Horticulture Division
Annual Report 2012

Introduction

The Horticulture Division continued with its long standing activities in the fields of vegetable seed production, plant propagation and plant genetic resource (PGR) conservation aimed at:

1. Ensuring an adequate and timely supply of quality vegetable seeds and other planting materials to the planting community and public.
2. Conserving crop genetic resources for sustainable use.

Seed production

At Barkly ES (BES), 27 different crops were grown on some 6.0 ha for the production of seeds whilst at Roches Brunes Seed Production Centre (RBSPC) 9.0 ha were planted with 13 crops for the same purposes.

About 14,500 fruits and 71 tonnes of other harvested materials, comprising of an aggregate of 36 crop varieties and types were received at BES for seed processing.

The quantity of seed issued by the Seed Processing Unit (SPU) amounted to 3,947 kg. As far as seed testing is concerned, 1,238 germination and 121 moisture tests were carried out.

The amount of seeds disposed by the Division stood at 3,594 kg which represents 90% of the set target of 4,000 kg for the present year.

Plant propagation

At the Plant Propagation Unit (PPU), 36,148 plants of different fruit and ornamental species were produced as follows:

(i) Breadfruit: 570
(ii) Citrus grafts: 6898
(iii) Mango grafts: 591
(iv) Misc. Grafts (Jujube, Atemoya, etc): 296
(v) Litchi layers: 3603
(vi) Coconut seedlings: 603
(vii) Pawpaw: 4101
(viii) Misc Fruit trees: 14419
(ix) Misc ornamental/Spices/medicinal plants: 5067

The number of plants sold by the PPU was 47,431 representing 88% of the current year’s target of 54,000. It includes 11,758 tissue-cultured plants comprising of up of orchids (6,398), banana (4989), anthurium (26) and African violet (433).
**Conservation of plant genetic resources (PGR)**

At the Plant Genetic Resource Unit (PGRU), 193 movements of accessions were recorded from (102 movements) and to (91 movements) the Seed Gene Bank located at the Curepipe ES for one or more of the following purposes: regeneration, multiplication, processing and characterisation.

One hundred and sixty-eight (168) germination tests and 44 moisture content tests were carried out in relation to that activity.

One hundred and nine (109) accessions of 20 crops were maintained at the Field Gene Bank located at Nouvelle Découverte Plant Genetic Resource Unit (NDPGRU).

Accessions of amaranthus, bean, lettuce, celery cabbage, beetroot, peas, Chinese radish, lima bean, cucumber, squash, tomato, bottlegourd, pumpkin and chilly were grown for regeneration whilst those of cassava were for maintenance and those of dwarf bamboo, fern and rose for propagation.

Characterisation was ongoing in chilly (BES) and cucumber (NDPGRU) accessions. Purification exercise was ongoing in pumpkin (NDPGRU) and bottle gourd var. Natale (Richelieu ES and Plaisance ES).

An expert from the SADC Plant Genetic Resource Centre (SPGRC) based in Lusuka, Zambia, namely Mr. L. Qhobela (Senior Programme Officer, ex-situ conservation) visited the island from the 2nd to 6th July 2012 respectively, to monitor progress made by Mauritius in the conservation of PGR. He had in-depth discussions with officers responsible for the subject of PGR and attended field visits organised in relation thereto.

**Other activities**

**Seed Bill and Plant Breeders’ Rights Bill**

Following two Ministerial Meetings on Intellectual Property legislation held on 28 February and 10 May 2013, it was decided that all aspects of intellectual property rights (IPR) would have to be administered under one umbrella with the establishment of the Intellectual Property Office of Mauritius (IPOM). A committee was set up under the Chairmanship of the Attorney General to pursue the discussion involving all stakeholders, including Horticulture Division, until finalisation of the IPR Bill.

The Seed Bill was sent to the State Law Office for vetting. After being reviewed by SLO, Horticulture Division submitted its views and comments on the revised draft of the Seed Bill.

**Workshops/Training Courses attended**


Mr R. Beeharry (SSO): Regional workshop to review the Charter Establishing the SADC Seed Centre, South Africa, 12-16.11.12.

Mrs J.D. Mohur (STO): Biotechnology Application on Food Industries for Developing Countries, China 29.8-23.10.12

Mrs R. Seetohul (STO): Effective communication skills, Mauritius, 21-23.11.12.

Mrs V.P.V.Nursimulu (STO): Effective communication skills, Mauritius, 21-23.11.12.

Mrs H. Ramsahye (TO): Agricultural Planning Management in developing countries, China, 6-26.9.12.

Mr A.R. Dooky (TA): Vermiculture and Vermicomposting, Madagascar, 16-20.7.12.


Mr K.Bhujun (TA): Agricultural Irrigation Management, China, 8-28.5.12.