

# fresh

News from AVRDC – The World Vegetable Center



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## Kaset Fair

Thailand's lively showcase of innovation in agriculture featured improved AVRDC vegetable lines

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## Open Day for Agricultural Research

*International institutions highlight progress, share strategies for development in West and Central Africa*



Friendly faces of the AVRDC Team greet Open Day visitors in Samanko, Mali. Staff demonstrated vegetable processing methods, discussed nutrition, shared recipes, and introduced the Center's latest improved vegetable lines for the region.



AVRDC - The World Vegetable Center, the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), the World Agroforestry Center (ICRAF) and the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) invited partners to review the results of their research work during an **Open Day for Agricultural Research**, 26-27 October 2011 at Samanko, about 30 kilometers

from Bamako, Mali. The four research institutes displayed techniques to improve yield and quality of crops, market gardens, and livestock, and shared strategies for agricultural development in West and Central Africa.

International organizations, including the World Food Program (WFP) and Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit

(GIZ), seed companies, government institutions (Mali Ministry of Health, Department of Nutrition), farmers' and consumers' associations, international and national NGOs, donors, and vegetable processors took part in this yearly gathering. Local media covered the event, which drew more than 400 visitors from around the region.

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African eggplant (*Solanum aethiopicum* L.), roselle (*Hibiscus sabdariffa* L.), okra (*Abelmoschus esculentus*), pepper (*Capsicum annum*) and amaranth (*Amaranthus* sp.) were among the vegetables growing in AVRDC's demonstration plots, where visitors also saw installations of net shelters to protect plants from pests and sun, and low-cost drip irrigation kits.

The AVRDC team presented the concept of the mobile garden—cultivating vegetables in buckets, bags, barrels, and other containers—as an option for urban gardening in small spaces.

Also on display at the AVRDC booth: Processed vegetables using techniques developed by AVRDC, including high beta-carotene orange tomato powder, juice, and dried tomatoes; and dried sweet and hot pepper. Visitors perused publications on vegetable processing, recipe booklets, fact sheets on nutritional values of vegetables, and Mali's official catalogue of vegetable species and varieties. Many were intrigued by the collection of *cube magnificent du Mali*—spice blends developed by the Center that incorporate dried vegetables into stock cubes for flavoring stews and soups—and

were impressed with AVRDC's efforts to improve production and processing methods to promote greater vegetable consumption.

- Moussa Kanouté, Research Assistant
- Cheik Amadou Marico, Irrigation Specialist
- Theresa Endres, Community Development Specialist Nutrition

## Seeing is believing



(Clockwise from top left): **Cheik Amadou Marico** shows visitors a drip irrigation installation.

Roselle thrives in the mobile garden.

Visitors view a healthy stand of amaranth in the trial plot.

At the AVRDC table, visitors got a closer look at dried spice/vegetable blends, sauces, and other ways to preserve the harvest.

