

UNIVERSITY CONSORTIUM

A newsletter of the Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources

Vietnamese awarded the first TUA-SEARCA dissertation doctorate scholarship

The first Tokyo University of Agriculture (TUA)-SEARCA Scholarship for Doctoral Dissertation was awarded to Mr. Tran Quang Trung, Lecturer, Faculty of Accounting and Business Management, Hanoi Agricultural University, Vietnam.

Effective 1 June 2010, Mr. Trung's scholarship is tenable at TUA for a period of three years. His dissertation doctorate program requires him to stay at TUA for one month every year for three years to undertake consultations with his Academic Adviser at TUA.

The topic of Mr. Trung's doctoral dissertation is on "The influence of rural investment climate factors on business operations of agricultural firms: Evidence from Vietnam."

The TUA-SEARCA Doctoral Dissertation Scholarship is offered for three years, starting school year 2010/2011. Effective School Year 2010/2011 for a duration of three years, the scholarship provides one slot annually for a three-year graduate program leading to a Dissertation Doctorate at TUA.

The scholarship is open only to nationals of the regular member countries of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO), namely: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor Leste and Vietnam.

On the other hand, TUA forged a collaboration with the Southeast Asian University Consortium for

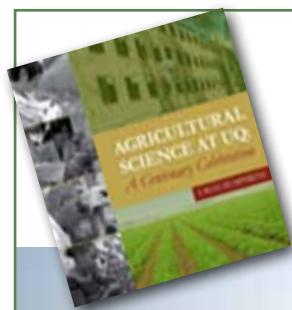
Mr. Tran Quang Trung, from Hanoi Agricultural University, Vietnam receives TUA-SEARCA grant starting June 2010.



Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources or UC to offer a Dissertation Doctorate Program. The three-year dissertation program is available only to any highly qualified researcher from the members of the University Consortium.

Details of these two dissertations programs can be found in the UC website at <http://www.uc.searca.org>. Inquiries can also be sent addressed to Dr. Editha C. Cedicol, Manager, SEARCA Graduate Scholarship Department at ecg@agri.searca.org or gsd@agri.searca.org.

(LLDomingo)



UQ publishes book on the university's agricultural science history

Disease-resistant tomatoes, eggs with high Omega 3 fats and other health benefits, mine rehabilitation, and improved pasture and rice yields for Australian and international farmers are among achievements recounted in a new book released for UQ's centenary.

Agricultural Science at UQ is a 100-page colour booklet written by former Head of the Department of Agriculture at UQ (1978-1991) and Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Biological Sciences (1991-93) Professor Emeritus L. Ross Humphreys.

Professor Humphreys said the story of

agriculture at UQ mirrored the development of Australia over the past 80 years.

The book also discusses changes in the social fabric, with a migration from country to city; and intensified farming practices bringing new problems of salinity, groundwater, introduced pests and diseases and land degradation.

Copies can be ordered by fax or email from The School Manager, School of Land, Crop and Food Sciences, The University of Queensland Brisbane, Q 4072, Fax 07 3365 1177 or email a.hanson@uq.edu.au.

Condensed from: UQ News | 1 July 2010



Photo courtesy of UBC webpage

UBC Graduate Studies announces appointment of Associate Dean, Grad Policy and Program Review

The Faculty of Graduate Studies announced the appointment of Dr. Philip Loewen to the position of associate dean, Grad Policy and Program Review, effective 1 July.

Dr. Loewen joined UBC in 1987 and has been the department co-op coordinator, curriculum committee chair, graduate advisor and was elected to the UBC Senate as a representative for the Faculty of Graduate Studies in 2008. In 2005 he received the Canadian Mathematical Society's Excellence in Teaching Award.

Loewen takes over this role from Dr. Jim Thompson, who has occupied the post since 2003. Thompson served as associate dean, Research and Graduate Programs from 1998-2003 and has chaired the Graduate Academic Policy Committee since 2001. In 2007, he served as acting principal, College for Interdisciplinary Studies.

For more information, visit <http://www.grad.ubc.ca/>

UBC News | 24 June 2010

Prof. Suryo Purwono inaugurated as Vice Director for Academic Affairs in UGM Graduate School

UGM Rector Prof. Ir. Sudjarwadi, M. Eng., Ph.D. inaugurated Prof. Ir. Suryo Purwono, M.A.Sc., Ph.D. as Vice Director for Academic Affairs, Development and Cooperation of UGM Graduate School. At the same time, the Rector dismissed Prof. Dr. Ir. Edhi Martono, M.Sc. with honor from the position of Vice Director for Academic Affairs, Development and Cooperation of UGM Graduate School and Dr. Abdul Halim, M.B.A., Akt. from the position of Vice Director for Administration.

As far as the Rector is concerned, the UGM Graduate School is a strategic element in the effort to become a research university. As a main front, the Graduate School plays an important role in guiding, pioneering, and inspiring high-quality research. "The results of the research are expected to give solutions and meet challenges in the community, nation, and humanity," said the Rector.

The Rector also expressed his gratitude for the two incoming officials for their willingness to fulfill the duty and the accept head on the challenges involved in their new positions.

Source: UGM News report | 06 July 2010



Photo courtesy of UGM webpage



Photography by John Gollings

\$100 million School of Veterinary Science Opens in UQ

The most modern veterinary science building in the southern hemisphere opens at the University of Queensland's Gatton campus this morning.

The \$100 million School of Veterinary Science complex will put all the university's vet sciences training at one campus for the first time.

It will provide state-of-the-art training for 550 students, plus research facilities that will provide leading-edge advantages for veterinary sciences.

The Dean of Veterinary Science, Professor Jonathan Hill, said relocation to the 1068-hectare Gatton campus was an "exciting development" for veterinary education for Queensland and Australia.

"The development unites the school in a setting suited to learning and discovery in veterinary science.

"It provides state-of-the-art teaching facilities for the school's 550 veterinary science students — 80 per cent of them female — and a vitality and economic boost to the Lockyer Valley."

Historically, UQ has had the largest intake of veterinary students of any university in Australia and has produced more than 3000 veterinary science graduates.

The 3000 graduates work in 53 countries, including Beijing, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Shanghai, Singapore, Thailand, United Kingdom and Vietnam.

Source: UQ News Online | 06 Aug 2010

UPM graduates challenged to watch over agriculture commodity issues

Graduates of tropical agriculture discipline from UPM are urged to join hands in unraveling the plight of natural resources and agriculture commodity.

UPM's Pro Chancellor, Tan Sri Dato' Dr. Nayan Arifin said these issues should be tackled to ensure equilibrium and tranquility in the community.

"Factors such as weather changes, non-sustainable resources, social economic demands, food and agricultural produce demands, might affect the commodity tremendously.

"It is my great hope that the new batch of highly skillful graduates will look into this matter and to find a resolution in accordance to

our tagline, A World Leader in New Tropical Agriculture," he opined in his speech.

Tan Sri Nayan said UPM can certainly achieve the status as a centre of development for professional agriculture by producing prestigious graduates as well as high impact research products in new tropical agriculture.

During the ninth session, Tan Sri Nayan awarded diplomas and bachelor degrees to 774 graduates, followed by 797 recipients during the 10th session awarded by Tan Sri Dato' Seri Lim Ah Lek.



Tan Sri Nayan presented Teng Wern Jyet his bachelor degree; Teng is also the recipient of UPM's Gold Medalist.

Capacity Building of KU Students on Internationalization Program

International Affairs Division, Kasetsart University launched the Internationalization Program, initiated by the University President, Associate Professor Vudtechai Kapilakanchana.

The program aims to enhance the international capacity of Kasetsart University students to conform not only to current global trends in tertiary education management and student mobility through credit transfer, but also to the major policy of Kasetsart University administrators that stimulates student exchange opportunities, both inbound and outbound, either for credit transfer or research.

In the Fiscal Year 2010, a total allocation of funds for this project provided by Kasetsart University is 6 million baht.

Outbound students in this program will go to a variety of overseas countries namely U.S., Canada, Germany, China, Japan, Taiwan and Singapore; meanwhile, inbound students are from U.S., Norway, China, Japan and Singapore.

Delegates of Bogor Agricultural University Attend FORED 2010

Faculty of Forestry students from the Bogor Agricultural University -- Renando Meiko Putra and Umar Atik attended the International Conference on forestry education and research for the Asia-Pacific Region (FORED 2010) held at SEARCA, College, Laguna, Philippines from 23 - 25 November 2010.

The three-day event with the theme, "Forestry education and research responding to changing needs," aimed to strengthen the

education and research in the forestry sector leading to Sustainable Forest Management as one of the priority programs in the Asia Pacific region.

Mr. Putra presented his paper entitled "Bio-technology to increase soil pore function," wherein he explained the application of a technology invented by Dr. Khamir Raziudin Brata M.Sc., called the Biopori technology.

During the session "Forest and climate change," Mr. Umar Atik

presented his paper on "Environment activities: planting activity program to face global warming: Case study in Megamendung Area, West Java."

Through the FORED 2010, resolutions were crafted to improve the cooperation, transfer of information and technology in forestry education and research between institutions, universities and governments in the Asia-Pacific.

IPB News | 2 December 2010

UPM and Private Sectors to Agree on Food Security Policy

Universities and the private sectors including those involved in the food industry need to cooperate with the government agencies in order to ensure food security policy will be achieved.

Minister for Science, Technology and Innovation, Datuk Seri Dr.

Maximus Ongkili said both parties play an important role to help the government to get ready to face local food crisis as well as globally.

“The ministry will continue to give support to accelerate development of biotechnology and information technology to transform and increase the added value of agriculture sector in the future,” he said during the launching of International Conference on Food Research held by the Faculty of Food Science and Technology,

“The ministry will continue to give support to accelerate development of biotechnology and information technology to transform and increase the added value of agriculture sector”



Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM).

Various approaches are applied in order to develop more research and development centres, innovation centres, tissue banks and biotechnology will transform the agricultural sectors in addition to ensuring the country's food supplies is guaranteed.

“We need to strengthen technology in the agricultural industry to consolidate the position of the food industry due to the increase of food resources,” he said.

Meanwhile, Vice Chancellor UPM, Prof. Tan Sri Datuk Dr. Nik Mustapha R. Abdullah said the conference aims to provide platform for idea sharing between researchers and food experts to produce highly durable food.

“As a research University, this conference will provide a new network of researchers and agencies to build technology that can be utilized by the community,” he said.

Source: UPM News | 22 November 2010

SEARCA awards 19 new graduate scholarships

Nineteen nationals from Southeast Asia are among the selected few who received new scholarship grants from SEARCA to pursue their graduate studies in school year 2010/2011. Of them, 4 are from Lao PDR, 5 from Myanmar, 3 from the Philippines, 2 from Thailand, and 5 from Vietnam.

Moreover, five nationals of Timor-Leste have also begun their studies under the Academic Bridging Program, which provides preparatory training to selected beneficiaries for graduate studies.

Present also during the orientation were Dr. Mariliza V. Ticsay, Head, Knowledge Resources Unit; Ms. Ma. Obdulia B. Jolejole, Head, Facilities Management Unit; Mr. Ricardo A. Menorca, Head, General Services Unit; Ms. Nova A. Ramos, Training Specialist, Training Unit; Ms. Maria Teresa B. Ferino, Project Development Associate, Networks & Linkages; and the GSD Staff – Ms. Leah Lyn D. Domingo and Ms. Zacyl R. Jalotjot, both Graduate Scholarship Specialists; Ms. Blessie P. Saez, Graduate Scholarship Assistant; and Ms. Irene J. Mercado, Administrative Assistant.



'Eliminate Dengue' trial ready to start

University of Queensland's School of Biological Sciences embark on an international project to control dengue involving research institutions in Australia, Vietnam, Thailand, USA and Brazil.

World-first trials aimed at eliminating dengue fever are set to begin in Cairns.

Project leader Professor Scott O'Neill, of The University of Queensland's School of Biological Sciences, this week welcomed the newly recruited research field team in Cairns at the opening of the international project's first office.

"This is a very exciting day for me and for the other 30 or so scientists and researchers working on our project around the world," Professor O'Neill said.

"We are marking another major milestone after 15 years of successful laboratory research. With the skills and experience of these field officers we can now take our research to the next stage.

"We hope to provide a real solution to reduce the global burden of dengue fever."

In September, the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority gave the project approval to proceed to field trials at Yorkeys Knob and Gordonvale near Cairns

over the coming wet season.

The "Eliminate Dengue" program aims to control dengue by stopping mosquitoes passing the virus to humans.

Under the project, strains of the Wolbachia bacterium are introduced to the mosquito population, blocking virus transmission.

The project is the first of its kind in the search for a permanent solution to dengue fever and is unique in that the method will be self-sustaining once established.

The project's first field implementation team will be based at the new Grafton Street office in Cairns. They will work to suppress the wild mosquito population over the coming weeks before releasing the Wolbachia *Aedes-aegypti* from January 2011.

The field team is led by Brian Montgomery, formerly of Queensland Health, and includes members from Brazil, Brisbane, Gordonvale and Yorkeys Knob.

"The team's first task is to recruit project supporters from the field site areas," Mr Montgomery said.

"We are encouraging all residents

of Yorkeys Knob and Gordonvale to call us on 1800 811 054 to register their support. "Only with the prior approval of householders will we enter yards to manually reduce the number of wild mosquitoes before we release the Wolbachia *Aedes aegypti* between January and March next year."

The objective of the 2011 field trial is to determine how well the Wolbachia bacteria establishes within the wild mosquito population.

"Eliminate Dengue" is an international collaboration involving research institutions in Australia, Vietnam, Thailand, USA and Brazil.

The Foundation for the National Institutes of Health is funding the project as part of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's "Grand Challenges in Global Health" initiative.

The Queensland and Australian governments also have contributed funding.

If the Cairns trials are successful, the researchers hope to repeat the trials at a large field site in Vietnam towards the end of 2011.

The project team can be contacted on 1800 811 054 any time, or through its office at Suite 11, 36 Grafton Street, Cairns.

More details are on the project website at www.eliminatedengue.com



Source: UQ News | 25 November 2010

Preparing Green TV, IPB Holds Training and Workshop on Television Program Production

Rector of Bogor Agricultural University (IPB) Prof. Dr. Ir. Herry Suhardiyanto, MSc unveiled the plan to launch the Green TV come 2011. The Green TV will enable IPB to produce various educational TV programs related to agriculture, including food security, bioenergy, environmental sustainability, poverty reduction, and others.

Green TV is part of IPB's effort in introducing agricultural education to the public and change the perception of the younger generation towards

agriculture. Green TV will also educate the public on food and environmental issues. "If national television gives good attention to the agricultural education, IPB would not really need to introduce this green TV," Rector said.

Based on the plan, approximately 800 episodes are required for one-year running. To prepare for the staging of the Green TV, trainings and workshops on TV program production will be conducted by the Laboratory of Electronic Media for two periods. Period I is

scheduled on 21 to 22 October and 2 November 2010, and Period II is set on 28 to 29 October and 4 November 2010.

Participants, who are academicians from IPB, will be trained by Creative Content Indonesia (CCI) to become executive producers, and generate new and exciting program ideas for the Green TV. The challenge is to make the agricultural topics interesting enough for the millions of viewers in Indonesia.

Source: IPB News | 29 October 2010

University Consortium, from p. 8

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Dr. Richard Williams, Professor

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Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., Director
Dr. Editha C. Cedicol, Manager of Graduate Scholarship Department

SEARCA initiated the establishment of the UC in 1989. The UC founding members are IPB, UGM, UPM, KU, and UPLB. Four universities outside Southeast Asia have joined the UC as associate members. They are, UB C, UQ, TUA, and Georg-August University of Göttingen, Germany. (LLDDomingo)

The University Consortium

The Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources is a program launched on 19 September 1989 by SEARCA.

The idea of having such a program was formed in August 1988 when SEARCA, with convened a meeting of deans of five leading agricultural graduate schools in the region. The deans noted a rising demand for graduate education across all agricultural disciplines and related fields, strong agricultural and demographic pressures, and tremendous growth in education, and agreed to the idea of establishing a University Consortium.

The objectives of the Consortium are:

1. To provide highly trained personnel in agriculture and natural resources for national development of Southeast Asian countries.
2. To promote mutually beneficial cooperation among agricultural universities in the region.
3. To utilize more fully and efficiently the scarce resources and expertise available in each country in the region for top-quality graduate education and research.
4. To stimulate freer sharing and exchange of information, facilities, and expertise among agricultural universities in the region.

SEARCA has served as the Consortium's Secretariat since 1989. Its founding members are Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) and Institut Pertanian Bogor (IPB), both in Indonesia; Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) in Malaysia; University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) in the Philippines; and Kasetsart University (KU) in Thailand. Four associate members have been admitted, namely: University of British Columbia (UBC) in Canada, University of Queensland (UQ) in Australia, Georg-August University of Göttingen in Germany, and Tokyo University of Agriculture in Japan.

"To be a leader in implementing collaborative strategies for excellent graduate education and cutting-edge research in agriculture, environment, and natural resources for the benefit of Southeast Asia" - this is the vision of the revitalized University Consortium.

The Consortium has five components, namely: faculty visits, research fellowships, professorial chairs, and thesis grants.

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UPLB takes lead in biotech education

The University of the Philippines-Los Baños (UPLB) is leading the campaign to upgrade biotechnology education nationwide and Chancellor Dr. Luis Rey Velasco is proud that it was his institution that took the cudgels for it.

Dr. Velasco said UPLB has pioneered an academic program that grants baccalaureate degrees for agrobiotechnology, which emphasizes on using biotechnology to develop new crop varieties suited to Philippine conditions.

In contrast to traditional plant breeding that has gestation periods ranging from 12 years to 15 years, biotechnology can produce new strains using shorter production cycles.

Velasco said biotechnology develops new varieties with better qualities, something like designer plants, and these could be armed with genetic traits that make them durable to grow under extreme weather conditions.

“With biotechnology, because you’re directed, whatever gene it is you need you can put in, that will shorten the gestation period to about half the time. So in five years, six years, there is something

you can produce because you already know what gene gives you the desired effect. Unlike before, it was a random selection more like trial and error,” Velasco said.

As a result of this UPLB’s efforts, the country has already produced Pinoy GMOs (genetically modified organisms).

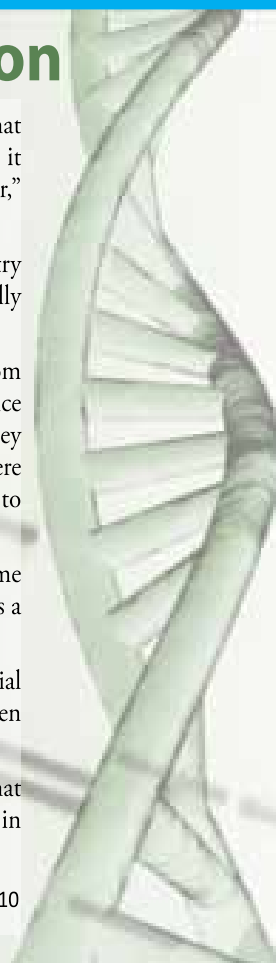
“Japan is into harvesting new molecules from insects with the use of biotechnology, serving notice that entomology can be more than interesting. They now source new gene material from insects. There are many tools for biotechnology and we need to expand on them,” Velasco said.

“These new avenues for research compelled me to think seriously about BS Agrobiotechnology as a degree,” Velasco said.

He said that the search for new genetic material to improve the traits of plants and animals that even insects have become a significant source.

“I saw the trend already in agriculture, that biotechnology will be a very important tool in agriculture,” he said.

Source: MNBenaning (The Manila Bulletin) | 27 Sept 2010



University Consortium Holds 23rd Executive Board Meeting

The Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC) held its 23rd Executive Board Meeting on 10-11 November 2010 at the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) in Laguna, the Philippines.

The UC Executive Board approved the development and offering of

one or two master’s courses focused on ASEAN agriculture that could be credited to an existing master’s program offered by each UC member to give that program an ASEAN perspective. Since the proposal is a joint initiative of UPLB and SEARCA, the Board agreed that the two institutions will continue to work together to develop said graduate courses focused on ASEAN agriculture

starting 2011. At the same time, they will also gradually develop short courses on relevant topics which are envisioned to eventually form part of a full master’s program.

Eight UC members and SEARCA as UC Secretariat were represented in the meeting by 19 officials. Participants of the meeting were:

See University Consortium p. 6



Participants of the 23rd University Consortium Executive Board Meeting pose for a souvenir photo with Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. (third from left, back), SEARCA Director, and members of the SEARCA Management Committee during their visit to SEARCA.