

RESERVE BANK OF FIJI



PRESS RELEASE

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RESERVE BANK OF FIJI AWARDS SCHOLARSHIP TO LOCAL CHEF FOR TRAINING IN MALAYSIA

The Reserve Bank of Fiji today announced the first recipient of their Chef Training Scholarship, Mr. Simone Toanikeve, an experienced local Chef with the Training and Productivity Authority of Fiji (TPAF), based in Nadi. Mr. Toanikeve will be attached with the Crown Plaza Mutiara Hotel in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia for 2 months from 1 June 2010. The purpose of the attachment is to study the use of local produce in the preparation of hotel menus. This is part of the Reserve Bank's ongoing efforts to support and promote local value adding and import substitution policies.

In making the announcement, the Reserve Bank Governor Mr. Sada Reddy said that "Fiji currently imports a lot of food, including fruits, vegetables and other produce that could be supplied locally. This is particularly so in the tourism industry. To help reduce our import bill and improve our balance of payments position, we should encourage local value adding. Everyone can contribute to this by encouraging one another to grow and utilise more Fiji made products and local foods. It is also encouraging to see that some of the major hotels were now engaging in farming to be able to supply their own local ingredients."

This scholarship is expected to bring new insights and fresh ideas on preparation and presentation techniques of local foods such as fruits and vegetables, root crops, meat and poultry, on hotel menus. Mr. Toanikeve will also prepare a food preparation manual using local produce for hotel menus as part of the training agreement.

Governor Reddy added that Fiji produces some of the best tasting varieties of local fruits, vegetables and seafood and was pleased to hear that some of the larger hotels are now utilising a larger percentage of local foods in their menus.

The Reserve Bank has entered into an agreement with the TPAF to organise a series of seminars and workshops for local chefs on Mr. Toanikeve's return, to share the knowledge and skills attained from the Malaysian attachment.

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