In an article about obesity published by the Samoan Observer in 2017, it said that the people of the Pacific have some of the highest rates of obesity in the world, ranging from 43% among Fijian males to nearly 80% among Samoan females. Like most obesity problems around the world, poor choice of food or lack of food choices in the market are the two most common reasons of the increasing numbers of obese Samoans. According to the article mortality increases with obesity. Obesity is an important risk factor for many metabolic syndrome, the clustering of a number of diseases and risk factors such as diabetes mellitus Type 2, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and triglyceride levels. The University of South Pacific in Alafa Campus aims to contribute in managing this problem by producing vegetables and making it available on affordable prices to staff and students. According to USDA (2016), eating vegetables provides many health benefits. People who eat more vegetables and fruits as part of their overall healthy diet are likely to have a reduced risk of some chronic diseases. Vegetables provide nutrients vital for health and maintenance of your body. In IRETA Farm, vegetables such as string beans, tomato, eggplant, squash, yellow corn, water spinach “Kangkong” and cabbage are regularly harvested and sold in the campus. The institute intends to continue and will expand the vegetable production to serve not only the USP community but also to others. (LTU)

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The School of Agriculture and Food Technology (SAFT) was represented at the Faculty of Business and Economics (FBE) Open day this year through posters, live animals and Food Technology products displays.

SAFT served as the link of the University to various stakeholders in Agriculture in Fiji. Joining in one large tent with the Ministry of Agriculture’s (MoA) Crop Extension, Crop Research, Land Resource Planning and Development, and the Animal Health and Production, Biosecurity Authority of Fiji (BAF), Fiji Cooperative Dairy Company Limited (FCDCL) and The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animal (SPCA). The display covered a large area for the easy flow of public viewing.

There were approximately 2,000 students present from Secondary schools all over Viti Levu. Together, students and teachers, as well as some USP staff, collected SAFT’s brochures and MoA’s brochures for their information. They were fascinated with the wide range of stakeholders and what they offer and very excited to see new breeds of animals that we now have in Fiji. Some of these students have expressed their interest in pursuing Agriculture in Alafua. They had the chance to be informed about the eligibility and subject combinations requirements and alternative pathways for entry into SAFT offered programmes.

The SAFT won 2nd Prize again this year for the Best Display among the different Schools in the Faculty of Business and Economics while the School of Economics bagged the 1st Prize and the 3rd Prize was won by the School of Management and Public Administration.
On the 27th of July in Laucala Campus, the University of the South Pacific’s (USP) Open Day was officially opened by Hon. Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama, Fiji’s Prime Minister and Minister for i-Taukei Affairs, Sugar Industry and Foreign Affairs joining him was Professor Rajesh Chandra, Vice-Chancellor and President of USP who welcomed the distinguished guests, secondary school students, their principals and teachers; parents and guardians; sponsors; and the member of the press.

Hon. Bainimarama said in his keynote address that he was delighted to be able to speak directly to so many young Fijians, especially those prospective students who are getting their first glimpse into what could very well be the next stage of their education at USP. Higher educational institutions, including USP, he said, are hubs of exchange, ideas and new ways of thinking which is a fundamental part of our democratic system. Hon. Bainimarama also noted that USP was the first regional university in the Pacific and we recognize the impact USP has had on the Pacific over the last 50 years and hoped this will continue for the next 50 years.

The Prime Minister’s presence is yet another example of the support of the Fijian government for USP and recognition of the role the University plays in the development of Fiji and its other member countries.

There were about 10,000 students present at USP’s main Laucala Campus, 2,000 at the Lautoka Campus and 1,000 at the Labasa Campus. (cont. page 4)
On the same day, the 27th of July 2018, USP Labasa Campus celebrated their Open Day. Twenty three (23) secondary schools from the three provinces, Bua, Macuata, Cakaudrove of Northern Division South Taveuni and Immaculate Conception College, and Nadogo Sec from Wainikoro with total student number of 1,571. The School of Agriculture and Food Technology (SAFT) has represented the Faculty of Business and Economics (FBE) Open Day this year through posters and Food Technology products displays. The highlights of SAFT booth were the student sharing sessions together with poster and video presentations. Students were drawn from one display to another gathering, capturing information and also being educated on the different career opportunities that exist within the scope of the programmes offered by SAFT. Students also had the chance to be informed about the eligibility, subject combinations requirements, alternative pathways for entry into SAFT offered programmes and discussions involving the delivery modes of different courses, the practical components and the flexi schools.

Cont...
New and current students of the University of the South Pacific (USP) Alafua Campus were welcomed and oriented to another new semester for 2018. Our Student Learning Support and also MC of the day, Ms. Niseta Buatava welcomed the new students and conveyed her support as USP Alafua begins a new semester.

The orientation address was delivered by Head of School, Campus Director and Director of IRETA, Associate Professor Mohammed Umar. He focussed on the important roles,opportunities and programmes USP offers and encouraging new students the importance of studying Agriculture as it is a possible solution for some of the global problems such as food security, climate change, hunger and poverty. He also added the great significant of Agriculture in the Pacific Island countries.

Ms Niseta Buatava introduced the academic and professional staff present plus other support services provided and available on campus. There was also an opportunity to hear from current students on “The Alafua Experience” from different regions. The vote of thanks was delivered by our Information Technology (IT) Manager, Lemamea Sia Matalavea followed by a group photo.

There were presentations on Moodle from the IT team, Time Management and the Importance of the Course Outline by SLS and NZAID Foundation Scholarship Brief by Student Welfare Officer, Ms. Ronna Lee. (APS)
The MC of the day, Mr. Ioane Malaki welcomed the 319 new and returning students of the School of Agriculture and Food Technology (SAFT) during the SAFT Orientation on the 10th July. He gave the students some useful information that will surely help them throughout their studies. It was an afternoon loaded with information explained by the Academic staff presented various academic issues and work of the SAFT and IRETA Farm. Also Scholarships, pathways to various study streams, Student Learning Outcomes, research activities, compulsory attendance in lectures, practical, tutorials, seminars, inter-school Debates, student research and vocational training, registration and enrolment system at Alafua campus, University’s Strategic Plan, Policies, the functioning of Moodle system, and many others.

Dr. Renee Orange, the only Samoan Government Female Veterinarian on the island from the Ministry of Agriculture and fisheries (MAF) gave a presentation on raising awareness about “The state of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) in both human and animal health in Samoa and globally” on the 19th of July. In attendance were USP Staff and Students. The Samoa National Health and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries are teaming up to raise awareness among agriculture students at USP about the issue of AMR. Dr. Renee stated that AMR is a significant emerging problem in both human and animal health globally, where antimicrobials are overused and misused which had resulted in populations of microbes resistant drugs leading to an increase in untreatable diseases among humans and animals through an additional effect on our food chain. She ended her presentation with a request to study in Veterinary Medicine. According to her, “We, Samoans are in need of more Vets”. The presentation was very interesting that students, staff as well as a few members of the public had asked questions to Dr. Orange which she graciously answered. Also the Assistant Chief Executive of APHD, Tony Aiolupo and Animal Health Officer, Maretta Anitelea were present.
THE SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD TECHNOLOGY

CFL Research Visit!

From the 30th of July to the 3rd of August Evan Naqiolevu (Instructional Designer) and Flora Bentley (Education Technologist) of the USP-CFL Department visited the Alafua Campus. The main purpose of their visit was to carry out a research on the “Effective use and integration of technologies in support of Flexible Learning at USP”.

They specifically focused on “Lecture Capture” use and were targeting USP’s 3 main teaching campuses Alafua, Emalus and Laucala Campuses. They interviewed students and teaching staff on its use. (APS)

Briefing the students on what the research is about!

Campus Directors Meeting

The University of the South Pacific (USP), Alafua Campus Director and Head of the School of Agriculture and Food Technology (HOS-SAFT), Assoc. Prof Mohammed Umar attended the meeting for Campus Directors and the New Strategic Plan (2019—2024) Workshop held in Fiji on the 30th July until the 3rd of August 2018.

American Accreditation for USP

The Vice-Chancellor and President, Professor Rajesh Chandra announced that the University of the South Pacific (USP) received Initial Accreditation by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC), United States for a term of six (6) years and this accreditation is without conditions. USP now have full accreditation in Australia, New Zealand (NZ) and the United States of America (USA).

He proclaimed that this is perhaps the most consequential accreditation for the University and it puts USP up in the midst of those American institutions that have been thoroughly evaluated as meeting stringent American standards. This accreditation further distinguishes our best status in the Pacific, and establishes much more strongly our credentials internationally.

Visit USP’s WSCUC journey on the University website at https://www.usp.ac.fj/wscuc.

Alafua Acting Campus Director and Head of the School of Agriculture and Food Technology (HOS-SAFT), Assoc. Prof Mohammed Umar with the Campus Directors of the different USP Campuses in South Pacific
The University of the South Pacific, Planning and Quality Office (PQO) manages and sends out online surveys to obtain feedback from students, staff and external stakeholders to improve services and student experience. In 2017, P&Q office sent out to all campuses the Total Student Experience Survey (TES), an annual survey, intended to find out how the University is supporting undergraduate students in achieving success in their programmes. Only two students, Caroline Fuivailili and Theresa Ilalio, from the Alafua Campus managed to fill in this survey and they were rewarded for their prompt support, each receiving a USP Tablet.

In addition, Caroline Fuiavailili, a 22-year-old, second year Bachelor of Science Double Major Chemistry and Information System is the new Information Technology (IT) student intern with USP, Alafua IT Team. She assists IT assistant Noel and another student intern Eloi Alatimu with monitoring the satellite room, configuring student’s laptops, assisting students with Moodle and online/computer matters. (APS)

Samoa Touch Tournament
Student Welfare Officer (SWO), Ms. Ronna Lee registered our own USP Touch Rugby Team for the Samoa Touch Rugby Incorporated, OPENS Championship for Men’s and Women’s Divisions. It was two-day tournament with Pool games on the 14th of July and Playoffs and Finals was on Saturday 21st July.

The Samoa Association carried out two workshops with trainings on the 9th and 11th of July at 5pm to help facilitate and familiarize those who are new to the sport. The team is mainly made up of USP students and a few staff (16 for each teams) and they have been organizing themselves with their trainings throughout the tournament. The registration, food, uniform, transport and other needs were organized and financed by SWO (Campus Life) office with the help of USPSA.

For a newly established team, they did outstandingly great. They have received awe-inspiring feedback especially from Marist Family, Blade Runners, Stay Aloof and No Idea, some of the toughest and best teams. The team received 2 $25 Bluesky Vouchers and 3 Taula Boxes. The vouchers were given to Justin and Caroline for their leadership in organizing the teams while Taula Boxes were sold to get funds to be used to buy some rugby balls and cones for the teams training. The USP Touch Rugby team extend their many thank you to the sponsors and everyone who contributed. (APS) (Photos: Ro Setu)

SIT: School for International Training.
The new Academic Director of World Learning, Mrs Fataomi Tapu-Quiliho comes onboard with a wealth of experience. She is moving from Fiji to take up her new role as the Academic Director of the SIT Programme based here at Alafua Campus. She met with the SWO and Maintenance to discuss renovation plans for the SIT office and with the support of the Head of School/Campus Director Assoc. Prof. Mohammed Umar, renovations are underway. There will be a new cohort of students this semester and we look forward to working with Mrs. Fataomi in the near future. Jackie Faasisila was the previous AD and she has retired. (RL)
**USP ALAFUA CAMPUS UPDATES AND ACTIVITIES**

**Campus Life with SWO**

**ROTARY YOUNG LEADERSHIP AWARDEES (RYLA)**

Rotary seeks opportunities for further leadership trainings for outstanding Rotary Students. This year, Tasman Milo (Law student at Alafua) attended the Rota Pacific RYLA study Tour in NZ for two weeks (all expenses paid for) in July. Tasman Milo was nominated due to his commitment to his studies, his leadership among his peers and his efforts to volunteer at Rotary events every chance he gets. He is also a peer-mentor and I believe volunteers to assist with Foundation study groups. As a result of Tasman attending RYLA, he has spearheaded the ROTARACT CLUB of USP dedicated to service above self. *(RL)*

Mr. Tasman highlighted that the main intakes that really affected his personality is the building foundations of leadership. And before the tour started they were given the challenge “BE THE POSITIVE RIPPLE OF EFFECT BECAUSE YOU ARE THE CHOSEN LEADERS OF TODAY NOT TOMORROW”. It burned and motivated him to be an effective young leader in his family, community and institute of study and it will always be his motivation to be an inspiration or positive ripple of effect to the lives of others. *(TM)*

**ROTARACT CLUB in the USP**

Rotaract is lead by Tasman and it is made up of all students sponsored by the Rotary Club of Apia in addition to students who wish to participate in Community service. They meet every Thursday and their projects include the cleaning of the surrounding areas at the SWO office, book stamping for the Rotary Club of Apia, weekly team building activities and the promotion of health and wellness through their hiking activities. The main purpose of the club is to encourage each other to do well in school and to give back to the community through volunteer work. *(RL)*

**Student Learning Support - We Help You Achieve!**

**Activities**

- Drop-In Consultations (Face to face to sort students learning difficulties)
- Study Guides (study guides on different topics produced for students’ free use)
- Teaching and marking assessment

**Workshops (UU204 and DG102)**

- Speedreading
- Letters to the editor
- Paraphrasing.

**Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS)**

- To help students who are currently struggling with a course
- Senior-peer-mentoring program
- 4x1-hour weekly sessions
- PASS Leaders (those that aced or completed successfully in the past)
  - Courses are:
    1. UU114 (Suliana Lefaoseu)
    2. AG111 (Tusiata Lemuelu)
    3. AG213 (Evangeline Poti-
Okra scientifically known as *Abelmoschus esculentus* (L.) Moench also called lady’s finger has been reported to have been altered by humans through a process of selective breeding. The exact origin of okra is unclear, but it is thought to have come from Africa, while evidence suggests it was grown in Egypt as long ago as 2,000 BC. Today it is widely cultivated and naturalized tropical and subtropical annual grown extensively in Asia and Africa for its edible green fruits. It is harvested when immature (after 3-5 days of development) infamous for their slimy mucilage.

Here in Samoa, only limited number of people know how to grow and eat this very healthy vegetable. Okra is a popular health food due to its high fiber, Vitamin C, folate content, high in antioxidants and good source of calcium and potassium.

Its medicinal usage has been reported in the traditional systems of medicine such as Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani. It is an Antioxidant and prevents cellular damage, helps manage blood sugar for diabetes, anti-fatigue, prevents cancer, memory enhancer, improves vision, lowers cholesterol and blood pressure.

There are 30 ways to consume okra as processed or fresh cooked. Among the many dishes with okra are fried okra, steamed okra, stewed okra, roasted okra, grilled okra, salad, crispy Indian okra, okra curry, Filipino delicacies such as pinakbet, law-oy, sinigang, ginisa, and lapwa, and US Southern dishes such as okra panzanella, creole, and okra and shrimp gumbo. The USP Alafua Food Technology Laboratory is developing various processed products from okra such as pickled okra, okra powder, okra tea, dried okra, okra chips, salted okra, candied okra, okra jam, okra polvoron, okra lemonade, okra baby food, and okra baked products such as muffins, pancake, cookies, etc. *(AMF)*

### Energy

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<th>Energy</th>
<th>33 kcal</th>
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### Carbohydrates

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### Sugars

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### Dietary Fibers

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### Fat

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### Protein

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<th>2g</th>
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### Water

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<th>Water</th>
<th>90.19g</th>
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### Vitamin A

<table>
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<th>36μg, 7%</th>
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### Thiamine (B1)

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<th>0.2 mg, 17%</th>
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### Riboflavin (B2)

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### Niacin (B3)

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<th>1mg, 7%</th>
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### Vitamin C

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Vitamin C</th>
<th>23mg, 28%</th>
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### Vitamin E

<table>
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<th>0.27 mg, 2%</th>
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### Vitamin K

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<th>31.3 μg, 30%</th>
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### Calcium

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### Iron

<table>
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<th>0.62mg, 5%</th>
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### Magnesium

<table>
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### Potassium

<table>
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<th>299mg, 6%</th>
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### Zinc

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<th>0.58 mg, 6%</th>
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The Head of the School, Assoc. Prof. Mohammed Umar and some SAFT staff and students attended a forum that is intended for Women involved in farming to share and discuss their valuable contributions to agriculture, fisheries, livestock, floriculture and processing in a two-day forum on the 19th and 20th July 2018 in the inaugural of the **National Forum for Women in Agriculture, Floriculture and Agri-Business**. The objectives of the forum are to acknowledge and celebrate the role of women in agriculture development, exchange information and learn from success stories and experiences, raise profile of women farmers and agriculture related women entrepreneurs, have a network of Women in Agriculture in Samoa with links to women in agriculture networks in the region and globally.

It was facilitated by the **Samoa Farmers Association (SFA)** and funded by the **Pacific Island Farmers Organisation Network (PIFON)**. More than 100 women farmers across Samoa turned up together with organizations ranging from Florists, vegetable growers, livestock farmers, aqua fish production as well as small businesses like chips producers. The first day was mainly on presentations that included presentations from the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF), the Scientific Research Organisation of Samoa (SROS), the University of the South Pacific (USP), Floriculture experts, METI Samoa and the Women in Business Development Inc. (WIBDI) to name a few. The last day was spent visiting four sites: Charlie Ah Liki (Pineapples and vegetables), Ricky Westurlund (Vegetables), Amy Chan Mow Plant Nursery and the Cooks Organic Farm (Orchards and fruit trees).

The PM who officially open the forum encouraged the women associations to maximise the use of this forum as a learning experience to flourish new networks, share their experiences and successes as well as raise issues to the forefront that will allow their efforts to be continually supported in their respective fields.

The discussions of the forum will successively contribute significantly to achieving sustainable development goals, particularly, food security and improved nutrition, as well as gender equality and the empowerment of all women. (APS)
JOANNE WESTERLUND - Wirth, a beautiful, charming, strong, hardworking, a fourth generation farmer and the daughter of well-known farmer Ricky Westerlund, born, raised and grew up into a farming family, mastered farming just like that. Farming was their way of surviving, living and it has for years a combination of lifestyle and business. From her father to her mother and to the youngest of the children they all worked on the farm with the help of the workers.

From a humble beginning their farm in Aleisa have grown over the years. Now they have more machines such as Tractors to help out with the farm and with this, labor has become a bit easier and time saving. Joanne mentioned that she has considered quitting a few times when it gets really hard and going into retailing business.

During the Samoa Farmer’s Association, National Women’s Forum in July she nervously took the stage and talked about her experience in farming and how it has helped her and her family. Joanne’s family farm started out with Passionfruit and a few sugar canes, as well as taro. She described the hardest part of farming is not having enough time to relax and spend with friends and loved ones. But the most satisfying part of farming is when the produce turns out great and making enough to pay workers as well as cover expenses. She also added how she starts her day typically at 7am and end at 12pm for most days. The Westerlund’s grow a variety of crops but the main one is Chinese cabbages for the reason that Samoan people love their “Pak Choi” white stem. This has also been the most consistent crop in terms of making a good profit together with head cabbages. Dealing with weeds and insect pests Joanne uses the traditional ways together with chemicals.

Her advice to the young apprentices interested in getting into farming is to “Get into farming because it’s your passion and you love doing it. Farming is the hardest occupation you can choose. Farming is taking risks and never giving up when things don’t turn out well. Farming will always have its bad days and good days that is 100% guaranteed.” (APS)
For a mother of five and a grandmother of 11 children, who would say FARMING is a MAN’s job alone? Temukisa Rimoni became a full-time farmer since her retirement in 2009 from working in the government for 12 years. Currently the farm is a house to 300+ heads of Cattle, Tilapia, Bees, variety of fruit trees and vegetables. The Rimoni Farm in Tafaigata is where they grow their famous Black Pepper powder. She believes that women farmers are better at getting tasks done. During the National Women’s Forum held at the Orator Hotel, Temukisa Rimoni shared her experiences and hopes in farming and for the women in agriculture in Samoa.

She talked about the challenges of a woman especially in livestock farming and even commended the government particularly the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries for the recognition they give to the group. Temukisa encouraged government to invest in new technologies and methods that are suited to women to encourage their participation. She also talked about climate change, which she considered as an issue to who are involved in farming. Temukisa also challenged and encouraged women in subsistence farming, to take their farms/gardens to the next level which is commercial farming, to the boost their income for their families, villages and communities. (FR/LTU)
IRTETA Vegetable Farm and Produce
The Journal of the South Pacific Agriculture (JOSPA) is a peer reviewed, online, open accessed Agricultural Journal which publishes research articles, critical reviews, general papers and short communications in tropical and sub-tropical agriculture. It has highly qualified editors and a transparent peer review system which normally takes about 6 to 8 weeks from submission of manuscript to the decision with reviewers’ comments. We are inviting contributions relevant to agriculture in the tropics and sub-tropics for JOSPA’s Volume 20.

Now, JOSPA receives and reviews article by using online system. Please first register in our journal website (http://www.journalofsouthpacificagriculture.com/) and creates your user id and password before submission of your manuscript. Then submit your article through online system. Now, manuscript is being published soon after acceptance as an online early version that later organized in volume. Guide for authors are provided on our website. If you have any confusion and/or need additional information, please contact with our editor.

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