Eleven taro varieties were on put on a tasting trial as the country commemorated the World Food Day. Taro is also the chosen crop given top recognition with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) marking 2009, as the Year of the Taro.

Dr. Vili Fuavao the FAO Subregional Representative to the Pacific delivered on behalf of the FAO’s Director General, Dr Jacques Diouf his special message for Samoa emphasising on achieving food security in times of crisis. This message also conveyed the Director General’s personal and of FAO’s solidarity with the Government and the people of Samoa in the aftermath of the natural disaster and in dealing with the devastation that resulted from the tsunami.

But for the School of Agriculture and Food Technology (SAFT), World Food Day for this year and being the “Year of the Taro” was the opportunity to give our people a taste of the new taro varieties being developed through its SPC/USP/MAF Taro Improvement Project (TIP).

Several people who participated in the opening ceremony of this special event including the Prime Minister Honorable Tuilaepa Malielegaoi took part in the survey to identify the variety that tastes the best.

Of the 11 varieties tasted, 10 were from Cycle 7 and one was from Cycle 5 of the same project that had been planted by an outside farmer.

Cycle 7 according to Tolo Iosefa the Coordinator of the TIP refers to the number of breeding process of taro that has taken place.

According to Tolo seven varieties had the taste score of very good. The variety with the yellow flesh had a score of 3.8 out of 4, bordering excellent in taste.

Further tasting trials will be carried out to improve on these preliminary evaluation results.
Alafua Campus joins tsunami scientific investigation in Samoa

Ioane Malaki - SAFT

SP’s Alafua Campus played host to the International Tsunami Survey Team (ITST). The team included experts from Australia, New Zealand, USA, Japan, Canada, Indonesia, Tahiti, Fiji, Canada, El Salvador, USP’s School of Agriculture and Food Technology (SAFT) as well as local Samoan scientists from Government Ministries and National University. Professor Randolph Thaman of USP was Co-Leader together with Dale Dominey-Howes of the Australian Centre for Tsunami Research at the University of New South Wales.

The main report of the investigation is being finalized but an interim report of findings has already been submitted to the Government as promised in the initial stages of consultations. The team was based at USP’s Alafua Campus and made daily reconnaissance to the affected areas for observations.

The impact of the tsunami was mainly on food gardens around the villages in coastal areas but those on higher grounds were safe.

The destruction of important food plants such as taro, giant taro, banana, yam, pineapple and vegetables in the backyard gardens were due to seawater inundation and the tremendous physical power of the waves. From a food security viewpoint, a useful lesson for other communities living on the coastal plains is to make sure that permanent food gardens that supply subsistence food must be cultivated inland on higher ground away from the coast.

The food aid assistance from the government and other organisations is complementing crops and livestock lost during the livestock. This allows members to concentrate on the more pressing and urgent needs of recovery, especially in the rebuilding of houses, those destroyed and those being relocated inland, and accessing essentials such as water, sanitation facilities and electricity.

The residents in the worst affected areas are adamant to relocate inland on higher ground permanently although they will still rebuild some structures on the coast to maintain some presence there. For those who saw, battled and survived the tsunami, there definitely is a deep fear of the awesome destructive power of this natural phenomenon. As one survivor put it “I know it because I saw it”.

Team of scientists including SAFT staff members being briefed. Head of State, His Highness Tuiatua Tupua Tamasese Efi (right foreground) is in attendance (Photo: I.Malaki)

The Ecology and Environment Team (EET) made up mostly of USP (Suva and SAFT Alafua Campus) and Samoan government scientists planning the daily tsunami survey strategy. EET studies the marine and terrestrial environments of tsunami affected areas (Photo: I.Malaki)

The remains of a house around the coastal area of Lalomanu (Photo: I.Malaki)
Paula Tuione and Ramona Sulifoa, two of SAFT’s master students, presented seminars at Alafua Campus recently to explain their research topics and proposals they are now undertaking as partial fulfillment of their master’s program.

Ramona Sulifoa is studying the Canarium Nut. She explained that the nut has been used in the Solomon Islands for many years and important to them in their culture, medicines and as a source of income in the villages.

Some commercialization efforts involving the export of the nut in the past were unfortunately not successful due to supply, management and marketing problems that did not allow the industry to grow.

As a result, Ramona has set herself the task of addressing these supply and marketing issues which she hopes will set the foundation for future planning and policies so that this industry based on Canarium Nut can grow and flourish. Information obtained from the study will also help identify other areas where research is needed to promote the industry.

Paula Tuione is interested in land use patterns of smallholder farmers in his home country Fiji. He is studying how smallholder farmers are currently using their lands in order to understand and identify their optimal uses.

At the end of the study, he hopes to suggest policy options that would improve the land use patterns of smallholder farmers.

DAL organises World Food Day 2009 for PNG

The Department of Agriculture and Livestock (DAL), in collaboration with local authorities and stakeholders, organized the three days celebrations in observance of World Food Day.

World Food Day coincided with World Hunger Day and World Poverty Day and the celebration was held in the Manus Islands.

However World Food Day is an annual event, which is observed internationally and for 2009 it was scheduled for the 16th October. DAL organized a wide range of activities including agricultural displays, information sharing and traditional performances by schools, public and private sector organisations, institutions, farmer groups and individuals. This year’s theme is “Achieving Food Security in Times of Crisis”.

DAL Secretary Anton Benjamin said this year’s theme reminds the world during the global economic crisis that not everyone works in offices and factories.

This crisis is affecting small-scale farms of the world where majority of the world’s hungry live and work. Mr Benjamin said food and fuel prices are hitting the poor who have already exhausted their savings to buy food.

“We are reminded on how the economic crisis is affecting developing countries, how they can protect the most vulnerable from hunger and how investment could shockproof the agriculture sector against future crisis and even enable farmers to profit from higher prices”, he said.

“On the occasion of the World Food Day, we should look at ways to reduce hunger. Crisis or no crisis, we have the know-how to do something about hunger.

We also have the ability to find money to...”
Wave force and saltwater damage food plants in Tsunami affected villages

Ioane Malaki - SAFT

Agricultural crops in the tsunami affected areas of Upolu from Saleaumua in the northeast round the east coast at Lepa and along the southwest to Siumu were badly affected by the by saltwater inundation and physical forces exerted by the fast moving waves.

Taro, taamu and banana which make up the bulk of the daily food staples were all destroyed in seawater run-up areas. All taro and taamu that had been inundated had died but new shoots were starting to emerge. With taro, corms that were sampled were starting to rot even though new shoots were appearing suggesting that complete recovery was not possible and should have been consumed after the first week following the tsunami.

Most of these were planted near residences in the coastal plains mostly in the backyards. This was very evident in Lalomanu and Saleapaga where access to inland areas was severely hindered by an extremely steep escarpment forming a natural barrier one to two hundred metres from the seashore. Other affected crops included yams, pineapples, sugarcane and vegetables.

Only the tree crops seemed to have fared better although at varying degrees. The coconuts received the least damage which were confined mostly to those uprooted at the water line due to wave erosion of sand and soil at the root zone and to a lesser extent some young trees whose stems had been snapped by the strength of the waves.

Damage to breadfruit trees and mangoes were mostly manifested as defoliation of leaves and broken branches although many were already starting to recover, evidenced by new shoots that were starting to reappear, especially in breadfruit. Those that did not seem to have recovered were growing in low lying areas where standing seawater was still present two weeks after inundation.

Defoliated breadfruit trees in inundated area at Saleaumua (Photo: I.Malaki)

Taro plants in the inundated foreground are sprouting new shoots-Saleaumua Primary School garden (Photo: I.Malaki)
Plastic mulching ideal for one pineapple farmer

The Pacific Produce Limited (PPL) owned by Pater Kjaer is one of a kind estate that shows the best utilisation of farming technology, and other farm management practices. The whole estate is spread with pineapple plants in an area whose panoramic views are as sweet as the fruit itself.

Mr Kjaer is originally from Denmark but has been residing in Fiji and maintaining his pineapple business for the past 20 years. He specifically produces the crop for the hotel industry.

Mr Kjaer said that due to economic crisis worldwide as well as the declining number of tourists production has also declined. With increasing cost of production Mr Kjaer opted for cost effective measures so that he can easily adjust in times of uncertainty.

He opted for planting pineapples under plastic mulching. For him plastic mulching technology is not new method of crop cultivation; in fact he has been using it for the past five years. “Plastic mulching technology is most efficient for pineapple farming as well as it is one of the efficient methods of farm management,” said Mr Kjaer.

Plastic mulching contributes towards efficiency of field management such as reducing weed, irrigation time and infestation of pests as well as increases fertilizer and water utilisation on field.

He believes instead of using too much money on weedicides, weeding and watering, the same amount of money could be used to cater for other expenses but then he added plastic mulching will incur some plastic expenses also. “In this case we opted to increase our planting density that is the number of plants per acre. Before we had 16,000 plant and now we are planting 22,000 plants per acre.

In Fiji there are three common varieties of pineapple. These include Ripley Queen, Smooth Cayenne and Waimama. Smooth Cayenne is bigger in size, has soft leaves and yields higher compared to Ripley Queen but Ripley Queen is sweeter. Waimama is a local variety which is a cross between the two varieties.

Using different planting materials will give different harvesting time. Using crown as planting material will take up to 18 – 20 months, suckers and slips will give fruit in 12 -15 months while using plantlets which is produced in nursery takes 12 – 15 months to get ready for harvest.

“We always have to ensure that all the different minerals and nutrients required for the sugar ratio into the produce is arranged so that the quality and taste is accepted for the tourist market,” he said.

“We produce Ripley Queen as it has the something to do with the sugar acid ratio hence there is more demand for the produce as the tourists prefer the sweet one,” he added. “For example the pineapple sugar ratio is something to do with potassium and magnesium so we have to make sure the plants get the needed minerals.”

Mr Kjaer said under the plastic mulching technology the soil temperature increases which enhances the growth since it prefers hot season. As well as the soil does not collapse hence more suitable for pineapple farming.

“Initially I used plastic mulching as a trial with the plants not mulched with same amount of fertiliser and other inputs hence the growth is simply less,” he added. “Without using the technology one can yield five to eight tonnes per acre but with the application of plastic mulching I am harvesting 20 tonnes per acre”.

Mr Kjaer said that mostly they produce their crops in off season in order to remain ahead of other farmers in this business because in main season pineapple gets flooded and we get less value.

“It has been noticed that for the past three years the season for pineapples has started early and finished early whereas usually the season starts in mid of November,” he added.

“As the fruiting season approaches the Ripley Queen variety will mature first then the Waimama and then the Smooth Cayenne fruits. So as the season ends by February we have to get the Off-season fruits ready”.

---

Monika Mala - Fiji Ministry of Primary Industries
Emergency veterinary drugs to control intestinal worms in sheep and goats have arrived in Fiji and distributed to all agriculture offices in the country.

Director for Animal Health & Production Division Mr. Shiu Chand said the anthelmintic drugs Fenbendazole and Levicare were air-freighted last Friday as an emergency measure.

“This is to address the current shortage of drenching drugs and to await the arrival of the main shipment sometimes later next month”, Mr. Chand said.

“We have already distributed the drugs and they are now available at all our vet clinics located in agriculture offices in the Northern, Western, Central and Eastern Divisions”, he added.

Mr. Chand cautioned farmers that the drugs alone are not the solution to addressing worm infestations in animals and they should rotate the use of the drugs to avoid animals developing resistance.

“Farmers should have in place good husbandry practices to minimize drug use in control of intestinal worm problem in their animals and one way to do this is to feed the animals with medicated urea molasses blocks (MUMB) which is nutritional base and also has drugs to control worms”.

“Another is the use of rotational grazing to break the worm’s life cycle and reduce worm burden in goat and sheep”.

“Farmers must follow good husbandry and management practices to avoid loss of animals and minimize use of drugs as much as possible”.
FAO discusses food crisis in Rome

Kamlesh Prakash Fiji Ministry of Primary Industries

About 300 international experts met at the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in Rome to discuss recent food crisis affecting certain parts of the world and how to make sure that they have enough to eat 40 years from now.

FAO Director General Jacques Diouf said that over the next four decades, the world’s population will grow by 2.3 billion people.

“Meeting the demand of the world’s 9.1 billion inhabitants in 2050 will require 70 percent more food than we currently produce”, Mr. Diouf said.

“Unless we take the right decision today, we risk finding the global cupboard dangerously bare tomorrow”, he added.

Mr. Diouf pointed out that the world food situation must be addressed with the growing challenge of climate change which may reduce potential agricultural output by up to 30 per cent in Africa and by 21 percent in developing countries.

This he said will be further exacerbated by trans-boundary animal and plant pests and diseases.

“At the same time, the sector will have to cope with smaller agricultural labour force as some 600 million people move from the countryside to the cities, and with increased competition for land and natural resources, including the bio-energy sector”.

Mr. Diouf stressed that how we respond to these challenges will determine how well we can feed the world tomorrow.

“As the rural and farm population is reduced, agriculture will increasingly become more capital- and knowledge-intensive to produce more and higher quality food for bigger and richer urban populations”.

“Therefore substantial investments will be needed, including in research and development because future production increases must overwhelmingly come from sustainable yield increases and improved cropping intensity rather than bringing more land into cultivation”.

This will mean that farmers need to be better trained to take up new methods and technologies and investing on education and agricultural extension.

He also emphasised that feeding everyone in 2050 will require poverty reduction strategies, social safety nets for both poor producers and consumers and rural development programmes.

“It will need better governance and the establishment of the kind of socio-economic conditions that improve people’s access to food’.

High yields of organic rice production using SRI

Organic Federation of Australia

The adoption of simple and improved organic practices continues to show that organic systems can feed the world. SRI stands for the System of Rice Intensification and is a cultivation system that is ideally suited to organic production.

SRI can out yield many of the current conventional rice production systems in developing countries. Rice is an important food staple with hundreds of millions of the world’s small holder farmers cultivating it.

Researchers at Cornell University in the USA reported: ‘Several different studies in Madagascar, where average rice yields are currently 2 t/ha, have shown that with SRI methods an average yield around 8 tons per hectare (t/ha) is attainable. High yields are in the 12-15 t/ha range, while some low yields of 3-4 t/ha.’

‘Maximum yields, obtained with the most skillful use of SRI techniques and after soil quality has been improved by good management methods, are in the range of 15-20 t/ha, and a few farmers have topped 20 t/ha.’

The method is now being adopted in rice growing areas of Asia such as Cambodia with similar results.

Most significantly SRI uses between 25 to 50% less water than traditional paddy systems.

SRI shows that there are low cost ways to effectively improve farming yields without the expensive and unnecessary investments in GMO’s and toxic chemicals.
Hermant Prakash believes that every farmer in Taveuni can earn a lucrative income provided there is faith, ability and willingness to farm.

In around five acres of land he has planted dalo producing almost ten tonnes annually. Mr Prakash has grown yaqona in three acres of land and harvests one tonne per annum. “This crop requires intensive care and should be well looked after as if one is raising his own child,” said Mr Prakash.

However he believes that growing yaqona is a tough but interesting farming practise and he has farmed without any machineries.

He starts with clearing of the unused land by spraying it with chemicals and once weeds are removed he prepares land for planting.

“Yaqona plantings which is also known as kasa is planted into the soil and I always ensure that I take extreme care of the two inch plant till it reaches to six feet”

He agrees that yaqona can be harvested from two years and onwards but the best level of maturity is five years. “The older the plant gets the more quality it becomes and the more value we can get out of the crop,” said Mr Prakash. There is no problem of market in Taveuni because it is readily available. Prakash supplies the crop to the middlemen in Taveuni market while he gets the desired value for the crop.

Yaqona crop is planted on his land at different stages of production which is weeded and sprayed on a timely basis. Planting is an ongoing activity on his farm.

Mr Prakash emphasized that chemicals should be used to its minimum level as it can affect the quality of the produce. He ensures that excessive chemical is not applied on the crop but that only recommended amounts are sprayed.

When the plant reaches its third year and gets matured for harvesting he digs it with fork with the help of his labourers and prepares it for his buyers.

As he prepares his crop for the market he separates the waka from the Lewena. Waka is the root portion and Lewena is the stem portion of the crop.

Waka fetches more price as it has more demand than Lewena because of taste. Farm gate price of waka is $16 - $25 per kilogram and Lewena is $12 - $16 per kilogram.

“Firstly Waka is cut, washed properly and soaked in water for almost one day and then dried properly on corrugated iron under the sun. Some farmers also use driers to dry it but since we get good sunshine we prefer drying it under the hot sun,” said Mr Prakash.

Prakash added that the more dry the produce gets the better the quality becomes.

As for Lewena it is also cut and dried on corrugated iron for four to five days for better quality.

There are two types of Lewena the white and black Lewena. Black Lewena has the price range of $8 - $10 per kilogram. White Lewena is stripped and dried which gives its white colour.

He proudly said the taste of local kava is superb and the best drink in the Pacific.

Though yaqona dieback disease is a serious issue he has not come across the disease so far. Prakash practices preventative measures such as using disease free and clean planting materials as well as following strict controls and practices to avoid the infestation of the disease.

Mr Prakash is very grateful to the Agriculture Ministry in terms of support he is getting from the extension staff.

“I managed to increase my crop production through the assistance in terms of planting materials and farm implements that I have received from the Ministry under its capital programmes,” said Mr Prakash.

Agriculture Extension staff Saleshni Anjali Shafeen said farmers and Ministry staff work together in a bid to maintain the consistent supply of crops to the market.
Alafua Campus farewells
Campus Manager end of services

Alafua Campus staff members farewelled their Campus Manager, Lemalu Lemi Taefu at the end of the month in appreciation and acknowledgement of his service to USP.

The University of the South Pacific in its Alafua Campus recruited the expertise and service of Lemalu in 2003 as a Business Manager. With his extensive experience in business administration he was the key figure envisioned to operate Alafua Campus as a business.

Lemalu had contributed a lot to improve the Campus in terms of maintenance services, marketing and administration. He is a humble, quiet and down to earth person who associated with many of the staff on Alafua Campus.

Alafua Campus through its Senior Staff and Intermediate and Junior Staff (INJ) organised a small but enjoyable farewell function to show their appreciation towards a man that was once their leader and had always helped them one way or the other.

There were formalities with Aaron Kama of the Senior Staff Association saying a few words to acknowledge his services as well as the President of the INJ Maiva lose Isara thanking Lemalu on behalf of the INJ Staff. (Photos: C.Akira SAFT/JICA)

FAO support benefits dairy farmer

Many dairy farmers in Fiji are reaping the benefits of assistance provided by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) Small Holder Dairy Project through the Ministry of Primary Industries.

A smallholder dairy farmer of Natova Settlement at Sabeto in Nadi Mr. Anub Kumar was one of the lucky farmers to be assisted under this project.

The Permanent Secretary for Agriculture Col. Mason Smith who visited the farm recently, was very impressed with the development that Mr. Kumar had done on his farm that he believed that contributions from such farms will assist in Fiji’s bid to be self sufficient in milk and dairy products.

Mr Anub Kumar is one of the lucky farmers who were assisted by the Ministry of Primary Industries under the US $94,000 FAO Funded projects. He received $1,500 to purchase materials to construct a dairy shed and to buy a Chafer machine. The Government also assisted him with a small mobile milking machine to assist him in milking his cows.

“I became involved in the dairy farming business in 1999 when I realised that I needed to look for another source of income to supplement my income from sugar cane”, Mr. Kumar said. He owns 6 cows that produce an average of 15 litres per day.

“It’s a challenge for me and I believe that the...
dairy farming has a reliable market here in the West with the demand for fresh milk from consumers in urban and semi-urban areas,” he added.

Mr. Kumar has 15 acres of Native Lease land and he has allocated 8 acres for sugar cane farming, 5 ½ acres to graze his 15 heads of cattle with the remaining 1½ acres for his farm house and other infrastructures.

Mr. Smith is thankful to Mr. Kumar’s initiative to develop his dairy farming business in the Western Division and said that government’s assistance is available through the Import Substitution programme to assist smallholder farmers outside the dairy producing areas of the Central Division.

“From the development that Mr. Kumar has carried out on his farm, I am confident that farmers in the Western Division have the potential to contribute positively to local milk and dairy production if they follow Kumar’s lead,” said Mr. Smith.

“These smallholder dairy farmers play a vital role to the Dairy industry, in supplying fresh milk to consumers in the Western Division,” he added.

For Mr. Kumar, Mr. Smith’s visit was an event that he will remember and cherish for a long time.

“I am so delighted and thankful to the Government for their visit and I regard it as a source of inspiration and encouragement and it also showed Government’s commitment to smallholder farmers”.

“It is also recognition of our small contributions to the dairy industry and to Fiji’s economy”.

The Government assists dairy farmers through the Dairy Industry Support (DIS) and the Import Substitution Programmes.

With this programmes, the Ministry aims to reduce our imports bill of milk and milk products by $5 million in 2012. Currently Fiji imports $19 million worth of milk products and milk from overseas.

Taveuni - the largest producer of taro

By Monika Mala - Ministry of Primary Industries

No doubt Taveuni is the largest producer of dalo in Fiji.

The Garden Island caters for 70-80% of dalo production in the country bringing in an average income of $17 million out of $22 million of foreign exchange earned into the country annually.

The current market value of Tausala variety dalo is $1.90 per kilogram and there are more than 3,600 farmers in Taveuni investing into large scale dalo production.

Last year around 9,000 tonnes of dalo was produced itself in Taveuni out of 10,795 tonnes produced nationally.

Semiti Lauve an elderly farmer from Navakawau village which is on the South end of the island has been into dalo farming for decades and he is passing on his skills and knowledge to younger generations motivating them to take farming activity as a challenge for life.

“I must say that dalo farming is a lucrative business and opens the door for success and pros-
Taveuni - the largest producer of taro ..........from page 10

perity if managed in a right and timely manner,” said Mr Lauve proudly.

“Taveuni Dalo has always been in good demand so I took the timely advantage of the farming and now I have climbed the ladder of success,” he added.

Mr Lauve grows Tausala variety of dalo as well as other varieties of dalo and also specializes in yaqona farming. In addition Lauve grows vegetables at subsistence level for food security. He is a backyard gardener and prefers growing his own rather than buying from outside.

“On a monthly basis I plant more than 1000 dalo tops into different plots of land so in a year there are more than 12,000 tops on ground,” he added.

He said that it takes around seven months for the crop to get ready for harvest and almost every month his field is ready for harvest.

Lauve ensures right farming practices to be on board with continuous and consistent supply of crops to his suppliers.

“I always do advance planning for farming and with the assistance of the Agriculture Extension Officers we come up with a planned farming programme to make the most out of the demand for the crops,” said Mr Lauve.

“Currently I am practising intercropping of dalo and yaqona whereby the short term crop dalo gives me monthly income generation while the long term crop yaqona gives me lucrative sum”.

Mr Lauve has several blocks of land with dalo crop planted at different stages of production hence he also does phase planting to ensure consistent supply as a means of continuous income to sustain his livelihood.

“Once the tops are planted on ground I prepare another block of land for planting and as soon as three leaves appear on one plot another plot is planted with the dalo crop,” said Mr Lauve.

Regular spraying and weeding are essential activities for him to maintain the farm sanitation.

“Suitable climatic condition with optimum amount of rain and soil fertility is crucial for good dalo production and the land is just perfect for farming,” said Mr Lauve.

Lauve is a very wise farm manager who utilises the farm resources by practising the rotation of planting materials.

“I make my own planting materials and sell to the needy farmers in the village at $10.00 per 100 tops. Lauve also sells the tops to farmers outside Taveuni.

With the readily available market and constant shipping services, farmers hardly face any difficulty in terms of reaching their market destination.

But post devaluation of the national currency, there are issues of rising cost of the agro inputs especially the chemicals and fertilisers so the farmers are left with no choice but to cope with the high price.

Agriculture Assistant Saleshni Anjali Shafeen said farmers from various groups and Tikina’s are assisted under the Ministry’s capital programmes to enhance agriculture development to a successive level.

Ms Shafeen said that under the Export Promotion Programme (EPP) and the Northern Development Programme (NDP) farmers are supplied with agro inputs, planting materials as well as farm implements.

She added that Taveuni has the perfect climate and growing conditions for dalo production and with the advent of competitive prices farmers are reaping the benefit from their hard work.

“Recently when Agro Marketing Authority (AMA) ventured into the buyer list of Taveuni dalo, prices became more competitive among the buyers and this gave an opportunity for farmers to get good value out of their crop,” she added.

In addition to this Taveuni has always been placing strict regulations on the issue of dalo beetle in Fiji.

In addition to this Shafeen added that Ministry has set up demo plots for dalo crop depicting the use of different types of fertiliser economically viable for production which is as well dependent on the type of soil.

Dalo farming is indeed a lucrative business for locals and it is utilised to its best potential for greener pasture.
Biosecurity with NZ’s Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries is a serious business and they do carry out stringent inspections with every little spot, checked. With plants that are exported NZ-MAF Inspector Ratan Singh checks out the leaves of the Sanseviaria or Mother-in-law tongue plant for signs of pests or diseases. During the inspection no insects were located but a number of fungal lesions and fruiting bodies were found.