earnings through production of certified organic green copra for virgin coconut oil! However, the true advantages does not come from one method of production exclusively over another, but that the average yield of both production methods combined, can increase both return and output for growers as well as mitigating long terms risk by supplying various processing methods. Revenue stability is key to Sustainable Development and success.

We welcome your feedback, comments and suggestions and encourage you to [join our NuiData Public Outreach Community](#) to keep up to date as CertLink develops. Please feel free contact us [here](#), or forward the email to any interested parties.

Wishing you your wishes...plus a safe, relaxing festive season and a happy & healthy 2013 from the CertLink Team

*CERTLINK - Innovating Vanuatu Agriculture through Data & Information Coordination.
Our Vision – “By 2015, Vanuatu to be lead innovator in small scale agricultural management systems...Globally”*

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