

COLLEGE OF MICRONESIA-FSM YAP CAMPUS AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION

Noni cultivation

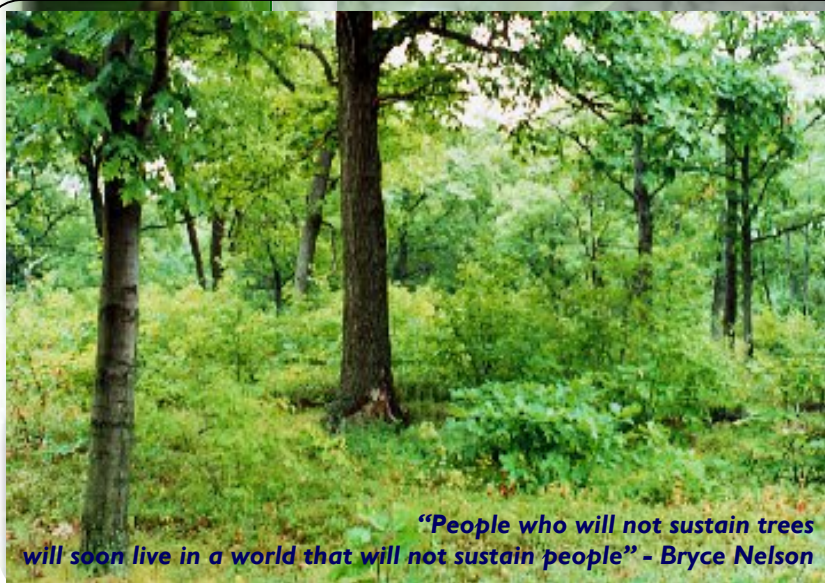
Noni made a remarkable transition from traditional Polynesian herbal medicine to modern natural remedy over the last few decades. It has become incredibly popular before sufficient evidence had accumulated to establish its efficacy according to biomedical criteria. Noni grows extensively throughout the Pacific and is widely used as herbal medicine in almost all Pacific island communities. Noni juice has become increasingly popular in recent years as a health food drink in western and Asian countries where there appears to be substantial market. This has prompted the establishment of commercial export enterprises in the Pacific on noni products.

Noni grows abundantly in Yap. This presents a lucrative opportunity for coordinated cultivation, harvesting and export. The exploration of returns from noni products will provide alternative sources

of economic growth and promise for sustainable development while opening doors for private sector development.

Agricultural Experiment Station, College of Micronesia-FSM, Yap Campus has embarked on a project in 2006 to promote commercialization of noni and small-scale private sector development. The overall project goal is to create an environment for the local population to begin small scale enterprises based on noni products to improve local economy. Since the inception of this project, local farmers and home owners have planted more than 2000 elite seedlings in the traditional agro forestry system to augment existing noni resources in Yap. Today, community continues to plant more and more noni seedlings in natural settings. Such greening exercise will not only increase noni resources in the island, but there are hidden benefits of enhancing green cover and carbon sequestration from the island's atmosphere.

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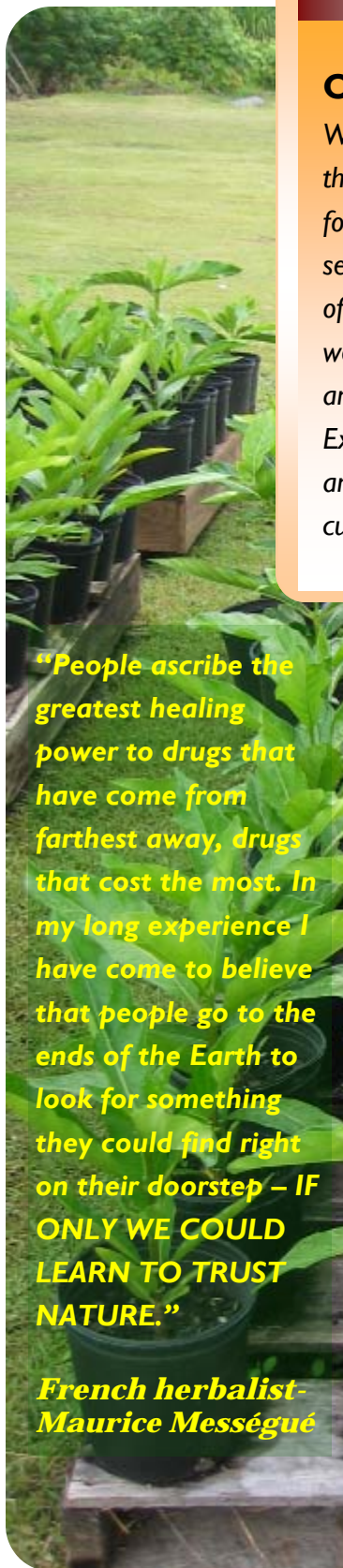
*"People who will not sustain trees
will soon live in a world that will not sustain people" - Bryce Nelson*

Role of noni in traditional agro forestry

Agro forestry is the deliberate incorporation of trees and other woody species of plants into agricultural activities. Planting indigenous plants such as noni among other crops using a mixed cropping system has several added benefits

- Plant diversity provides flexibility and risk aversion from environmental failures
- Low input expenditures maximize economic returns
- Ecosystem services are protected and harnessed to maximize nutrient and water use efficiency, as well as to sustain the

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“People ascribe the greatest healing power to drugs that have come from farthest away, drugs that cost the most. In my long experience I have come to believe that people go to the ends of the Earth to look for something they could find right on their doorstep – IF ONLY WE COULD LEARN TO TRUST NATURE.”

French herbalist Maurice Mességué

Our extension program

We promote noni cultivation as one of the components of traditional mixed agro forestry system and distribute elite noni seedlings to all community members, free of cost. Noni is an ideal plant that grows well in home gardens, island landscapes and agro forests. Please stop by the Experimental Station to pick up seedlings and for any information on planting and cultivation practices.

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natural food chains and life cycles that regulate pests and diseases

- Mixed cropping is appropriate for traditional crops and amenable to the integration of tree crops such as noni in agro forestry systems
- Opportunities for a wide range of natural resource investments in a mixture of crops meeting domestic and market needs
- Opportunities for inclusion of specialty crops for niche markets as well as the staple foods
- Perennial crops, especially trees for timber and indigenous fruits and nuts in an agro forestry system provide a ‘bank account’ for the next generation
- Mixed cropping is suitable for marginal land and protection of landscapes and water catchments from soil erosion.

Renaissance of noni

While Scottish bacteriologist Alexander Fleming was busy accidentally discovering penicillin and ushering in a new era of disease treatment, residents in the Pacific Islands were content to sip noni cocktails. "Antibiotics will wipe out illness entirely by the end of the 20th century!" American scientists boldly predicted. The 20th century is yesterday's news and antibiotics are not cure-alls. Frustrated by the pharmaceutical industry, rising costs of medical treatment and side effects that accompany some antibiotics - combined with a heightened desire to age gracefully - many consumers prefer to look to nature. Echinacea, ginseng and St. John's Wort experienced an unprecedented buying frenzy in the 1990s as if the age-old remedies were brand-new products.

The field of natural remedies has flourished over the last decade as natural products become increasingly popular around the world. Noni has become part of a growing healthcare trend and the subject of much science, myth and marketing hype. Noni plant is regarded as

a living biochemical factory for it produces many biologically active and useful chemical compounds. So far, about 160 **phytochemical** compounds have been identified in the noni plant and the list grows constantly as scientists characterize new molecules. Owing

Phytochemicals are non-nutritive plant chemicals that have protective or disease preventive properties. Plants produce these chemicals to protect themselves but recent research demonstrates that they can protect humans against diseases.

to its antioxidant potential, commercial interest has increased tremendously in recent years, as provided by the number of patents registered. In the United States 19 patents have been registered by the US Patent and Trademark Office since 1976. Noni juice has been recently accepted in the European Union as a novel food.

Disclaimer: The information provided in this information sheet is meant for educational purpose only. For any medical conditions, always consult a qualified medical practitioner.

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