

**FRAMEWORK FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORKING PROGRAM
FOR
THE ASEAN-AVRDC REGIONAL NETWORK FOR VEGETABLE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
(AARNET)**

BACKGROUND

1. ASEAN members accord the utmost priority to the development of agriculture as a primary instrument for food security;
2. There is increasing recognition among ASEAN members that vegetables have a great potential, not only to provide essential vitamins and minerals and low-cost supplementary proteins and calories to the diet of burgeoning urban populations, but also to generate more employment in rural areas;
3. In order to accelerate development of the vegetable industries of ASEAN members, the needs have been recognized for improved varieties, more productive, sustainable and safe production technologies, more efficient marketing, handling and processing systems, and more and better trained human resources for research and development (R&D);
4. Many of the problems in the production, handling, processing and utilization of vegetables are common to all ASEAN members;
5. There is much scope for mutual gain through collaboration and complementation in research and in exchange and sharing of germplasm, information and expertise, not only among ASEAN members but also with other sources of technology and expertise outside the region;
6. The Asian Vegetable Research and Development Center (AVRDC) – the World Vegetable Center, through various collaborative networks, is engaged in research and training related to the development of improved vegetable varieties, and of enhanced technologies for economically producing and marketing vegetables to raise the living standard of people within and outside Asia;
7. The 20th meeting of the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF) in Hanoi (17-18 September 1998) approved Singapore's initiative to establish the ASEAN-AVRDC Regional Network for Vegetable Research and Development, hereinafter referred to as AARNET, to serve as the regional framework for collaborative vegetable R&D.
8. In order to strengthen the network, a set of governance for AARNET is therefore formalized and agreed upon by members of ASEAN and AVRDC.

ARTICLE I. OBJECTIVES

9. AARNET has the following specific objectives:
 - a. To promote sustainable and improved production of quality and safe vegetables for consumption and trade, and to develop indigenous vegetable-related industries within ASEAN.
 - b. To foster collaborative research partnerships in areas of common interest, in order to attain better and more efficient use of the expertise, technologies, plant materials and resources available within ASEAN.
 - c. To facilitate the acquisition, generation and adoption of improved technologies for vegetable R&D through collaborative research, information exchange and scientific consultation among

and outside ASEAN members.

- d. To help develop/strengthen the technical proficiency of vegetable professionals with scientific capability to respond to the national and regional needs for the vegetable industry.

ARTICLE II. GOVERNANCE

10. Governance of AARNET resides in the Steering Committee composed of one senior official nominated by each member of ASEAN and a designated representative of AVRDC. The Steering Committee will meet at least once a year. It will elect its Chairperson among the country representatives, on a rotation basis.
11. The Steering Committee has the following responsibilities:
 - Set policy and priorities and approve the strategic plan of the network.
 - Review and approve annual work plans and budgets of the network.
 - Consider and approve new activities/programmes/projects submitted by members.
 - Monitor and assess progress of the network and report to ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Crops (ASWGC).
 - Mobilize resources within and outside ASEAN for AARNET.
 - Appoint executing agencies on a need basis to coordinate and implement projects

ARTICLE III. COORDINATING AGENCY

12. Singapore, as initiator of this network, is to designate Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority of Singapore (AVA) to serve as the Coordinating Agency to provide overall coordination of AARNET. The Coordinating Agency has the following responsibilities:
 - a. Serve as liaison among and between ASWGC and AARNET members.
 - b. Seek additional fund support for AARNET from the donor community with assistance from the members.
 - c. Arrange annual Steering Committee meetings and regular workshops on specific subjects with assistance from the host member/country.

ARTICLE IV. RESPONSIBILITIES OF NETWORK MEMBERS

13. Subject to relevant national policies and availability of resources, the network members are to
 - a. Facilitate participation of vegetable professionals in R&D and training activities.
 - b. Facilitate the exchange of information, plant materials, technologies and expertise within ASEAN.
 - c. Execute agreed programs and provide venues and support for agreed activities.

ARTICLE V. MAJOR ACTIVITIES OF THE NETWORK

14. In addition to other activities which may later be agreed upon, AARNET is to engage in the following major activities:
 - a. Collaborative research on agreed topics, with individual countries taking lead roles in areas where they have interest and comparative advantage.
 - b. Seminars, conferences, workshops and training courses on topics of common interest.
 - c. Information exchange, including establishing database on vegetables, publication of newsletters, bibliographies, bulletins, and manuals and maintain the AARNET website.