



## Indian Agri-Business Incubation Conference focuses on technology commercialization

Since its inception in 2009, the Network of Indian Agri-business Incubators (NIABI) has marked its presence by impacting innovations, entrepreneurs, and institutions. In the third edition of its annual conference, "Indian Agri-Business Incubation Conference: NIABI 2013" held on 26 April at the HITEX Exhibition Center in Hyderabad, the focus was on agro-technology commercialization with emphasis on business meetings (B2B) and deal finalization between entrepreneurs/industries and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).

Conducted by ICRISAT through its Agri-Business Incubation (ABI) program along with ICAR, NIABI 2013 was hosted as part of AGRITEX 2013, which brought together the farming community, agri-specialists and agri-service providers.

Describing the role incubators play, in nurturing start-ups, Chief Guest Dr PS Pandey, National Coordinator, NAIP (ICAR) said, "Incubators play a crucial role in bringing different stakeholders together. By helping nurture innovations and entrepreneurship in agriculture, ABI is fulfilling ICRISAT's mission of eliminating poverty and improving livelihoods."

Dr Kiran K Sharma, CEO, AIP-ICRISAT in his welcome address, spoke about how growing global agri-business ventures are exploring new markets to achieve growth and develop their businesses. He stressed the need to create competitive agri-business enterprises through technology development and commercialization to benefit farmers in the semi-arid tropics.

NIABI 2013 also served as a platform for 52 ready-to-commercialize agro-technologies from six sectors – crops, horticulture, food technology, animal husbandry, cotton and jute fiber products and fisheries. Agri-business incubators from NIABI presented their technologies, explained the process of technology transfer and listed the incubator services used in ensuring that the venture succeeds.

As part of the conference, 85 B2B meetings were conducted between incubator teams and industrialists and agri-business entrepreneurs for technology commercialization. Thirty-one technologies were commercialized from a pool of 82 shortlisted, high-impact technologies. The estimated value of the technology transfer is 3 crore (\$.56 million). Over 120 participants took part in this event which provided innovators with an opportunity to explore and incubate their ideas through NIABI.



*Chief Guest Dr PS Pandey, National Co-ordinator, Component-1, NAIP (ICAR) and SM Karuppanchetty, COO, ABI-ICRISAT speak during the inaugural of the Indian Agribusiness Incubation Conference, NIABI 2013*

## NIABI Awards 2013

The NIABI National Awards for 2013 were presented during the inaugural of AGRITEX 2013 on 25 April by Mr Kanna Laxminarayana, Minister for Agriculture and Agriculture Technology Mission, Government of Andhra Pradesh. The awards were instituted to recognize Business Planning & Development (BPD) Units of NIABI for their excellent performance and incubatees for their dedication in setting up successful agribusiness ventures.

The guests of honor at the event were Dr PS Pandey, National Coordinator, NAIP and Dr Joanna Kane-Potaka, Director, Strategic Marketing and Communication, ICRISAT, representing Dr Dar, Director General of ICRISAT.

The National Award for the Best Agribusiness Incubatee 2013 went to Kemrock Agritech Private Limited, an incubatee of the business incubator at Anand Agricultural University (AAU), Anand. The company played a major role in commercializing Anubhav liquid biofertilizer under the name *Tapak Bund*.

The National Award for the Best Agribusiness Incubator 2013 was awarded to the agribusiness incubator of the Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT), Cochin.



*Dr PS Pandey, National Coordinator, Component -1, NAIP (left) and Dr Joanna Kane-Potaka, Director, Strategic Marketing and Communication, (right) ICRISAT deliver a special address during the inaugural of AGRITEX 2013*



*CIFT receiving the award for the Best Agribusiness Incubator 2013 (left) and AAU receiving the award for Best Agribusiness Incubatee 2013, for their incubatee client Kemrock Agritech Private Ltd (right)*



## CURAD: Opening doors for agribusiness entrepreneurs in Uganda

In the recent past, Entrepreneurship, in its different definitions, interpretations and approaches has become a central interest and focus of both public and private sector institutions. This has been taken up with a holistic strategy, targeting young and innovative entrepreneurs by the Consortium for enhancing University Responsiveness to Agribusiness Development Ltd. (CURAD).

CURAD, informed by many empirical studies, is concerned by the fact that many young people enter the work place from universities without the skills and experience needed by prospective employers or to be self-employed. To contribute to correcting this dismal situation, CURAD has unveiled plans to inspire university management staff, professors, lecturers and students at Makerere University to become entrepreneurs and create jobs. CURAD will do this by implementing an innovative “Earn As You Learn” initiative.

Under this initiative, Professor Samuel Kyamanywa and the Acting Incubator Manager, Mr. Joseph Nkandu stress that acquiring the right motivation, skills and opportunities during their university training are central to success in establishing businesses that will create jobs and enhance the incomes of young men and women. The students must be inspired to become passionate, confident and competent in what they aspire to achieve in their businesses.

Awareness raising events are a vital part of CURAD’s approach to motivating potential entrepreneurs. By holding ‘Open Days’ and ‘one-to-one walk-ins’, conducted at Makerere University College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences and Makerere University Agricultural Research Institute Kabanyolo, CURAD has attracted a large number of prospects (potential incubatees) with interesting business ideas from which potential winners can be selected.

From 55 registered potential incubatees, 26 have already submitted interesting business ideas. Five of them have already developed effective elevator pitches to promote their concepts. CURAD is helping such prospective agri-entrepreneurs to develop bankable business plans and link them to potential funding sources while also exposing them to improved technologies. Those who succeed in developing viable business models will be nurtured to realize their dreams within coffee and related agricultural value chains in Uganda.



*Management, staff, students and lectures at Makerere University (Left) CURAD prospective incubatee, Grace, makes an elevator pitch and a tissue culture entrepreneur explains his business to the DANIDA review mission (centre and right)*

## Nepal evinces interest in setting up incubator in Nepal with AIP-ICRISAT's support

A team of high-level delegates from the Project for Agriculture Commercialization and Trade (PACT), Ministry of Agriculture Development, Government of Nepal visited AIP – ICRISAT on 19 - 20 April 2013.

The 13-member group led by Mr. Yogendra Kumar Karki, Project Director - PACT, was given detailed introduction about AIP and its operations in different regions and sectors. Later the delegates were taken to *Aakruthi Agricultural Associates of India* to understand the role of the Agri-Business Incubation (ABI) program in promoting seed business ventures which involves small-holder farmers and commercialization of open pollinated seed varieties. Later, the team visited *24 Letter Mantra*, an organic retail outlet of Sresta Organics Limited an innovative venture that was supported by the ABI program to understand the commercialization aspects of organic products, packing & certification and the services that were provided by the incubator.

The delegates also met SM Karuppanchetty of the ABI program for a detailed discussion on way forward on implementing and handholding the value chain incubator or *Yuva Kisan* incubator in Nepal through CAA & Others for PACT. The delegates in principle agreed to avail AIP support for establishing an incubator at Nepal.



*Delegates from Nepal and AIP staff pose for a group photo*

## PanAAC strategy meet scheduled in May

The Pan African Agribusiness and Agroindustry Consortium (PanAAC), a key UniBRAIN partner is hosting a joint incubator strategy meet and specialized training during 29 - 31 May 2013 at Mombassa continental hotel, Mombasa - Kenya. This meet aims to officially introduce and delineate PanAAC's role within UniBRAIN and come up with a way forward for fulfilling incubator expectations and for the effective delivery of services.

This strategy meet also aims to offer technical presentations that will add value to the business management and daily operations of the incubators and add by extension those of the incubatees.

## Event Update

### Africa Food Security Conference & Agri Exhibition

The **Africa Food Security Conference & Agri Exhibition** will be held in Nairobi-Kenya on the 27-28 August 2013. This regionally focused forum aims to bring the interrelated parties together for discussions that will refocus food security issues in Africa in alignment with the continent's requirement. This event will feature a 3 day industry exhibition and 2 day conference.

To participate in the event, contact:  
[maggy@aidembs.com](mailto:maggy@aidembs.com)

## ANAFE Convenes Agribusiness Tracer Study Validation Workshop in Zambia

The need to improve agribusiness pedagogy in colleges and universities, enhance linkages between universities and the private sector and improve the practical skills for agribusiness graduates dominated the discussions during the Agribusiness Tracer Study Validation Workshop held at Mulungushi University, Kabwe, Zambia on April 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

The workshop, which brought together leading educationists, researchers, students and representatives of non-governmental organizations, government officials and agribusiness people, was organized by the African Network for Agriculture, Agroforestry and Natural Resources Education (ANAFE) in collaboration with Agribusiness Incubation Trust Ltd. (AgBIT), a Zambian UniBRAIN agribusiness incubator.

While officially opening the workshop, Mulungushi University Deputy Vice Chancellor, Dr. Judith Lungu commended ANAFE for its efforts to reform tertiary education in Africa. "This initiative is an effective tool for making informed decisions on curriculum reform. We need to involve all stakeholders in the agricultural value chain and this meeting has done well to bring in all actors including private sector, government, civil society and NGOs" she said.

Dr Anderson Kipkoech, presented the findings of the Tracer Study titled '*Linking Training of Agriculture to Agribusiness Development: A tracer study of graduates from the universities involved in the University, Research and Business in Agricultural Innovation Incubators (UniBRAIN) Consortia in Africa*'. Dr Wilson Kasolo, the Principal of Nyabyeya Forestry College also presented findings of a tracer study conducted by the College. A common theme emerging from the two studies was that students graduating from tertiary agricultural education require thoughtful exposure to practical skills. The UniBRAIN incubators are exceptionally well placed to provide opportunities for hands-on agribusiness experience and they are committed to up scaling the lessons learnt and best practices, which through ANAFE's network will go well beyond the six consortia.

ANAFE's Executive Director, Dr Aissetou Yaye called on all stakeholders in agricultural education to work together in a bid to have a comprehensive curriculum that can revolutionize agribusiness education in the continent. Key educationists who attended the workshop included: Prof. Olusegun Yerokun, Dean, Faculty of Agriculture, Mulungushi University; Prof. John Ofori-Anim; Dean, School of Agriculture, University of Ghana, Dean Faculty of Agriculture, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT); Prof. Kamau Ngamau Dr. George Bazirake, Dean, Faculty of Science, Kyambogo University, and Prof. David Munthali, Botswana College of Agriculture, who is also the Chair of ANAFE's Southern Africa Regional Agricultural Fora for Training (SA-RAFT).

Also attending the meeting were representatives of UniBRAIN consortia from other countries. Besides giving significant input for improving the tracer study report, participants developed key issues to be discussed during a policy dialogue forum scheduled for July 2013 in Accra Ghana. This will be the basis for development of policy recommendations for reforming agribusiness teaching, learning and practice in Africa.



*Mulungushi University Deputy Vice Chancellor, Dr. Judith Lungu (centre) and ANAFE's Executive Director, Dr Aissetou Yaye, during the tracer study validation workshop held at the University on 9-10 April, 2013.*

*Looking on is Prof. David Munthali of Botswana College of Agriculture, who is also the Chair of ANAFE's Southern Africa Regional Agricultural Fora for Training (SA-RAFT)*

## News & Opportunities

### **The Villgro Fellowship 2013**

The Villgro Fellowship aims to cultivate a pipeline of future leaders who have the social commitment and leadership and operational skills to contribute to the development of villages in India through principles of social entrepreneurship while filling a critical talent gap within Villgro's incubatee companies. The Fellowship is a one-year program that immerses Fellows in field work with social enterprises and exposes them to leadership training to support their professional growth. [More details and apply by May 15, 2013](#)

### **Call for Applications - SEED Awards 2013**

Are you a start-up entrepreneur? Are you a women-led enterprise? Does your business or business idea integrate social and environmental benefits, solving pressing local issues? Does your enterprise make significant contributions to mitigating and/or adapting to climate change? Do you need support to help to establish and grow your enterprise?

The deadline for applications is **Wednesday, June 12th, 2013, 23:59 Central European Time (CET)**. Please apply online or download the application form from the SEED Initiative website at <http://www.seedinit.org/>

### **The 2013 GIST Tech-I Competition**

GIST invites all eligible participants from GIST eligible countries in the three regions of Africa, Asia, and Middle East & Turkey to participate in its annual GIST Technology Idea (Tech-I) Competition. Tech-I is designed to encourage and support technology and science entrepreneurs to launch and/or grow a company in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Turkey through:

- Training and mentorship with successful entrepreneurs, angel investors, and venture capitalists
- Networking opportunities
- Seed funding

[More details and apply by June 17, 2013](#)

### **Impact Economy Innovations Grant Fund-Request for Proposals**

The Rockefeller Foundation, The Tony Elumelu Foundation and The Global Impact Investing Network (the Partners) invite proposals from organizations interested in receiving support for initiatives aimed at fostering Africa's impact economy, specifically by aiding the growth of the impact investing industry and social enterprise sector. The goal of the Africa Impact Economy Innovations Fund (IEIF) is to catalyze collective action and regional market development that will accelerate these market driven solutions for advancing social and charitable goals such as relieving poverty and promoting sustainable development. [More information and apply by May 31, 2013](#)



### **Call for Applications: Brazilian Government – “Science without Borders program” - Special Visiting Researcher**

The scholarship program for "Special Visiting Researcher" aims to attract senior foreign researchers to conduct projects with Brazilian research groups and visit Brazil for up to three months each year over two to three years.

The proposals for the Special Visiting Researcher program should be focused on the following areas:

- Pure and Natural Sciences;
- Health and Biomedical Sciences;
- Information and Communication Technologies;
- Sustainable Agricultural Production; Renewable Energy;
- Biotechnology; Biodiversity and bio prospection.

[Click here to read more.](#) Deadline: 20 May 2013

### **Call for Applications: The Crawford Fund Derek Tribe Award**

The award is made biennially to a citizen of a developing country in recognition of their distinguished contributions to the application of research in agriculture or natural resource management in a developing country or countries. Nominations can only be made by Australian researchers or researchers from international agricultural research centers. The recipient will undertake a visit of about two weeks to agricultural centers in Australia with the intention of enhancing networking and linkages between the recipient's home institution and country with similar bodies and individuals in Australia. Self-nominations will not be accepted.

[Click here to read more.](#) Deadline: 31 May 2013

### **Call for LOI: Improving nutrition outcomes through agricultural interventions**

LOI invites proposals to build a consortium in Africa to optimize nutrition outcomes from investments in agriculture, working with or delivering through existing platforms developed by governments, community organizations, private sector or development programs. The lead organization needs to be headquartered in Africa. However, the project can have several other types of partners, most notably a research/evaluation partner(s) and multiple local partners across countries.

The consortium needs to work in Ethiopia, Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Mali, Burkina Faso, Ghana, and Nigeria. The concepts need to cover a minimum of four of these countries. The call considers regional or language-based consortia (for example, East or West Africa, Anglophone or Francophone countries). Collectively, the consortium must have strengths in program design, implementation, and rigorous monitoring and evaluation with a strong focus on providing these services as technical assistance. The call anticipates that the duration of this grant will be at least 5 years.

[Click here to read more.](#) Deadline: 07 June 2013



## Click to Read ...

### The quiet revolution in staple food value chain

Feeding nine billion people by 2050 is a top priority on the global agenda for sustainable and inclusive development. This task is especially formidable in Asia, where more than two-thirds of the world's poor and malnourished people live. Food prices in Asia are projected to remain high and volatile, and food production is likely to be challenged by the combined effects of resource degradation and increasing climate variability and change. Ensuring food security in this region requires urgent actions to improve the productivity and climate resilience of agriculture and to upgrade the food value chains to ensure adequate and affordable food supplies.

To access the e-book online, visit:

[http://ebrary.ifpri.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15738\\_coll2/id/127312](http://ebrary.ifpri.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15738_coll2/id/127312)

## The Quiet Revolution in Staple Food Value Chains

Enter the Dragon, the Elephant, and the Tiger

Thomas Reardon, Kevin Chen, Bart Minten  
and Lourdes Adriano



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Global Agri Business Incubation Network's e-newsletter

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