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منظمة الأغذية
والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food
and
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des
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Unies
pour
l'alimentation
et
l'agriculture

Organización
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Naciones
Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

ASIA AND PACIFIC PLANT PROTECTION COMMISSION

TWENTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE ASIA AND PACIFIC PLANT
PROTECTION COMMISSION (APPPC)

Bali, Republic of Indonesia, 7 - 11 September 2015

AGENDA NO. 3

Country report

Tonga

Country Report – The Kingdom of Tonga

Plant Protection Activities 2013-15

Executive Summary:

The Quarantine and Quality Management Division is the OCP for IPPC and APPPC. The NPPO is the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry (MAFF). There has been intensive efforts in trade facilitation by the NPPO through market access requests of fresh agricultural produce and also to improve current export systems.

Trade:

The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry is the WTO-SPS representative for Tonga and was involved in Tongas WTO Policy Review in February 2014 at Geneva, Switzerland and in other regional trade agreements.

Bilateral talks were held with the NPPO of New Zealand, Samoa, American Samoa.

All fresh fruitfly host commodities pathways to New Zealand via the High Temperature Forced Air facility were suspended by NZ MPI in March 2015. Talks between New Zealand MPI and Tonga MAFFF are currently ongoing towards resolving the issues of concern and eventually lifting the suspension.

Legislation:

The Biosecurity Bill was resubmitted to parliament in 2014 but was returned with the need for amendments.

The first Food Safety Act 2014

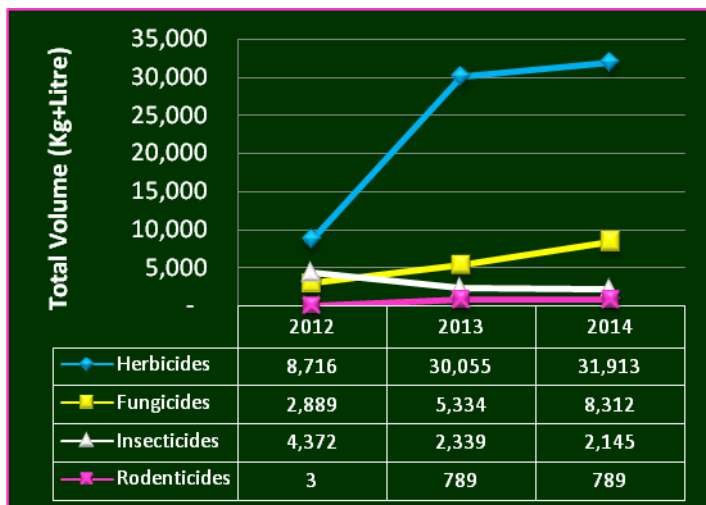
Research Activities:

1. *Colocasia esculenta* Breeding for Resistance to Taro Leaf Blight (TLB)
C. esculenta is a major root crop for domestic consumption and exports. None of the cultivars grown in Tonga are resistant to TLB which has established in nearby countries. Several TLB resistant cultivars of *C. Esculenta* have been introduced to Tonga from regional collections for breeding purposes.
2. Efficacy of Insecticides to Control the Diamond-back moth *Plutella xylostellae*.
New insecticides are being trialled for efficacy in the control of DBM on brassicas.

Days from Planting	Cabbage Growth Stage	Insecticide Applied
2 - 28	Seedling to transplanting	Multiguard
30 - 48	Vegetative Leafy stage	Ag Chem <i>Bacillus thuringiensis</i>
50 - 70	Forming of Cabbage head	Prevathon
70 - 98	Harvest	Match or Multiguard

Pesticide Imports and Safety:

The total volume of pesticides imported to Tonga has increased at an alarming rate by 59% from 2012 to 2013, and by 11% from 2013 to 2014 as in the graph below.



The main reasons for the huge increase in use of herbicides are: first, the increase range of uses, not only for weeds control of commercial crops but has extend to weeds control of subsistence food crop production, residential homes and public infrastructures, etc.; second, the high cost of manual labour of about \$5 to \$8 per hour favours the lower cost of herbicides.

For Fungicides and Insecticides The production of squash for export since 1987 has been the main user of fungicides and insecticides, and to a lesser amount for production of watermelon and vegetables.

Tonga is a party to the Rotterdam Convention in 2010.

Sea Containers

Tonga has joined the Sea Container Hygiene Scheme which is a government-to-industry agreement developed to manage the biosecurity risks associated with sea containers arriving in New Zealand from countries in the Pacific region. Tonga has 3 accredited sea container cleaning facilities within this scheme. The scheme has led to huge improvements in the compliance of sea-containers entering New Zealand from Tonga.

Interceptions of Giant African Snail, Common Garden Snail, other impurities have led to numerous cases of non-compliant containers entering Tonga. The relevant NPPOs have been notified formally.

Notification

The website for Tonga NPPO has been upgraded www.quarantine.gov.to. A facebook page has also been established as **TongaQuarantine**.

Conclusion:

Despite the pressure at the national level to increase the trade in fresh agricultural produce there is also the need to focus on a holistic approach to in terms of plant protection. Where there is the importance of all stake holders playing their role in a public private partnership. There is also the need to strengthen the NPPOs role in the improvement of import and export systems. Good export systems can only be strengthened with good border security and import systems as there is a growing threat of exotic species worldwide that are spreading quickly across the globe.