



## November 2012 Newsletter

Dear friends

Welcome to the AIFSC November Newsletter. This quarter we have a packed newsletter with articles on the AIFSC's activities and program development, articles by our project leaders on some of our projects and a snapshot of what our partners have been up to.

We would like to sincerely thank all our contributing authors. Our next update is expected in February 2013 and we look forward to sharing stories and outcomes from our upcoming [Conference](#). Contributions to AIFSC Newsletters are most welcome, please [contact us](#) if you'd like to contribute an article.

We are trialling a new format for the Newsletter - mailchimp - and are interested in your [feedback](#).

Warm regards

Melissa Wood (Director) and the AIFSC team



### What's happening with us

#### AIFSC office in Africa established

We are delighted that our Africa office in Nairobi, Kenya is now established. The office will serve as an interface with African partners and support the AIFSC operations in Africa.

The office is currently housed in the Australian High Commission and staffed by our new Liaison Officer, Ms Liz Ogutu. We would like to take this opportunity to welcome Liz to the AIFSC team! Liz spent the past five years as the resource mobilisation officer at the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) in Nairobi. She has already begun to represent the AIFSC at a range of meetings in Kenya and Tanzania. Our Africa office will also have an AIFSC Manager in the near future.

[Read more](#) about the new office and our new Liaison Officer Liz Ogutu.



### What's happening with our programs

#### Nutritious food for thought – Nairobi nutrition workshop

On 10-11 September 2012 in Nairobi, Kenya, African and international experts in nutrition and agriculture met at an ILRI–AIFSC joint workshop: Food Nutrition in East and Southern Africa. Discussions were aimed at helping the AIFSC map out where it should prioritise research investment to have the most impact on nutrition.

[Read more](#) about the workshop.

## **FOOD SECURITY IN AFRICA:** BRIDGING RESEARCH AND PRACTICE



**Sydney, 29–30 November 2012**

**AIFSC official launch in Sydney,  
November 30**

The AIFSC will host an international event, [Food Security in Africa: Bridging Research and Practice](#), at the end of November 2012 in Sydney.

The main purpose of the event is to officially launch the AIFSC and strengthen its collaborative partnerships. The invite-only event will include a high-level Forum (leadership dialogue) for officials from Africa and Australia, together with international experts on global food security.

[Read more](#) about the upcoming event.



### **AIFSC Australian staff visits to Africa**

The Australian-based AIFSC staff have made a number of trips to Kenya, Ethiopia and Tanzania in the last few months, conducting consultations, attending project workshops and visiting villages in Tanzania involved in the AIFSC poultry scoping study.

[Read more](#) about what we have been up to.



### **What's happening with our projects Vaccines, poultry and the poor: women farmers and researchers making a difference in Africa**

Seventy percent of the world's rural poor rely on raising livestock for their day-to-day living. Livestock contribute to both poverty alleviation and food security. They not only provide protein and micronutrients for human nutrition and wellbeing, they are also an important source of cash income, can assist with manual labour and provide financial security as a form of savings.

[Read the article](#) about the poultry project by project leader Assoc Prof Robyn Alders.



### **To adopt or not to adopt: understanding farmers' choices**

The AIFSC's Adoption Pathways project aims to better understand farmers' technology adoption decision processes, and constraints and incentives for adoption, risk spreading strategies and technology impacts by collecting and analysing data from sentinel villages. Building on the ACIAR-funded Sustainable Intensification of Maize-Legume Systems for Food Security in Eastern and Southern Africa (SIMLESA) project, the Adoption Pathways project will systematically collect and analyse household, plot, and village level data from sentinel villages representing maize-legume based farming systems in Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, and Mozambique.

[Read the article](#) about the Adoption Pathways project by project leader Dr Menale Kassie.



### **FARA welcomes AIFSC strategy**

In July 2012, Ms Mellissa Wood (AIFSC Director) and Dr Wendy Henderson (AIFSC Manager of Research and Communications), visited FARA headquarters in Accra, Ghana to demonstrate how the outcomes of the FARA–ACIAR consultation have been instrumental in shaping the Centre's priorities and to present the interim Strategy to FARA.

Prof Monty Jones, Executive Director of FARA, congratulated the AIFSC for its strategic vision. He stated that FARA “looks forward to partnering closely with the Centre to promote food security and poverty reduction in Africa”.

[Read more](#) about the meeting.



### **What's happening with our partners Australians contribute to nutrition research in Africa**

Australia's expertise in nutrition is being applied to several research projects in east Africa. Australia's national science agency, the Commonwealth Scientific Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), is working together with the Biosciences eastern and central Africa Hub (BecA), which offers world-class research facilities and strengthens the human resource capacity of biosciences in Africa.

[Read more](#) about the collaboration.

### **Informing food security priorities through the analysis of farming systems**

In some African countries every second child is stunted—an indicator of really poor food security—despite the promising economic growth in many countries across the continent. It is well known that Africa lags behind other developing regions in food production, rural incomes and diversity of diets. However, the farming systems, including crops, trees, livestock, and fishing, vary tremendously from the Sahelian pastoralism to the irrigation schemes of Somalia, to the dense settlements on the slopes of Kilimanjaro. Improved knowledge of these complex farming systems is an essential ingredient to developing strategies and action plans for improving food and nutrition security in these diverse rural populations — and to feeding the growing cities of Africa where so many migrants are taking shelter.

[Read the article](#) by the Farming Systems project team.



### **Trees for Food Security project launch**

The four-year Trees for Food Security project has been launched in eastern Africa with \$5.5 million of funding from the AIFSC. The aim of the project is to encourage and support farmers to integrate trees onto farms with cropping and livestock for improved food and nutritional security. Previous research has indicated that crop yields can be doubled by incorporating the right trees and management practices into agricultural systems.

[Read more](#) about the launch.

## Australian and African universities unite

On 17 July 2012, the Australia-Africa Universities Network (AAUN) was officially launched in Canberra. The AAUN is a consortium of Australian and African universities promoting collaborative research and education in a broad range of fields including food security; mining; public sector reform; public health; education, from early childhood to higher education; water and environment; and post-conflict societies, border disputes and population movements.

[Read more](#) about the AAUN launch.

## Can east African Landcare groups contribute to food security?

A new AIFSC scoping study has been launched, investigating what role Landcare groups, in partnership with researchers and other public and private interests, could play in improving food security in Sub Saharan Africa. There will be a feature article on this scoping study in our next newsletter.

[Read more](#) about the scoping study.

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