

From John Taito in Navua, Fiji

Navua Rotuman Farmers Foodshow 2014 Report

On Saturday, 7 June 2014, the Navua Rotuman Community gathered at the Serua Provincial Council Hall, Naitata, Navua for their 12th Annual Food-show. The wet weather during the week did not dampen the spirits of the competitors and the guests, who came from as far as Nausori, Davuilevu Housing and Suva arrived in good numbers to witness first-hand what their brothers in Navua had yielded for the much awaited 2014 competition.

The program commenced at 8.40a.m with Pastor Robert Powell of the Pacific Harbour Wesley Circuit reminding everyone that each competitor has been *blessed and whether the yield was satisfactory or not, they were to give thanks and rejoice for the almighty God loves each and everyone of them equally*. Rotuman Hymn 114-Jisu Gagaja a Hanisim Ae was sung – *mak ke'pel* after which the Pastor delivered a prayer dedicating the day's program and handed over to the Secretary, Mr. Sam George.

The Secretary in his address thanked the Pastor for delivering a wonderful message and then welcomed everyone and thanked them for their support in attending the event for the last decade and that they have also become part of the foodshow with their continuous support – they were no strangers and were to enjoy the day's program. The Secretary also reminded everyone on the **aim** of the foodshow: the involvement of youths in the planting, maintenance and harvesting phases, participation in the koua preparations, and as ring crew, scorers, catering and kava crew and then lead the guests in inspecting the crops.

Competition commenced at 9.15a.m with the Filipino ta – Maha and then the Filipino ta Roa. The **14 x taro, 8 x yam** varieties were measured for weight and length followed by the **5 x Temafa** (Kumara, Tapiko, Pari – 4 x varieties, Merene & Painapa).

Fresh kava flowed during the event as the older Nausori visitors stamped their mark over the younger Navua crew.

Assorted home-made baked pastries and juice were served during morning tea and were enjoyed by everyone present.

Competition break at item 19 as lunch was served at 12.45 p.m and everyone were treated to koua puaka/fupag masi/moa, palusami and fekei mara ma a'ana.

The competition resumed after lunch: item 19 – 31 and the remaining yams and temafa varieties were weighed. The entertainment by the local PRO-AMS band also livened the event as Mr Jioje Aisea led the guests in some exciting island moves.

The last crop was measured at 3.30 p.m with the M.C leading the competitors to give three cheers to the audience for their support and patience during the event as the score-keepers— Mary Kaitu'u, Katarine Fonmoa, Josefa Wesley and Scale Master in Mr Malakai Kaitu'u— tallied up the points for awards and bets payout.

The following **messrs** were asked to hand out the prizes & trophies for the champion Taro, Yam, Bets, Ho'aga and Overall Champion 2014:

- Mr. Visoni Ufiamorat (Pacific Harbour)
- Ms. Susie Fesaitu (Suva)
- Ms. Saverina Fatiaki (Suva)

2014 Competitors

Jione Kaitu'u 73yrs of Maftoa, Itu'muta (Viwawa Ho'aga)
Pene Konrote 22yrs of Pephaua, Malhaha (Viwawa Ho'aga)
Wesley Konrote 55yrs of Pephaua, Malhaha (Viwawa Ho'aga)
Sam George 63yrs of Feavarere of Itu'ti'u (Navua Ho'aga)
Jioje Fonmoa 50yrs of Savlei, Itu'tiu (Navua Ho'aga)
Freddy Wesley 50yrs of Lopta, Oinafa (Rovadrau Ho'aga)
Tausia Amoe 52yrs of Losa, Itu'tiu (Rovadrau Ho'aga),
Jioje Aisea 63yrs of Lopta, Oinafa (Rovadrau Ho'aga)

2014 Results:

***Heaviest Taro:** Mr. Pene Konrote, Navua, 7.35kg*

***Longest Taro:** Mr. Pene Konrote, Navua, 80cm*

***Champion Taro 2014:** Mr. Jioje Fonmoa*

***Heaviest Yam:** Mr. Wesley Konrote, Filipine Ta, 54.8kg*

***Longest Yam:** Mr. Wesley Konrote, Filipine Ta, 92.1cm*

***Champion Yam 2013:** Mr. Wesley Konrote*

***Heaviest Cassava:** Mr Wesley Konrote, Ul Mi'a Ta, 35.05kg*

***Heaviest Kumara –** Mr. Sam George, 0.8kg*

***Champion Ho'aga –** Navua*

***Overall Champion 2014 –** Mr. Jioje Fonmoa*

Existing Records:

Heaviest Yam: Filipine Ta – 83.4kg, Francis Varea (2010)

Longest Yam: 'Uh Fit ta' - 105cm, Jioje Fonmoa (2005)

Heaviest Taro: Navua – 7.9kg, Freddy Wesley (2005)

Longest Taro: Pulou ne Hoi Ta – 98cm, Tausie Amoe (2005)

Heaviest Cassava: Soko Bale – 71.9kg, Freddy Wesley (2005)

Mr. Jioje Fonmoa was again pronounced the Overall Champion 2014 (three consecutive years) and in his victory speech acknowledged everyone present and encouraged the other competitors to prepare well for next year as both the Overall Champion and Ho'aga trophies will be growing roots in the Navua Ho'aga, *“Ip rua e la fup va' e Hoa'ag ne Navua.”*

The Secretary on behalf of the organizing Navua Ho'aga in acknowledgement thanked all guests and family members present for their continuous support and prayed that the Lord Almighty bless them also.

The M.C tuned the Rotuman anthem *Atumotu Helava La Kele*, which was sung beautifully by the crowd.

In an **inspirational speech**, Mr. Visoni Ufiamorat thanked the Navua Rotuman Farmers for 'holding on to the true spirit' of the mene'a tela a. The elder emphasized the importance that all the competitors were **winners** with the Glory to be returned to the Lord.

Pastor R. Powell delivered the benediction followed by the end of 2014 Food-show cheer by the Navua Rotuman Community youths.

At 5.00p.m all guests were directed to their respective food crop piles as a token of appreciation for their contribution to the day's event.

A farmers meeting was convened the following day, Sun 8th June, 2014 after a Thanksgiving Church Service at the Taito residence where the following members have been elected to form the organizing committee for 2015 Foodshow Competition:

- Freddy Wesley - Chairman
- Wesley Konrote - Secretary
- Jioje Fonmoa - Committee member
- Jioje Aisea - Committee member

Ua'ak ti'se haiasoag hanisit ne po e hensasiag e/Thank you to the following **guests, family members and friends** for your **generous contribution** to the event:

- Fereti Viliame, Mako Chute & family of Nasinu & Nausori
- Francis Varea & family of Suva
- Susie Fesaitu & Ms Fatiaki of Suva
- Stefan & Hapmak youths of Suva
- Visoni Ufiamorat & family of Pacific Harbour
- Marieta Rigamoto & family of Rovadrau, Deuba
- Setaita Homstedt of Rovadrau, Deuba
- Maraeva Fonmanu Wise of Wainiveidio, Navua
- John George & family of New Zealand
- Gus George & family of Naitata, Navua
- Ratu Marika of Naitata, Navua
- Freddy Fonmoa & family of Suva
- Christopher Fonmoa & family of Tokatoka Highway, Navua
- Wise Fonmoa & family of Suva
- Paul Taito & family of Lautoka
- Farema Taito Naga & family of Germany
- Peter Seeto of Wainiveidio, Navua
- Ravai Antonio & family of Suva

Te is rogrog ne mene'a tela'a ne fau te'is – 2014 ne omus hensasiag ne noh e Navua Gagaja la Alalum 'ak is e te ne ava

Photos:

1. Farmers 2014



2. Wesley Konrote & Jione Kaitu'u - Filipines



3. Christopher & Tausie



3. Tausie & Sam



4. Ring Crew



5. M.C re-assuring "big boss"



6. Scorers & Scale Master at work



7. Ms Saverine Fatiaki presenting Jioje Fonmoa overall champ trophy 2014



8. Visoni Ufiamorat congratulates Jioje Fonmoa 9. Ms Suzie Fesaitu presenting Ho'aga trophy to Navua Ho'aga



10. Visoni Ufiamorat delivers inspirational speech



11. Visoni congratulates Pene Konrote - heaviest & longest taro award winner



12. Visoni congratulates Mervin Wesley – Uhi 13. Sam & Wesley monitor activities in the ring



14. Marseu (Suva) kau kao ta



15. Yams



16. Wesley Konrote's – Heaviest Yam Award



17. Stefan & Hapmak youths Suva



18. Sam George – vote of thanks

