

AFACI NEWSLETTER

Asian Food & Agriculture Cooperation Initiative

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New Acting Secretary General : Mr. Yang-Hee Cho



The Acting Secretary General, Dr. Gihwan Yi, was transferred to other position. Mr. Yang-Hee Cho who was in charge of managing the KOPIA (Korea Project on International Agriculture) centers in Asia, Rural Development Administration (RDA), Korea, has temporarily taken over the responsibility. He will be in charge until the election of the Secretary General in the next General Assembly held in May, 2012.



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2nd AFACI Workshop on Rural Development for High-level Officials

The 2nd AFACI Workshop on Rural Development for High-level Officials was held at the ITCC Conference Hall, RDA and the Central Training Institute (SUCTI) of Saemaul Undong (New Village Movement) from August 22 to 26, 2011, in Republic of Korea. The meeting was attended by 20 participants from 11 countries: Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam, and Korea.



Participants of the workshop

During the opening ceremony, Mr. Sang-Jae Lee, the Director of International Technology Cooperation Center (ITCC) of RDA, emphasized in his welcoming remarks that the rural development has been a driving force for the economic and social development of many countries. He said that the workshop would serve as a venue for all participants to share their experiences and knowledge to realize more balanced and sustainable rural development of the region. He also said that all AFACI members must work together to build closer partnership with each other.

During the meeting, Ad-Hoc Committee of AFACI was created. Dr. Gihwan Yi, the AFACI acting secretary General, chaired the meeting with Dr. Evelyn A. Exquejo from the Philippines, a Co-Chairperson of the Committee. The Temporary Committee members reviewed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) of AFACI line by line. By consent of participants, some clauses of the MOU was modified. After the review from Legal Affair Department of RDA, the MOU will be circulated to the member countries. The member countries will give final decision on this agreement during the General Assembly to be held in 2012.

They also discussed about the organization of Executive Council and AFACI Full Membership.



Dr. Evelyn presiding the committee

Report of the Ad-Hoc Committee Meeting

A. Organization of Executive Council

AFACI organized the Executive Council with representatives from each region. Since there are five geographical regions defined by AFACI, five representatives were chosen as the members.

Chairperson of the Meeting informed the members of obligations, responsibilities and rights of the Executive Council.

As Korea and the Philippines had taken the position of chair and co-chair of AFACI since its inauguration, these countries automatically became the members of the Executive Council representing the East Asia, and Southeast Asia regions, respectively.

To represent the remaining three regions, three countries were also selected in the Executive Council. For Central Asia, Mongolia agreed to be in the Executive Council. Nepal was also chosen to represent the South Asia with support from Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Vietnam declared its intention to join the Executive Council to represent also the Southeast Asia. Cambodia, Lao PDR, Indonesia, Philippines and Thailand agreed on this matter.

Finally, the Executive Council consisted of Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines, Vietnam, and Korea. The office term of EC members will be from July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2014.

B. AFACI Full Membership

Participants discussed about the AFACI membership. Currently, AFACI consists of 12 member countries - Cambodia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, and Korea which are considered full members while Bangladesh, Indonesia, Thailand, and Uzbekistan are provisional members.

During the meeting, delegates from Bangladesh, Indonesia and Thailand which are provisional member countries said that they will try to give the final decision of each country regarding their membership immediately. The official confirmation on their membership will be made at the General Assembly to be held in 2012.

There were two special lectures on agricultural information of Korea after the Ad-Hoc Committee Meeting. Prof. Je-Kyu Kim, Chonnam National University gave a lecture on Korea agriculture situation and performance, and Dr. Soo-Hwa Lee, former Administrator of RDA, introduced Korea's Strategy of Agricultural Improvement and Rural Development.

The participants also attended the Field Trip to National Agrobiodiversity Center under National Academy of Agricultural Science (NAAS) and National Institute of Horticultural & Herbal Science (NIHHS), RDA. At the National Agrobiodiversity Center, they were provided with comprehensive information on the conservation and management of genetic resources including plants, microbes, insects, and animals. They also watched research sites for horticulture, ginseng, herb and mushroom crops at the NIHHS

After finishing the schedule in RDA, Suwon, the participants moved to the Saemaul Undong Central Training Institute (SUCTI), Sungnam. SUCTI is the representative training institute for Saemaul movement. The goal of Saemaul training is to contribute to building a wealthy village, a wealthy community, a wealthy country, and a wealthy global community. The participants practiced Saemaul lifestyles in the SUCTI and was provided lectures by professors. Case studies was also introduced by successful Saemaul leaders. Through these activities, the participants could learn Saemaul philosophy focusing on putting Saemaul spirit into practice.

In the last day of the workshop, the participants had opportunities to visit rural village. After looked around the village, the participants met a leader of the village and had time to discuss with him. They indentified that how the rural village was changed through the SMU and how cooperate with villagers. It was a valuable time to get idea about adoption and implementation of SMU. The final destination was 'Guri Agricultural and Marine Products Wholesale Market'. The manager of the market led the group and explained the marketing system in Guri city. There was a good place to watch the distribution structure of the agricultural products in Korea. The participants finished their five-day workshop with a visit to Guri Agricultural and Marine Products Wholesale Market.



Dr. Soo-Hwa Lee giving a lecture



National Agrobiodiversity Center



Saemaul Undong Central Training Institute



The participants visiting rural village



Guri Agricultural and Marine Products Wholesale Market

What is 'Saemaul Undong Movement'?

Saemaul Undong is a movement seeking community development and modernization. Of all things, it is a movement to escape from poverty. It is not limited to individual lifestyles and living conditions, but encompasses the whole community. Until the late 1960's, Korean people did not have enough food. Situations were worse in the rural area. Many people moved to urban areas for better life. It made the urban area very unstable. Thus, the government proposed Saemaul Undong Movement in rural communities to inspire the people and lead them into the prosperity of rural communities. These activities gave Korea the opportunities to overcome poverty and develop rural area. Many Koreans believe that Korea could achieve economic growth in a short time through Saemaul Undong Movement.

Thailand experts visited Korea for Sharing the knowledge on maize

Dr. Chutima Koshawatana, an agricultural research scientist of Field Crops Research Institute (FCRI) and also a principal investigator of Thai country project named “Maize Seed Village in Thailand” and her five co-workers who are involved in this project visited Korea from 20 to 23 September, 2011. The purpose of visit was to discuss the progress and status of the research project in Thailand and to visit RDA research institutes and extension stations for enhancing knowledge and technology of maize cultivation.

First, they visited Upland Crop Research Division, National Institute of Crop Science (NICS) of RDA and met Dr. Beom-Young Son who is in charge of this project. Dr. Son and the delegates discussed about AFACI research project activities and situation. After finishing the discussion, Dr. Son guided them to research facilities at the NICS.

The delegates moved to Maize Experiment Station located in Hongcheon City next day. Dr. Ki-Jin Park who is a senior researcher of Maize Experiment Station gave the information on the situation of the maize cultivation and seed development in Korea. The delegates were interested in the newly developed maize seeds. They also looked around facilities for maize such as cold storage room and washing machines, etc. Dr. Park explained that Maize Experiment Station has stored the maize against a year of famine and how to use the machines. After the delegates looked around all facilities, they visited maize research field close to the center. They only saw the maize stalk because the center has already harvested maize. However, the delegates could learn cultivation condition of Korea.

The National Agricultural Cooperative Federation was next destination. The delegates got a chance to look that the workers were peeling the maize and classified them by quality. In the factory of the federation, there were washing, boiling and packing machines for maize. The manager explained the function of each machine.

After identifying the processing procedure of the federation, the delegates finally visited a farm and confirmed how to produce maize seed at the farm.

There were some limits to confirm the maize production in Korea because this period was not harvest time for maize in Korea, but the delegates could upgrade their maize research project with the knowledge and experiences learning from this period.



Delegates listening Dr. Park's explanation



Delegates watching the research field



Dr. Chutima checking maize seeds at the farm

Country Project in Thailand : 'Maize Seed Village in Thailand'

Hybrid maize seed production by groups of farmers as “Seed Village” is an alternative strategy to solve the problem of high seed price and seed shortage. Thus, Thailand government agencies need to transfer knowledge of seed production to farmers by training them on seed distribution system. Nakhon Sawan Field Crops Research Center (NSFCRC), Field Crops Research Institute (FCRI), has taken responsibility in research and development of maize; in 2009, the new released cultivar is Nakhon Sawan 3 (NS 3) – a drought tolerant hybrid. Meanwhile, hybrid seed production technology of NS 3 has been researched and could be promptly transferred to farmers if required. Furthermore, parent inbred of NS 3 are available and farmers could produce hybrid seed for their own use in their community.

2nd Workshop on Asian Network for Sustainable Organic Farming Technology (ANSOFT)

The 2nd Workshop on Asian Network for Sustainable Organic Farming Technology (ANSOFT) was held on 26–28 September, 2011, in Suwon, Republic of Korea. The meeting was attended by 14 participants from 11 countries: Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and Korea.

This workshop aimed at sharing the organic farming techniques to find new and better practices and help farmers to use various techniques. Also, the gathering was a venue where researcher, extension experts and policy makers in this field can build networks for creating environment-friendly organic farming system in Asia.

In the opening ceremony, Dr. Gwang-Yong Chung, the President of National Agricultural Academy of Science (NAAS), Rural Development Administration (RDA), emphasized that organic agriculture is one of the fast growing agricultural business in worldwide. We have required new farming techniques, policy & regulation, certification and marketing system, etc. Asian countries need their own systemic development in this area. Therefore, each country needs to share organic techniques. He also conveyed his sincere welcome to the participants in his welcoming remarks.

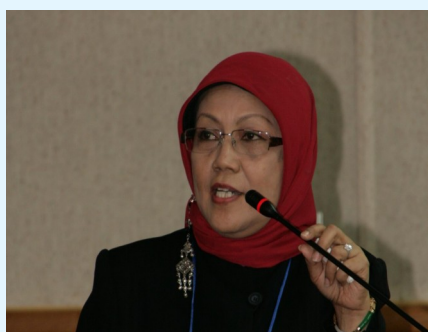
After finishing the opening ceremony, each member presented country reports in alphabetical order. New organic farming practices from each member were introduced. Each country report included the following information: Around ten organic farming techniques of your country – 1) Soil and nutrition, pest, disease & weed control, organic seed, biodiversity etc 2) Organic cropping system for specific crop (integrated techniques) 3) Research results, traditional farming techniques, which can be used in O.A. All those information were compiled, and published into a booklet and internet text for the public access.

There were also 4 guest speakers from International Centre for Research in Organic Food Systems (ICROFS), Denmark and Louis Bolk Institute, Netherlands. First, Dr. Simon Rebsdorf, Information Officer of ICROFS, gave a lecture on “Organic technology transfer and Networking”. Subsequently, Dr. Bo van Elzakker, Director, Department Tropical Agriculture, Agro Eco-Louis Bolk Institute, conveyed his presentation on “Organic marketing in small farms”. Dr. Ilse Ankjær Rasmussen, scientific Officer of ICROFS, introduced about “Organic eprint”. Organic eprint is the open-access website (www.orgprints.org) for sharing achievements of research in organic agriculture and food such as publications, projects and programs, institutions and facilities. She explained the status of the eprint and how to use organic eprint. Dr. Niels Halberg, Director of ICROFS, gave last presentation on “Why organic in ASIA”

After all those presentations were finished, the participants had a free discussion on organic agriculture. The participants exchanged their opinions freely. It was very short time to discuss due to time limit but it was very useful time to learn various ideas. The schedule of the first day was finished with this activities.



Participants of the ANSOFT Workshop



Dr. Rochayati presenting country report



Dr. Halberg giving a lecture



Participants participating in discussion

Organizing Committee Meeting

The Principal Investigator of ANSOFT project had a organizing committee Meeting during the workshop period. Dr. Youn Lee who is in charge of this project in Korea presided the meeting. There were two agenda to discuss as follows:

- Agenda 1 : Suggestion for 2012 ANSOFT activities
 - 1) Create cooperative research projects on organic rice and crop rotation system
 - 2) Conduct the training program of organic techniques for young scientists from each member countries before holding next ANSOFT workshop
 - 3) Upload the information about organic techniques, organization and human resources after the ANSOFT website is opened.
- Agenda 2 : Potential to participate in the organic congress held in October 2012, Naju, Korea
 - 1) The participants agreed to participant in the congress
 - 2) AFACI will open ANSOFT booth and exhibit representative organic products of each member countries at the organic congress
 - 3) Detailed information of the congress will be distributed after the budget and schedule are finalized.

NAAS-ICROFS MOU

NAAS, RDA, Korea and ICROFS signed the MOU in 27 September. Dr. Niels Halberg, Director of ICROFS, who gave a lecture during the ANSOFT workshop signed the MOU as the representative of ICROFS. ICROFS is a centre where the research is performed in interdisciplinary collaboration between research groups in different institutions and universities. Organization.

Although this agreement is the bilateral MOU between RDA and ICROFS, ICROFS showed big interests in ANSOFT project. The AFACI believe that it brings the opportunities for the AFACI members to sharing the knowledge and experiences with Europe.



Representatives of RDA & ICROFS signing the MOU

Field Trip

The participants attended the field trip to 'Korean Folk Village' and two organic farms. First, the participants visited 'Korean Folk Village' for sightseeing. They were free to explore the area on their own during two hours.

After having a lunch, the participants visited a pear farm located in Asan city. They confirmed the importance of disease resistant varieties if organic. Also, they looked around the processing facilities operating at the farm. The owner of the farm explained that how to use the machine and emphasized that the value of the organic products are risen when it is processed. He gave the participants a chance to taste the organic pear and pear juice that made by the farm. Next, the participants visited the rice farm managed by agricultural union. The manager of the union explained nutrient management system and the method of using snails for weed control of rice. He also gave the information on productivity of organic rice and differences between organic and non-organic rice. The participants were interested in the organic rice farming.

In the final day of the workshop, the participants attended the IFOAM Organic Congress and World Organic Fair. Some participants who are interested in the seminar of the congress extended their staying and participated in various program of the congress. ANSOFT Workshop was finished with this activities.



Korean Folk Village



Participants visiting a pear farm



Mr. Tumurkhuyag observing organic rice

Expert Workshop for Agricultural Technology Information Network in Asia (ATIN)

Expert Workshop for Agricultural Technology Information Network in Asia (ATIN) was held on December 8–10, 2011, Mercure Hotel, Vientiane, Lao PDR. The workshop was attended by 30 participants from 11 countries: Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam and Korea.



ATIN Workshop Participants

Dr. Bounthong Bouahome, Director General of National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute (NAFRI), Lao PDR, conveyed his welcoming address to the participants. He also said that agricultural researchers and farmers need better access to information to build their capacity. He hopes the participants develop the implementation plan to construct and network the web-based agricultural information system during this workshop.

Dr. Saejung Suh, Secretary General of KOPIA Group of RDA, Korea, emphasized that the expert workshop would be a good opportunity to promote the sharing of information, experience and knowledge among member countries through the AFACI platform in his congratulatory remarks.

After the opening ceremony, each member presented country reports. Each report included the following information: 1) Case Study on agricultural websites 2) Existing national or international information network standardization projects 3) Education materials for providing agricultural technologies 4) Web-based

extension service.

Dr. Keun Seop Shim delivered a special lecture on the 'Standard Platform Implementation'. He explained the necessity of the AFACI platform and how to operate the AFACI system. Next, he gave the demonstration of the platform with Ms. Nam Haeng Kim and Mr. Sung Kwang Hwang. After his presentation was finished, they had a discussion on the AFACI platform configuration. It was led by Dr. Shim and the participants discussed network conditions in each member country to construct the web-based agricultural information system.

Also, the principal investigator of AFACI country project, Dr. Khamkeo Panyasiri, gave a presentation on the current status of the project at the end of the day.

In the second day, the participants had a Steering Committee Meeting. At the meeting, they discussed the main contents of the websites and operating plans for the project.

Report of Steering Committee Meeting

- 1) The websites of member countries will consist of six menus including agricultural technologies and human resources.
- 2) The website will be written in English first. Local language will be added after the operation of the English website becomes stable.
- 3) The Principal Investigators should upload suitable information to each menu.
- 4) They can organize the committee for efficient management of their website. The project budget covers costs relating to managing the committee.
- 5) Detailed input formats will be distributed by 31 January, 2012.



Mr. Shim presenting the country report



Discussion on the AFACI platform configuration



Steering Committee Meeting

Agricultural Technology Books

With the special budget of the AFACI, a project titled, 'Publication and distribution of good agricultural technology books' will be conducted under the ATIN project. In this meeting, all principal investigators brought agricultural text books which are under consideration to publish by each countries. During the Steering Committee Meeting, Mr. Yang-Hee Cho, Acting Secretary General of AFACI discussed with PIs, one by one, the plan of each countries.

The AFACI gave the members options to choose books. But they should remember the following point:

- 1) The AFACI logo must be shown on the cover of books.
- 2) Local language is recommended since the purpose of this project is to distribute to farmers, however, English is possible.
- 3) Fifteen copies of books will be sent to the AFACI Secretariat until 15th April 2012 since the books will be displayed during the 2nd AFACI General Assembly. Also, published books will be shared with other member countries through the AFACI platform.

Country	Title of Book
Bangladesh	1. Modern Rice Cultivation 2. Manual of Selected Agricultural Technology
Cambodia	How to produce and handle rice to get high yield, low losses and high quality
Indonesia	Innovative Technologies for Food Security and Famer's Welfare
Lao PDR	Village Technician Manual
Mongolia	1. Technology transfer handbook 2. Handbook of Extension officer 3. Vegetable and grocery preserving technology
Nepal	Modern Techniques of Vegetable Farming
Philippines	1. Package of Technology of Different Vegetable Crops 2. Handbook on the Identification and control of Pigeonpea Insects Pest and Diseases 3. Mga Pamamaraan sa Organikong Gulayan (Organic Vegetable Farming Guide) in Filipino
Sri Lanka	Ten books (number of books) will be selected
Thailand	Maize Seed Production
Vietnam	Cassava Sustainable Cultivation Technologies in the North of Vietnam

※ Above information is subject to be changed.

Field Trip

The participants attended the Field Trip to 'National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute (NAFRI)', Rice and Cash Crop Research Center (RCRC). The NAFRI, the workshop co-organizer, and RCRC under the NAFRI are the mainly agriculture and forestry research institutes in Lao PDR. They introduced mandate, responsibilities, structure and prioritizing research of their institutes to the participants and it was a fruitful time to all participants to understand agricultural situation and policy of Lao PDR.

They also visited a organic farm. In the organic farm, there was a donation ceremony of 27 kinds of Korean vegetable seed and 5 shade nets to farmers. The organic farm is a demonstration farm related AFACI Pan-Asian Project (ANSOFT) and use the advanced technologies like sprinkler and rain proof cultivation. The participants could visit the leading farm in Lao PDR and expected that increase in yield using Korean vegetable seeds and shade net would have positive effect in technologies dissemination to other farmers.



Group Photo at the NAFRI



Donation ceremony at the organic farm



Participant looking around the organic farm

Training on Estimation of Soil Properties for Implementing Lao Country Project

Mr. Thisadee Chounlamouny, Deputy Head of Research Unit, National Conservation Agriculture Centre (NCAC), National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute (NAFRI), Lao PDR, who is involved in the Lao country project named "Direct Seeding Mulch-based Cropping Systems—DMC or SCV", visited Rural Development Administration (RDA), Korea, from 12–26 December, 2011, to participate in training program.

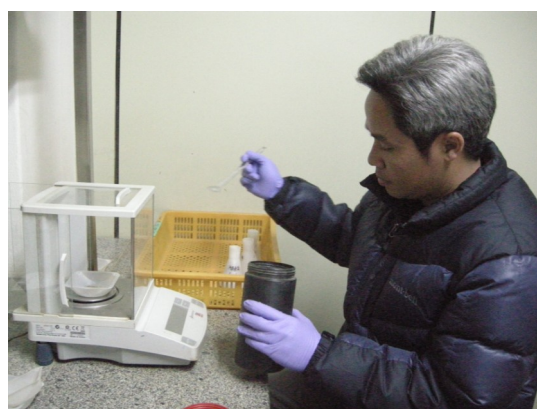
The purpose of this training was to introduce analysis methods of soil physical and chemical properties that are necessary for implementing the project. Dr. Yong-Seon Jang, who is a senior researcher of Soil & Fertilizer Management Division, National Academy of Agricultural Science (NAAS), RDA, organized and managed the program.

The first day of the training, Mr. Thisadee was on Field trip for soil sampling to the farm of Green house-grown Cucumber located in Cheonan city. At the farm, he surveyed soil profile and estimated soil moisture infiltration rate. He also collected core samples by depth and soil hardness. After came back to the farm, he was trained for soil physical properties using the sample in the lab during three days. Analysis items were as follows: soil phase, bulk density, soil aggregate, soil texture and soil water holding capacity. He was also trained for soil chemical properties for four days. Analysis items were as follows: pH, EC, Organic matter, Available phosphate, Ca, Mg, K, and Cation Exchange Capacity (CEC) etc. The training was finished with this practice. Before he leaved Korea, he expressed his wish that there will be more chances to share the knowledge among members in the future.

Mr. Thisadee will draw his knowledge on estimation of soil properties learning from training while he is implementing the project. It will be helpful to accomplish the final goal of the project.



Cucumber farm



Mr. Thisadee estimating of soil properties

Country Project in Lao PDR : Direct Seeding Mulch-based Cropping Systems—DMC or SCV

Farming systems throughout the Lao PDR have changed drastically over the last 15 years due to a range of factors. In some areas where market forces are prevalent, shifting cultivation systems have given away to more conventional high-input agriculture systems. In other more remote areas, the traditional swidden system with long rotations has been put under pressure primarily due to modification of land access and increasing population pressure. For example in Southern Xayabury in the Mekong corridor, where there is access to the Thai market, land preparation has become based on burning residues and plowing on steep slopes.

Because of the environment and financial costs of land preparation, farmer are shifting to herbicides, which lead to chemical pollution, while crop residues and weed mulch are usually burned, thereby increasing mineral losses and erosion on bare soil. In the mountainous areas such as Xieng Khouang Province, the rationale of shifting cultivation is collapsing as farmers use land for long periods of cropping and return more frequently to each field. A holistic research approach will be implemented in Udom Xay, Xieng Kaung and Luang Prabang to find direct seeding mulch based cropping (DMC) systems that are compatible with farmers' strategies and which can be components. It emphasizes the process of adaptation and validation by farmer groups, meaning that priorities are defined by smallholders in light of the constraint of their farming systems and the overall environmental conditions.

AFACI Work Plan for 2012

New Pan-Asian Project will be launched: "Integrated Management System of Plant Genetic Resources"

AFACI will start a new collaborative research project. The project is titled, "Integrated Management System of Plant Genetic Resources", with aim at improving the genetic resource management of member countries. 9 member countries (Bangladesh, Indonesia, Korea, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Vietnam) decided to participate in this project and Cambodia and Thailand are waiting for the permission of government.

Dr. Seok-Young Lee, who is a senior researcher of National Agrobiodiversity Center, National Academy of Agricultural Science (NAAS) of RDA, will lead the project. The project will be taken into action after discussing with principal investigator of each participating country at the workshop held in February 2012.

The AFACI wishes that this project would enable members to jointly address the global issues in genetic resource conservation and to strengthen their network in this field.

2nd General Assembly Meeting , 3-5 May 2012, RDA, Suwon, Korea

The 2nd General Assembly Meeting will be held on May 3-5, 2011, RDA, Suwon Korea.

There will be the RDA's 50th anniversary ceremony over the same period. The first day of the GA, the AFACI delegates will participate in "Global Agricultural Technology Cooperation Forum". Representatives from Korea-Africa Food & Agriculture Cooperation Initiative (KAFACI), Korea Project on International Agriculture (KOPIA) and RDA Alumni Association also will participate in this event. The topic of the forum will be "Sharing experience on development and decreasing technology gap for food security".

The Formal Meeting for the 2nd General Assembly will be held on May 4, 2011. The main agendas of GA will be: 1) Establishment of the Executive Council 2) Discussion for new member country and sustainable development strategies of AFACI 3) Report on the successful AFACI Research Project 4) New business plans and confirmation.

The last day of the GA, the delegate will go on a field trip to confirm advanced agricultural technologies.

More detailed information will be distributed later.



<AFACI Event Schedule in 2012 >

Date	Place	Title
February	TBD	Meeting for Principal Investigator on Integrated Management System of Plant Genetic Resources
3-5 May	RDA, Suwon, Korea	2nd General Assembly Meeting (RDA's 50th Anniversary Ceremony)
June	Suwon, Korea	2nd Year Monitoring Meeting on Collaboration Network for the Management of Migratory Rice Planthoppers and Associated Virus Diseases of Rice in Asia
	TBD	Training Workshop on Organic Farming Technologies
September	TBD	Workshop on Agricultural Technology Information Network in Asia (ATIN)
October	Naju, Korea	Workshop on Asian Network for Sustainable Organic Farming Technology (ANSOFT)
	Seoul, Korea	International Workshop on Collaboration Network for Control of Migratory Rice Planthoppers and Associated Virus Diseases in Asia

※ This schedule is subject to change.