

INTERVENTION HIGHLIGHT

Enhancing regional trade and food security Kiribati trials import of fresh produce from Fiji

Kiribati faces unique challenges and opportunities in terms of market access and trade in fresh and value-added agricultural products. Kiribati's limited available arable land for agriculture, reliance on subsistence farming, and the difficulties presented by its remote island geography and vulnerability to climate change has contributed to the country's dependence on imported food.

Kiribati prioritised the need to discuss and negotiate trade and market access opportunities for importing appropriate value-added agricultural products for human consumption. To do this, the Government of Kiribati through MTCIC and MELAD reached out to PHAMA Plus for support.

At a glance

- PHAMA Plus supported Kiribati's efforts to have bilateral discussions with Solomon Islands and Fiji to explore trade opportunities, particularly fresh agricultural produce.
- PHAMA Plus provided relevant technical support and facilitated a trade delegation from Kiribati, with representatives from MTCIC, MELAD and Kiribati Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), to Fiji and Solomon Islands in July, 2023.
- The mission was successful in confirming agreed protocols for the import of frozen agricultural produce from Solomon Islands and fresh produce from Fiji.
- It also enabled inter-agency discussions on biosecurity protocols and treatments and establishment of business relationships between potential exporters and importers.



Trial imports

Following the approval of import protocols, businesses in Kiribati have shown strong interest in trading. As Kiribati has not previously engaged in commercial-scale trade of fresh produce with Fiji, the country adopted stringent measures to ensure biosecurity compliance, considering the limitations of its current infrastructure.

Betty Trading has been in operation since July 2010 and is a household name in Kiribati as a trading business. PHAMA Plus partnered with Betty Trading to conduct trial shipments of fresh agricultural produce from Fiji and frozen produce from Solomon Islands. To help facilitate this trade, PHAMA Plus subsidised freight costs and working with Betty Trading and the Fiji exporter to ensure all standards and biosecurity requirements are met.

PHAMA Plus supported Betty Trading to conduct the first trial shipment of selected fresh produce from Fiji in May 2024. This helped inform Betty Trading's future operations and may also benefit other local businesses exploring similar opportunities. PHAMA Plus will continue to advance discussions on commencing trade of selected commodities from the Solomon Islands, including frozen and fresh produce and sawn timber.