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AGRIBUSINESS MARKET AND SUPPORT ACTIVITY  
*'Helping Indonesia to Grow'*



## New Fish Collecting Boat in Kokonao

Beginning in January 2010, the nine-ton boat provided by PADA will be used to travel to different villages along the coast so that the Cooperative can buy fish directly from fishermen.

*read full article on page 2*



## AMARTA Launches New 2010 Activities in North Sumatera

From January 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup>, AMARTA visited demonstration plots and government officials in the Karo Highlands and Deli Serdang.

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AMARTA website is now ONLINE. Visit [www.amarta.net](http://www.amarta.net)

### Report from JAKARTA

## AMARTA Cocoa Training Video Instituted through Government of Indonesia Program



*Mr. Rizki Muis, the Director of Fruit and Herbal Plant Cultivation hands over GERNAS's publication to AMARTA*

In an effort to improve the capacity, knowledge, and skills of cocoa farmers, AMARTA officially launched a training video series titled "Cocoa Cultivation" in November 2007. The series consists of several topics, including: 1) cocoa handling techniques (PsPSP); 2) pests and disease control measures; 3) harvest and post-harvest handling; 4) cocoa bean quality; and 5) side grafting for rehabilitation. A total of

12,300 copies have been distributed to farmers groups in several provinces, related partners in the Government of Indonesia (GOI)- such as the Directorate General of Estate Crops, USAID, Indonesian Coffee and Cocoa Research Institute (ICCRI), the Indonesia Cocoa Board, and other stakeholders.

One of AMARTA's main objectives is to provide technical assistance and support for the cocoa value chain in Indonesia, not only for the farmers, but also for the government of Indonesia, private sector actors, and other stakeholders. The ultimate goal is to ensure that the GOI replicates successful pilot initiatives. Furthering this goal, AMARTA approved a written request dated November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009 from Mr. Rizki Muis, the Director of Fruit and Herbal Plant Cultivation of the Estate Crops Directorate General, to reproduce AMARTA's cocoa cultivation video series to be used in the 'National Movement for Improvement of Cocoa Production and Quality' (GERNAS), as the films are considered to be integral to meeting the objectives of GERNAS in improving production and quality. The films will be used for farmers who participated in GERNAS in nine provinces and 40 districts. The video will be distributed to thousands of farmers in Bali, East Nusa Tenggara Central Sulawesi, South Sulawesi, West Sulawesi, Southeast Sulawesi, Maluku, Papua and Papua Barat.

GERNAS was initiated based on the declining productivity of Indonesian cocoa in the last five years. The decline was quite significant from 1,100 kg/ha/year to 600 kg/ha/year, or 45%. The change was due to several factors including old trees, poor quality clones used, and prevalence of pests and diseases such as cocoa pod borer (CPB) and vascular streak dieback (VSD).

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GERNAS will be implemented for three years starting in 2009 through 2011, with the following main activities: rejuvenation, rehabilitation, and intensification. The program hopes to achieve the following results for 450,000 farmers:

1. Improved 450,000 hectares of small-holder cocoa farms
2. Empowerment of farmers through training and assistance
3. Control over cocoa pests and diseases on all farms
4. Improved cocoa quality to meet the Indonesian National Standard (SNI)



On December 17<sup>th</sup>, AMARTA met Mr. Rizki Muis, to receive a copy of the 6,000 reproduced videos made by the Estate Crops Directorate General that will be distributed to participating locations. AMARTA hopes that this excellent cooperation will continue in the future to improve productivity and quality and to provide improved market access, creating better livelihoods for cocoa farmers in Indonesia. It is also AMARTA's expectation

to continue the partnership and to become a reliable source for the DG of Estate Crops and the Department of Agriculture in general, in a common effort to develop an agribusiness system in Indonesia that can provide significant contributions in creating job opportunities, economic growth, and improving people's welfare.

As Mr. Rizki Muis noted, "AMARTA has

*provided a very positive contribution to support the National Movement to Improve Cocoa Production and Quality 2009, by allowing the government to reproduce the videos on cocoa cultivation. We hope this positive cooperation can continue in the future and AMARTA will support other government initiatives."*

*DVD and poster production designed in collaboration with AMARTA and the DG of Estate Crops*

## Report from PAPUA

### New Fish Collecting Boat for Kokonao



The PADA constructed ice factory and cool storage facility in Kokonao continues to provide the Maria Bintang Laut Cooperative significant advantages over traders in the coastal area of Mimika Regency. Before the facility was built local traders purchased fish from native fishermen at a very low price. Currently, the Cooperative is buying barramundi fish at Rp8,000 per kg and Rp5,000 per kg for mixed fish. The other seafood traders had no choice but to

purchase fish at the Cooperative's price level to continue their supply and remain in business.

Due to the new prices set by the Cooperative Maria Bintang Laut, the seafood traders developed a new strategy where they sail up and down the coast to different local villages in order to buy fish directly from local fishermen. The traders are quite successful because they are able to pay a lower price

since they pay with cash at the village. In addition, they literally save the fishermen's time, energy, and fuel that would otherwise be spent to transport their catch to the ice factory in Kokonao. As a result, fish supplied to the Cooperative has decreased.

To respond to this challenge, PADA provided a new nine ton boat to Maria Bintang Laut. Training will also be conducted to build two fiberglass ice tanks to be installed inside the boat to transport ice. Beginning in January 2010, the boat will be used to travel periodically to different villages along the coast so that the Cooperative can also buy fish directly from the fishermen. In addition, AMARTA-PADA will assist the Cooperative to build satellite ice shelters at points that are far from the Kokonao ice factory. The shelters will serve as points of transaction where fishermen can stockpile their fish and a Cooperative boat can stop and help collect the fish. This will save the fishermen time and energy. Eventually, the hope is to increase the supply of fish at the Cooperative and help maintain a fair price for local fishermen.

*New fish collection boat for Kokonao*

## Report from JAKARTA

### Cupping 10 Coffee Samples from Gayo Highland



SCAI Gayo coffee cupping event

On December 10<sup>th</sup>, the Specialty Coffee Association of Indonesia (SCAI) conducted a cupping of 10 Aceh Gayo Arabica coffees, following previous cuppings of Lintong and Sidikalang coffees. These samples were acquired from 10 different regions of Belang Gele Village, Mude Bahagie, Gele Wehilang, Bergendel, Bukit Pepanyi, Jongok Meleuw, Suka Damai Village, Puten Luwas, Tebuk Penawat, and Pondok Gajah. The objective of this testing was to compare the flavor, quality, and characteristics of the coffees that were produced in the same region, though at different altitudes. Determining subtle distinctions can only be made through cupping practices that adhere to set standards and requirements utilized throughout the world:

**First**, the coffee must be roasted at a medium level to ensure that coffee aromas and flavors are fully extracted. **Second**, a measurement of 10 grams of coffee for every 150 ml of water

must be mixed. Afterwards, the dry coffee powder is inhaled for its fragrance. Hot water is then poured over the coffee and is left to stand for four minutes to ensure production of special aromas that can be detected only when the coffee surface is broken. **The final step** is to taste the coffee to detect other attributes such as flavor, acidity, and uniformity.

From the ten tested Aceh Gayo coffees, four have relatively high acidity, and, in general, the coffees have a spicy note due to the influence of the surrounding environment of pepper and spice plantations.

In January, SCAI will conduct a similar testing on Flores coffee, in cooperation with Indonesian Coffee and Cocoa Research Institute (ICCRI) which is also a member of SCAI. The activity also serves as a calibration activity for Indonesia Q-graders.

## Report from NORTH SUMATERA

### Deli Serdang Barangan Banana Community Alliance Receives Support from the Deli Serdang District Office of Food Security



The Deli Serdang Barangan Banana Community Alliance has become a partner of the Deli Serdang District Government in determining programs and policies related to the development of barangan bananas in the district. The Alliance was appointed as a barangan banana certification organization that graded quality based on flavor, aroma, and color. The District and Provincial Offices of Food Security involved them in a training conducted from December 21<sup>st</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> in Bintang Meriah Village - Lima Mungkur and Namu Serit Village. The certification team consists of representatives

from provincial and district offices of agriculture, provincial and district agencies of food security, and experts on barangan banana from the University of North Sumatera.

As a result of AMARTA's successful training program and dedication to the farmers, the Food Security Office agreed to donate 4,000 protective bags for barangan bananas. The protective bags recommended by the Alliance were identified by AMARTA STTA, Carlos Barquero from the Philippines. The Subur Farmer's Group of Bintang Meriah Village,

already received 1,500 bags through the Alliance that were received directly by the head of the farmers group, Mr. K. Ginting.

Contributions will be distributed in stages to farmers groups that meet the requirements for certification. The bags allow farmers to better handle and maintain their banana farms, and improve post-harvest handling, which ultimately leads to higher quality products worth more money. The Alliance also continues to socialize Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) and Standard Operational Procedure (SOPs) to farmers groups, to ensure that they understand proper handling and maintenance procedures on their banana farms. By applying proper procedures, farmers can reduce their production cost and acquire larger profits from improved quality products.

Next month, AMARTA will produce an SOP films for double row planting technology, to be utilized by the district and provincial offices as a reference for farmers in meeting the requirements for certification.

*AMARTA's David Anderson and Togar Napitupulu pose with Durin Tonggal Demonstration Plot members of the Deli Serdang Barangan Banana Community in Bintang Meriah*

Report from WEST JAVA

## AMARTA Partner Continues to Support Farmers in West Java, an Interview with CV Bimandiri



CV Bimandiri is a fruit and vegetable trading company that supplies modern markets in the area of greater Jakarta and Bandung, with a capacity of eight tons of produce per day. Bimandiri's business development is focused on environmentally safe agriculture, commitment to work together with farmers, empowerment and improvement of farmer groups welfare, and continuous efforts to provide access, especially to modern markets. The company has been in business since 1994, is currently led by the Director, Mr. Ir. Ahmad Rivani, and employs 150 staff. AMARTA began working with Bimandiri in 2007 and has supported the extension of their packing facilities and provided substantial training for farmers who supply the company. The following is an interview with Mr. Ir. Sandrodo, General Manager of Operations, and Mr. Ir. Denny Hidajat.

### Q: What is Bimandiri's role in Horticulture Development in West Java?

A: We are known and respected as a company who is a reliable supplier of vegetables and fruits to modern markets. It is reflected in the acknowledgement and award that we received as "The Best Supplier for PT Carrefour Indonesia, 2005" and "National Award Certification of Food Security as the Leading Company and Entrepreneur of Horticulture from the Department of Agriculture".

One of Bimandiri's roles is to serve as a central buying station for the fresh produce market, where Bimandiri serves as a market guarantor for farmers. The guarantee is also provided for quality at end markets (supermarkets) that our horticulture products will meet the supermarket's requested standards, after going through good quality control processes.

In the district of Garut, which has great potential in vegetables, we constructed a packing house with an initial capacity of one ton per day. With the support of USAID-AMARTA, now we are able to increase the capacity into six tons per day.

### Q: What are Bimandiri's efforts to improve the quality

### and quantity of products and increase farmers' income?

A: Bimandiri's concrete steps are to ensure a good supply level from farmers and local traders. Bimandiri provides assistances in cultivation techniques to increase production with the application of better technology, and works together with agriculture production supplies companies. One initiative is the introduction of a baby black watermelon variety with Syngenta seed, while another is the currently running off-season mango production program.

We also look to continuously improve the business administration chain. We tried to introduce the concept of "transparent margins" to farmers, where they can deliver their products directly to supermarkets that have been accessed by Bimandiri. Farmers have identified the selling price to supermarkets and the profits are shared between Bimandiri and the farmer groups, as arranged in their initial agreement. Another aspect is the creation of a market image, that every product sold by Bimandiri has a guarantee of top quality. It provides market assurance for the farmers' products.

Finally, we are aiming to empower farmer groups to operate the packing house independently. Therefore they can enjoy the results of the value added services. We also tried to decrease the distance between production centers and buying stations in order to create faster delivery time and reduce product damage. That is one of the reasons behind the construction of the packing house in Garut. We hope there will a behavioral change among farmers to be more concerned about the quality of products they produce.

### Q: What are the fundamental problems that Bimandiri faces in running the business? Infrastructure, facility, marketing?

A: There are plenty of problems in running this kind of business. Among others are issues with infrastructures, human resources, limited raw materials, strong competition in markets, changes in customers (buyers) characteristics every year, high cost of transportation, poor

post-harvest handling at the farmers' level, and lack of reliable farmer groups.

The major internal problem in Bimandiri is the lack of infrastructure, incomplete facilities at the packing house, and a lack of cold chain facilities. Those issues made Bimandiri feel unprepared to enter the regional/export markets. Other structural problems are a lack of raw materials (fruits and vegetables) that are specifically grown for Bimandiri by farmer groups. Most of the products are sourced from local traders because there are only a small number of reliable farmer groups that can reliably supply Bimandiri, therefore contracts with growers can not be implemented well.

External problems are stiff competition among suppliers of supermarkets, high marketing costs, including promotion costs, and the increasing rebate value every year.

**Q: What is Bimandiri currently working on with AMARTA?**

A: Since 2007, we have cooperated with AMARTA in providing assistance and empowering farmers, especially in the introduction and application of advanced agriculture technology to farmer groups supplying Bimandiri in Lembang and Garut. We worked on application of cultivation and post-harvest technologies, as well as building the capacity of farmers groups.

**Q: Does Bimandiri currently cooperate with other organizations in the government or private sector, other than AMARTA, in terms of horticulture development in West Java?**

A: There is no concrete cooperation established with the government, so far it is only a concept. AMARTA continues to facilitate discussions with the government and we are confident that we will be able to create a partnership in 2010. We have established cooperation with other private sector organizations, including: Permodalan Nasional Madani (PNM), managing the fund of Program Kemitraan dan Bina Lingkungan (PKBL) of PT Hutama Karya, a state-owned enterprise. PNM serves as Program Manager, Baitul Maal Wa Tamwil (BMT) Rabbani as financial manager, and Bimandiri as market guarantor for farmers groups that were funded by the consortium. We also cooperate with NISP Bank, where the bank provides loans for vegetables and fruits farmer groups that are supplying Bimandiri. In the program Bimandiri acted as a credit guarantor for the farmers groups and market guarantor for products of the farmer groups. We also worked together with Syngenta, where they provided technical assistance in introducing new technology (seeds for baby black watermelon) and Bimandiri provided the market for the product.

**Q: What are the benefits and assistance from AMARTA's activities? What is Bimandiri's strategy to maximize this support?**

A: We experienced direct benefits and assistance from AMARTA's intervention in increasing the capacity of our packing house in Garut from one ton a day to six tons per day. This is a very

AMARTA should expand its coverage to vegetable production centers in Majalengka, Tasikmalaya, and fruit production centers in Cirebon, Indramayu, Majalengka, and Kuningan. The expansion will support our program in increasing the supply of vegetables and fruits.

beneficial partnership for us, considering the challenges we have in infrastructure. It provides a solution for us. There is also development and strengthening of value chains from farmers and suppliers to Bimandiri that have increased the number of farmer groups supplying Bimandiri.

The model that AMARTA implemented in strengthening the value chain and farmers groups is exactly what is required and has helped Bimandiri in building relationships with farmers. We will continue to implement this model as one of our activities in empowering Bimandiri's partner farmers. We currently work with nine farmer groups, representing about 200 farmers and hope to increase that number significantly next year.

**Q: One final question, what kind of lessons learned or workable collaboration should we build between AMARTA and Bimandiri in the future?**

AMARTA should expand its coverage to vegetable production centers in Majalengka, Tasikmalaya, and fruit production centers in Cirebon, Indramayu, Majalengka, and Kuningan. The expansion will support our program in increasing the supply of vegetables and fruits. Also, AMARTA's trainings and interventions should be directed to create behavioral change of farmers or farmer groups, so they can establish a clear oriented business with good profits. We call it a farmer company. We also hope AMARTA can continue to work with the government on providing services and support for farmers in West Java.

*Management of CV Bimandiri, sitting down: Bp. Ir. Ahmad Rivani (Director) standing up left-right: Ir. Sandredo, Ir. Ahmad Hidayat, Ir. Denny Hidayat and Ir. Trisnaran*

*Farmer group partners of Bimandiri, during off-season mango production in cooperation with Syngenta, a private company*

Report from NORTH SUMATERA

## AMARTA Launches New 2010 Activities in North Sumatera



From January 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup>, AMARTA visited field sites and government officials in the Karo Highlands and Deli Serdang.

The trip was intended to re-establish contacts and share the strategy for the final year of implementation with local governments in North Sumatera.

The first event took place in AMARTA's Kabanjahe Office with the Karo Horticulture Community. AMARTA will continue focusing on accessing credit from the Food and Energy Defense Credit Fund facilitated by the government. AMARTA will also provide an on-line library to improve access to information, and will continue training on presentation skills,



lobbying local government in policy advocacy, and broadcasting current horticulture issues on the regularly scheduled local radio station.

The next day started with a visit to the carrot green house in Merdeka Village, Berastagi, Karo Highlands. The Chairman of the Karo Carrot Farmer's Group, Mr. Markasta Sinulingga, and a local extension agent, Mr. Pranseda Pelawi, thanked AMARTA for helping to produce better quality carrot seed locally in the greenhouse

compared to imported seed. AMARTA will continue assisting the organization in receiving certification and transferring technology best management practices. Mr. Markasta stated, "I am pleased that AMARTA came and helped us because we now have a productive carrot green house in our district, thank you."

AMARTA then visited the citrus demonstration plot in Mulawari Village, Tiga Tanah Sub-district. The farmers have implemented good agriculture practices (GAP) and standard operating procedures (SOPs) and as a result, the citrus trees have bloomed with excellent production and sweet tasting fruit.

It is expected that other farmers will replicate the successful citrus pilot project and practices GAP and SOPs in their citrus orchards to improve their quality and yields. Neighboring farmers who planted next to AMARTA's demonstration plot have noticeably lower production as noted by participants.

AMARTA also met the Secretary of Simalungun District, Mr. Mahrum Sipayung, and the Head of the Department of Agriculture in Simalungun Mr. Hamdan Nasution. AMARTA discussed cooperation with the government in an effort to improve the policy environment, as well as the upcoming workshop to create a new farmer alliance in Simalungun.

The next stop was the Deli Serdang Barangan banana demonstration plot in Durin Tonggal Village maintained by the Rinta Farmer's Group, as well as a similar plot in Limau Mungkur Village managed by the Deli Serdang Barangan Banana Community. Observations of the trees identified some sigatoka infected leaves, and a remedy was recommended of deleafing and dehanding the smallest hands on the stem

to encourage bigger banana fingers, and deflowering bananas after they formed.

Participating farmers were extremely excited in joining training activities and learning the double row system, evident in the request of 16,000 culture tissue seeds from female farmer groups. It is expected that AMARTA can collaborate with the local government in providing culture tissue seed.

Based on AMARTA's successful training and cooperation, the local Department of Agriculture donated 4,000 plastic banana bags from the Philippines, 1,500 have already been provided to the Subur Farmer's Group, while the remainder will be distributed in the coming weeks. Mr. Dahlan, Sembiring, a government extension agent, shared his enthusiasm and stated that: "The government will continue to disseminate the banana SOPs from AMARTA as a model for cultivation in Deli Serdang. We will also help farmers in gaining certification of barangan banana products."



AMARTA will also provide a shed at the demonstration plot in Bintang Meriah for hand sorting and training activities. In January, plans are in place for the inauguration of twelve women banana farmer's groups in the Deli Serdang Alliance.

1. Mr. David Anderson, AMARTA COP, explains to extension agents proper green house management

2. AMARTA's demonstration plot in Karo Highland using citrus cultivation's SOP

3. Members of the Deli Serdang Barangan Banana Community in Durin Tonggal

Report from WEST JAVA

## Workshop on Supply Chain Management of Horticulture Exports



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On December 28<sup>th</sup> a workshop was jointly conducted by the Value Chain Center (VCC) AMARTA, LPPM-UNPAD, and PT Alamanda Sejati Utama, a private fruit and vegetable exporting company that is also a founding member of the Fruits and Vegetables Exporters Association of Indonesia (AESBI).

The main goal of AESBI is to increase Indonesian fruits and vegetables exports to regional markets in Singapore, Brunei and the Middle East, especially targeting Singapore. PT Alamanda Sejati Utama is the largest fresh produce exporter to Singapore and has a keen interest in increasing their market share. To acquire and meet the target of increasing Indonesian market share from 6% to 10%, PT Alamanda requested the VCC design and establish a supply chain management (SCM) scheme for horticulture.

The workshop is intended to improve the West Java horticulture supply chain, to improve the quantity of export products while maintaining reliable quality and continuity of supply. With good SCM, it is expected that by the end of 2010, the new export target of 10% can be met.

During the workshop, AMARTA discussed post-harvest handling and cold chain requirements. In addition, Dr. Yul H. Bahar, Director of Vegetables and Biopharmacy Plants of the DG of Horticulture in the Department of Agriculture, and Dr. Tommy Perdana, expert on SCM for agriculture products from LPPM-UNPAD discussed necessary improvements in the current supply chain. In the subsequent session, a resource person from Rabobank and Rabobank Foundation gave a presentation on agro-finance.

Participants of this workshop are farmers or farmer groups who supply PT Alamanda and those who are potential suppliers, extension agents of PT Alamanda, the West Java Provincial Office of



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Agriculture, the District Office of Agriculture, HPSP, and academic staff from UNPAD.

The workshop opened with a signing of cooperation agreement between UNPAD, represented by the Dean of the University, Dr. Ganjar Kurnia, and PT Alamanda Sejati Utama, represented by Mr. Komar Muljawibawa. This cooperation is intended to improve production of export oriented fruits and vegetables with the participation from farmer groups. Operational implementation of the cooperation is led by VCC-LPPM UNPAD. As a result of the workshop, there is an agreement to conduct a joint activity in improving SCM of export oriented horticulture in West Java.

1-3. A presentation during the workshop

## SUCCESS STORY

### Appropriate Side Grafting Techniques Improve Cocoa Production and Increase Farmers Income



"I'm lucky because AMARTA staff trained and guided us how to apply the correct side grafting techniques and directly demonstrated improvements in the field. I was challenged by the trainer to test the strength of the applied side grafting and I couldn't pull it up, that was very strong. I will apply the technique to my 500 cocoa trees because I have confidence and have seen the results and proof myself.

Thank you USAID/AMARTA, we hope that we will continue to benefit with AMARTA's presence in our village and we can increase our cocoa production for a better future."

*Mr. Ibrahim Dg Pagiling,  
Head of Alipato Village, Ngapa District*

North Kolaka is well-known as the biggest cocoa producing area in Southeast Sulawesi. AMARTA is continuing its program in the region by training 2,500 farmers that joined 100 previously trained, and new, farmer groups in nine out of 15 districts. AMARTA is also continuing to provide technical assistance for cocoa farmers to improve production, quality, pest and disease control, and introducing transparent market accessibility.

Today, almost all cocoa farmers are focusing on rehabilitation, replanting, and intensification of their cocoa trees. In conjunction with farmer's activities, the AMARTA training program is introducing garden evaluations to help understand the existing problems, followed by developing workable solutions to provide recommendations for cocoa garden improvement.

Side grafting and replanting techniques are crucial. Many farmers are disappointed because poorly grafted trees collapse after they produce high yields, as the grafts fall down under the heavy weight of cocoa pod production. AMARTA training has provided the courage to farmers in applying the appropriate side grafting techniques. Having enough confidence by knowing the appropriate techniques, has empowered the farmer's and improved their cocoa production and increased their income.

*"Sometimes I felt disappointed and almost desperate because my side grafting techniques always failed. I'm lucky because AMARTA staff trained and guided us how to apply the correct side grafting techniques and directly demonstrated improvements in the field. I was challenged by the trainer to test the strength of the applied side grafting and I couldn't pull it up, that was very strong. I will apply the technique to my 500 cocoa trees because I have confidence and have seen the results and proof myself. Thank you USAID/AMARTA, we hope that we will continue to benefit with AMARTA's presence in our village and we can increase our cocoa production for a better future,"* said Mr. Ibrahim Dg Pagiling, Head of Alipato Village, Ngapa District, North Kolaka.

*Mr. Ibrahim Dg Pagiling, Head of Alipato Village, observes side grafting techniques demonstrated by AMARTA*

## SUCCESS STORY

### Banana Training Entrepreneur Establishes His Own Nursery Business



Mr. Mambar Sembiring, is a 52 year old banana farmer with a wife and five children. Since 1990 he has actively followed the agricultural trainings conducted by the Indonesian Agriculture Department. In 2000, he obtained extension agent certification from the local agriculture department. So great was the learning spirit of Mr. Sembiring, that when AMARTA introduced new technology in 2007 he was one of the first to volunteer to participate and immediately began implementing recommended enhancements.

In mid-2008, he was hired by AMARTA as a field trainer and due to the basic knowledge and motivation he obtained from AMARTA and the Department of Agriculture, he has now started his own banana nursery businesses under the name Mandiri Agro Nursery, licensed by the Department of Agriculture of Deli Serdang. Mr. Sembiring now sells products consisting of seed followers and seedlings from tissue culture. Seeds are marketed under the supervision of UPT BPSB-IV in North Sumatera.

In accordance with the knowledge he possessed after training from the Department of Agriculture and AMARTA, Mr. Sembiring prefers using tissue culture seedlings rather than using field suckers, based on superior results.

Nevertheless, Mr. Sembiring faced a major obstacle in establishing his business due to a lack of capital. He could not afford to pay for all of the tissue culture seed from farmers. Furthermore, many of the farmers chose to continue to buy sucker due to the cheaper price. Banana seed ranges from Rp2,000 to Rp2,500 for non-labeled suckers. For labeled suckers prices range from Rp3,000 to Rp3,500, while for culture tissue seed the cost is Rp7,500 per stem.

After finding funding and proving the value of the higher quality

seed, Mr. Sembiring has seen his business flourish. He gains a profit of Rp500 per stem for seed sucker and Rp1,000 stem for tissue culture seed. He believes that he can run his business efficiently in the future since, in addition to selling sucker and culture tissue seed, he is also conducting planting training for his customers at three different times: before, during, and after planting.

Mr Sembiring noted: *"Thank you very much to USAID/AMARTA for giving me banana cultivation training and also for giving me the opportunity as a field trainee so that I can run my own business."*

*"Thank you very much to USAID/AMARTA for giving me banana cultivation training and also for giving me the opportunity as a field trainee so that I can run my own business."*

*Mr. Sembiring, banana farmer*

1. Mr. Mambar (second from left) with training participants
2. Pastor of Pancur Batu GBKP, one of banana tissue culture seed buyer

## SUCCESS STORY

### AMARTA Provides First Cocoa Training for Farmers After 20 Years of Efforts



“We hope after attending this training our cocoa production will increase in quantity and quality. We are already seeing more cocoa pods with higher quality and know that we will earn more money than before.”

*Mr. Winastra, cocoa farmer*

Banjar Cepaka is a village in Gadung Sari, Selemadeg Timur, Tabanan, Bali where a majority of the inhabitants are cocoa farmers. They own about one ha per farmer, and have been cultivating cocoa for more than 20 years. Because of limited knowledge, the production of their cocoa yield was marginal, approximately 250 - 300 kg per ha per year.

I Nyoman Winastra is a 37 year old farmer that has gained a tremendous benefit from AMARTA’s training. His family depends entirely on the cocoa yield for income. Mr. Winastra said that AMARTA’s training is the first training in cocoa management that he has ever attended. He has never received training before so he farmed his cocoa garden using traditional practices without adequate knowledge. “We have thought of doing pruning based on our neighbor’s suggestion, but we were confused which part of the cocoa tree must be pruned. We don’t have any knowledge about cocoa pruning and handling, so we just left the garden as the way it was. We came to the garden only for harvesting when the cocoa was ripe.” Mr. Winastra said.

With help and assistance from AMARTA, he and other cocoa farmers are continually learning new techniques and, methods to improve their gardens. The participants are extremely happy because they have gained knowledge about maintenance, handling, and harvesting their cocoa. “We hope after attending this training our cocoa production will increase in quantity and quality. We are already seeing more cocoa pods with higher quality and know that we will earn more money than before,” Mr. Winastra said with an optimistic smile.

*Mr. Winastra in front of his improved cocoa garden*

## SUCCESS STORY

### Learning in the Field: AMARTA's Citrus Field Schools Provide Practical Training Solutions



AMARTA socializes citrus technology packages in North Sumatera by conducting direct field training for villagers in citrus “field schools”. The hands-on methodology takes learning out of a classroom environment and into the field where theoretical lessons can be directly applied to trees. The practical application allows farmers to analyze pests and diseases that have infected their citrus, then they can compare the situation in their citrus fields with others fields and exchange ideas interactively with other farmers from other villages. The program allows participants to see demonstration plots in locations outside their village and explore successful interventions.

There are currently three “field schools” in three different villages; Seberaya, Dokan, and Kandibata. In each village, participants were trained in skills based on frequent problems they faced in the field. The exercises took place in small groups where each group was given some citrus and identified problems, then developed recommendations and solutions to improve production. As a result of this active engagement with farmers in the field, AMARTA has seen dramatic results of increased yields and quality, translating into higher income for farmers in North Sumatera.

The practical application allows farmers to analyze pests and diseases that have infected their citrus, then they can compare the situation in their citrus fields with others fields and exchange ideas interactively with other farmers from other villages.

1. The citrus field school in Mulawari Village, North Sumatera
2. A farmer in Mulawari Village identifies diseases that infected a citrus tree during training

## AMARTA Activities in January - February



**AMARTA**

AGRIBUSINESS MARKET AND  
SUPPORT ACTIVITY

'Helping Indonesia to Grow'

### January 4<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup>

ASKA Sulawesi & SKA Bali Training: Socialization and garden evaluation training for 180 FGs

### January 11<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup>

Banana cultivation socialization using double row system under new nursing technology in North Sumatera

### January 11<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup>

ASKA Sulawesi & Bali: Group strengthening and follow up program for 180 FGs on garden evaluations

### January 12<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup>

Citrus Training: soil and citrus pest and disease control in North Sumatera

### January 13<sup>th</sup>

West Java Agribusiness Action Group/Value Chain Centre (VCC): Workshop on Marketing and Financing for Sub Terminal Agribusiness at VCC- LPPM Unpad, Bandung, West Java

### January 14<sup>th</sup>

SCAI: Coffee Q Grader meeting in Jakarta

### January 14<sup>th</sup>

Banana training using demoplot in Durin Tonggal Village, North Sumatera

### January 15<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup>

SKA Bali: Facilitating collaboration between PT OLAM and AMARTA FGs in Bali

### January 15<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup>

ASKA Sulawesi & SKA Bali: Baseline survey in North Kolaka, East Luwu, North Luwu, Polman, Jembrana and Tabanan District

### January 15<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup>

ASKA Sulawesi & SKA Bali: Demoplot preparation in North Kolaka, East Luwu, North Luwu, Polman, Jembrana dan Tabanan District

### 2<sup>nd</sup> week of January

Completion of new office and coffee hand sorting facility for PADA grantee Cooperative Baliem Arabica in Wamena, Papua

### 2<sup>nd</sup> week of January

Contract signing between Cooperative Baliem Arabica and Yayasan Bina Utama Mandiri in Wamena, Papua

### January 16<sup>th</sup>

Banana cultivation socialization using double row system under new nursing technology in Ajibaho Village, North Sumatera

### January 16<sup>th</sup>

West Java Agribusiness Action Group/VCC: Workshop on Marketing and Product Development for Organic Vanilla at VCC-LPPM Unpad, Bandung, West Java

### January 18<sup>th</sup>

Citrus Field day: Demoplot in Tiga Panah and Kandibata Karo District, North Sumatera

### January 18<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup>

ASKA Sulawesi & SKA Bali: Training for 360 FGs with GAP training in cocoa pruning techniques and sanitation

### January 19<sup>th</sup>

RACA Workshop in "Improving Competitiveness Value Chain of Agriculture Coffee and Horticulture in North Sumatera"

### January 19<sup>th</sup>

RACA: Working agreement between AMARTA and Simalungun Local Government in Simalungun District, North Sumatera

### January 21<sup>st</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup>

Citrus Training: soil and citrus pest and disease control in Lau Riman Village, North Sumatera

### January 22<sup>nd</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup>

Banana ToT and training using demoplot in Sembahe and Bintang Meriah Village, North Sumatera

### 3<sup>rd</sup> week of January

Cooperative Baliem Arabica signs an agreement with Amungme Roasting in Wamena, Papua

### 3<sup>rd</sup> week of January

Completion of a nine ton boat granted to Cooperative Maria Bintang Laut in Papua

### January 27<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup>

Citrus Training: soil and citrus pest and disease control in North Sumatera

### January 28<sup>th</sup>

SCAI: Coffee Cupping with SCAI members in Ginsco café, Jakarta

### 4<sup>th</sup> week of January

ToT/Facilitator on Farm Management for Development of Fruits and Vegetable Supply Chain Management for Export Market at LPPM Unpad, Bandung, West Java

### February 1<sup>st</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup>

ASKA Sulawesi & SKA Bali: Group strengthening and follow up program for 360 FGs

### February 1<sup>st</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup>

ASKA Sulawesi & SKA Bali: Establish Demo plot in in North Kolaka, East Luwu, North Luwu, Polman, Jembrana and Tabanan District

### 1<sup>st</sup> week February

Baliem Arabica Cooperative begins coffee buying in Baliem Valley, Papua

### 1<sup>st</sup> week February

Construction of ice bunkers in four selected points begin in Kokonao, Papua

### February 9<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup>

Citrus Training: Soil and citrus pest and disease control in Ujung Teran and Guru Singa Village, Karo District, North Sumatera

### February 9<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup>

Banana cultivation socialization using double row system under new nursing technology in North Sumatera

### 2<sup>nd</sup> week of February

Training on Vegetables Seed Nursery House Management for Bimandiri's FG at Bimandiri Packing House in West Java

### February 15<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup>

Banana ToT for Agricultural Extension in Durin Tunggal and Perpanden Village Deli Serdang District, North Sumatera

### February 16<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup>

Citrus Training: Soil and citrus pest and disease control in North Sumatera

### 3<sup>rd</sup> week of February

Training on Farm Management for Dirgantara and As-syifa FG in Garut, West Java

### February 23<sup>rd</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup>

Citrus Field day: Demoplot in Tiga Panah and Kandibata, Dokan and Perteguhén, Karo District, North Sumatera

### 4<sup>th</sup> week of February

Training on tomato production with plastic covers in Garut, West Java

### 4<sup>th</sup> week February

Selection of location and construction begin for fish processing facility in Kokonao, Papua

### 4<sup>th</sup> week February

Continued harvesting of rice in Aramsolki Village, Agimuga, Papua