

## Trip report of the Agro-Industry group

### August 1-5, 2005

ATPAC members: Drs. Amy Simonne, Sasithorn Tajchakavit, and Vanee Komolprasert

Sponsor: RBD project

Host organization: Dr. Sirichai Kanlayanarat, Head, Division of Postharvest Technology (DPHT), King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi (KMUTT)

- ATPAC members attended 2005 APEC Symposium on Assuring Quality and Safety of Fresh Produce, organized by DPHT/KMUTT at Radisson Hotel, Bangkok, August 1-2.
- They visited Talaad Thai, which is the largest distribution center for fresh produce in Asia, located in Rungsit, Pathumthani, August 3.
- They gave a special, one-day workshop to graduate students and staff of DPHT on "Outlook on Quality and Safety issues of Fresh Produce," held at Bangkhuntien Campus, on August 5, 2005.

#### Proposed activities:

- Co-research at U of FL: Collaborative research effort between U of FL and KMUTT has been initiated and research training of KMUTT students and staff at U of FL is possible through Dr. Amy.
- Thai orchid irradiation: Initiated is collaborative research between Texas A&M University (TAMU) and KMUTT to study effects of e-beams and X-rays on kill of thrips and quality of Thai orchid flowers as an alternative quarantine method to replace methyl bromide fumigation. Mr. Douglas Johnson of TAMU who spoke at the APEC Symposium will help coordinate the effort of TAMU staff in collaboration with KMUTT team through Dr. Sirichai Kanlayanarat of KMUTT and Dr. Chettachai Banditsing, former Director of Thai Irradiation Center, Office of Atomic Energy for Peace. The communication between two universities is underway.
- A consultants team: Proposed is to form a consultants team consisting of ATPAC members and KMUTT faculty staff to provide technical assistance to the industry on issues associated with fresh produce, through a new program to be considered as a fee-for-service at DPHT/KMUTT. Funds obtained from consultation would help support research projects of graduate students and improve facilities for research at DPHT/KMUTT.
- A pilot line of fresh-cut produce: Proposed is to consider a setup of a pilot line of a fresh-cut produce to testing a niche market at the foreign-based fast food restaurants such as McDonald, Burger King, KFC, where more healthy dishes are being added or have been added to the menu choices that include fresh-cut produce such as salad and fresh-cut fruits in the USA. Thai fruits are regarded as exotic and offering them to customers, most likely to be foreigners at these restaurants in Bangkok area, would not only give them an opportunity to taste the Thai fruits, but also to evaluate the marketing potential in Thailand and the feasibility of these products in foreign market or for export.

### August 4, 2005

- Khun Achara Poomchatra (Deputy Director General, Department of Science Service (DSS), Ministry of Science and Technology) invited Dr. Vanee Komolprasert to present talks on "Qualifications of a researcher" and "Scientific/ technical writing" to app. 50 researchers of DSS and others at DSS and to participate in an open discussion with the attendees.
- Dr. Vanee met and discussed with several DSS staff on various scientific issues.
- Dr. Vanee talked with Dr. Varapan Danutra (Associate Professor, National Research for Environmental and Hazardous Waste Management, Chulalongkorn University) regarding a grant proposal that Dr. Varapan is preparing for submission to the EU-Thailand Economic Cooperation Small Projects Facility for a lab survey that would help Thailand be prepared for the emerging EU requirements under the program called REACH (Registration, Evaluation, and Authorization of Chemicals), which would affect the Thai products being exported to EU market in the future.

Prepared by Dr. Vanee Komolprasert  
Agro-Industry group, ATPAC (August 18, 2005)